



McDonald Fire Update

[BLM Alaska Fire Service](#)

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June 20, 2024

www.akfireinfo.com

McDonald Fire remains west of the Tanana River

Size: 39,706 acres	Personnel: 73	Start Date: June 8, 2024	Cause: Lightning
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FAIRBANKS, Alaska – Persistent thunderstorms continue near the McDonald Fire, bringing winds to increase fire activity in both northern and southern areas. Firefighters implemented burning operations Wednesday to protect the cabins along the 5 Mile Creek. The goal is to remove the burnable vegetation in a controlled manner in front of the fire, decreasing the threat to the cabins as fire activity on the south end increases. These firing operations will continue Thursday. Please use caution and turn on headlights while driving along the Richardson Highway as smoke may impact visibility.

The fire danger in the area remains critically high.

Crews continue to mop up and put out any hot areas along the fireline constructed directly at the southern edge closest to the 5 Mile Creek cabins to provide additional protection. Firefighters have completed prepping cabins with sprinklers and removing nearby burnable vegetation. As the day heats up, firefighters will use the sprinkler systems to wet down the area around cabins. Other tasks assigned to the crews on Thursday include clearing fallen and weakened trees from 5 Mile Creek, assuring safe access and egress from the east side of the fire. There are three designated firefighters at lookouts feeding timely fire behavior updates to firefighters on the ground.

Two engines and the White Mountain Module from the Alaska Division of Forestry & Fire Protection (DOF) continue patrolling the Richardson Highway corridor and adjacent subdivisions.

Weather: Thursday will see areas of dense smoke with numerous showers and possible wetting rains at night. Winds will also switch to out of the northeast and push smoke south of the fire starting Friday afternoon. A drying and warming trend and reduction in number of thunderstorms will resume over the weekend.

Burn Permits: The DOF has issued Burn Permit Suspensions for Fairbanks, Salcha, Tok and Railbelt areas. The fire danger in these areas remains HIGH. 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: An Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) air quality advisory is in effect for the Central and Eastern Alaska due to wildfire smoke through 2 p.m. Sunday. Low-level smoke will affect communities near the McDonald Fire. During the evening hours, smoke will settle in the flats, impacting a larger number of communities in the area. The ADEC expects increased smoke production from wildfires in Canada, northeast Alaska and McGrath during the advisory period. Find information on how to protect yourself from wildfire smoke at the [Smoke Management](#) page on <https://akfireinfo.com/smoke-management/>.

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 has areas along the lower Salcha River, Harding Lake, Hollies Acres, Canaday, Salcha and Johnson Road neighborhoods in a READY status. Find more information and [an interactive map](#) of these areas on the [Fairbanks North Star Borough Emergency Services](#) website.

Temporary Flight Restriction: Location is 30 nautical miles southeast of Fairbanks to provide a safe environment for firefighting aircraft. The TFR is posted at https://tfr.faa.gov/save_pages/detail_4_0375.html.

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Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Fire Service, P.O. Box 35005 1541 Gaffney Road, Fort Wainwright, Ak 99703
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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.