

Bureau of Land Management
Alaska Fire Service



Alaska Incident Management Team

Crews on the East Fork Fire supported by favorable weather

June 15, 2022, Daily Update, 9:30 AM

East Fork Fire

STATS: 141,172 acres

Location: 3.7 miles northwest of St. Mary's

Personnel: 239

Start Date: May 31, 2022

Cause: Natural, Lightning

Fuels: A mix of tundra, brush, and black spruce

Apoon Pass Fire

STATS: 52,866 acres

Location: 24 miles north of Mountain Village

ST. MARY'S, Alaska. – The East Fork Fire remains active with dry fuels and wind-driven movement to the northeast at its head. The fire is also growing along its flanks as well as at the rear, but more slowly and at lower intensity. Most of the fire progression has shifted to the northeast edges, rather than the south. The shift in wind direction and cooler weather has allowed more fire-fighting activity directly on the fire's edge and favorable conditions to strengthen the fireline.

Operations: Yesterday, smokejumpers and crews were able to directly work the active edge of the western flank west of the Andreaksky River (North Fork). Firefighters were supported by aerial water drops, but progress in the riparian corridor was slowed by brushy fuels. Unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) completed the burn out of fuel islands around the southern toe of the fire and that operation created some smoke visible from St. Mary's. Crews at Pilot Station improved the existing fireline, brushed around cabins, and laid hose to protect them from fire. No structures have been damaged or destroyed.

Final preparations on the contingency lines protecting St. Mary's, Pitka's Point, and Mountain Village are likely to be completed today. Crews will construct primary containment line around the village of Pilot Station and continue assessments of structures and allotments along the Yukon River east of Mountain Village. Direct attack operations along the western flank will continue.

Aerial monitoring of both the East Fork and Apoon Pass fires will continue regularly in order to identify any allotments, structures, or cultural sites that may be at risk. As a reminder, temporary flight restrictions remain in effect (<https://tfr.faa.gov/tfr2/list.jsp>).

Evacuations: No mandatory evacuation order is in place. Voluntary relocations are continuing for St. Mary's, Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, and Pilot Station. Some residents are sheltered temporarily in Bethel with support from the Red Cross and Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation.

Ready: St. Mary's and Pitkas Point are currently in "Ready" position.

Set: No communities at this time.

Go: No communities at this time.

Weather: Moderate weather conditions will continue today. Tomorrow a front is moving in with southeast winds, which will continue to reduce the threat of smoke and fire toward St. Mary's and Pilot Station. The weekend will be the start of a warming trend, but winds will remain from the south. There is even a chance of showers before temperatures start to rise again next week.

East Fork Fire Information: Phone: (907) 290-2852; Email: 2022.eastfork@firenet.gov

Statewide Fire Blog: akfireinfo.com/, Facebook: facebook.com/BLMAFS, and Website: inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8148/