BC Wildfire Service

August 7, 2021 (Vol 14.)

WILDFIRE UPDATE

ARROW LAKE WILDFIRE COMPLEX

Octopus Creek Wildfire
(N51800)
Size: 18,447 hectares
Status: Out of control
Cause: Lightning
34 firefighters, 8 pieces of heavy equipment

Michaud Creek Wildfire
(N51765)
Size: 8,550 hectares
Status: Out of control
Cause: Lightning
34 firefighters, 16 pieces of heavy equipment

Renata Creek Wildfire
(N51688)
Size: 3,445 hectares
Status: Out of control
Cause: Lightning
11 firefighters, 6 pieces of heavy equipment

There are currently a total of 79 firefighters, 46 personnel and 30 pieces of heavy equipment and 5 helicopters are assigned to the Arrow Lake Complex — 1 helicopter is assigned to Octopus, 1 to Michaud and 3 are shared across the complex. Additional aircraft is available, if requested.

An Incident Management Team of 33 personnel has been assembled for the Arrow Lake Wildfire Complex.

WEATHER & FIRE BEHAVIOUR FORECASTS

Fire behaviour increased Friday once the winds picked up and the smoke began to clear. Crews observed vigorous surface fire on the forest floor with individual trees and small clusters of trees igniting. Due to the extreme dryness of the forest, the same can be expected today, even with the slightly lower temperatures and higher humidities forecasted. Moderate westerly and southwesterly winds are expected at the fires' elevation Saturday, but these should ease on Sunday. The wind, which cross over the fires from the west, brings some showers today, followed by cool and cloudy conditions Sunday. A lack of significant precipitation continues to dry out the forest fuels. It is important to stay vigilant and informed on the wildfire situation as conditions can change very quickly.

STRUCTURE PROTECTION

Structure protection was established early on for Octopus Creek Wildfire and is being maintained and monitored by firefighters. Firefighters completed the set up and reinforcement of structural protection in the community of Renata yesterday.

ADDITIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION:

Wildfire Information Officer: Victoria Ostendorf/Christi Howes | Hours: 0800-2000
778 364-1287 | BCWS.ArrowlakeINFO@gov.bc.ca
Evacuation Information: Emergency Operation Centre | 250 352-7701 | www.rdck.ca
Road & Ferry Conditions: | 800 550-4997 | DriveBC.ca

www.bcwildfire.ca BC Forest Fire Info @BCGovFireInfo **www.firesmartbc.ca**

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OCTOPUS CREEK | WILDFIRE UPDATE

Increased fire activity at a rank 2-3, continued yesterday and growth was reported on all areas of the fire. On the north side of the fire no constructed control lines were compromised. Firefighters, helicopters and heavy equipment continued their work to reinforce control lines to protect the community of Fauquier from the wildfire.

On the north, northwest side of the wildfire, firefighters were unable to conduct their plans for continued hand ignition operations off the Pin Road, due to unsafe variable winds. Today, firefighters will be further assessing this area to look for opportunities to conduct ignition to create and strengthen control lines if conditions allow.

On the east side of the fire, firefighters, heavy equipment, and airtankers worked together on the control lines in the valley near Koch Creek. Due to the steep terrain heavy equipment did face some challenges creating line. Firefighters continue to plan for ignition operations in this area as well. These control lines are being created to prevent the wildfire from spreading east into adjacent valleys.

MICHAUD CREEK |RENATA CREEK | WILDFIRE UPDATE

Yesterdays fire behaviour at a rank 2 challenged firefighters however, crews and heavy equipment were able to safely continue establishing control lines on the north end of the wildfire along the Johnson Creek drainage to Bear Paw Lake. Heavy equipment lines being establish also are helping firefighters access hard to reach areas along the fires perimeter. The objective of these establishing these lines is to protect the community of Edgewood.

In the southeast area of the Michaud Creek wildfire, firefighters observed intense fire behaviour at a rank 3-4 and therefore and there was growth reported in this area. Firefighters reported that due to the extreme fire behaviour at rank 4 the fire crossed control lines in a few areas. Due to the unsafe conditions to have firefighters in close proximity to the wildfire they patrolled the fire activity in this area by helicopter and worked to complete and reinforce structure protection on structures at risk. Firefighters are also planning to conduct ignition operations if weather conditions allow to aid in establishing a control line as to protect the community of Renata.

On the eastern side of the Renata Creek wildfire, heavy equipment was able to continue establish control lines and reinforce safety zones for firefighters.

NEW WILDFIRES | ARROW LAKE COMPLEX

On August 5th, firefighters responded to a new wildfire (N52447) located near Sunshine Creek, south of the Octopus Creek wildfire. This fire is classified as out of control and is estimated to be 20 hectares in size as there was overnight growth reported. Firefighters, along with aircraft support continued to establish control lines yesterday due to improved visibility. Heavy equipment supported establishing control line around the fire but were challenged in the rocky terrain.

Spot a wildfire, smoke or illegal fire activity? Call 1 800 663-5555 or *5555 on your cellphone.

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FIRE STAGES OF CONROL:

Out of Control	Describes a wildfire that is not responding (or only responding on a limited basis) to suppression action, such that the perimeter spread is not being contained.
Being Held	Indicates that (with the resources currently committed to the fire) sufficient suppression action has been taken that the
Under Control	The fire has received sufficient suppression action to ensure no further spread of the fire.

WILDFIRE RANKS:

Rank	Description
1	**Characteristics:** Smouldering ground fire, no open flame, white smoke, slow (i.e. creeping) rate of fire spread. **Firefighting tactics:** Direct attack with ground crews using hand tools and water delivery systems (i.e. pumps and hose).
2	**Characteristics:** Surface fire, visible, open flame, unorganised or inconsistent flame front, slow rate of spread. **Firefighting tactics:** Direct attack with ground crews using hand tools, water delivery systems, or heavy equipment. Hand constructed control lines and lines that have been cleared of combustible material will likely be successful.
3	**Characteristics:** Organised flame front – fire progressing in organised manner, occasional candling may be observed along the perimeter and/or within the fire, moderate rate of spread. **Firefighting tactics:** Hand constructed control lines alone are likely to be challenged, ground crews conducting direct attack may require air support from fixed-wing air tankers, skimmers or helicopters conducting bucketing or tanking operations. Control lines constructed by heavy equipment will generally be effective
4	**Characteristics:** Grey to black smoke, organised surface flame front, moderate to fast rate of spread on the ground, short aerial bursts through the forest canopy, short-range spotting. **Firefighting tactics:** Ground operations may not be successful at the head of the fire, indirect tactics may be required to bring the head of the fire under control. Parallel attack may be used along the flanks of the fire to direct the head into favourable ground or fuels. Air operations may be required to support ground personnel.
5	**Characteristics:** Black to copper smoke, organised crown fire front, moderate to long-range spotting and spot fire growth. **Firefighting tactics:** The limited options available include indirect attack and planned ignitions to remove fuel in the path of this type of fire behaviour. Ground operations are often restricted to fighting the least active sections of the fire or conducting ground ignition operations from secure control lines with readily available escape routes and safety zones.
6	**Characteristics:** Organised crown fire front, long-range spotting and independent spot fire growth, possible fireballs and whirls, violent fire behaviour probable, a dominant smoke column may develop which influences fire behaviour. **Firefighting tactics:** Firefighting under these conditions is extremely dangerous. Suppression efforts will be well away from active fire behaviour and may include preparing structure protection measures or conducting indirect large-scale ignition operations in an attempt to steer the fire. Often, the safest and most prudent strategy is to pull resources back to safe areas, ensure that personnel and the general public are safe, and wait for fire behaviour to lessen before re-engaging in fire suppression operations.

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ARROW LAKE WILDFIRE COMPLEX | OBJECTIVES AND TACTICS

The overall objective of the wildfire complex is to build control lines to prevent the wildfires from approaching values at risk such as communities, properties, infrastructure, watershed and natural resources (for example: cell towers, hydro lines and major transportation corridors). Once the wildfire is contained, firefighters will continue to work the perimeter of the wildfire inward, removing the risk of escaping the anticipated boundaries. Control lines are built using multiple techniques, such as heavy equipment or hand tools, to remove the burnable vegetation. In some cases, crews may use planned ignitions to remove fuel between the control lines and the fire perimeter.

Planned ignitions are essential to help contain large wildfires. They are used in situations where direct attack has limited effectiveness, or to maximize resources by reducing the area that requires suppression. Planned ignitions are monitored under the direction of a certified ignition specialist or other qualified personnel to meet pre-determined land management objectives. Opportunities for planned ignition are being explored. The exact timing of these potential burns will depend on weather and site conditions.

AREA RESTRICTIONS

The BC Wildfire Service has amended an **Area Restriction Order** for the vicinity of the Octopus Creek wildfire (N51800) and Michaud Creek wildfire (N51765). This area restriction reflects the continued need to protect the public in areas where ongoing fire suppression activities are taking place. Visit www.bcwildfire.ca for more information.

EVACUATION ALERTS & ORDERS

The Regional District of Central Kootenay has issued an evacuation order and alerts in the vicinity of these wildfires. The most current information is available at https://www.rdck.ca/

Please be advised that the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) does not issue evacuation orders or alerts. The BCWS works closely with Regional Districts and shares critical wildfire information. The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) will use the wildfire information, along with other critical information from local authorities and protection services, to base their decision on evacuations.

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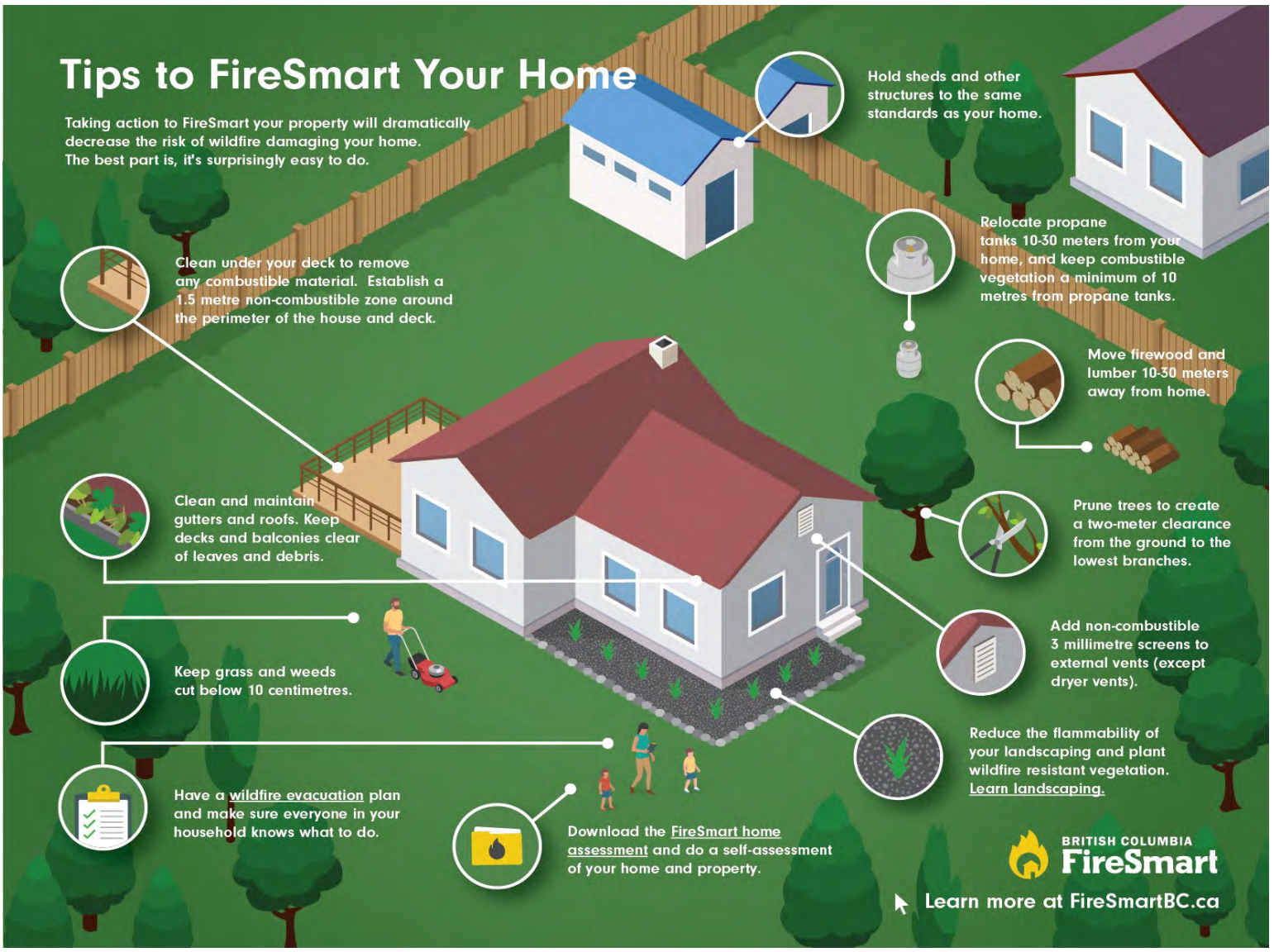
FIRESMART PREPARDNESS

There's a lot you can do before an evacuation is ordered to protect your home, farmland, or ranch from wildfire. Moving fuel sources like firewood and lawn furniture away from your house, trimming branches near your roof, and cutting your lawn shorter are just a few quick chores you can do—before you're in a wildfire emergency—that may save your property. For all property owners, our Homeowner's Manual is an essential tool for mitigating the threats of fire. To learn more please visit, firesmartbc.ca.



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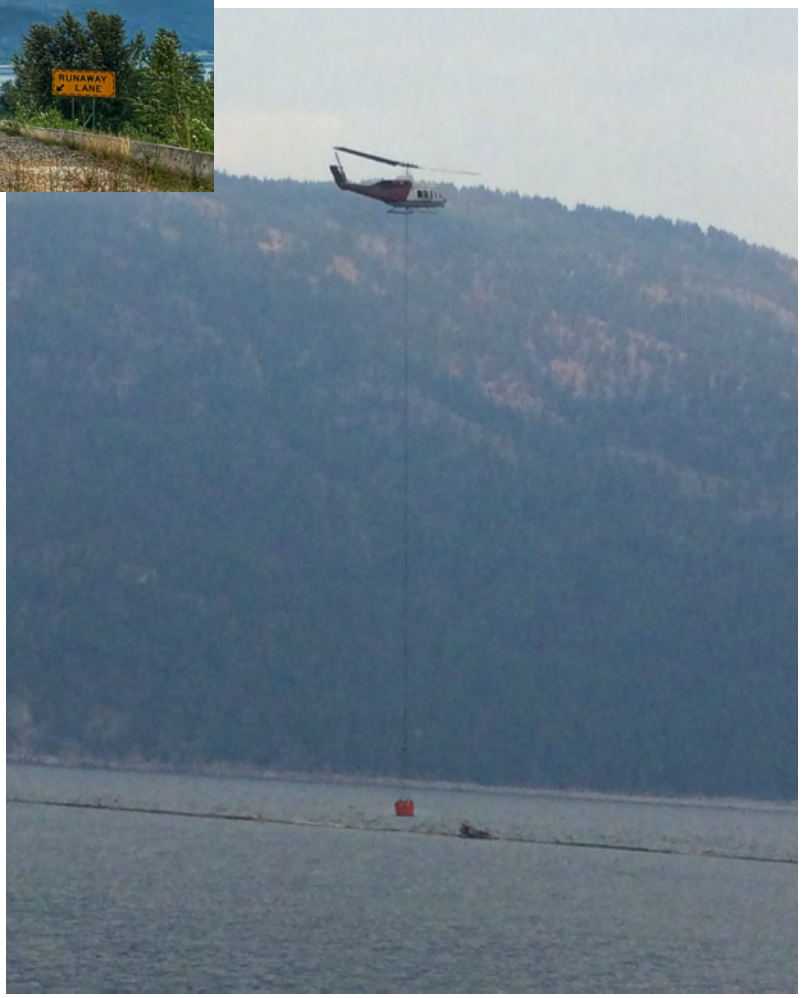
ARROW LAKE WILDFIRE PHOTOS

Left: Photo taken in Needles looking across Arrow Lake to the northern area of the Octopus fire. The fire was active yesterday with a rank of 2-3.

Right, a helicopter filling its bucket in Arrow Lake to help assist firefighters working on the Octopus Creek wildfire.



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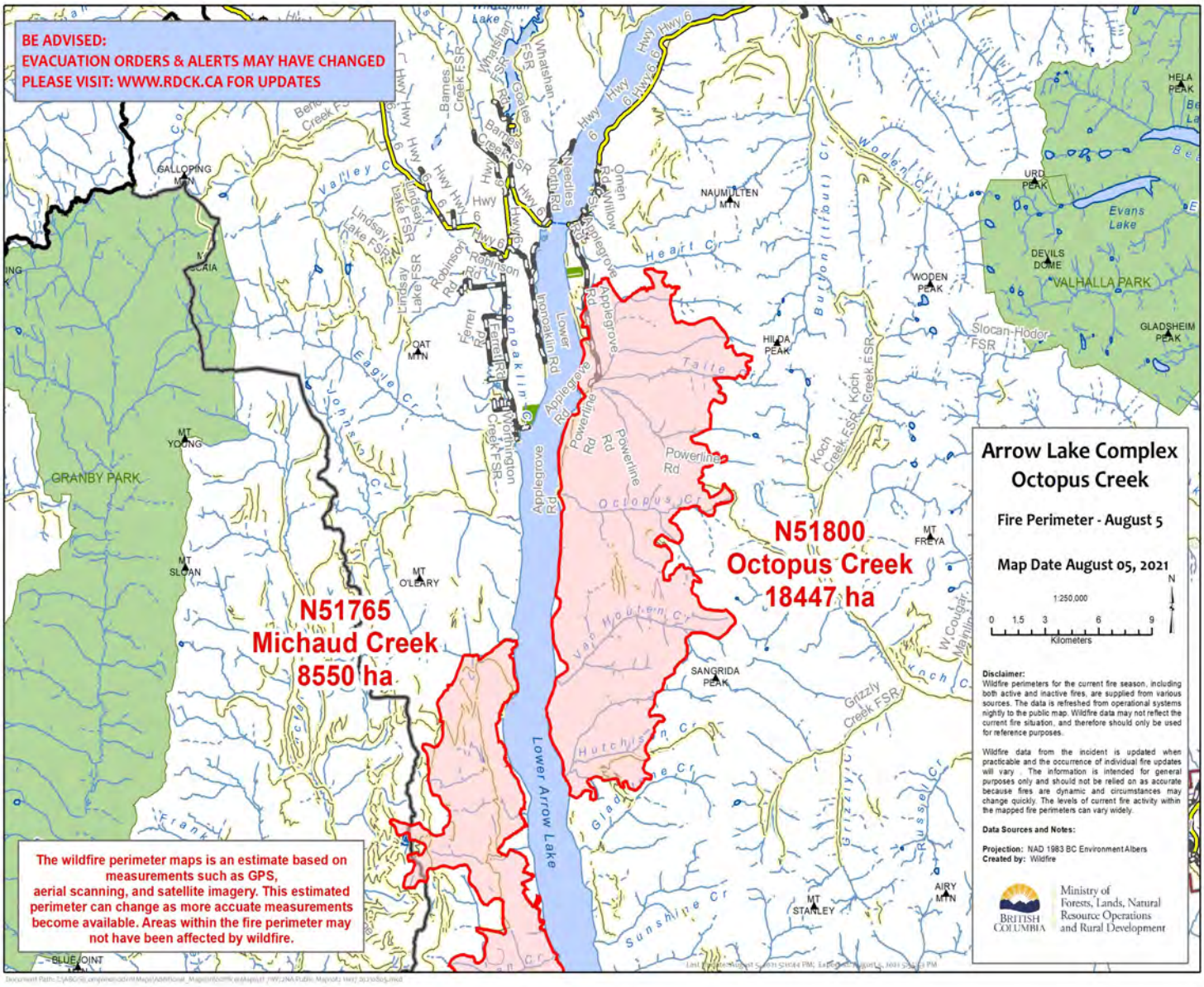
ARROW LAKE WILDFIRE COMPLEX MAPS | NORTH MAP



The wildfire perimeter maps is an estimate based on measurements such as GPS, aerial scanning and satellite imagery. This estimated perimeter can change as more accurate measurements become available. Areas within the fire perimeter may not have been affected or burnt by wildfire.

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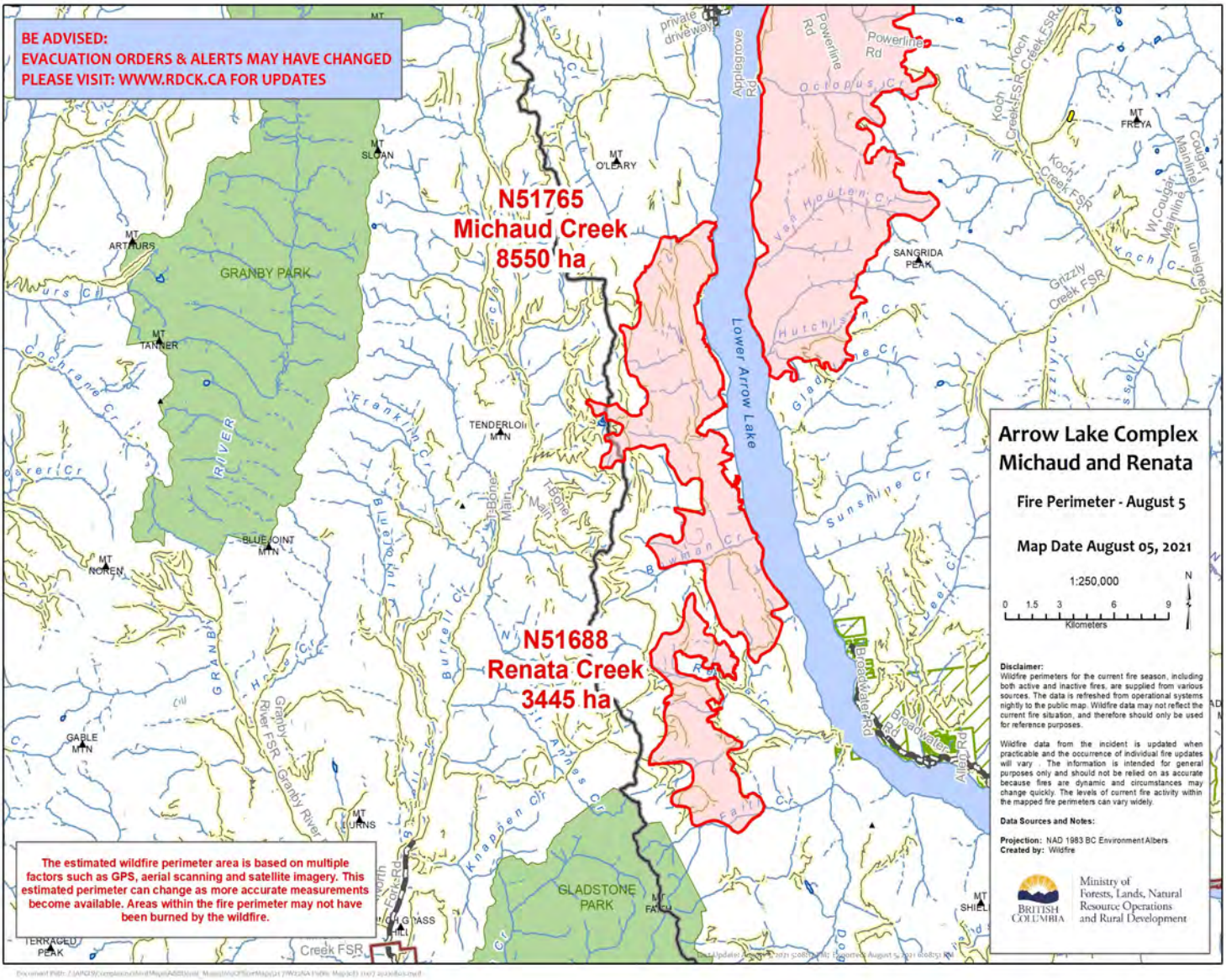
WILDFIRE UPDATE

ARROW LAKE WILDFIRE COMPLEX MAPS | SOUTH MAP



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HELPFUL RESOURCES:

- View an interactive map by clicking here or visiting **http://ow.ly/uo2U30oXqzS**
- **Road Closures:** DriveBC |dial 1-800-550-4997 | https://www.drivebc.ca/
- **Drifting Smoke:** www.bcairquality.ca/bluesky/west/index.html
- **Smoke Health Concerns:** HealthLink BC | dial 8-1-1| www.healthlinkbc.ca/kbaltindex.asp
- For info on **Community Support Services**, click here or visit https://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/
- For **damage** to private property and Reserve Lands, please email **BCWSClaims2019@gov.bc.ca.**

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES			
BC Wildfire Service	**Emergency Management BC**	**Local municipalities and regional districts**	**First Nations**
- BCWS' jurisdiction covers all BC Parks, Crown and private lands, but it does not include the boundaries of local governments that have forest fire prevention bylaws and are serviced by a fire department. - BCWS speaks directly about **wildfires** (i.e. fire status, operations, etc.) and is responsible for disseminating wildfire updates to local governments, stakeholders, First Nations and the public. - BCWS does not announce Strategic Evacuation Orders or Alerts. - BCWS does announce Tactical Evacuations. - In the event of an imminent threat to public safety, BCWS can authorize an immediate **Tactical Evacuation** of the affected area.	- EMBC coordinates communication across all agencies and stakeholders to support communities. - EMBC provides advice to evacuees and support to communities regarding Emergency Operations Centres and Emergency Support Services.	- Local Municipalities and Regional Districts speak directly about **Strategic Evacuation Orders and Alerts in** their respective jurisdictions. - Local Municipalities and Regional Districts do not speak about the status of a wildfire unless the fire occurs within their jurisdiction. For example, if a wildfire starts within the boundaries of a local government, BCWS will often assist the local fire department with suppression efforts. If the fire spreads into Crown land to become a wildfire, BCWS will often assume control.	- On IR lands, Evacuation Orders and Alerts are implemented by a Band Council Resolution or other. - A designated person(s) from the respective First Nations community will speak to Evacuation Orders and Alerts on IR lands.

ACCESSING INFORMATION		
BC Wildfire Service Online Communications	**EmergencyInfoBC EMBC Online Communications**	**PreparednessBC EMBC Online Communications**
@BCGovFireInfo	@EmergencyInfoBC	@PreparedBC
www.bcwildfire.ca	www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca	www.gov.bc.ca/preparedBC
BC Wildfire Service		PreparedBC