

# FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL



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## BC WILDFIRE UPDATE: JULY 13, 2017

Updated as of 4:00 pm, Thursday July 13, 2017

### UPDATES:

- B.C. remains under a state of emergency as 183 wildfires are still actively burning, including 12 new fire starts from yesterday. Many of these fires are burning in interface areas across the Kamloops Fire Centre and Cariboo Fire Centre.
- Continuing warm and dry conditions are expected for the rest of the week. The province overall is forecast to see some patchy destabilization, which means that lightning strikes are possible. The chance of lightning occurring in any given area is relatively low, but the area in which lightning strikes are possible is very broad, spanning across most of the province.
- Red Cross funding assistance to evacuees is beginning to distribute.
- Emergency Management BC said the province remains prepared for the possibility of mass evacuations and Canadian Armed Forces aircraft and helicopters are also standing by in case airlifts are necessary.
- Crews took advantage of calmer conditions Wednesday to make progress on fire guards near Williams Lake.
- First Nations Health Authority continues to monitor air quality, it has improved as of today with Air Quality index' in the Quesnel and Williams Lake area hovering between the 7-10 range (moderate to high).
- The city of Williams Lake remains on an Evacuation Alert.
- The community of Little Fort remains on an evacuation alert.
- T'kemlups te Secwepemc (Kamloops) have opened their powwow grounds for evacuees. The grounds provide showers, RV space, and food. Moccasin Square Garden is also available.
- T'kemlups te Secwepemc (Kamloops) may have space for livestock, as well as resources such as water and hay. For information call Ron @ 250-819-8012.
- The Gustafsen fire burning near Williams Lake is now 15% contained as wind conditions stabilize.

### BC FIRST NATIONS ADVISORIES:

#### Central Region (Caribou Fire Centre)

##### Ashcroft First Nation

Ashcroft remains on an evacuation order, approximately 100 people evacuated.

Primary Contact: Chief Greg Blain (250)-457-7130

##### Bonaparte Indian Band

Bonaparte remains on an evacuation order, there some that are in community working to monitor and prevent the fire.

A new account has been set up to accept donations for Bonaparte Indian Band at Royal Bank.

Primary contact: Chief Ryan Day: (250)-457-3025

### **Cooks Ferry Indian Band**

Cooks Ferry is currently not under and evacuation order or evacuation alert. Two homes that were without power have recieved generators. Leasees are losing crops due to water access issues. Cooks Ferry will continue to monitor the wildfire situation.

Primary contact: Chief David Walkem (250)-315-8508 or (250)-458-2224

### **Skeetchestn Indian Band**

The community is monitoring the fire twice daily from the top of the mountain and thus far there is no imminent danger. The community continues to take precautionary measures. A Band Council Resolution for Alert is in place, and they are prepared.

Primary contact: Chief Ron Ignace: [kukpi7.ignace@gmail.com](mailto:kukpi7.ignace@gmail.com)

### **Simpcw First Nation**

Simpcw is not under an evacuation alert, or an evacuation order. Only one resident close to Little Fort remains on an evacuation alert. Fuel Reduction strategies are being implemented. The community is prepared in the event conditions worsen.

Primary contact: Shelley Lampreau

### **Tk'emlups te Secwepemc**

No evacuation alerts, or evacuation orders are in place at this time. The powwow grounds remain open to provide evacuees with essential services such as food, water and space for RV's and tents. Members of Tk'emlups are also volunteering at TRU to take in evacuees.

Primary contact: Band Office @ (250)-828-9700

### **Northeast Region (Prince George Fire Centre)**

#### **Alexis Creek First Nation**

Alexis Creek remains under partial evacuation. The community has organized crews to enact preventative measures for their community, and has made requests for fire equipment. Some families from Anaham are staying in Alexis

Creek. The ARDG provided the Northeast PREOC Aboriginal Liaison's contact information to follow up on the fire equipment.

Primary contact: Chief Evan Charleyboy: (250)-305-4459 OR Councilor Percy Guichon: (250)-267-2507

#### **Canim Lake Indian Band**

Canim Lake remains under an evacuation order for 1 person at IR#4, and an Evacuation Alert for the rest of the community. The band office remains open at Canim Lake, as well as the Emergency Operations Centre. Resources are available but are thinning. Canim Lake continues to work with the situation and is communicating regularly with EMBC.

Primary contact: Chief Mike Archie: (250)-397-2227 OR Command Center: (250)-397-2253

#### **?Esdilagh First Nation**

?Esdilagh remains on an Evacuation Order, more details will be provided as they come in.

Primary contact: Chief Roy Stump (250)-983-8348

#### **Esk'etemc First Nation**

#### **Soda Creek First Nation (Xat'sull)**

Soda Creek remains on an evacuation order. As of July 12, approximately 35-40 homes have been evacuated. There are currently 90 fire fighters at Soda Creek. Given the status of Williams Lake, resources are limited.

#### **Tl'etinqox Government**

On July 10, 2017, EMBC indicated that an evacuation of this First Nation has been called. Provincial officials ordered an immediate general evacuation order. Chief Alphonse has indicated that about 300 band members have stayed to fight the fires.

Tl'etinqox would like to reiterate that the decision for community members to stay was a conscious, well informed decision, based on knowledge of the territory, past experience, and a strong desire to protect their homes. An Evacuation Alert, and Emergency Order was documented by the Nation on Friday, July 7 @ 5:00 PM PST.

The province has indicated that the fire is close to the highway and it is difficult to transport fuel. Members continue to fight back wild fires threatening their communities. Chief Joe Alphonse has put a call out for assistance for items such as portable showers, fire-fighting equipment, generators and tents. Tl'etinqox continues to fight the wildfire with volunteer band members, using their own heavy machinery and tools. Any and all assistance is greatly appreciated; please contact the Tsilhqotin National Government if you wish to assist @ (250)-392-3918. Financial contributions are welcome by Paypal: <http://www.tsilhqotin.ca>.

**Primary contact:** Chief Betty Cahoose: (250)-742-3260

#### **Williams Lake Indian Band**

Williams Lake is on an evacuation alert. On July 9, 2017, it was reported that the reservoir level is back up to 45% after water had to be shut off in part of the community due to leakage in system. Confirmed that it would not impact hydrants for firefighting purposes. Hydro outage also reported due to one home destroyed by fire. Concerned may still be live wires and Hydro notified. On July 10, 2017, the First Nation requested assistance from provincial officials to clean up around community and help with dozer guards.

Primary contact: Chief Ann Louie: (250)-267-9450

#### **Yunesit'in Government**

An evacuation order is in place. Yunesit'in fire fighters and other services are currently working to contain the fire.

Primary contact: Chief Russel Myers (250)-302-2189 or [rmross@yunestin.ca](mailto:rmross@yunestin.ca)

#### **HIGHWAY CLOSURES:**

For the latest road closures and conditions, visit [www.drivebc.ca](http://www.drivebc.ca)

- **Highway 1**
  - Closed in both directions from Ashcroft Junction to Cache Creek, there is no estimated time of reopening.
  - Closed in both directions 10 kilometers west of Cache Creek to five kilometers east of Cache Creek. There is no estimated time of reopening.
  - Closed west bound 4 kilometers of Savona for all traffic bound for Cache Creek. There is no detour available and no estimated time of reopening.
- **Highway 20**
  - Closed to westbound traffic only at the Sheep Creek/Chilcotin Bridge, 25 kilometers west of Williams Lake to five kilometers west of Alexis Creek. Traffic is open eastbound. There is no detour available and no estimated time of opening.
- **Highway 24**
  - Closed at Horse Lake Road (31 kilometers east of Junction with Highway 97 North) for westbound traffic destined for 100 Mile House. However, it is open at Horse Lake Road for westbound traffic
- **Highway 5A**
  - Closed in both directions at Junction with Highway 3 from Princeton to 29 kilometers north of Princeton at Allison Lake Provincial Park. There is no detour available and no estimated time of reopening. There is an alternate route via Highway 3 , Highway 97 and Highway 97C

#### **AIR QUALITY**

Air quality has improved in the last 24 hours, with the Air Quality Index dropping extreme (high 20's – mid 30's) down to moderate levels (5-8). A wind advisory is in place, and conditions will continue to be monitored.

#### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Red Cross Emergency Funds: Anyone registered with the Red Cross will immediately receive \$600 via direct transfer to their bank account. To register, or if you have been evacuated, click on the following link [www.redcross.ca/gethelp](http://www.redcross.ca/gethelp) or call 1-800-863-6582.

British Columbia Fires Appeal donation information: [www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca)

Red Cross Emergency Preparedness information and tips: [www.redcross.ca/beready](http://www.redcross.ca/beready)

BC Emergency Preparedness

<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/emergencyprogramact/2016/01/11/discussion10/>

The Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Center (PREOC) may be able to coordinated requests for resources for communities on Evacuation Alert.

PREOC Northeast Region Contact: (250)-612-4172

PREOC Central Region Contact: (250)-371-5240

For affected workers, Service Canada is making every effort to provide direct assistance to workers and communities during this difficult

time: [https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-](https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/portfolio/service-canada/wildfires-british-columbia.html)

[development/corporate/portfolio/service-canada/wildfires-british-columbia.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/portfolio/service-canada/wildfires-british-columbia.html)

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT BC DAILY REGIONAL TELECONFERENCES**

For specific support in regional areas please call:

**Central Region (Kamloops) 250-371-5261**

**Northeast Region (Prince George) 250-614-6322**

There are **First Nation Coordination calls** based on the regions

- **Northeast region – daily calls at 2:00 pm**  
**Dial in 1-877-353-9184 participant ID 6160606#**
- **Central Region – daily calls at 3:00 pm**  
**Dial in 1-877-353-9184 Participant ID 5166580#**

If you require any further information or support, please contact UBCIC, FNS or BCAFN. Please send community updates to [Curtis.bedwell@bcafn.ca](mailto:Curtis.bedwell@bcafn.ca).