

2023 Wildfire Season Update

Presented to the
Governance and Priorities Committee
August 14 2023

Since May...

- Evacuation Centre for Hay River and KFN (May 15 - 24)
- Welcomed Wekweeti evacuees (between YK and Behchoko, June 29 – July 4)
- Evacuation Centre for Behchoko (July 24 - August 3)
- Fire Ban in place for YK since July 12, 2023

Wildland Fires...

- Most intense wildfire season on record
- Working collaboratively/meeting regularly with ECC North Slave office since late July on fire status. Also with MACA/REMO.
- City's EOC meeting daily since July 25 – first on coordinating evacuation centre for Behchoko, and now for proactive protection of YK
- Proactive wildfire protection based on risk and current conditions, developed with expert advice from ECC wildland fire experts

Yellowknife Wildfire Protection Strategy



6.3 0 3.15 6.3 Kilometers

WGS_1984_Web_Mercator_Auxiliary_Sphere
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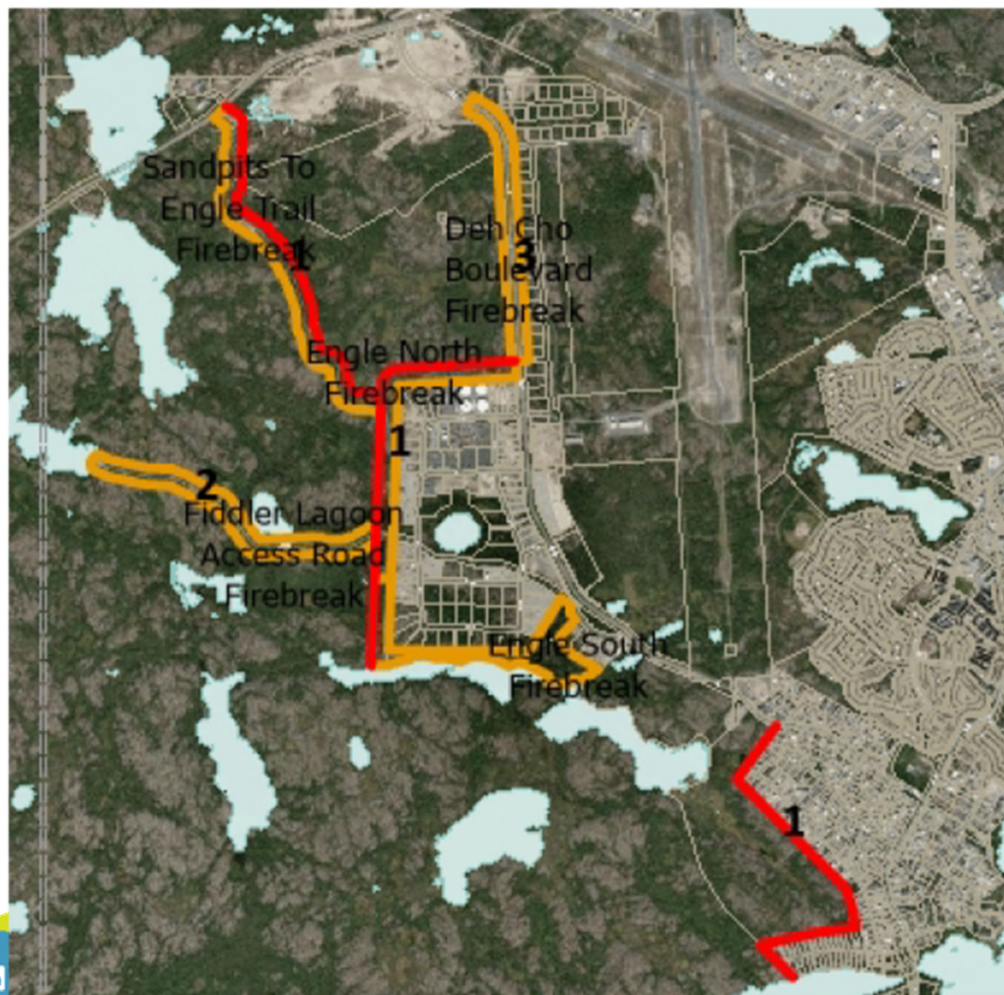
Legend

- Sprinkler Line
- Firebreaks
- Parcels
- Municipal Boundary
- Waterbodies

Notes

Priority 1: Sandpit Firebreak, Engle Business District Proper, Grace Lake Sprinkler Wetline.
Priority 2: Fiddler's Lake Lagoon Road
Priority 3: Deh Cho BLVD. Fuel Control





Fire Breaks

- Priority areas for 100m fire breaks are:
 1. Bush trail west of the sandpits
 2. Creating perimeter around Engle Business District
 3. Deh Cho Blvd - undeveloped area to sandpits - mulching
 4. Sewage Lagoon Road through Engle to Fiddler Lake

*Aerial photos courtesy of Northland Utilities





Firesmarting

Sewage Lagoon Road (from developed area to Fiddler Lake) — *note: special care being taken with sewage forcemain buried under the berm on the north side of the road; and firesmart around the structures at Fiddler Lake off Highway 3*

Firesmarting to clear brush for set up of sprinklers



Sprinklers

- Behind Kam Lake (Enterprise Drive) and Grace Lake properties
- Along Fire breaks to moisten the area
- Sprinklers, pumps, hoses
- Placement every 75M
- Combination of City sprinklers (YKFD & Parks), plus 2 rented wildfire pump trailers 100 sprinklers each)
- High volume/speed pumps en route

Evacuation Framework

- The Emergency Plan has an Evacuation Framework
- There is not ONE singular plan for evacuation – it is situational and dependent on conditions and risk
- The City's evacuation framework seeks to:
 - Understand the threat & current conditions and determine the risks
 - Determine whether is safer to shelter in place or evacuate
 - Evacuation Alert to residents that they may be required to evacuate
 - Confirm routes and evacuation centre location
 - Evacuation Order if required, activate reception centre(s)

Emergency Communications

- Stay connected to reliable sources of information – NWT Fire, City website, GNWT
- NWTel advises that cellular service will not be at risk



What Yellowknifers Can Do...

- Firesmart your property
- Respect the Fire Ban, don't flick your butts, and in the bush don't use equipment that can spark (ATVs, dirtbikes, etc)
- Stay informed and get your updates from a reliable source
- Stay calm... Emergency situations can be unnerving, stressful and confusing so prepare (www.getprepared.gc.ca)

Current Status

- We're all thinking of our friends and neighbors in the South Slave
- Smoke is unnerving for YK residents
- Weather conditions determine a lot
- At this point there is no risk to Yellowknife, but the situation is fluid based on the latest update from ECC North Slave (11AM, Aug 14th)

