

Slocan Lake Complex Wildfire Update

August 5, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

Weather today will not be conducive to planned ignition operations, preparation will continue in the event that an opportunity arises later this week. It is unlikely that ignition operations will occur on the Ponderosa FSR (N51069) wildfire before Thursday.

Increased fire behaviour and candling will be observed, especially when the smoke clears. Both the Komonko Creek (N51210) and Ponderosa FSR (N51069) wildfires will continue to back down steep slopes and active flame will be visible, today.

Weather: An upper low/trough will drop southward this afternoon (August 5), bringing cloud cover and unstable conditions to the area, resulting in isolated showers and thunderstorms. Winds will be light and variable this morning, shifting to gusty winds from the south (15 km/h gusting to 35 km/h) this afternoon, and then shifting to the north this evening. Venting will improve as increasing winds clear some of the smoke. Expect a high of 31°C with a minimum relative humidity of 23%.

Fire behaviour: Fire behaviour this morning will be similar to yesterday, with the potential for greater intensity this afternoon (August 5) when winds increase. Some areas received 2 mm of rain yesterday, which will result in lower intensity in those regions. However, if thunderstorms pass through the valley, the accompanying gusty winds will increase fire activity. Fire growth is driven by terrain-influenced winds, with downslope winds promoting movement downhill at night and upslope winds pushing the fire uphill during the day. These terrain-driven winds are crucial in determining the behaviour and spread of the fires.

Thunderstorms cause gusty winds because of the way they mix hot and cold air. Inside a thunderstorm, warm, moist air rises quickly and cools down, forming clouds and rain. This creates a strong downward flow of cooler air that rushes toward the ground. When this cool air hits the ground, it spreads out and causes strong, swirling winds around the storm. These gusty winds can be sudden and unpredictable, making them especially dangerous and affecting fires, and general safety.

Danger Trees: Coniferous trees, with low-lying branches and high sap content, are easily ignited by ground fires. The flames quickly reach the canopy, and the flammable sap accelerates the fire, leading to fast-moving wildfires. These trees often have shallow root systems that become unstable when the duff layer, a crucial anchoring layer of organic material, is burnt away. This makes the trees prone to falling, even if they appear undamaged on the outside, posing significant hazards to people, animals, and infrastructure. Fallen trees can block roads and obstruct access routes. Drought conditions worsen these problems by increasing the flammability of organic materials, resulting in more intense and widespread fires.

Challenges: The BC Wildfire Service prioritizes the safety of both the public and responders above all else. In the Southeast Fire Centre, the mountainous terrain and the challenging topography pose significant risks to ground and air crews. The region's steep slopes, rocky terrain, and lack of safe access or egress routes can make direct suppression efforts unsafe. Additionally, the intense fire behaviour and the presence of dangerous trees in inaccessible areas further complicate crew safety.

Flying, especially at high altitudes with sustained bucketing, is a high-risk activity and does not effectively extinguish wildfires without the support of ground crews. Aircraft and ground crews must work together for effective wildfire suppression. However, **in steep terrain, the use of aircraft can lead to unintended negative consequences, such as washing burning debris downslope or creating heavy winds that spread embers, potentially starting new fires.**

Slocan Lake Complex Information Team

Email: BCWS.Slocan.Information@gov.bc.ca

Phone: 778-405-4352

REPORT A WILDFIRE: 1 800 663-5555 OR *5555 from a cell phone





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August 5, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

Complex resources: Incident Management Team, 106 structure protection personnel and 7 helicopters assigned to the complex

Wilson Creek wildfire (N51614)

Resources: 8 firefighters, 3 fallers

There is very minimal fire activity. Crews are patrolling for and extinguishing remaining hot spots. The fire is classified as Under Control.

Nemo Creek wildfire (N51103)

Resources: Structure protection personnel and 9 pieces of heavy equipment,

Operations include continuing work on a guard along the northern flank of the fire with heavy equipment and ongoing structure protection around threatened areas. Fire behaviour this morning is expected to be similar to yesterday, but may increase later today with gusty winds and potential thunderstorms. There has been limited growth on the north and south flanks in recent days.

The Komonko Creek wildfire (N51210) and the Aylwin Creek wildfire (N51065) merged at Enterprise Creek. All updates going forward will be provided on the Komonko Creek wildfire (N51210).

Komonko Creek wildfire (N51210)

Resources: 92 firefighters, 6 fallers and 13 pieces of heavy equipment

The Komonko Creek fire, now combined with the Aylwin Creek fire, has crossed Enterprise Creek and is moving south along the ridge, with potential impacts on Highway 6 due to rolling debris. Crews are focused on directly attacking the fire from existing guards, with specific attention to hose lays and hotspots along Highway 6 and Red Mountain Road. They are also assessing and managing danger trees and reinforcing guards with heavy machinery, while structure protection continues.

Mulvey Creek wildfire (N51117)

Resources: 46 firefighters, 6 fallers and 9 pieces of heavy equipment

Crews are mopping up along the east flank and using small-scale ignitions on the south flank to remove fuel and connect with the Mulvey Creek drainage. Heavy equipment is constructing a new guard along the south flank, while structure protection is being maintained. Fire behaviour is expected to remain similar to yesterday, with increased activity possible if thunderstorms affect the area.

Ponderosa FSR (N51069)

Resources: 74 firefighters, 12 pieces of heavy equipment

Today's weather will not allow for planned ignition operations, so crews will focus on preparation in case conditions improve later this week. The fire continues to backing down the slope. Where the fire has reached the machine guard, small-scale hand ignitions will be used to remove fuel and reduce the risk of spotting. Crews are also completing hoselay and testing a water delivery system from Lemon Creek to Dayton Creek, while structure protection is ongoing.

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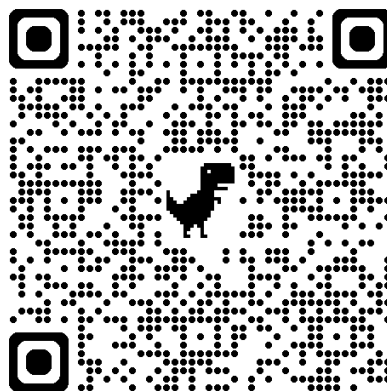
SOUTHEAST FIRE CENTRE

Wildfire Updates

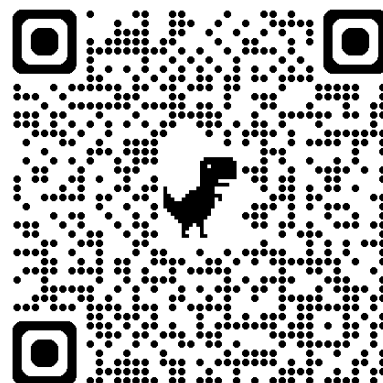
Wildfire Map



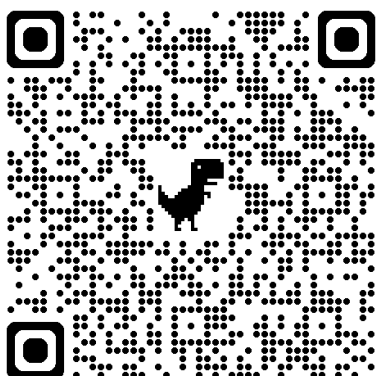
SEFC Bans & Restrictions



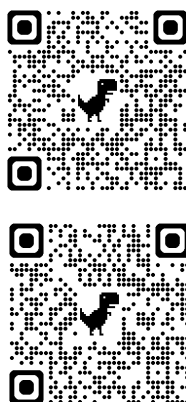
Wildfire Rank



Stages of Control



Download the BC Wildfire App



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Planned Ignition Explained



BC Wildfire Service Claims

Inquires about compensation should be emailed to BCWSClaims@gov.bc.ca. If you don't have access to email, please contact Slokan Lake Complex Information Team at 778-405-4352 for the mailing address.

