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FIRE INFORMATION

Fire Information Evening Update – August 24, 2023 @ 9:00 pm (page 1 of 1)

Fire Behaviour Update

Wood Buffalo Complex (previously Parks Canada Fire 7, Alberta Wildfire MNZ003, and NWT SS069):

Today, we saw some extreme fire activity on the furthest northwest part of the wildfire perimeter, west of Thebacha. The wind pushed the wildfire towards Thebacha and structure protection was turned on in Thebacha and along Foxholes Road.

Helicopters were bucketing in that area, however; today they were limited operationally because of poor visibility. We also ordered airtankers that were expected this morning and they were again unable to fly due to poor visibility.

Fire activity in other areas of the wildfire perimeter was minimal and experienced minimal fire growth today.

Earlier in the day, we were able to get some additional dozer guard work completed on the north flank of the wildfire near Fort Smith. We also had crews out working on the flank east of the finger that ran towards Fort Fitzgerald on Tuesday.

There was an ignition operation that ignition specialists were hoping to finish off today south of Fort Fitzgerald, however; the conditions were not favourable. Ignition specialists will continue to look for new opportunities to complete this operation.

Tomorrow, we anticipate a challenging firefighting day based on the forecast and current drought codes. We will have crews and resources out tomorrow as long as it's safe to do so. We also have airtankers that are ready to be deployed tomorrow morning, if visibility allows.

It is still UNSAFE FOR RESIDENTS TO RETURN. A state of local emergency remains in effect for Fort Smith and Fort Fitzgerald. We understand you want to go home but now is not the time, please be patient so that our crews and incident management teams can focus on this wildfire, rather than worrying about people who have re-entered the community unauthorized.

Road closures:

Road closures are in place for YOUR protection. Entering into an area before it is safe puts YOU at risk and IMPEDES OUR ABILITY to respond to the fire. We cannot conduct firefighting operations while people are nearby, especially if we don't know where you are.

Highway 5 is **CLOSED**, with staff monitoring the entrances from Hay River to Fort Smith due to active fire reaching the highway, safety concerns and heavy smoke. Please do not attempt to enter this area. If you try to re-enter unauthorized, you will be turned around. Pine Lake Road, including Pine Lake Recreation Area, **remains CLOSED** due to fire behaviour and ongoing fire operations in the area. For up-to-date highway information click here [Highway Conditions \(gov.nt.ca\)](https://dot.gov.nt.ca) or insert <https://dot.gov.nt.ca/Highways>

Significant smoke and poor visibility created challenging fire operations today. For more information on smoke intensity and to see where it's coming from, go to firesmoke.ca.

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:

Emily Smith

Wildfire Information Officer

Fort McMurray Forest Area

Emily.smith@gov.ab.ca

780-799-9253