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### CURRENT STATISTICS

Fires to-date: 150  
Human-caused: 134  
Lightning-caused: 16  
Hectares Burned: 1197

### BANS AND PROHIBITIONS

**Campfire:** No prohibition in Haida Gwaii, prohibited in all other areas of the Coastal Fire Centre

**Category 2:** In Effect

**Category 3:** In Effect

**Forest Use Restrictions:** No Ban

[Prohibitions section of bcwildfire.ca for full details.](https://bcwildfire.ca/prohibitions)

## Fire Centre Update

### Dry conditions with potential lightning in the forecast

Coastal Fire Centre personnel are bracing for what could be a busy August long weekend. Conditions remain hot and very dry with no precipitation being received in over 40 days. This weekend, unseasonably hot weather is forecast with temperatures eight to ten degrees above normal for this time of year, as well as a risk of lightning from Friday night through to Sunday.

Environment Canada has issued a Heat Warning that includes large portions of the Coastal Fire Centre. For more information go to: [https://weather.gc.ca/warnings/index\\_e.html?prov=bc](https://weather.gc.ca/warnings/index_e.html?prov=bc).

Currently in the Coastal Fire Centre, all open fire is prohibited with the exception being that campfires are now allowed in Haida Gwaii. Haida

Gwaii has received some showers and temperatures have been moderated by low, marine cloud in the area. The prohibitions in place are for campfires, Category 2 and 3 open fire throughout the fire centre with the one exception noted above.

The BC Conservation Officer Service will be out in full force, having increased the number of officers patrolling for people with illegal fires. When they find illegal burning, Conservation Officers are immediately issuing fines for \$1,150. It is up to their discretion, but fines are not confined to one fine per fire but can be levied against every person attending that campfire or bonfire.

Due to the extreme fire danger, the Coastal Fire Centre is asking everyone to abide by the prohibitions, report any fires quickly and to use the reporting lines available to you (reporting information on back page).



## Day in the Life of an Air Attack Officer

### No two days are the same

Those who fly for the BC Wildfire Service have some of the most visible jobs in the organization. Whether training or actioning a fire they can be seen, and heard, for kilometres.

For Jeff Austin it may be just another day on the job, but the excitement has yet to wear off after 28 years in the air.

Forty-three years ago, Austin started as a crew member with two boots planted firmly on the fireline. Fifteen years into his BC Wildfire Service career, he was drawn towards the excitement of flying due to his experiences in helicopters at work.

One flight through a tight canyon sparked his interest.

“My coworker was puking in the back seat, and I had a very large grin on my face in the front seat. I was realizing that this flying stuff is a lot of fun. That was my first flight in a helicopter and I was hooked after that.

“I also wanted to make the transition because I realized if I learned the air attack role it would make me a better firefighter on the ground,” he said.

“Of course, adrenaline is very addictive and flying in fast airplanes around the province and seeing different countries, different states, other places and



Jeff Austin, Air Attack Officer with BC Wildfire Service.

being exposed to a lot of fire. It’s very addictive. I do both now.”

For Austin, doing both means taking part in an Incident Management Team in addition to his work as an air attack officer.

As an officer he works with a pilot, flying side by side in a bird dog, a small but powerful airplane, to assess proposed airtanker runs and assess airtanker drops for accuracy.



Turbo Commander 1000 is the best bird dog aircraft, according to Air Attack Officer, Jeff Austin.

While no two days are the same, an air attack officer's regular tasks include monitoring weather, staying up to date on fire activity, inspecting their aircraft, daily briefings and of course being deployed to fires.

The plane Austin flies in is a Turbo Commander 1000.

"In my estimation it is the best bird dog aircraft we've ever had...lots of power, it's quite comfortable, it's very fast, has good duration, holds lots of fuel, has

very good visibility, it flies very fast (350 mph), or it flies very slow, it is an all-around beautiful aircraft.

"The air attack officer is ultimately responsible for the fire attack plan, doing most of the communications to ground crews, headquarters, fire departments, the provincial airtanker centre, back to the fire centre and crew leader or incident commander on the ground."

It's that direct involvement with fire that Austin said brings him satisfaction on the job.

***"That direct control you have on the outcome of the fire by using retardant with air tankers, you affect control of the fire so much faster than you can from the ground. You see the fruits of your labour very fast. It's a very fast moving, dynamic, adrenaline filled environment and that is addictive."***

In addition to the fulfilment from working on a fire, Austin said stunning views from the cockpit are indescribable.

"This province is so amazing. If you end up on a bluebird day flight from Dease Lake down to Abbotsford down the spine of the Coast Range, it is an absolutely mind-boggling flight it is so beautiful. I know airtanker pilots have got 20,000 plus hours and they still can't get the grin off their face. That flight is something to behold."

# Support from all over added fuel to firefighting efforts

Over 350 fires burned in Kamloops Fire Centre, over 1,100 across BC in 2021 so far



BC Premier John Horgan and Ministers Katrine Conroy and Mike Farnworth travelled to the Provincial Wildfire Coordination Centre.



The Provincial Wildfire Coordination Centre welcomed representatives of the First Nations



Firefighters from New Brunswick



Water-skimmer aircraft—Air Tractor AT-802F—provide critical prepare to support crews on the ground.



BC Premier John Horgan boards a helicopter at the PWCC.



Firefighting crews from New Brunswick arrive in Kamloops. More than 3,000 firefighters and support staff are on the fire lines, including crews from Alberta, New Brunswick and Quebec—with more on the way.



La Société de protection des forêts contre le feu (SOPFEU) arrived from Quebec to support

## Partnerships and Teamwork Key to Success in Research and Innovation

The BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) Research and Innovation team has been working to improve and modernize all aspects of the organization. The priorities and objectives of the team are reflective of the organization's commitment to wildfire management and the ongoing shift towards becoming a multidisciplinary organization dedicated to the all-hazards response.

The success of much of the work is based on collaboration and relationships with local, national and international partners. Research and innovation staff work as liaisons between the academic and the operational worlds of wildland firefighting. They also work closely with crews and other response staff to understand the challenges firefighters face and collaborate with researchers and academics to find creative and innovative solutions.

When the team was developed in 2018, four main areas of focus were established according to organizational needs: health, safety and well-being of staff, wildland fire science, equipment and technology research and social and behavioural science.

Currently underway is a collaboration with UNBC and Canada Wildfire to develop a five-year worker health research strategy based on research review,

consultation with experts and stakeholder engagement. In addition, the development of a psychosocial health program for all BC Wildfire Service staff is underway. The BC Wildfire Service has also partnered with FP Innovations, a Canadian non-profit research and development organization dedicated to supporting the Canadian forest sector. Establishing the partnership was a catalyst for several ongoing equipment and technology studies. A total of twenty-seven projects are planned, five have been completed, two are in the proposal stage, and the remainder are planned or underway. Completed projects include the BC Wildfire Service Mobile App, which launched in 2020, testing and acquisition of infrared smartphone camera technology, and the assessment of resistance to wildfire damage to bridges on forest service roads.

BCWS recognizes that to continue being a world leader in wildfire management and fulfilling our commitment to the people of British Columbia, we need to continually assess and improve our practices. The development of the research and innovation team and its work exemplifies the prioritization of development and continual improvement of our practices and operations.

## Fire Weather Forecast

**Issued: 12:00 PDT Friday 30 July 2021.**

**SYNOPSIS:** A strong ridge of high pressure continues to drive temperatures upwards and humidities downwards. The heatwave us underway and will persist until Sunday with afternoon highs reaching the high 30's inland and low 30's by the coast. Fuels and fire weather indices continue to rise steadily with most inland areas now under Fire Behavior Advisories. Winds remain light inflow, up-valley, and upslope. The upper flow shifts to the south this afternoon opening the door to convection from the South. Manning Park has a risk of thunderstorms this afternoon. The risk of thunderstorms extends to the South Island, Gulf Islands, Sea to Sky Corridor and eastwards overnight tonight. Showers will be limited to non-existent so the majority of lightning will be dry. The atmosphere remains unstable over the South Coast through the weekend maintaining the risk of additional thunderstorms. Sunday's storms would likely be accompanied by some rain for eastern portions of the Pemberton & Fraser zones. High level smoke from US fires is also likely on Saturday.

**OUTLOOK:** An upper low tracks from Washington into the South Coast on Sunday spreading cloud, stronger inflow and an ongoing chance of showers and thunderstorms. Temperatures will begin to ease but remain above seasonal while RH will be trending upwards. Temperatures fall further to near seasonal values on Monday as the onshore flow deepens and a marine air mass takes hold. Showers return to the North Island and Mid Coast by midweek with the potential to extend further south by week's end.

**6 TO 10 DAY:** (next week) A large-scale trough off the Coast will support cloudier and near to slightly below seasonal conditions next week. Whether the precipitation accompanying the trough manages to reach the South Coast remains to be seen.

### Reporting Violations

As I am sure everyone is well aware the fire danger is continuing to climb due to the lack of precipitation and the ongoing drying of forest fuels. Many citizens are concerned when they see violations occur and have been using the Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) line to report their concerns. The RAPP line is continuing to take reports and disseminate them to the appropriate responding agencies but have noted a substantial increase in reporting. One way to help these agencies deal with the call volumes is to:

- 1) Fill out an online form rather than phoning when reporting a campfire violation at: [Report All Poachers and Polluters \(RAPP\) – Environmental Protection & Sustainability Forms \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hen/nrv/report.htm) or call 1-877-952-7277 (or #7277 on a cellphone). This helps the Conservation Officer Service determine if there are any locations or patterns they need to target when patrolling.
- 2) Report all other natural resource violations (Category 2 and 3 open fire use and high risk activities): online form <https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hen/nrv/report.htm>. This will go directly to Compliance and Enforcement who are mandated to investigate and charge specific violations.

**We thank everyone for their ongoing support!**

## Contact Information

**Report a Wildfire: \*5555 on a cell or 1 800 663-5555**

**Wildfire Information Line: 1 888 3FOREST**

**Burn Registration Number: 1 888 797-1717**

**Information Officer Phone Number: 250-951-4209**

**Information Officer Email:**

**[BCWS.CoFCInformationOfficer@gov.bc.ca](mailto:BCWS.CoFCInformationOfficer@gov.bc.ca)**