



## Coffee Brief

**Date: August 15, 2023**

### Preparedness Levels & Alaska Fire Activity

Alaska	3
National	3

<p>Light Initial Attack Activity</p> <p>New Fires and Acres: 2 fires for 4.1 acres</p>
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There are currently 9 staffed fires with 1,014 personnel. Yesterday's large fire growth was ~8,450 acres

Sources: National and AICC Situation Report, AICC Aircraft Logs

### Resources

Aviation within Alaska	Total
Air Tactical	1
ASM	1
BirdDog	4
Lats	5
FireBosses	4
Scoopers	2
SMKJ	3
Utility AC	4
Helicopter, Type 1	1
Helicopter, Type 2	9
Helicopter, Type 3	5
<b>Total Aircraft</b>	<b>39</b>

Crews Committed within Alaska	
Type2IA	
Type 1	9
Type 2	21
Type 1 Module	
Type 2 Module	
Suppression Module	4
<b>Total Crews</b>	<b>34</b>

Incident Mangement Teams in Alaska	
CIMT	
IMT 1	
IMT 2	2
IMT 3	1
<b>Total IMTs</b>	<b>3</b>

## **AVIATION**

- **#191(DAS):** AA-7MZ, BD-135, FB-211/214/216/218, S-261/262, T-542 & T-544 responded. J-92 responded w/ 6 SMKJs in one area and 4 SMKJs in another area for structure pro.
- **AFS Aviation Drawdown Meeting tomorrow, 8/16.**
- **Red flag military exercises ongoing through 8/25.**

## **AIRSPACE/TFRs**

- **#201/290(FAS):** 3/3351
- **#257(FAS):** 3/5014
- **#296(FAS):** 3/0799
- **#191(DAS):** 3/3212
- **#299(DAS):** 3/3110

## **SMOKEJUMPERS**

Anticipated smokejumpers available: ~14  
SMKJ's committed: 13

- 8 SMKJ booster orders for AK to Boise, Needed date 8/17.

## **Smokejumper Demobilizations**

Yesterday:

Planned for today:

- **#201(FAS):** 3

## CREWS

- Gannett Glacier available today, 8/15.
- Yukon crew projected availability tomorrow, 8/16.

Crew	Incident	C #	Status	Mob	Length	Demob
Chena IHC	191 – Pogo Mine Road	C-4	At Incident	8/14	14	8/29
Midnight Sun IHC	296 - Lost Horse	C-13	At Incident	8/12	14	8/26
Pioneer Peak IHC	296 - Lost Horse	C-10	At incident	8/11	14	8/25

## NICC JET MOVEMENT

### Jet #1

Crew	Incident	C #	Status	Mob	Length	Demob	Extension Approved
Union IHC	201 - McCoy Creek	C-1	At Incident	7/30	21	8/20	Yes
Lassen IHC	296 - Lost Horse Creek	C-8	At Incident	7/30	21	8/20	Yes
Shasta IHC	257 - Teklanika	C-3	At Incident	7/30	21	8/20	Yes

### Jet #2

Crew	Incident	C #	Status	Mob	*Length	*Demob
WY East Wildlands T2C258	296 - Lost Horse Creek	C-6	At Incident	8/6	14	8/23
Franco Reforestation T2C052	257 - Anderson	C-7	At Incident	8/6	14	8/23
N. Pacifico Reforestation T2C521	201 - McCoy	C-8	At Incident	8/6	14	8/23
North Pacific T2C157	191 - Pogo Mine Rd	C-9	At Incident	8/6	14	8/23
Willamette Val Reforestation T2C567	261 - Sand Lake	C-10	At Incident	8/6	14	8/23

\* TBD per extension process and needs.

### Jet #3

Crew	Incident	C #	Status	Mob	*Length	*Demob
CRW2 - T2C247 West Coast Reforestation	201 - McCoy Creek	C-10	At Incident	8/8	14	8/25
CRW2 - T2C062 Franco Reforestation	296 - Lost Horse Creek	C-9	At Incident	8/8	14	8/25
CRW2 - T2C063 Franco Reforestation	257 - Teklanika	C-15	At Incident	8/8	14	8/25
CRW2 - T2C064 Franco Reforestation	299 - Mount Hayes	C-1	At Incident	8/8	14	8/25
CRW2 - T2C248 West Coast Reforestation	296 - Lost Horse Creek	C-7	At Incident	8/8	14	8/25

\* TBD per extension process and needs.

### Jet #4

Crew	Incident	C #	Status	Mob	*Length	*Demob
Texas Canyon IHC	261 – Sand Lake	C-6	At Incident	8/12	14	8/27
Arroyo Grande IHC	191 - Pogo Mine Rd	C-3	At Incident	8/12	14	8/27
Sierra IHC	299 - Mount Hayes	C-10	At Incident	8/12	14	8/27

\* TBD per extension process and needs

### OVERHEAD/TEAMS

- 15 pending overhead requests.

TEAM	INCIDENT	O#	IC	Status	Current Location	Mob	Duration	LWD	Extension
IMT2 GB Team 3	Teklanika River	O-1	Brett Waters	At Incident	Anderson, AK	7/31	21	8/20	Yes
IMT2 AK Green	Lost Horse Creek	O-2	Peter Butteri	At Incident	Fairbanks, AK	8/4	14	8/18	
IMT3 - Local ad hoc AK	Pogo Mine Road/ Mt Hayes	n/a	Casey Boespflug	At Incident	Delta, AK	8/9	14	8/23	

Source: IROC Reports, [National Smokejumper Status Report](#), AK Incident Aircraft Tracking Spreadsheet & AICC Documentation, 2023 IMT Tracking Report

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## Weather Summary

The high pressure over northwest Alaska is weakening, and temperatures across the Interior will decrease. Warmest conditions will be in the eastern and central Interior with low 70s. Temperatures will continue to trend downward this week, so that by Thursday, most areas will not break out of the 60s. Relative humidities will be moderate, generally greater than 40% in most areas, with the exception being the Tanana Valley, with some stations reaching to near 30%. Winds remain light, though some gap winds north of the Alaska Range could be problematic for small areas of the southern Interior.

There is the chance for thunderstorms across much of the Interior for the next few days, though strike counts will be considerably diminished from earlier this week. These storms are expected to be wet.

The long-range forecast shows little change in the overall pattern through mid-week. Cool and wet weather will dominate southern Alaska while the northern Interior will remain fairly warm and dry. Thunderstorm activity will remain present, but low. Towards the end of the week, a westerly flow sets up, increasing the chances for rain across the Interior. The desired season-ending Southwest Flow regime still appears to be a bit elusive for now, but the pattern will be shifting ever-closer by next weekend.

*Source: Alaska 7-Day Outlook*

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## Fuels/Fire Potential

Fires continue to show little growth, though isolated activity within fire perimeters has been observed. This is telling of the rest of the fire season, as it is unlikely fire activity will increase much with the cooler and wetter weather forecast for the Interior by the second half of the week.

Though gusty winds in the Alaska Range continue this morning, the area of impact is minimal.

The challenge for the rest of the season comes in that the deepest duff layers are extremely dry in the eastern Interior. The Drought Code (DC) represents these fuel layers and discloses that resistance to extinguishment is Very High. The upper and middle layers of duff are represented by Duff Moisture Code (DMC), and those values only show a few areas in the eastern Interior with Very High or Extreme values, indicating resistance to control is limited. So, though fires may be more easily controlled from here forward, they will likely continue to burn in the deep layers until the snow flies, or substantial wetting rains penetrate those deepest layers. In addition, these fires may overwinter and lend early action to next year's fire season.

*Source: Alaska 7-Day Outlook*

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Fuels Status [Alaska Fire and Fuels Map](#)

**A Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory was Issued 8/04/23**

## Fuels and Fire Behavior Advisory

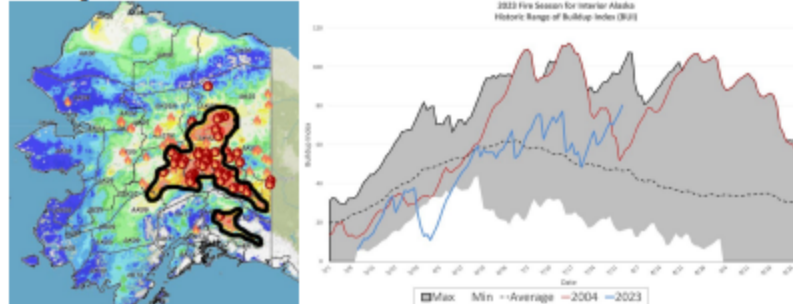
### Central Interior, Eastern Interior and Copper River Basin

Valid: August 4 – August 18, 2023

**Subject:** Exceptional landscape flammability and widespread ongoing large fire growth.

**Discussion:** The Buildup Index (BUI) is the best indicator of seasonal severity and overall flammability of fuels in Alaska. It represents deeper drying in the duff layers and greater fuel availability. Large fire growth typically occurs from mid-June to mid-July when long days and rapid drying can produce elevated BUIs. The delayed onset of season-ending rains has resulted in BUI far above average for this time of year. There are already numerous fires near core population areas. New starts continue to be discovered in these areas and are resistant to containment.

**Difference from normal conditions:** The attached graph shows the current 2023 BUI trend for the Interior of Alaska compared to other busy fire seasons. This fire season started below average, but July was abnormally dry and the last week of July saw high temperatures with numerous lightning ignitions. While most seasons have seen wetting rains by this time, BUI remains elevated with no significant precipitation expected for this area in the forecast period. Multiple days of wetting rain adding up to more than one inch will be needed for lasting relief.



#### Concerns to Firefighters and the Public:

- Spruce stands are extremely flammable, will ignite readily, may exhibit rates of spread more than one mile per hour, spot prolifically up to ¼ mile or more, and exhibit intense crown fire behavior.
- Temperatures above 80 degrees and RH at or below 30% are important thresholds for rapid spread and crown fire behavior. Strong winds are not required for large fire growth in these conditions but forecast for the area includes sustained strong winds.
- Long-term drying has stressed green fuels may allow spread into riparian areas and less flammable hardwood forests. With continued drying, these fuel types may no longer be barriers to fire spread.

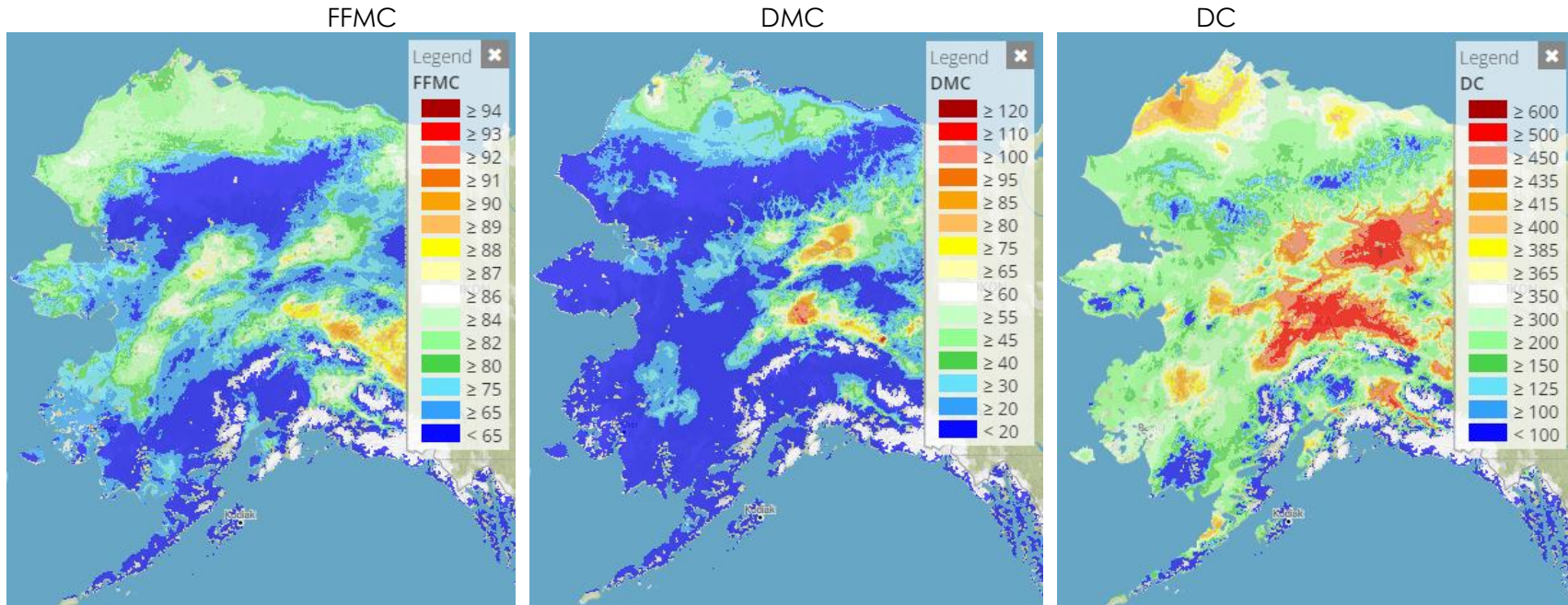
#### Mitigation Measures:

- Understand the triggers and thresholds for problem fire behavior.
- Monitor forecasts and indices to anticipate areas of increased flammability and extreme fire behavior.
- Maintain clear communications when working around active fires.

**Area of Concern:** Central and Eastern Interior to include the Yukon Flats, Tanana Valley and Copper River Basin.

**Issued By:** Alaska Interagency Coordination Center Predictive Services

Click on the following images for direct links to the maps.



**When encountering a mismatch between a point value based on actual weather observations and the background grid, please discount the grid and go with the points.**

For additional fuels information visit <https://akff.mesowest.org/>

Sources: AICC Predictive Services – Fuels/Fire Danger web page, Alaska Fire & Fuels web page

The Coffee Brief is posted at PLs 4 and 5 only.

