



## **The Paskwa Fire (HWF030) | May 16, 2023, as of 9am**

The Paskwa fire is located in the community of Fox Lake and was detected on May 2, 2023. This fire is classified as Out of Control (OC) and the last recorded size is 39,179 hectares. The fire is approximately 4km from the Wood Buffalo National Park boundary and 13km from the community of Garden River.

As expected, the fire grew overnight driven by strong gusting winds brought by the passing cold front. Wind direction was more northerly than forecast and as a result fire growth was primarily to the south and not southeast. The most active area of the fire continues to be on the southeast side between Deep Lake and Fighting Lake. The fire remains outside of Wood Buffalo National Park and has not made movement towards the community of Garden River.

Today, work will continue on the indirect control lines near the community of Garden River. A retardant line is being established west of community, just east of the park boundary and inside the trigger line for evacuation order. This line would be reinforced through backburning operations to remove forest fuels between the retardant line and the northeast perimeter of the fire should the fire advance toward the community later this week.

The Incident Management Team is looking at potential to proactively perform this backburn taking advantage of forecast east winds pushing fire away from community. As any ignition in this area would be past the trigger line, the team will be working with the community on any temporary evacuation plans that might be required. If proactively done, the evacuation could be limited to the burn day and potentially overnight.

The Structure Protection Group will be working in the community to finalize the installation of sprinklers and continue on other structure protection measures including the creation of control lines and removal of fuel buildup near structures.

Winds will continue blowing from the northeast throughout the day and will drive fire activity and movement. This may be visible from the community of Garden River, but any fire growth is forecast to be away from the community and along the southeast edge of the fire.

Fire crews will be assessing the overnight fire growth this morning and will revise their control tactics and plans as needed.

Work in the community of Fox Lake to create safe conditions to allow for re-entry, beginning with temporary access and escorted community visits is ongoing. Crews are working to create an extinguished perimeter of approximately 30 metres around every structure. ATCO crews are also working in the community to remove and replace damaged power poles and lines.

The evacuation trigger point has been revised in anticipation of the southeast edge of the fire reaching the boundary of Wood Buffalo National Park in the next 24 hours. The revised trigger point has been extended into Wood Buffalo National Park at a distance of approximately 15km around the community of Garden River. The fire has potential to enter the park outside of this trigger in the next 24 hours.



A large format map that includes an up-to-date fire perimeter and revised trigger point will be put up at the school in Garden River. Another map will be put up in the community of John D'Or as well.

There are 79 firefighters, 9 helicopters, and heavy equipment working on the Paskwa fire. Air tanker support is available as requested.

Little Red River Cree Nation has an evacuation order in place for the community of Fox Lake. The community of Garden River is on an evacuation alert. For information regarding the evacuation, please stay informed by visiting the Little Red River Cree Nation's Facebook page.

The Incident Management Team will continue to coordinate with the Wood Buffalo National Park management team as the fire moves towards the park boundary. Once the fire crosses the boundary, a unified incident command will be implemented to manage the fire.

### **Weather Forecast | Paskwa Fire (HWF030)**

The Incident Management Team has a dedicated Fire Behaviour Analyst and therefore the weather briefing will be fire area specific. Hot and dry conditions continue with no significant rain in the forecast. Today the forecast is as follows, a temperature in the low 20 degrees and a relative humidity of 30 percent. Northeast winds of 15-20 km/h will continue throughout the day, with gusts of up to 40km. Wind-driven fire growth is expected to be away from the community of Garden River towards the southeast.

### **Where can I find more information about the wildfires?**

Current information on wildfires can be found:

- [Wildfire.alberta.ca](https://wildfire.alberta.ca)
- Download the Alberta Wildfire Status App [https://open.alberta.ca/blog/?page\\_id=206](https://open.alberta.ca/blog/?page_id=206)
- High Level Forest Area Updates: <https://srd.web.alberta.ca/high-level-area-update>
- Follow Alberta Wildfire on Facebook, twitter and Instagram.

### **To Report a wildfire call 310-FIRE (3473)**



Fire activity on the southeast perimeter of the Paskwa Fire near Deep Lake on May 15, 2023