



Parks  
Canada

# FIRE INFORMATION

**Wood Buffalo Complex Wildfire Information Update – October 6, 2023**  
**(Previously Parks Canada Fire 7, Alberta Wildfire MNZ003, and NWT SS069)**  
(page 1 of 3)

*Managed under unified command between Alberta Wildfire, the Government of the Northwest Territories, and Parks Canada from the incident command post in Border Town (Smith's Landing First Nation).*

*Starting next week, updates will be shared weekly on Wednesdays. Additional updates will be issued if the fire situation evolves.*

## **Wildfire Update**

The Wood Buffalo Complex was last estimated at 504,881 hectares in size. There are currently 103 personnel [responding which includes](#) 9 pieces of heavy equipment, 6 helicopters and 54 firefighters.

Although rain and snow have been received, it is not enough precipitation to downgrade the status of the Wood Buffalo Complex from being held to under control. Crews remain working on the perimeter of the Wood Buffalo Complex, primarily south of Fort Fitzgerald along Hay Camp road and within the park boundary. Crews continue to work to protect cabins west of the Slave River in the area north of Thebacha.

## **Closures**

It is estimated that at least 140mm of continued precipitation over a several day period is needed to impact the current drought conditions and slow fire growth. Until a significant snow/rainfall event, the status will remain as “being held” and closures will remain in place. The fire continues to burn hot, and the landscape remains extremely dry.

Road and area closures remain in place. Trees with burnt root systems or trees that are partially burnt can fall easily and without warning regardless of wind conditions. These trees are dangerous and pose significant risk on roadways. Crews continue to work diligently to clear roads and remove dangerous trees.

Land users are asked to exercise extreme caution when in forested areas. Ash pits, which are smoldering areas of ground fire, continue to pose significant risk to humans in burned areas, especially when wet or covered with snow. Ash pits are created when a ground fire consumes sub surface fuels and creates an empty space that is barely visible or not visible at all from the surface. They are an inherent and hidden risk that can cause severe burns and injuries. Crews continue to work diligently to extinguish ash pits by digging into the ground exposing hidden burning debris and then using hose and helicopter bucketing to suppress the fire.

The following closures and no stopping zones remain in place:

- Salt River Day-Use Area, Salt Plains Day-Use Area, Pine Lake Campground, Kettle Point Group Camp and ALL trails within Wood Buffalo National Park are closed.
- Hay Camp Road, Parsons Lake Road (including Salt Plains Access Road) and Kettle Point Road are closed.
- Foxholes Road and Connie's Road are closed. Thebacha Road is closed to the general public, resident and boat launch user access only at this time.
- There is a **NO STOPPING** area on Pine Lake Road from Salt River Bridge (Park boundary) to the junction with Parsons Lake Road.



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Canada

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(page 2 of 3)

### Reclamation

Reclamation of dozer guards throughout the Wood Buffalo complex is well underway. Heavy equipment is being used to replace soil, trees and other organic matter that were removed when the fire guard was created. The sites are being left with loose soil and covered in coarse woody debris (such as downed trees and branches). This is done to reduce soil compaction and mimic natural forest processes that create suitable areas for vegetation to regenerate quickly. The rough surface slows the flow of water and air, reducing erosion in disturbed areas. As it decays, the wood returns nutrients to the soil and protects young regenerating plants. Rough debris also helps to deter predators from using the newly open areas as movement corridors.



Most reclamation work that can be completed this fall has been finished in Wood Buffalo National Park and in Alberta. Reclamation in the Northwest Territories is still underway. Reclamation will resume in the winter on guards in wet areas once the ground is frozen and heavy equipment can operate there. Additional reclamation will occur in the spring. The enclosed map outlines areas of reclamation that are completed, will occur in the winter or are to be completed in the spring.

A long-term reclamation and monitoring plan is in development for Wood Buffalo National Park to help guide the ongoing recovery of areas impacted by guard construction.

### Additional wildfire information

All other wildfires in Wood Buffalo National Park are being actively monitored and do not pose a risk to public safety at this time. Parks Canada will continue to monitor and action these wildfires as required.

### For more information:

- Wood Buffalo National Park wildfire updates: <https://parks.canada.ca/wbnp-fire>
- Northwest Territories fire information: <https://www.gov.nt.ca/ecc/en/services/wildfire-update>
- Alberta Wildfire Status: <https://www.alberta.ca/wildfire-status>
- For up-to-date road conditions, visit the NWT Highway Conditions website: <https://www.dot.gov.nt.ca/Highways>
- [The evacuation alert for Fort Smith has been lifted. For updates, please follow: Fort Smith Protective Services on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/FortSmithProtectiveServices>](#)
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**Report any wildfires or suspicious smoke in Alberta to 310-FIRE, in Northwest Territories to 1-877-NWTFIRE, and in Wood Buffalo National Park to 867-621-0136.**

### For further information, contact:

Fire Information Officer  
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Wood Buffalo Complex Wildfire  
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867-872-0170

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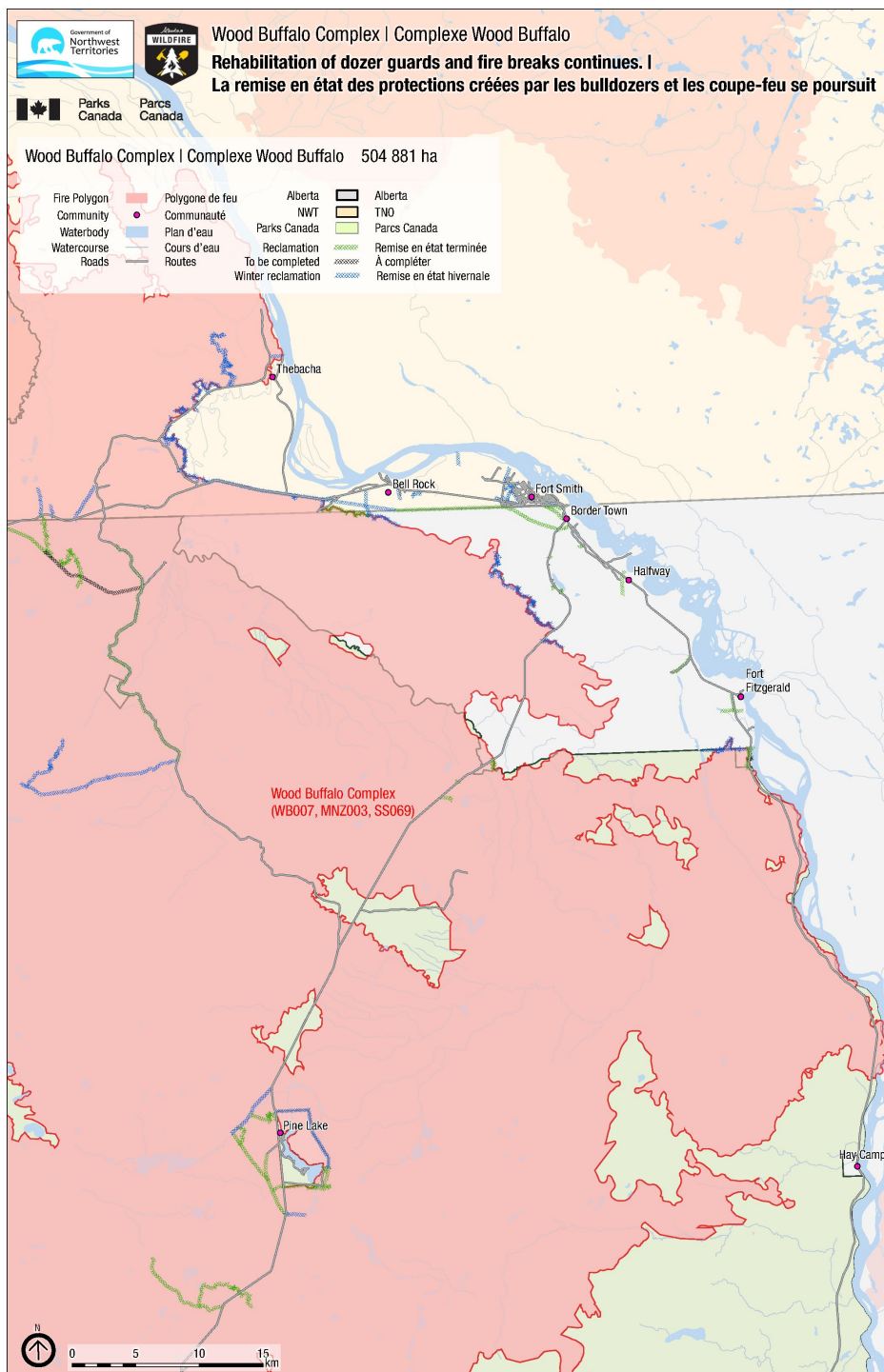


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(page 3 of 3)



### For further information, contact:

Fire Information Officer - Sierra Stinson

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