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Campfire Ban

Campfire Ban is Still in Effect!

Last week's cooler temperatures and light rainfall have caused some people to ask if the campfire ban has been lifted for the Coast. Please be advised that the Coastal Fire Centre has not lifted the campfire ban at this time.

The decision when or where to lift a fire ban is made by regional fire centres, depending on: local fire hazards or dangers; weather conditions and forecasts; and fire activity. In the Coastal Fire Centre, there are currently 174 fires burning, 16 of which were started due to human activity. Prior to implementing the campfire ban, wildfire starts due to abandoned campfires were of significant concern to the Coastal Fire Centre.

The weather forecast for the Coast is for higher than seasonal temperatures until Wednesday, moving to near normal seasonal temperatures with

less than normal rainfall. This forecast is a major consideration in continuing with the fire ban. Lifting a fire ban after a long period of very hot weather, followed by patchy rain, then hot weather again, often results in increased human-caused, campfire related wildfires

It's more important than ever that the public prevent grass and forest fires. In 2009, 2,000 per cent more hectares have burned than the eight year average, and there are still a number of weeks left in the traditional B.C. fire season.

In an effort to reduce human-caused fires we are asking all British Columbians to abide the restrictions, adhere to the voluntary backcountry restrictions and remain vigilant. Please report any smoke or fire to: **1-800-663-5555 or *5555 on your cellular phone.** To see the bans and restrictions which apply to your area please go to: **www.bcwildfire.ca**.

Fines and Enforcement

Despite the current campfire ban, the Coastal Fire Centre continues to get regular reports of abandoned campfires. In the first two weeks of August alone, six abandoned campfires were reported.

Compliance and enforcement personnel are currently enforcing all campfire bans in the Coastal Fire Centre.

There are several areas of the *Wildfire Act* and Regulation where failure to comply may result in a ticket. Fines are as follows:

1. Failure to report a fire: \$115
2. Dropping, releasing, or mishandling a burning substance: \$173
3. Failure to extinguish burning substance: \$173
4. Lighting, fuelling or using fire against restrictions: \$345
5. Failure to comply with a fire restriction: \$345

Airtankers

Airtankers are usually stationed in groups of up to four aircraft with a "bird-dog" (a lead plane carrying an Air Attack Officer), with a combined capacity of up to 15,000 litres, or more than 11,000 litres for heavy single aircraft.

Airtankers do not put out fires. They are a tool that facilitates initial attack on fires that are predicted to or currently are threatening to exceed the capabilities of ground resources. They also support action on large fires where specific attainable objectives are in place, and hold action on fires where a delay in ground forces is anticipated.

In initial attack, airtankers drop fire retardant and/or foam on or near small fires to limit their spread until ground crews arrive to extinguish them.

To assist the action on large fires, airtankers support ground control lines by dropping on guard lines to dampen the area. They also limit the spread of fire through controlled drops on or in front of a portion of a fire, and cool hot spots by dropping above identified areas.

They are pre-positioned for a "one-strike concept" that allows them to hit targets hard, minimizing the need for re-loads.

The B.C. Forest Service air tanker fleet command and control is the responsibility of the Provincial Airtanker Centre located in Kamloops. The B.C. Forest Service has 15 airtankers and eight bird-dogs.

To Date in Coastal

Fires

Person-Caused 159

Lightning-Caused 341

Total Number of Fires Actioned 504

Hectares Burned 6,613

Number of Incidents Responded To This Year 1,524

Fire Danger Rating



Moderate

Be Safe!

Understanding Restrictions

The B.C. Forest Service may impose restrictions to help prevent fires or support active firefighting operations. These restrictions are applied in accordance with the *Wildfire Act* and Regulation.

The B.C. Forest Service typically issues three types of restriction orders: Open Fire Restriction Orders, Restricted Areas Orders and Restricted Activities Orders.

If the B.C. Forest Service considers it necessary or desirable to limit the risk of a fire, or to address a public safety concern, an official, by order for a specific area, may restrict or prohibit the use of open fire. Under the *Wildfire Act*, open fire may include campfires used for cooking and warmth, as well as burning for the disposal of material.

If the B.C. Forest Service considers it necessary or desirable to limit the risk of a fire, to address a public safety concern, or to avoid interference with fire control, a specific area may be restricted for a specified time period.

During this time period, a person must not remain in or enter the area designated by the order.

Exceptions to this may apply where the person obtains the written authorization of an official, enters the area in order to travel to and from his/her residence, or is traveling to or from an operation or activity that has been specifically exempted in the order.

Restricted Area Orders, which may have an impact on tourism and industrial operations, are only applied after serious consideration.

The B.C. Forest Service may prohibit or restrict activities and/or the use of equipment, materials, or substances that may be used in a specified area for a specified period, if it is considered that the activities and/or use are likely to cause or contribute to the spread of a fire.

For more information on restrictions in your area check out the Bans & Restrictions section of www.bcwildfire.ca

Today at Coastal

Fire activity in the Coastal Fire Centre continues to be steady. The following fires have been of recent interest to the public and media.

Camel Back East, V30940 (Pemberton Meadows):
Status: 90 per cent contained; 657.9 hectares in size.
Resources: 43 firefighters, two pieces of heavy machinery, 19 helicopters shared with V30937.

Copper Mountain, V30937 (Pemberton Meadows):
Status: 65 per cent contained; 838.4 hectares.
Resources: 25 firefighters, 19 helicopters shared with V30940.

Heckman Pass, C50396 (Tweedsmuir Provincial Park):
Status: 75 per cent contained; 2,826 hectares.
Resources: 110 firefighters, two helicopters, seven pieces of heavy equipment. Air tankers available if needed. Managed by the Coastal Fire Centre.

Antler Lake, V81061 (Gold River):
Status: 90 per cent contained; 182 hectares.
Resources: 7 firefighters, one helicopter and heavy equipment on west flank.

Weather Forecast

SYNOPSIS — A strong upper ridge is rebuilding, resulting in sunny and considerably warmer weather than last week. The exception is the mid-coast zone where thick clouds will bring cooler and windy conditions. A weak thermal trough is deepening along the Oregon coast and appears to be moving north. It's likely an outflow effect will bring areas of poor humidity recovery mostly along the west coast of Vancouver Island and over the upper inlets. The ridge is expected to continue to grow stronger. Temperatures will respond by climbing another couple of degrees.

OUTLOOK — A surface outflow and strong upper ridge continue to bring hot dry weather through Thursday. On Friday, the ridge collapses allowing a cooler moister onshore circulation, but no rainfall is expected. The mid-coast may see showers by Friday.

LONG TERM TREND — Progressive pattern for next week or so with weak upper troughs moving through from the west for a day or two followed by upper ridging for a day or two, but mostly dry. Climatic forecasts indicate near normal temperatures through the end of the month and less than normal rainfall.