



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Fire Update

BLM Alaska Fire Service

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Management of Isom Creek Fire Significantly Downsizing Saturday

(FAIRBANKS, Alaska) – Fire management on the Isom Creek Fire is scheduled to downsize on Saturday morning because rain, high humidity and cloud cover over the past week have calmed fire activity and allowed firefighters to make significant headway towards containment. The transition from a Type 3 to a Type 4 organization will reduce the number of firefighters and other resources in place to monitor the fire and respond to any hot spots or active fires. Crews, engines, and helicopters released from the fire will be made available for other incidents. One helicopter will demobilize today, leaving 132 people and one helicopter assigned to Isom Creek Fire. The Incident Command Post will remain at Five Mile Camp, but with a significantly reduced footprint.

Drone flights with an infrared camera, which are safer and more accurate than helicopter flights, are scheduled for the remainder of this week. IR cameras show the apparent surface temperature and detect hot spots within the fire perimeter.

Although recent rains helped calm fire activity, fire managers warn that the season is not over. In record high fire years in Alaska, most activity has occurred in July and August. Recent rain was not sufficient to completely soak the very dry vegetation and soil, especially in the Yukon Flats. High temperatures and winds could bring back extreme burning conditions and fan smoldering fires into active flames.

Suppression repair was completed on the western and southern flanks of the fire. Hose lays remain in place around structures along the Yukon River in case fire approaches Native allotments. Repair efforts are now underway along the eastern flank of the fire perimeter, which is not contained at this time. Firefighters are moving brush and debris cut to create circular helicopter landing zones and spreading it around to create an irregular edge, mimicking natural meadows. Several hundred yards of indirect fireline along the eastern perimeter near the Dalton Highway will be blocked by brush and other materials that could be moved if crews need access to conduct a burnout to secure the eastern flank. When the fire is contained or the season ends, the fireline will be permanently blocked to prevent erosion and overuse.

The Wind River Wildlife K-9s and its certified bear detection canines will stay on the fire until Saturday. Handler Nils Pederson and his Karelian bear dogs have hazed bears, determined when bears have been in the area and offered advice to firefighting personnel on preventing conflicts in camp. In addition, the dogs have socialized with firefighters in the off hours.

The Dalton Highway remains open to travel, with traffic control as needed for smoke conditions or in support of firefighting efforts. The Five Mile Campground near the Yukon Bridge on the Dalton Highway remains closed to public access; it is reserved for crews fighting the Isom Creek Fire. The Yukon River Camp north of the Yukon River Bridge at milepost 56 is open for food, fuel and lodging. The fire reached the Trans-Alaska Pipeline; however, it is not damaged as it was designed to withstand wildfires.

A [Temporary Flight Restriction](#) (TFR) remains in place over the fire and some of the surrounding area to provide a safe operating environment for firefighting aircraft.

For more information, contact the Alaska Interagency Fire Information Office at (907) 356-5511.

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