



McDonald Fire Update
[BLM Alaska Fire Service](#)

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July 5, 2024

Wet weather to continue today over McDonald Fire

Size: 172,236	Personnel: 77	Start Date: June 8, 2024	Cause: Lightning
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FAIRBANKS, Alaska – Rain and cooler temperatures set up over the McDonald Fire on Thursday as a series of fronts pushed across the region. This moderated fire behavior. A reconnaissance flight found minimal fire activity, mostly backing and smoldering. There was minimal perimeter growth. Overnight, weather stations in the area received anywhere from a half inch to an inch of rain.

In the 5 Mile Creek Area, crews have secured roughly 100 feet of depth along the line and will continue with mop-up operations to secure the fire’s edge. Crews will continue to monitor fire behavior for any potential spotting or flanking beyond the perimeter. Several lookouts are being staffed by a wildland fire module to provide information to crews on the ground. With the wind and rain in the forecast, operations will be weather and safety dependent.

Weather: Rain is expected to continue Friday and will likely slow fire growth, although smoldering is expected to continue under the canopy and in areas that receive less precipitation. Winds will be out of the west at 10 to 20 mph, then shifting to southwest winds in the evening. Temperatures are forecast to be in the 50s to 60s. This should further reduce fire activity.

Burn Permits: The Division of Forestry and Fire Protection has lifted the Burn Permit Suspensions for Fairbanks, Salcha, Delta, Tok, and Railbelt areas. Small and Large Scale Permits are required. Burning is allowed today. The fire danger in these areas is MODERATE. 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: The cool, wet weather significantly moderated fire behavior and smoke production. There is still some lingering smoke in the Tanana River Valley, which will likely clear on Friday. It will be a bit drier and windier, but the overall pattern will stay cool and wet through the weekend and into next week. With the suppressed smoke production, the air quality is expected to remain GOOD. 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: The temporary flight restriction (TFR) has been adjusted based on public input to give float plane access to Harding Lake. Be aware helicopter operations to support the fire still continue in the area. Visit tfr.faa.gov for more information.

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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.