



McDonald Fire Update

[BLM Alaska Fire Service](#)

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July 3, 2024

Minimal fire activity observed on McDonald Fire

Size: 165,038	Personnel: 76	Start Date: June 8, 2024	Cause: Lightning
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FAIRBANKS, Alaska – There was minimal fire activity across the McDonald Fire on Tuesday. Heavy smoke over the fire dissipated, reducing the impact on the highway and surrounding areas. A reconnaissance flight over the fire found heat in the north near McDonald Creek. Pockets of heat were also observed in the old burn areas, as well as south of Salmon Loaf and on the southern edge of the fire.

The 50-foot-wide fire break constructed to protect the cabins in the 5 Mile Creek area was completed Tuesday and work continues with mop up operations along the line. A crew from eastern Montana continues their work alongside the Plumas Hotshots on cabin protection and securing the fire edge in that area. Crews will monitor fire behavior and any potential spotting or flanking beyond the perimeter. Engines are patrolling the ridge and lookout areas to provide information to crews on the ground.

Weather: A front and its associated low-pressure system will move towards the fire today. This will strengthen southwesterly winds with peak gusts in the 30 to 40 mph range this afternoon. There is an increased chance of wetting rain expected overnight.

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: Fires surrounding the Fairbanks North Star Borough and the fires east of the Yukon Flats are actively producing smoke. During the evening and early morning hours, smoke will settle in low lying areas, greatly impacting a large number of communities. Wetting rains are expected to move into the region late Wednesday and linger through Thursday. Clouds will keep the smoke trapped in the lower levels. Surface winds will transport smoke to an east-northeast direction. Air quality in the region will fluctuate between GOOD and VERY UNHEALTHY, with downstream areas of the fires experiencing the most significant impacts. Fairbanks Memorial Hospital (1650 Cowles St.) has clean-air rooms available for people impacted by smoke open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. 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: New temporary flight restrictions were put in place on July 1; for more information, see: [4/6081 NOTAM Details \(faa.gov\)](#).

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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.