

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

BC Wildfire Update: July 19, 2017

Updated as of 4:00 PM, Wednesday, July 19, 2017

Updates:

- **BC's State of Emergency status has been extended by an additional two weeks (August 2nd)**
- As of Wednesday July 19, 2017, there are 155 wildfires burning across B.C. 15 of these fires are threatening communities.
- 15 First Nations communities are affected by the wildfires
- The newly sworn-in NDP government will now handle the wildfire situation, it is expected Forest and Lands Minister Doug Donaldson and Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Minister Scott Fraser will be the primary file appointees, along with supporting staff in the deputy minister's council.
- 50 fire fighters will arrive from Australia today, and will mobilize throughout BC while staged in Chilliwack.
- An estimated 32,000 people are still displaced by the wildfires.
- **Despite cooler temperatures, calm winds and higher precipitation; hot and dry weather is expected to return after Wednesday, with winds up to 30-40 kilometers in some areas. There will be rain in some areas, but it is expected to be spotty and accompanied by lightning; conditions will continue to be monitored.**
- The Henceville and Riske Creek fires are now considered to be one fire. Successful preventative burn measures were undertaken on Monday; updates to follow.
- The Whitelake fire is currently 7 kilometers from Williams Lake, crews have enacted measures to protect infrastructure and properties. So far, no damage is being reported.
- First Nations Policing members are being deployed to Indigenous communities, roles include encouraging evacuation order compliance, liaising with local governance and administrators, and working at check points.
- The city of Williams Lake remains under an evacuation order, evacuees have been sent to Kamloops, BC (the Sandman Centre in Kamloops is now serves as the primary evacuation center).
- Vernon, Kelowna, Chilliwack, Surrey and Salmon Arm have evacuation centers open for evacuees
- The military has been called in to assist the Cariboo region RCMP on an assistance basis; and if needed, to support additional evacuation orders should they be issued.
- Military assistance has been requested in the Central Region, updates will be available as they come. The request is to address capacity issues regarding check points, as there is a high volume expected as road closures open up.
- The Thompson-Nicola Regional District has now posted an evacuation order for the areas around Little Fort and north to Clearwater, including the now all-important junction of Highway 24 and Highway 5, warning of imminent



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danger from fires and advising local residents to evacuate on short notice if necessary.

- The Cariboo Regional District has issued an Evacuation Alert for areas south of Nazko and the McFarland Meadows.
- The powwow grounds at Tk'emlups te Secwepmec (Kamloops) remain open for evacuees. The grounds provide showers, RV space and food. Tk'emlups te Secwepmec may have space for livestock, as well as resources such as water and hay. For information call Ron @ (250)-819-8012. Approximately 500-600 people are on site. First Aid and mental health support services are available.
- Residents of Ashcroft and Cache Creek are able to return home as of July 18, 2017. Various supporting services are expected to reach the communities in the coming days.
- If you have concerns that need to be addressed regarding equipment or resources, please bring it to the attention of Janice Franklin @ (778)-679-1921

BC FIRST NATIONS ADVISORIES

Central Region (Cariboo Fire Center)

Ashcroft First Nation

Ashcroft remains on an evacuation alert, highways have opened as of 3:00 PM July 18, 2017. The highway is open to local traffic only. Travelers must have identification and proof of residency as there will be check points conducted by the RCMP. Damage assessment training started today at 9:30AM, at Ashcroft Elementary. The River Inn has been established as an Emergency Services Facility for community member's information and use. Many supporting services are expected to become available in the coming days.

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

Bonaparte Indian Band

Highways through Cache Creek have opened as of 3:00 PM July 18, 2017, and community members can return to their homes. The highway is open to local traffic only. Travelers must have identification and proof of residency as there will be check points conducted by the RCMP. Many supporting services are expected to become available in the coming days.

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

Primary contact: Kukpi7 Ryan Day: (250)-457-3025.

Cooks Ferry Indian Band

Cooks Ferry is currently not under an evacuation order or evacuation alert. Cooks Ferry continues to monitor the wildfire situation.

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

Skeetchestn Indian Band

The community remains on alert and is monitoring the fire patterns. The community continues to take precautionary measures. A Band Council Resolution for Alert is in place, and the community remains prepared.

Primary contact: Kukpi7Ron Ignace: kukpi7.ignace@gmail.com

Simpcw First Nation

Simpcw is not under an evacuation alert, or an evacuation order. The community is prepared in the event conditions worsen, is following emergency plans, and have established an operations center.

Primary contact: Shelley Lampreau 250-571-4886 or by email
shelley.lampreau@simpcw.com.

Whispering Pines

Community is on evacuation alert, and the community continue to monitor the situation.

Primary contact: Chief Steve Tresierra, 780-910-7067.

Northeast Region (Prince George Fire Center)**Alexis Creek First Nation (Tsideldel)**

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. Food supplies are beginning to reach the community.

Primary contact: Chief Evan Charleyboy: (250)-305-4459 OR Councillor 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. There is a need for greater resources. Canim Lake continues to monitor the situation and is communicating regularly with EMBC. BCR for alert remains in place.

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

Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation (Canoe/Dog Creek)

Both communities are under an evacuation alert. Power at Canoe Creek has been restored. A number of community members have evacuated to Kamloops due to health concerns. Satellite phones have been received and contact info will be updated as it becomes available.

?Esdilagh First Nation

?Esdilagh remains on an evacuation order.

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

Esk'etemc First Nation

The community is on evacuation order. Food and resources are needed.

Primary contact: Kukpi7 Charlene Belleau, (250) 305-8784.

Lhoosk'uz Dene Nation

The community is on evacuation alert. The situation is being monitored, and the community is prepared in the event an evacuation order is issued.

Primary contact: (250)-992-3290

Soda Creek First Nation (Xat'sull)

Soda Creek remains on an evacuation order. Assistance is required in supplying food for firefighters who have remained in place. Any community members that have stayed behind and decide to evacuate are advised to head to Prince George.
Primary contact: Chief Donna Dixon, (250) 267-7464.

Tl'etinqox Government

TNG has set up an office at the Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council. Community remains under evacuation order. Many community members have remained to fight the fires. Elders and children have been relocated. Power has been restored and updates will follow as they come in.

Financial contributions are welcome by Paypal: <http://www.tsilhqotin.ca>.

Primary contact: Tsilqhotin National Government, (250)-392-3918.

Ulkatcho Indian Band

Fire prevention strategies are in place, along with prepped equipment. The situation is stable, and community members are prepared in the event the situation worsens.

Contact: (250)-742-3260 OR (250)-742-3288

Williams Lake Indian Band

Williams Lake is on an evacuation order. Community members were evacuated on Sunday, July 16, 2017. No updates for July 19, 2017.

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 combat the fire. Community members have evacuated to Kamloops, Penticton, and surrounding areas, as per the BCR evacuation order.

Primary contact: Chief Russ Myers (250)-302-2189 or rmross@yunestin.ca.

HIGHWAY CLOSURES AND UPDATES:

For the latest road closures and conditions, visit www.drivebc.ca

- **Highway 1 between Ashcroft and Cache Creek, and Cache Creek to Kamloops, is now open to all traffic.**
- Highway 97 Closed 1km North of Cache Creek to Clinton (except for Emergency Vehicles and First Responders). No detour available. No access to Highway 99.
- Highway 20 open to eastbound traffic only. Closed to westbound traffic (except Emergency Vehicles and First Responders at the Sheep Creek/Chilcotin Bridge, 25 km west of Williams Lake to 5 km west of Alexis Creek. No detour available. Assessment ongoing.
- Highway 24 closed at Horse Lake Road (31 km east of Junction with Highway 97 north) for westbound traffic destined for 100 Mile House. Highway 24 open at Horse Lake Road for Westbound Traffic destined for Clinton.
- Highway 5A closed in both directions at Junction with Highway 3 from Princeton to 29 km north of Princeton at Allison Lake Provincial Park. Estimated time of opening is not available. Assessment ongoing.
- Highway 5A is closed in both directions at Allison Lake Provincial Park 29km north of Princeton to the Junction with highway 3 in Princeton. Estimated time of opening is not available. Detour not available. Assessment ongoing.

- Highway 97 south of Williams Lake to Highway 24 is open for evacuation purposes only. Highway 24 to Little Fort, then Highway 5 to Kamloops. Check points remain in effect.
- Highway 97 is closed in both directions from Williams Lake to McLeese Lake (21 km). Assessment ongoing.
- Highway 97 closed in the southbound direction between 66 km south of Quesnel at Macalister to McLeese Lake (79.3 km). Evacuation order in place for Williams Lake, with the evacuation route being Highway 97 southbound to Highway 24 to Little Fort to Highway 5 to Kamloops.
- Highway 99 at Highway 12 is open to local traffic only to the Hat Creek Junction (54 km). Highway 99 is closed from the Hat Creek Junction to Highway 97. No estimated time of opening; assessment ongoing.
- Closed in both directions (except Emergency Vehicles and First Responders from 150 Mile House to Junction with Horsefly Road (4.5 km) because of Forest Fire. Detour from the Likely-Horsefly Junction to Beaver Lake Road then to Highway 97N. No estimated time of opening; assessment ongoing.

AIR QUALITY ADVISORIES

For updates on air quality advisories, check

https://weather.gc.ca/warnings/index_e.html?prov=bc

Air Quality Advisories remain in place for the following locations:

- 100 Mile House
- Arrow Lakes – Slovan Lake
- Boundary
- Bulkley Valley and surrounding lakes
- Cariboo Region
- Chilcotin Region
- East Columbia
- East Kootenay
- Elk Valley
- Fraser Valley
- Kinbasket
- Kootenay Lake
- Metro Vancouver
- Nicola
- North Columbia
- North Thompson
- Okanogan Valley
- Prince George
- Shuswap
- Similkameen
- South Thompson
- West Columbia
- West Kootenay
- Yellowhead
- Yoho Park/Kootenay Park

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 or call 1-800-863-6582.

British Columbia Fires Appeal donation information: www.redcross.ca

Red Cross Emergency Preparedness information and tips: 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@bcfn.ca.