



# McDonald Fire Update

[BLM Alaska Fire Service](#)

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June 13, 2024

[www.akfireinfo.com](http://www.akfireinfo.com)

## Cabin protection progresses as weather moderates near the McDonald Fire

<b>Size:</b> 32,725 acres	<b>Personnel:</b> 49	<b>Start Date:</b> June 8, 2024	<b>Cause:</b> Lightning
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**FAIRBANKS, Alaska** – The forecasted weather should continue to keep the McDonald Fire (#119) tempered from what was experienced during the initial days of the fire. This will allow firefighters more time to fine tune pump systems on the cabins in case conditions return to hot, dry and windy. Firefighters did site assessments of the last two cabins and will start implementing protection measures. They will also make improvements on two identified helispots west of the Tanana River near the cabins. There is no expected change to the perimeter Thursday.

The fire received short shot of light rain overnight Wednesday. The BLM Alaska Fire Service will set up a portable weather station closer to the fire's southern edge to give fire managers more accurate weather information to use along with what's produced by the weather station located at Blair Lakes.

Fire managers identified one small military survival structure destroyed by the fire. The shelter was located well within the military training range and near the Tanana River.

The fire is located 9 miles southwest of Salcha between Dry Creek and the Tanana River almost entirely in the Tanana Flats Training Area. A significant amount of spruce trees south of the fire on state managed lands present more of a risk than the more consistent hardwood forest on the northern edge.

A Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DOF) air tanker did proficiency drop of water on the fire's southern edge early Thursday afternoon. Proficiency drops are done to keep skills and equipment current when not used for fire suppression actions.

DOF also has 42 personnel staged near the McDonald Fire at Harding Lake. The Pioneer Peak Hotshots and Gannet Glacier Type 2 Initial Attack crews are providing fuels mitigation at the Harding Lake State Park and are ready to respond to any new fire in the Interior.

**Weather Forecast:** The area will experience partly sunny skies with areas of smoke on Thursday. Scattered showers and thunderstorms are predicted in the fire area for the next few days and into the weekend. There is a chance of gusty winds accompanying the rain showers and thunderstorms. Higher humidity levels of 46% during the day and 86% should also keep the fire behavior moderated.

**Burn Permits:** There are no DOF burn suspensions for the area. Please check <https://dnr.alaska.gov/burn/fireareas> or call the burn permit hotline for the Fairbanks Area Forestry at (907) 451-2631 for the most current updates.

**Air Quality:** The Alaska Department of Conservation issued an [Air Quality Advisory](#) for the Central and Eastern Alaska until 2 p.m. Thursday, June 13, due the McDonald Fire and wildfires in the Yukon Territory. Find information on how to protect yourself from wildfire smoke at the [Smoke Management](#) page on akfireinfo.com.

**Evacuation notices:** The Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB) issued a Level 2: SET evacuation notice for the approximately 20 cabins that are near the fire's southern edge. The FNSB also put areas along the lower Salcha River, Harding Lake, Hollies Acres, and Canaday neighborhoods in a READY status. Find more information and [an interactive map](#) of these areas on the [Fairbanks North Star Borough Emergency Services](#) website.

Contact BLM AFS Public Affairs Specialist Beth Ipsen at (907)356-5510 or [eipsen@blm.gov](mailto:eipsen@blm.gov) for more information.

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*The Bureau of Land Management Alaska Fire Service (AFS) located at Fort Wainwright, Alaska, provides wildland fire suppression services for over 240 million acres of Department of the Interior and Native Corporation Lands in Alaska. In addition, AFS has other statewide responsibilities that include: interpretation of fire management policy; oversight of the BLM Alaska Aviation program; fuels management projects; and operating and maintaining advanced communication and computer systems such as the Alaska Lightning Detection System. AFS also maintains a National Incident Support Cache with a \$18.1 million inventory. The Alaska Fire Service provides wildland fire suppression services for America's "Last Frontier" on an interagency basis with the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources, USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Military in Alaska.*