



McDonald Fire Update

[BLM Alaska Fire Service](#)

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July 4, 2024

Wet weather expected over McDonald Fire today

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| Size: 172,236 | Personnel: 75 | Start Date: June 8, 2024 | Cause: Lightning |
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FAIRBANKS, Alaska – The McDonald Fire received wind from the west-southwest Wednesday, with gusts as high as 35 mph. Fire behavior was moderated due to the higher humidity yesterday and smoke was present on the highway over the course of the day. A reconnaissance flight found heat along the northern edge with most of the heat in the northeast corner, which aligned with the wind direction. There was minimal perimeter growth with the gain in total acreage attributed to the fire consuming unburned pockets in the interior.

Crews have secured roughly 50 feet of depth along most of the line in the 5 Mile Creek Area and will continue with mop-up operations and securing the fires edge. Several crews reported trees falling over in the areas where they were working. The potential for fire-weakened trees to fall is high and firefighters must be alert to these dangers while working on the line. Rain is in the forecast today for the area, so operations will be weather and safety dependent. Crews will monitor fire behavior for any potential spotting or flanking beyond the perimeter. A module is staffing several lookouts and engines are patrolling the ridge and lookout areas as well as the Richardson Highway to provide information to crews on the ground.

Weather: Rain is expected today with winds from the southwest at 5 to 7 mph. Temperatures are forecast to be in the 50s to 60s. This should reduce fire activity.

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: Cooler temperatures and rain forecast today and into the weekend should help moderate smoke production. This should continue the overall trend of improving air quality. However, due to the amount of fire on the landscape and wind, there may be periods of increasing smoke until significant wetting rain arrives. Winds will continue to be from the southwest today, pushing smoke northeast. Lingering smoke may enhance any fog that forms and impact visibility. 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](https://akfireinfo.com/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.