

# FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL



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## BC Wildfire Update: July 18, 2017

*Updated as of 4:00 PM, Tuesday July 18, 2017*

### Updates:

- As of Tuesday July 18, 2017, there are 159 wildfires burning across B.C. Total wildfire hectares as of yesterday exceed 131,000 – to be updated as information becomes available.
- 20 First Nations communities are affected by the wildfires
- 50 fire fighters will arrive from Australia on July 19, 2017, and will be staged in Chilliwack. The fire fighters will mobilize where needed throughout BC.
- An estimated 40,000 people have been evacuated, another 27,000 remain on evacuation alert.
- Cooler temperatures and slight precipitation is predicted later week, and will provide some fire suppression relief for fire fighters. Some lightning is also predicted; conditions will continue to be monitored.
- 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 opened evacuation centers in addition to the Prince George and Kamloops centers.
- 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 alert 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 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 will be able to return to their homes on July 18 2017 @ 3:00pm. These communities remain on Evacuation Alert.
- 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.  
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. 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 continue 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 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. 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. The Canoe Creek side has no power or communications. 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 stand by and are prepared in the event of 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. Will update contact information.

**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 for the situation worsening.

Primary contact: Chief Betty Cahoose, (250)-742-3260 OR (250)-742-3288.

**Williams Lake Indian Band**

Williams Lake is on an evacuation order. The community is seeking food resources for remaining firefighters. Community members were evacuated on Sunday, July 16, 2017.

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

## **Yunest'in Government**

An evacuation order is in place. Yunest'in fire fighters and other services are currently working to contain 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](mailto:rmross@yunestin.ca).

## **HIGHWAY CLOSURES (Due to Wildfires):**

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

- EFFECTIVE JULY 18 AT 3:00 PM – from Ashcroft Junction to Cache Creek (9.4 km) will open to LOCAL TRAFFIC ONLY for residents to return home. Check points will be in effect and identification/proof of residency will be required.
- EFFECTIVE JULY 18 AT 3:00 PM – 10km west of Cache Creek and 5 km east of Cache Creek will open to LOCAL TRAFFIC ONLY for residents to return home. Check points will be in effect and identification/proof of residency will be required.
- EFFECTIVE JULY 18 AT 3:00 – Highway 1 4 km west of Savona to 5 km east of Cache Creek will be open to LOCAL TRAFFIC ONLY for residents to return home. Check points will be in effect and identification/proof of residency will be required.
- 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.
- 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](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 – Slocan 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](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-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](mailto:curtis.bedwell@bcfn.ca).