



McDonald Fire Update

[BLM Alaska Fire Service](#)

Information: 2024.McDonald@firenet.gov, 907-356-5511

June 29, 2024

McDonald Fire grows, but not threatening cabins

Size: 127,957 acres	Personnel: 61	Start Date: June 8, 2024	Cause: Lightning
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FAIRBANKS, Alaska – Flanking, backing, and some torching were observed on the McDonald Fire on Friday, resulting in about 8,000 acres of growth. Landscape features such as previously burned areas, rivers, and streams continue to hold the fire, although the fire did cross Clear Creek on the northwest perimeter into an area burned in a 2010 wildfire.

Hotshot crews are constructing direct line around the 5 Mile Creek cabins and continue structure protection. Firefighters maintain lookout duties, and engine crews patrolled the Richardson Highway corridor. Be mindful of fire crew activity on the roadways and help ensure their safety.

The McDonald Fire will continue to produce smoke, along with the other fires in Alaska and Canada. Take precautions to limit smoke exposure. Fairbanks Memorial Hospital (1650 Cowles Street) has clean-air rooms available for people impacted by smoke open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Weather: Hot and dry conditions are expected through this weekend. A thick smoke layer may moderate temperatures and humidity. Winds on Saturday will be mostly light and variable with a stray shower possible. Isolated thunderstorms are forecast for Sunday afternoon, forming along the Alaska Range and drifting northwest, which may produce gusty winds along the fire.

Burn Permits: The Division of Forestry and Fire Protection has issued Burn Permit Suspensions for Fairbanks, Salcha, Delta, 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: Air quality in the region will fluctuate between GOOD and UNHEALTHY, with downwind areas of the fires experiencing the most significant impacts. Generally, conditions worsen overnight and during the early morning hours as the atmosphere cools and brings smoke to the surface. During the day, surface heating will mix smoke and carry it upwards, temporarily improving air quality. Find information on how to protect yourself from wildfire smoke at the [Smoke Management](#) page on <https://akfireinfo.com/smoke-management/>.

Evacuation Notices: A Level 2: SET evacuation notice is in effect for the approximately 20 cabins near the fire’s southeastern edge, west of the Tanana River. The communities east of the Tanana River are in READY status, including the Johnson Road neighborhoods, Canaday, Harding Lake, Salcha, the lower Salcha River, Hollies Acres, and south to Birch Lake. Find more information and [an interactive map](#) of these areas on the [Fairbanks North Star Borough Emergency Services](#) website.

Temporary Flight Restriction: Flight restrictions have been lifted; however, pilots should be mindful that air operations in support of fire suppression are ongoing.

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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.