



2017.08.14

Wildfire Newsletter

Southeast Fire Centre

Wildfire activity

There were 44 active wildfires burning in the Southeast Fire Centre as of Aug. 14. Precipitation in the last few days has brought some relief and has helped lessen fire activity enough for crews to attack them directly.

Fires with evacuation alerts as of Aug 14, 2017

McCormick Creek (N51634) was discovered on Aug 8. This 337-hectare fire is burning 20 kilometres southwest of Salmo in the Pend D'Oreille area. Currently, 23 residents are on evacuation order. More information about this evacuation order can be found at: www.rdck.ca

Kokanee Creek (N71691) was caused by lightning on Aug. 12. This 89-hectare wildfire is burning in steep and difficult terrain. Currently, 135 residents are on evacuation alert. Please visit www.rdck.ca for more details.

Rescinded alerts and orders as of Aug. 14:

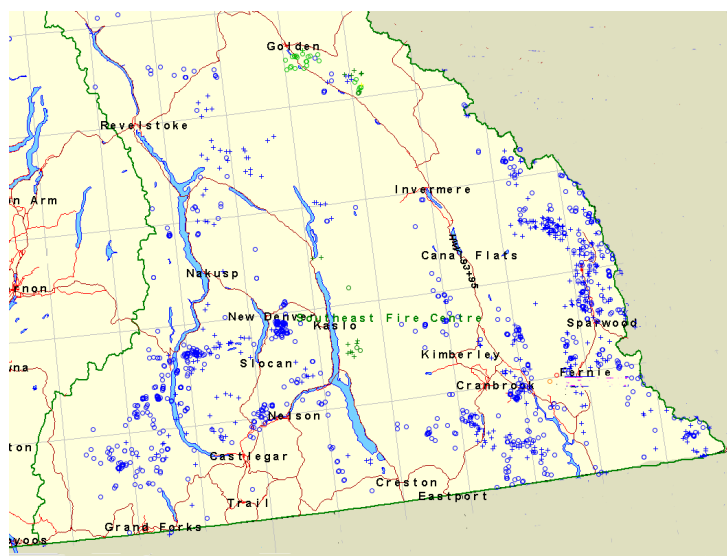
Galena (N51075)

Island Pond (N21451)

Pend D'Oreille river is also now open to boat traffic. However, please stay well clear of airtankers and helicopters.

Lighting strikes

After a long period with little thunderstorm activity, the Southeast Fire Centre area was hit by dozens of lightning strikes in the second week of August. As shown on the map below, the area south of Cranbrook, the Boundary and the Alberta border area received the most strikes.



The majority of wildfires this year have been caused by lightning. After a period of lightning strikes, our crews patrol the affected areas to try to spot and suppress any fires that may result. Fires can flare up days or even weeks after a lightning strike. These fires are called "holdover" fires.

Stay out of the way!

Aircraft fighting fires need room to do their work. If you are boating on a lake where air tankers or helicopters are drawing water for firefighting, you must give the area where these aircraft are operating a wide berth.

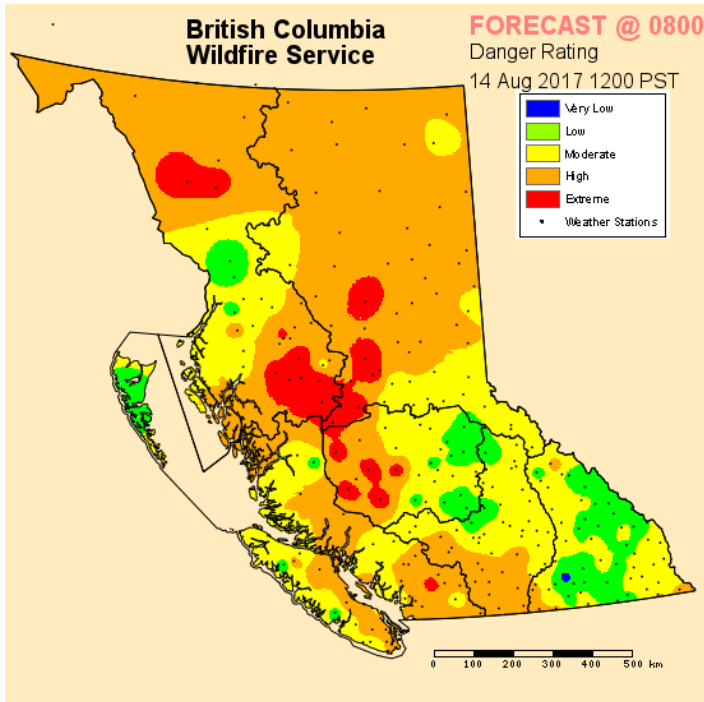
Failure to stay clear could not only endanger you and the flight crew, but can also interfere with fire suppression efforts. Boaters can face fines and even jail time for interfering with firefighting operations.

Call 1 888 3FOREST

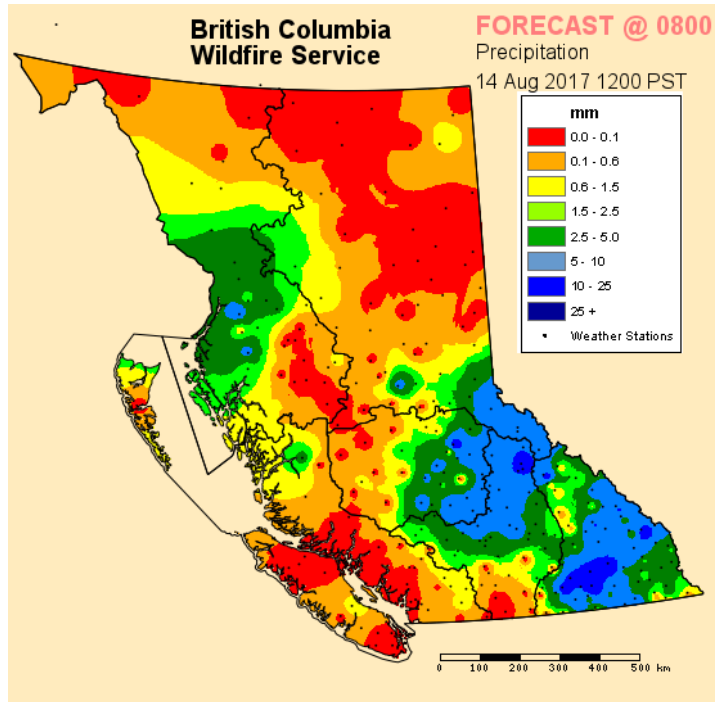
for more information about wildfires and burn prohibitions, or visit:

www.bcwildfire.ca

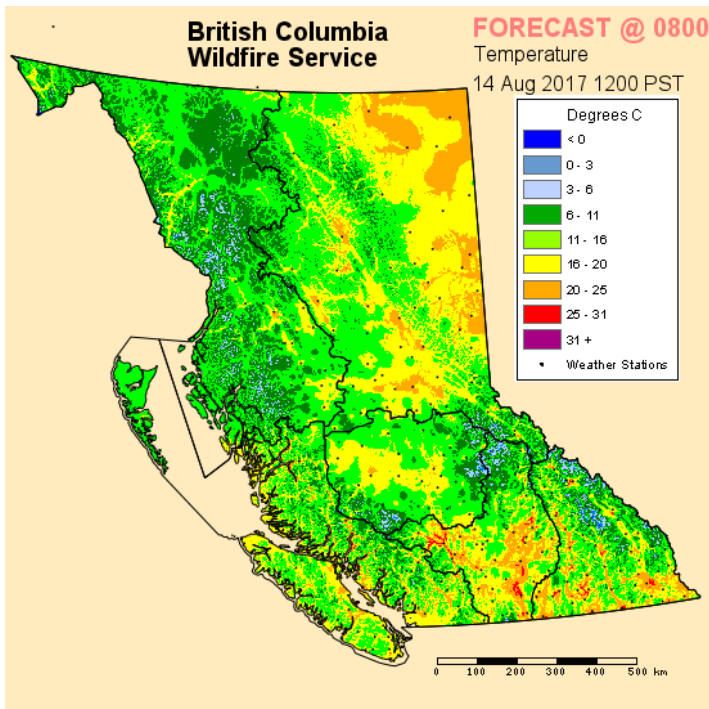
Fire danger rating



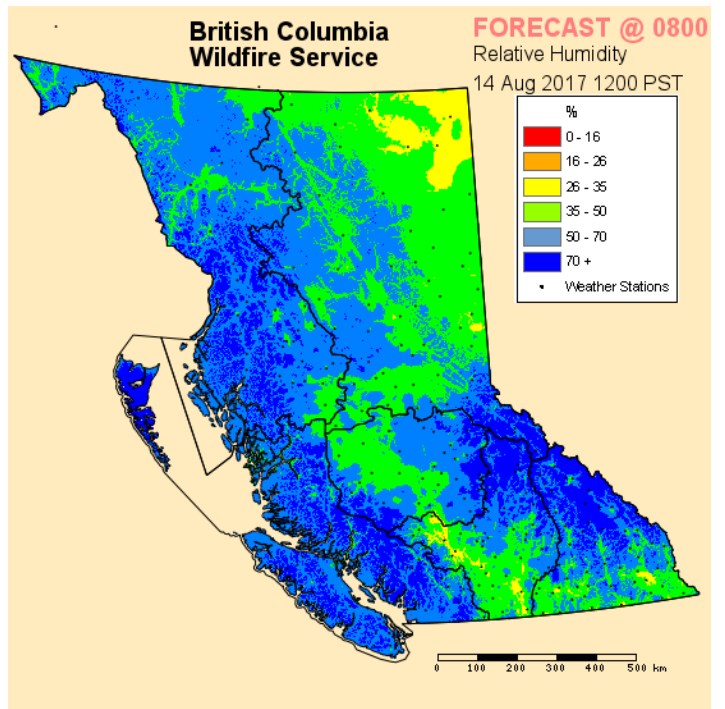
Precipitation



Temperature



Relative humidity



These maps are current for Aug. 14, 2017. For more info, see

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status/fire-danger/fire-weather>

These maps are for informational purposes only and should not be used to make operational decisions.

Southeast Fire Centre Statistics

Totals since April 1, 2017:

Fires to date: 267

Hectares burned: 15,404

Human-caused fires: 65

Lightning-caused fires: 202

2016 at this time:

Fires to date: 123

Hectares burned: 333

Human-caused fires: 41

Lightning-caused fires: 81

2015 at this time:

Fires to date: 449

Hectares burned: 6271

Human-caused fires: 67

Lightning-caused fires: 371

Off-road travel restricted in Southeast Fire Centre

On August 4, 2017, the provincial government enacted a prohibition on the use of off-road vehicles for recreational purposes on Crown land in the Southeast Fire Centre, the Cariboo Fire Centre, and Kamloops Fire Centre. In addition, all on-highway vehicles must not go off-road.

This step was taken to help prevent human-caused wildfires and protect public safety. Simply put, the operation of any off-road vehicles in these hot, dry conditions creates a potential wildfire risk. While Jeeps, trucks and other on-highway vehicles are permitted on designated roads, they are not allowed off-road.

This does not apply to private lands or national parks. It also does not apply to emergency responders or to agriculture or commercial/ industrial users who operate vehicles for farming, emergency response or business purposes.

See Page 4 for questions and answers about the off-road vehicle prohibition.

Campfire ban continues

The campfire ban that was put in place throughout in the Southeast Fire Centre remains in effect. The ban was enacted to help prevent human-caused wildfires and protect public safety. It will stay in place until further notice.

By prohibiting open fires and other potential sources of ignition (see below) we can reduce the risk of human-caused wildfires, freeing up resources to fight naturally occurring fires in our region.

Specifically, prohibited activities include:

- campfires (as defined in the Wildfire Regulation: www.gov.bc.ca/wildfirelegislation)
- the burning of waste or other materials
- stubble or grass fires of any size over any area
- the use of fireworks, sky lanterns, tiki torches, chimineas, burning barrels or burning cages of any size or description
- the use of binary exploding targets (e.g. for target practice)
- the use of air curtain burners (forced air burning systems)

To learn about the differences between campfires, Category 2 open fires and Category 3 open fires, visit www.gov.bc.ca/wildfirebans or review the open fire regulations poster at www.gov.bc.ca/openfireregs

Q&A: Off-road vehicle restrictions

Why is the use of off-road vehicles (ORVs) and on-highway vehicles being banned in the backcountry in the Cariboo Fire Centre, Kamloops Fire Centre and Southeast Fire Centre?

The use of off-road vehicles is being banned in these areas due to the extreme wildfire and weather conditions that we're experiencing in B.C. at this time. This is being done to help prevent human-caused wildfires and protect public safety.

Are there any exceptions to this restriction?

The prohibition of off-road vehicles and on-highway vehicles does not apply to private lands or national parks. It also does not apply to emergency responders or to agriculture or commercial/industrial users who operate vehicles for farming, emergency response or business purposes.

Can you give me some examples of uses that are permitted and are not permitted under this prohibition, and on what types of road surfaces?

- Jeeps, trucks and other on-highway vehicles are permitted on designated roads under this prohibition, including forest service roads. However, they are not allowed to go off-road.
- Travelling cross-country off of a travelled road surface in a Jeep, truck or 4x4 is not permitted.
- Driving an ATV on a forest service road or designated trail is not permitted.
- People who are going camping at a recreation site — so long as it is not in the Cariboo Fire Centre — may travel on a forest service road.

My ORV has a spark arrestor. Why can't I go riding?

Hot mufflers or build-ups of grass or other vegetation on hot spots can also help spark a wildfire — especially if the vehicle is driven in tall grass or weeds or off of established trails.

What is the fine for violating this restriction?

People can be issued a violation ticket that carries a fine of \$767. If the activity causes or contributes to a wildfire, the person responsible may be ordered to pay all firefighting and associated costs.

When will the ban be lifted?

The ban will be lifted when the BC Wildfire Service determines that threat levels have been reduced to the point where operating an ORV in the backcountry no longer poses a significant risk to public safety.

Road closures in the Southeast

All public travel is prohibited on some roads in the Southeast Fire Centre for public safety and/or to support local firefighting efforts. The following roads are currently closed:

- Highway 6 from the US Border to Highway 3 junction in both directions
- White-Middle Fork Forest Service Road at the 45.5 kilometre point
- Harrop Mainline and East Harrop Mainline Forest Service Roads
- Duncan-Glacier Creek Forest Service Road near the Macbeth Icefields turnout