

DOF Daily WildFire Update

June 30, 2021

2021 Alaska Wildland Fire Numbers

As of Wednesday, June 30



- Number of wildfires to date: 270
- Estimated acres burned statewide to date: 73,401
- New fires yesterday: 0
- Current active fires: 58
- Current number of staffed fires: 4
- Personnel assigned to fires: 296
- Human-caused fires to date: 174
- Lightning-caused fires to date: 81
- Natural-caused fires to date: 5
- Undetermined fire causes to date: 10

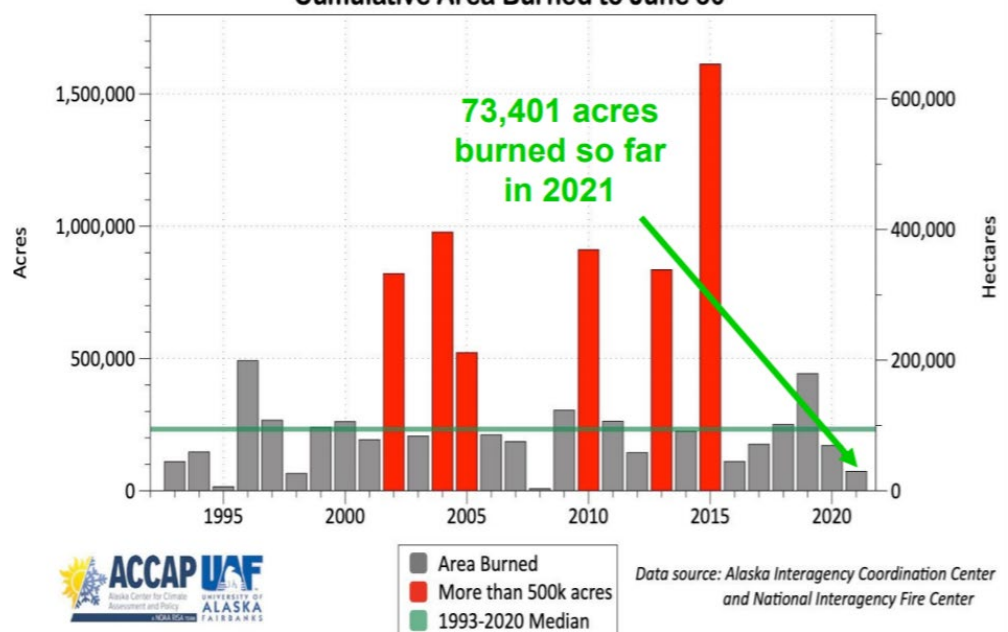


Alaska Division of Forestry wildland fire investigator Don Anderson at the Brock Road Fire. Dan Govoni/Division of Forestry.

Wildfire activity

- For the second straight day, no new fires were reported anywhere in the state yesterday.
- As of June 30, wildfires have burned 73,401 acres in Alaska this season. That's the lowest burned acreage total for that date since 2008, when only 8,143 acres had burned by June 30 (see graph at right). For the season in 2008, a total of 103,694 acres burned.
- The Alaska Type 2 Black Incident Management Team that has been managing the Haystack Fire north of Fairbanks will turn the

Alaska Wildfire, 1993-2021
Cumulative Area Burned to June 30



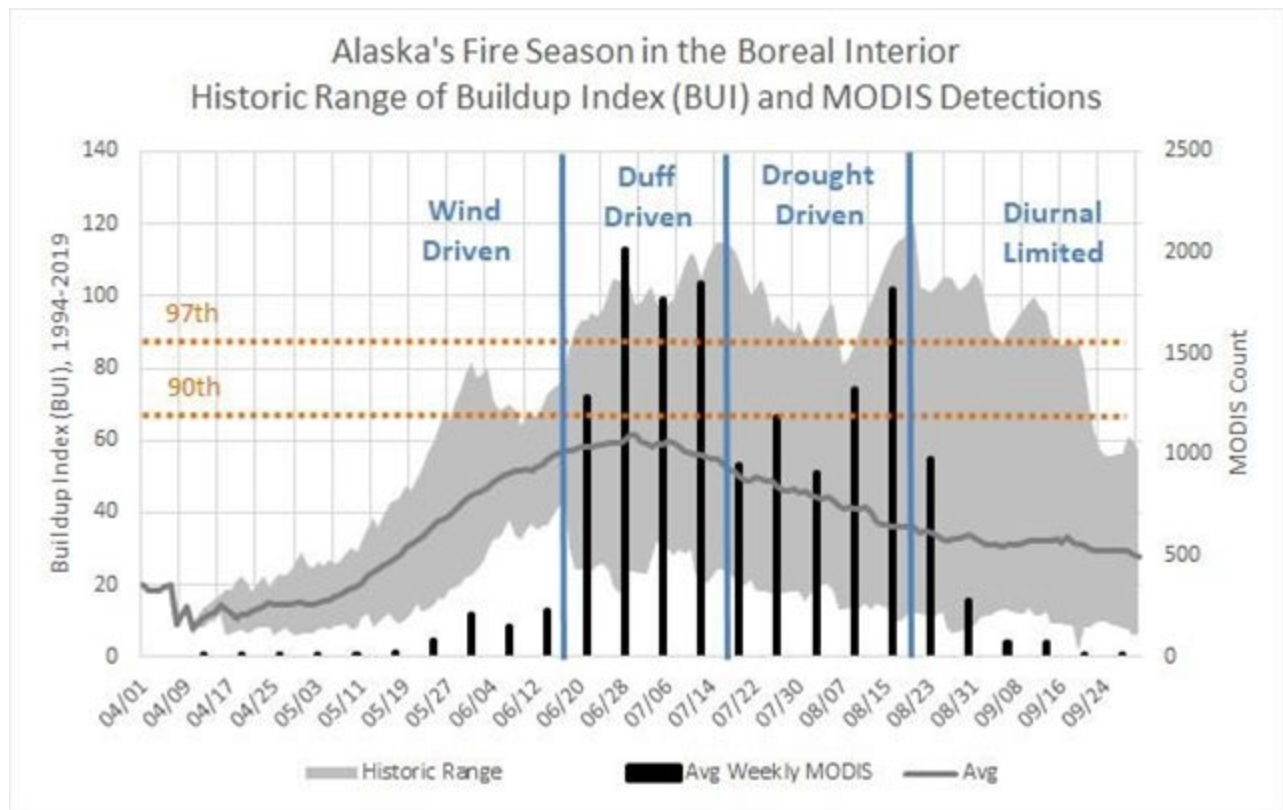
fire back to Fairbanks Area Forestry on Thursday morning. The fire is 100% contained and Fairbanks Area Forestry will monitor the fire from the ground and air.

Weather

- It was another quiet day for thunder and lightning on Tuesday, with only a handful of lightning strikes detected in Alaska. There is no significant lightning in the forecast for the foreseeable future.
- A high-pressure system will drive temperatures up in the Interior the next few days, with highs in the low 80s expected in the Interior on Thursday and Friday. Conditions will be slightly cooler in Southwest and Southcentral. A low-pressure system is forecast to move into the Interior this weekend, bringing gusty winds through Alaska Range passes that could produce a Red Flag Warning on Friday. The new weather system should result in cooler temperatures over the weekend with a chance of wetting rain

Fire danger/potential

- The main area of wildfire concern in Alaska remains the central and eastern Interior and Upper Yukon Flats. Those areas have experienced a long stretch of hot, dry and windy weather that continues to dry out the deeper fuels that make wildfires more resistant to control. Both the Build-Up Index and Duff Moisture Code, which are indicators of deeper drying, are increasing in those areas.
- With the Fourth of July weekend coming up and no significant lightning activity in the forecast, the main focus for DOF Areas is human-caused fires over the long, holiday weekend. The DOF information office will be messaging fire safety over the weekend pertaining to fireworks and other human-caused ignition sources.
- Alaska fire managers will be meeting next week to discuss the annual conversion of Modified protection areas to Limited protection areas. Alaska's conversion date is July 10 but that date may be pushed back based on fire danger and fire activity.
- The Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group will meet on July 7 to consider converting some lands that are in Modified protection status to Limited protection. Conversion date in Alaska is typically July 10 – though it can be pushed back depending on fire activity and potential - and is a sign that the Alaska fire season has reached its peak and the potential for large wildfires is declining. In preparation for the AWFCG meeting on July 7 to discuss conversion date in Alaska, DOF Area fire management officers will be reaching out to their respective jurisdictional representatives to discuss any concerns they may have with conversion. As part of the conversion date discussion/decision, Alaska Interagency Coordination Center Fire Behavior Analyst Chris Moore and AICC fire weather staff will be presenting a seasonal briefing on July 6 to discuss current and projected fire indices and the long-range fire weather forecast to provide fire managers with the most current science and weather information regarding the potential for future fire activity and large fire growth (see graph below).



Fire Restrictions

- A burn suspension remains in effect for the Fairbanks Area through Friday.

Fire Resources

- There are currently 127 firefighting personnel from the Lower 48 working in Alaska and that number continues to shrink as resources time out and return south.
- The Alaska Interagency Coordination Center has been receiving orders for firefighting personnel to work in the Lower 48. With fire season ongoing in Alaska, any Lower 48 orders are being evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Lower 48

- The National Preparedness Level remains at PL 4 with more than 7,200 firefighting personnel assigned to incidents across the western U.S. There are three Type 1 incident management teams assigned to fires in Arizona and Colorado and 10 Type 2 incident management teams assigned to fires in Arizona, Wyoming, Colorado, California, Montana.
- The Pacific Northwest, Northern Rockies and northern Great Basin remain in the grip of a record-breaking heat wave that is producing record-breaking, triple digit temperatures in northern California, Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The hot, dry weather could lead to new fire starts that could increase competition for resources nationwide.

Brock Road Fire (#294)

Acres: 21

Containment: 90%

Personnel assigned: 57.

Resources assigned: 3 crews – 1 Type 2IA; 2 Type 2.

Location: 8.5 miles SE of Fairbanks

Weather: Continued warm and dry. High temperatures today in the mid 70s with relative humidity's in the low 30% range. Temperatures in the 80s forecast for Thursday and Friday.

- 15% increase in containment over Tuesday.
- Crews have a saw/dozer line and hose line around the entire fire and are working to get water on it to mop up. Crews continue mopping up 50-100 feet inside the perimeter.
- A drone equipped with infrared imagery was used on Tuesday to identify hot spots inside and outside of the perimeter. The flight revealed considerable heat in the interior of the fire but no hot spots were found outside the control line.
- Given the amount of heat identified with the drone flight on Tuesday, crews will have several days of mop up to ensure the fire is fully contained and controlled.
- Fire was human-caused and is under investigation.
- Estimated cost to date is \$177,103.

Haystack Fire (#196)

Acres: 927

Containment: 100%

Personnel assigned: 149.

Resources assigned: 1 Type 1 crews, 1 Type 2 initial attack crews, 2 helicopters, 2 engines, 1 bulldozer, 1 water tender.

Location: 18 miles N of Fairbanks

Weather: Continued warm and dry. High temperatures today in the mid 70s with relative humidities in the low 30% range. Temperatures in the 80s forecast for Thursday and Friday.

- No hot spots have been identified by infrared flights the past two days.
- Alaska Type 2 incident management team will turn fire back over to Fairbanks Area Forestry on Thursday morning and fire will be placed in Monitor status.
- All resources will be demobilized from the fire at the end of shift today.
- The two crews remaining on the fire have walked the last grid lines, constructed waterbars and erosion control measures, prepared tools and equipment for sling loads, cleaned the spike camps, and will demobilize at the end of shift today.
- Helicopters are being used to backhaul pumps, hose and other supplies.

- Containment lines, log decks and helispots will remain in place. A suppression repair plan has been developed but rehabilitation work on containment lines put in for the fire will be done at a later date when fire activity elsewhere diminishes.
- Strong messaging has been used to keep local residents out of the fire area due to post-fire hazards such as snags and ash pits.
- Estimated cost to date is \$3,762,301.

Munson Creek Fire (#235)

Acres: Estimated 329

Containment: 0%

Personnel assigned: 24

Resources assigned: Type 3 incident commander, Yukon Crew, one engine from Fairbanks Area Forestry and one public information officer.

Location: In a Limited protection area 50 miles NE of Fairbanks and 4 miles south of Chena Hot Springs in Chena River State Recreation Area.

Weather: Continued warm and dry. High temperatures today in the mid 70s with relative humidity's in the low 30% range. Temperatures in the 80s forecast for Thursday and Friday.

- Fire moved slightly up the ridge from where it has remained for several days and is creeping toward Chena Hot Springs. It remains 3-4 miles south of Chena Hot Springs.
- Yukon Crew is monitoring the fire and is prepared to protect structures if the fire moves significantly.
- Firefighters have identified previous fire scars where fuels are reduced which will slow the fire's advancement.
- There is potential for growth with hotter, drier temperatures forecast for the next three days, which could mean more visible smoke.
- The Angel Rocks Trail remains open, but Alaska State Parks has closed the Angel Rocks to Chena Hot Springs Trail for public safety. Signs explaining the closure are posted at the Angel Rocks Trailhead and at Chena Hot Springs.
- Fire behavior is described as smoldering and creeping behavior.
- Messaging to the public is that the fire is being allowed to burn to reduce fuels, create a mosaic of different habitat types and reduce future fire danger similar to a natural fire regime.
- Estimated cost of the fire to date is \$74,670.

Fire Information Resources

- www.akfireinfo.com – Word Press blog with daily fire updates and other information
- <https://fire.ak.blm.gov/content/aicc/sitreport/AICC%20Situation%20Report.pdf> – Daily Alaska wildfire situation report from Alaska Interagency Coordination Center with daily rundown of fire activity in Alaska.
- <https://blm-egis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/index.html#/a23a625f4d18412ea13cffeefcbe7f5e> - Alaska Interagency Coordination Center dashboard with all sorts of nifty fire information.

- <https://fire.ak.blm.gov/> - Alaska Interagency Coordination Center
- <https://www.facebook.com/AK.Forestry> - Division of Forestry Facebook page. All info that is posted to akfireinfo is posted here as well, along with other fire information. Info from both DOF and AFS is posted here.
- <https://www.facebook.com/BLMAFS> -BLM Alaska Fire Service Facebook page. All info that is posted to akfireinfo is posted here as well, along with other fire information. Info from both DOF and AFS is posted here.
- <https://www.nifc.gov/nicc/sitreprt.pdf> - Daily national situation report from the National Interagency Coordination Center with a rundown of fire activity in all regions of the United States and Canada.