



The Paskwa Fire (HWF030) | May 29, 2023, at 10:00 AM

Yesterday, winds picked up in the afternoon leading to extreme fire behaviour on parts of the fire. Similar weather and fire conditions are expected over the next few days.

The Paskwa Fire is most active along the eastern perimeter. Yesterday afternoon, gusting west winds and dry conditions led to extreme fire behaviour in the northeast part of the fire. The fire traveled at least 4 km (2.5 miles) east. Four heavy helicopters bucketed throughout the afternoon to slow fire spread in the northeast.

As the fire moves east, the priority is to maintain the northern perimeter to protect the community of Garden River. Yesterday, a plan to ignite an additional area on the northeastern edge of the fire was discussed with members of the community. This would remove fuel ahead of the fire to limit it from moving north and across the Peace River. Fire specialists will assess the fire and weather conditions, to determine if ignition is an option for today. A structural protection plan was also presented to community members. Crews will begin to install high power sprinkler systems in the community of Garden River today. Smoke will continue to affect Garden River and air quality is currently poor.

In Fox Lake, work continues to assess and remove danger trees, and to extinguish 76m (250 ft) perimeters around all structures in the community. Yesterday afternoon, danger tree work had to stop as gusting winds posed a risk to crews falling trees. There are still many hot spots throughout the community, often burning deep in the ground. Due to the continued dry conditions, smoke is being seen from these hotspots. With those and other fire-related dangers, the area is still not safe for residents to return. The Incident Management Team is working closely with Little Red River Cree Nations' Chief and Council, and the Alberta Emergency Management Association to maintain a safe route for residents to have escorted visits to the community in the coming days.

A top priority is keeping the Paskwa Fire south of the Peace River. Fire crews continue to monitor for fire activity along the Peace River and respond with ground crews and helicopter support as required. Yesterday, helicopters responded to several hot spots along the south side of the river.

Crews continue work along the southwest perimeter, extending the fire guard by extinguishing an area 30m (100 ft) wide along the line to prevent fire spread.

There are currently 168 personnel supporting the Paskwa Fire response including wildland and structural firefighters, incident management staff, and Paskwa Fire Base support staff, as well as 11 helicopters and heavy equipment dedicated to the Paskwa fire.

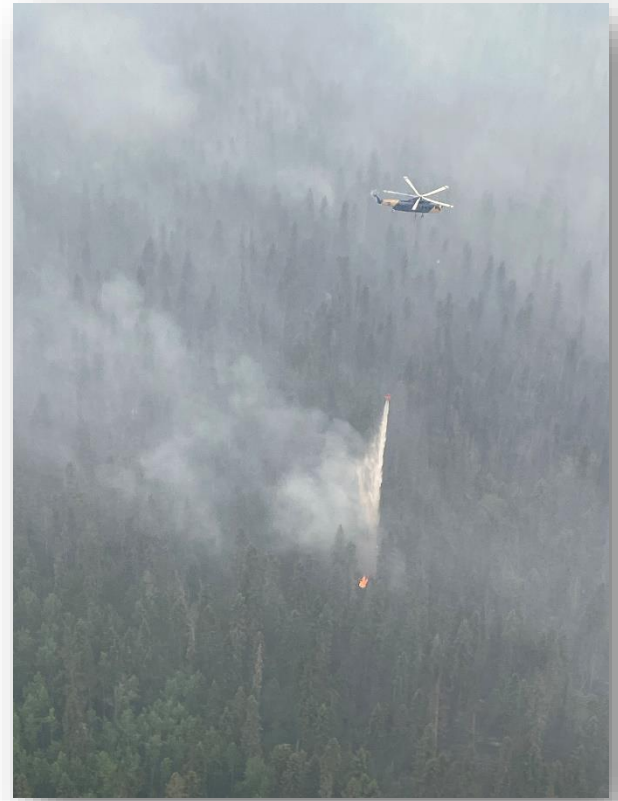


Photo: Helicopter bucketing, K. Dwyer



Evacuation alerts and orders

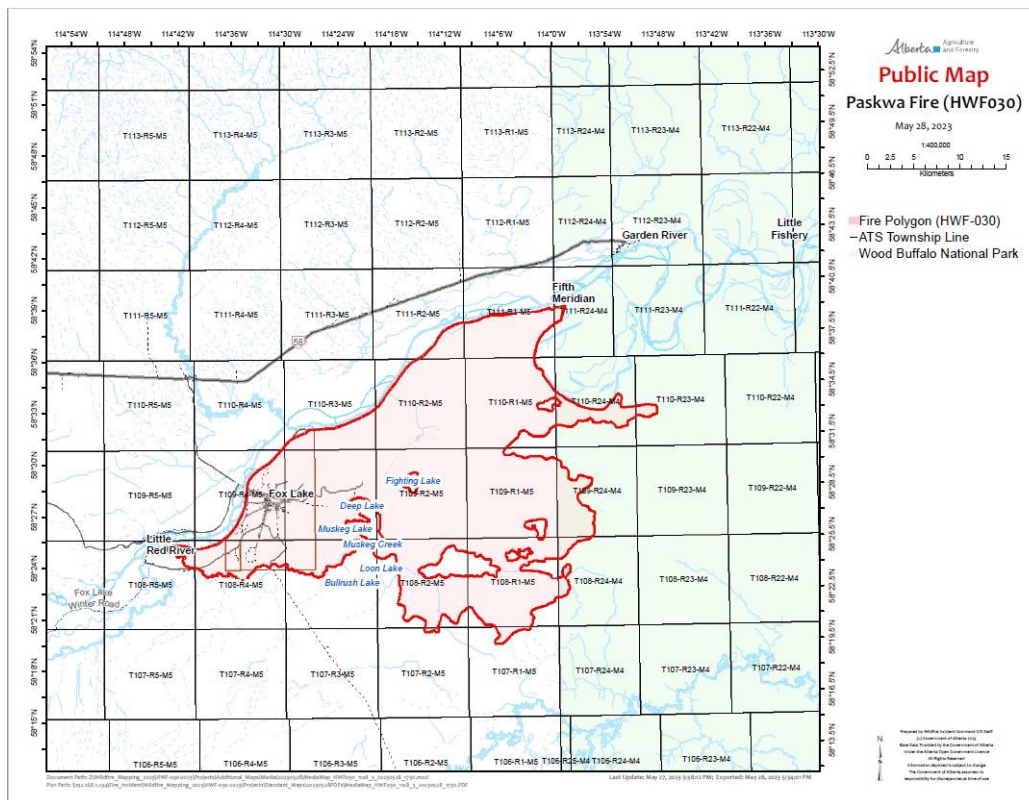
- Currently, Garden River remains on evacuation alert.
- Little Red River Cree Nation has an evacuation order in place for the community of Fox Lake.
- For evacuation information, please visit the Little Red River Cree Nation's Facebook page.

Background

The Paskwa fire was detected on May 2, 2023, in the community of Fox Lake. As of May 28, the fire is estimated at 78,774 hectares (787.74 km²). This fire is classified as Out of Control (OC).

Weather Forecast | Paskwa Fire (HWF030)

Temperatures are expected in the mid-20s in degrees Celsius (around 75°F) today with low humidity. Winds expected to west 20 to 25 km/hr with potential gusts up to 35-55 km/hr this afternoon. There is a low probability of isolated showers or thundershowers with no significant precipitation forecast.



Current information on wildfires in Alberta can be found:

- Wildfire.alberta.ca
- Download the Alberta Wildfire Status App 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)