



# McDonald Fire Update

[BLM Alaska Fire Service](#)

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

## Firefighters continue burn operations on the McDonald Fire

<b>Size:</b> 41,892 acres	<b>Personnel:</b> 76	<b>Start Date:</b> June 8, 2024	<b>Cause:</b> Lightning
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**FAIRBANKS, Alaska** – With the assistance of a helicopter providing aerial ignitions, crews continued burning operations Thursday to protect cabins along 5 Mile Creek. The goal of these operations is to remove 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. Firing operations will continue Friday to gain additional depth of containment lines and reduce spotting potential. 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.

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. Smokejumpers are being inserted into military lands to reduce hazardous fuels and install sprinklers, pumps and hose to protect military infrastructure northwest of the fire. There are three designated firefighters acting as fire 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:** Isolated thunderstorms are forecasted Friday afternoon and evening. Northeast winds are expected at 10 mph this afternoon into Saturday, causing smoke to move southwest of the McDonald Fire and away from the Richardson Highway. Drying and warming will occur through the weekend bringing near Red Flag conditions Saturday night.

**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](https://tfr.faa.gov/save_pages/detail_4_0375.html).

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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.*