



# Fire Update

BLM Alaska Fire Service  
P.O. Box 35005 1541 Gaffney Road, Fairbanks AK 99703-0005  
Tel: 907-356-6500 [www.akfireinfo.com](http://www.akfireinfo.com)  
**Contact: Beth Ipsen, eipsen@blm.gov; (907)388-2159**

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## Smokejumpers Quickly Take Care of New Fire Near Fort Yukon

**(Fairbanks, Alaska)** – Twelve smokejumpers are mopping up a lightning-caused fire after it was spotted about 13 miles north of Fort Yukon Wednesday night. The **Faith Fire (#336)** was reported by a passing aviator. BLM Alaska Fire Service smokejumpers mobilized for the 2.5-acre fire and were able to knock it down Wednesday night. They have plans to have work wrapped up today and demobilize from the fire tomorrow.

All three staffed fires in Alaska fall within northeaster Interior, with the possibility of more popping up as the northeastern Interior due to forecasted lightning and strong gusty winds associated with thunderstorms near the Yukon River corridor.

The BLM Alaska Fire Service Midnight Sun Hotshots constructed a saw line and set up a system of water hoses around a Native allotment to protect it from the **Sheenjek River Fire (#296)** burning about 46 miles north of Fort Yukon. While other fires throughout Alaska remain dormant, the Sheenjek River Fire recently came to life and grew substantially over the past few days, causing smoke to drift into Venetie about 37 miles to the west and then into Fort Yukon Wednesday night.

When BLM AFS personnel checked on the Sheenjek River July 4, it was reported at 214 acres and was smoldering and creeping. That changed over the weekend when the fire took off and has since grown to an estimated 2,549 acres. The lightning-caused fire is burning in black spruce, brush and tundra within the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge since it was discovered on June 23. Because it is burning in a limited management option area and was not immediately threatening any known structures or allotments, it was placed in monitor status and allowed to function in its normal ecological role. That recently changed now that it is within about 8 miles of a Native allotment. The crew mobilized through Fort Yukon on its way to the fire and are setting protective measures for the large allotment to the west of the fire.

Meanwhile, the **Isom Creek Fire (#187)** burning southeast of the Dalton Highway Yukon River Crossing, has 25 firefighters including the BLM AFS North Star Crew checking for hotspots along the eastern perimeter of the 12,139-acre fire. This fire had as many as 300 people working to contain this fire. This fire remains contained along the highway to the west, the Yukon River to the north and the southern edge.

As of today, an estimated 173,685 acres have burned in 296 reported fires across Alaska. The Yukon Flats remains the hottest and driest area of the state and has the most potential for continued fire activity.

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