Bulkley Fire Zone Orientation and Briefing Package

2022

TELKWA FIRE ATTACK BASE
250-846-9851
11530 Skillhorn Rd
Telkwa BC
V0J-2X3

HAZELTON FIRE ATTACK BASE
250-842-7630
2210 Highway 62
Hazelton, BC
V0J-1Y0

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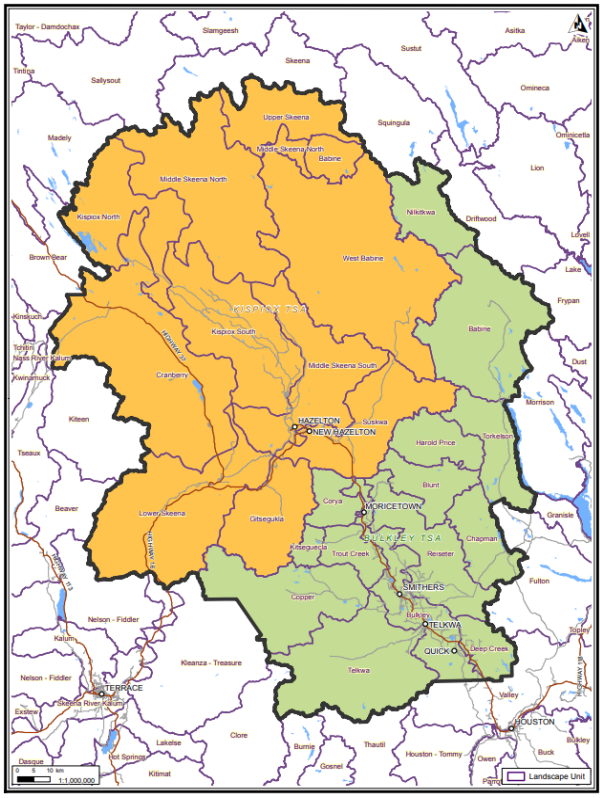
Overview

The Northwest Fire Center

The BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) is responsible for wildfire response across the province and is broken into six geographic response areas called Fire Centers.

The Northwest Fire Center is based in Smithers and encompasses approximately 25 million hectares with a wide range of topographic features. In the West of the center the coastal temperate rainforest is dominant with the Coast mountains being the main topographic feature. Vegetation is lush and Cedar Hemlock forests are the main timber type. To the East, the climate is drier as one moves away from the coast mountains and enters rolling hills and lakes. Vegetation is a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees, the latter primarily being Pine and Spruce species, but Balsam can be found at higher elevations. The Mountain Pine Beetle has killed most of the Pine timber and dead Pine stands are now abundant. The main industries in the NWFC are mining, logging, and tourism. The response to fires will primarily reflect the values these industries represent. Modified Response is often used in the North, where population is sparse and resources few. The South sees extensive logging with high timber values.

Each Fire Centre is further broken down into several Zones which are responsible for wildfire response in their respective geographical areas. The Northwest Fire Center coordinates the activities that occur in its four zones: Bulkley (Telkwa and Hazelton FAB), Cassiar (Dease Lake, Atlin and Watson Lake FAB), Nadina (Burns Lake and Houston FAB) and Skeena (Terrace FAB).



The Bulkley Zone

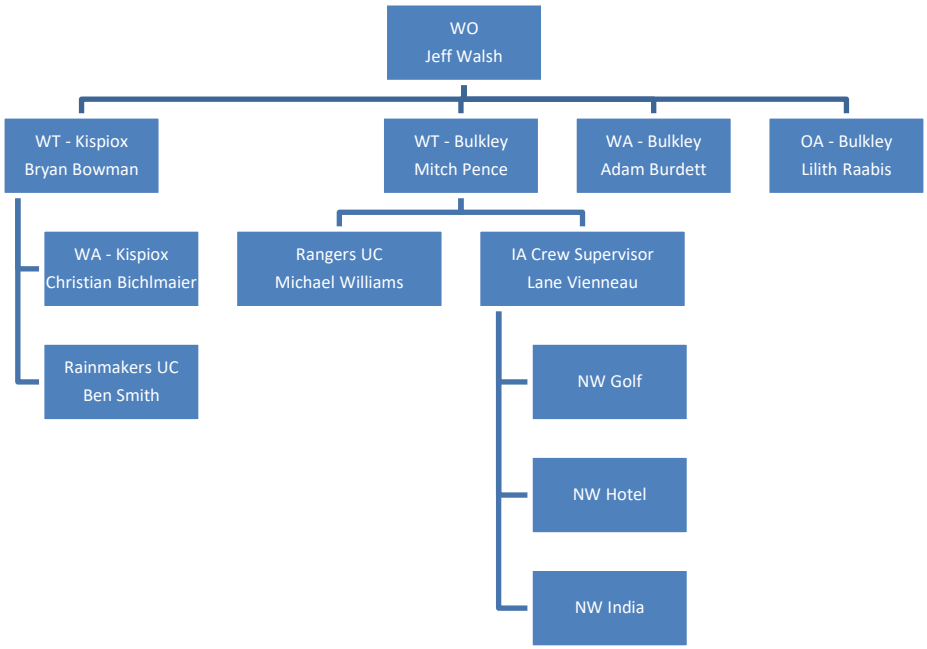
The Bulkley Zone encompasses the Kispiox (R4) and Bulkley (R3) Timber Supply Areas found within the Skeena Stikine Natural Resource District. It ranges from Hungry Hill to the east and Little Oliver Creek to the west on Highway 16. Typical forest types found within the zone are conifer leading, deciduous leading and mixedwood forests. Subalpine forests (Sub-alpine fir) are found at high elevations typically in the eastern part of the Zone. Spruce and pine forests are found at lower elevations, again predominately in the eastern part of the zone. The Mountain Pine Beetle has killed a significant portion of pine stands and the trees are now classified as standing grey and dead. Extra precaution must be taken in areas with this fuel type as the trees themselves are becoming increasingly unstable over time, as well as being a volatile fuel. In addition, advanced regeneration of trees along with blowdown can create extreme fire behaviour. In the western part of the Zone, the vegetation changes to primarily Cedar-Hemlock forests in and around the Hazelton area with a more coastal influence. Mixedwood forests (aspen, birch, cottonwood, spruce, pine, cedar) are typically found at low elevations throughout the

entire Zone. Deciduous leading forests (aspen, cottonwood, birch) are found at low elevations and southward facing slopes throughout the Zone.

The Bulkey Fire Zone is found on the traditional territories of the Gitxsan, Gitanyow, Wet'suwet'en, and Lake Babine First Nations. The Zone includes numerous First Nation communities including Gitanyow, the Gitxsan communities of Gitwangak (Kitwanga), Gitsegukla, Gitanmaax, Sik-E-Dakh (Glen Vowell) and Anspayaxw (Kispiox), the Wet'suwet'en communities of Hagwilget and Witset, and the Lake Babine Nation community of Fort Babine.

Provincial municipalities include Hazelton, New Hazelton, Smithers and Telkwa. The zone shares borders with two Regional Districts: Kitimat Stikine to the west and Bulkley-Nechako to the east. The Regional Districts are divided just east of Witset.

The Bulkley Zone staff are based out of Hazelton and Telkwa. Each base houses Fire Crews along with Zone Officers and other staff.



Telkwa Fire Attack Base

The Telkwa Base is located at 11530 Skillhorn Road. This base is home to the Telkwa Rangers Unit Crew, three Initial Attack Crews, an IA Crew Supervisor, three Zone Officers and an Ops Assistant.

Directions to the Telkwa FAB from Smithers:

Take Highway 16 East to Telkwa (14km)

- At the last intersection in town, turn right on Coalmine Rd. towards the river
- Cross the one lane bridge over the Bulkley River
- Follow Coalmine Rd. through residential area and turn left on Skillhorn Road.
- Follow Skillhorn until you see the Telkwa Fire Attack Base sign on your left

Base Map:

First Aid / Emergencies:

There is a first aid room in the bunkhouse trailer with a bed, patient care and full oxygen therapy. The first aid room should be open during working hours; however, if it is not, there is a key located in the lockbox in the duty room. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with the designated first aiders on site, the base emergency procedures, the location of first aid equipment and times to the nearest hospital. Keep in mind travel to Smithers does require crossing the train tracks to get to the BV District Hospital and a response may be delayed. Level III equipment and a stretcher kit will be on-site at both bases. Note if there is an ETV on-site, Level III equipment will also be located here.

Emergency Contact Numbers: 911 for Ambulance, Police, Fire Department

Contacts:

Wildfire Officer - Jeff Walsh	250-876-6912 (Office)	250-643-1279 (Cell)	Jeff.Walsh@gov.bc.ca
Wildfire Technician - Mitch Pence	250-876-6950 (Office)	250-877-2544 (Cell)	Mitch.Pence@gov.bc.ca
Wildfire Assistant - Adam Burdett	250-876-6938 (Office)	250-877-9357 (Cell)	Adam.Burdett@gov.bc.ca
Ops Assistant – Lilith Raabis	250-876-6967 (Office)	250-877-3493 (Cell)	Lilith.Raabis@gov.bc.ca
Telkwa Base Reception	250-846-9851 (Office)		

Hazelton Fire Attack Base

The Hazelton Base is located at 2210 Highway 62 in the Government compound shared with Service BC and BCTS. This base is home to the Hazelton Rainmakers Unit Crew and two Zone Officers.

Directions to Hazelton FAB from Smithers:

Travel West on Highway 16 to New Hazelton (70km).

- On the west side of New Hazelton turn right onto West Highway 62.
- Continue down the hill across the Hagwilget Bridge towards Old Hazelton.
- Watch for school zones and you will pass the hospital on the left, keep going.
- The FAB is located at the Provincial buildings on the corner of West Highway 62 and Halliday St.
- The main Fire control office is in the Provincial building while the crew and equipment are housed in the buildings inside the fenced compound.

Base Map:

First Aid / Emergencies:

The first aid room is in the provincial building through the same entrance as the Fire control office. Once in the building continue straight through another set of doors, and you will find the first aid room on the left. This door should be left unlocked; however, there is a key located in the lockbox in the Fire control office. First aiders and emergency evacuation routes are posted at the main entrance. The office shares the building with the courthouse, which brings the risk of a building lockdown in the event of an incident in the courtroom. Please review the emergency procedures posted above the key lockbox for details.

Emergency Contact Numbers: 911 for Ambulance, Police, Fire Department.

Contacts:

Wildfire Technician - Bryan Bowman	250-876-6967 (Office)	250-877-3910 (Cell)	Bryan.Bowman@gov.bc.ca
Wildfire Assistant - Christian Bichlmaier	250-876-6938 (Office)	250-877-9357 (Cell)	Christian.Bichlmaier@gov.bc.ca

Zone Wildfire Coordination Officer (ZWCO)

The Zone Wildfire Coordination Officer (ZWCO) is a rostered position that is filled on rotating basis by the Zone Officers mentioned above. The ZWCO is your main point of contact for the Zone for any questions around Standby or Fire Response. Transitions between individuals filling the ZWCO role typically take place Thursday mornings. The ZWCO will be monitoring the BCWS.NWFCBulkleyZWCO@gov.bc.ca e-mail address as well as the ZWCO cell phone 250-643-8164.

Preparedness

Crew manifest will be created and stored on the Northwest Fire Center G Drive, under Fire Operations ICS, Dutyroom, Deposit Manifest Here, 2. Bulkley. Choose the appropriate folder to deposit your manifest in. Follow the link below:

G:\!Publish\Fire_Operations_ICS\Dutyroom\Deposit Manifest Here\2. Bulkley

It is up to each individual or crew to understand what is required of them while in the zone. Personnel and equipment must be fit for duty and ready for work at the start of a shift. When a crew is not assigned to an incident or on MAX standby, it is expected of the crew to work a normal workday with tasks assigned by a zone representative. Please find the checklist below to determine your gear needs.

Preparedness Checklist:

- Manifest completed and submitted
- Up to date on RMHR
- Briefed on local hazard & weather
- Field Fire Report Notebooks
- Contact numbers
- Local map book
- GPS
- Sat phone
- Camera
- First aid requirements met
- Field safety plan
- DTA cards
- IA kit
- Heavy kit *if required
- Required certifications
- Overnight gear & 24/72 hour food *if required

At both bases there will be a minimum amount of gear to respond to local fires. All gear must be signed-out through a warehouse representative. For larger gear needs, the Prince George warehouse will fill resource requests for the next day if a priority. Gear orders will be coordinated by the Zone Wildfire Coordination Officer.

There is a daily conference call at 0900hrs in combination with a weather briefing. Dial 778–401–6289, 781276038# (Phone Conference ID: 781 276 038#) for the conference call (be sure to place your line on handsfree mute if on speaker). If there is computer access, the weather briefing can be found through the following links:

https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/bcws/fire-centres/northwest/prep-morning

https://bcfireweatherp1.nrs.gov.bc.ca/scripts/menu/BC/ShowPage.asp?page=wxbrief .

The text forecasts may also be printed out for briefing purposes.

Response

Response to a wildfire in the Zone will be coordinated through the RWCO and ZWCO.

- Our goal is to always provide an effective and efficient response. If you think you may need additional or specialty resources order them sooner than later, they can always be released.
- Incident Commanders have prime responsibility for all aspects of the incident until complete or handed over. This includes administrative/finance duties, fire origin and cause, compliance and enforcement interactions, rehab, long term patrol plans, declaring the fire out.
- The goal is to always declare IA fires out but there may be times when this can't be accomplished before being reassigned or due to other factors. IC's must work with the ZWCO to produce a long-term patrol and suppression plan under these circumstances.
- ZWCO's and IC's shall always look for opportunities to engage available local resources to benefit from the fire line experience. Over resourcing is acceptable when staff development opportunities arise.
- When doing fire line check-ins with fire center "Ops normal" is not acceptable. IC updates must be provided which concisely paint the picture of what is occurring: work activity, progress, fire behavior, estimated time to completion, resource requests or anticipated demobes.
- Midafternoon check-ins shall include a suggested end time of operational period and suggested next day start time for review by the RWCO.
- Always call the ZWCO towards the end of shift if able, and the RWCO if requested.
- All fires will receive an origin and cause investigation as soon as practical upon arrival. The area of origin shall be protected. IC's shall request a Type 2 Investigator for support when required.
- Take sufficient photos to paint the picture: origin and cause evidence, aerial overview if possible, fuel types, fire behaviour, perimeter, suppression action etc.
- Overnighting fires must be considered to meet the 10am concept and to cut down on lengthy travel or aviation costs. Overnighting is highly encouraged. If in doubt discuss with ZWCO.

Bulkley Zone Fire Management Plan

The Bulkley Fire Management Plan (FMP) is used to aid in the prioritizing of initial attack (IA) response activities at times of multiple fire situations, and to inform the development of objectives for sustained action and modified response fires. This plan is to be used as an aid to the decision-making process for wildfire prioritization and response, and in the development of the Fire Analysis (FA) for sustained action and modified response fires.

For quick access to the Bulkley Zone Fire Management Plan, open the link below: (Northwest Fire Center G: Drive)

file://fireline/S65007/!Publish/Zones/Bulkley/Fire%20Management%20Plan

A useful output that has been developed through the Zone FMP are the Theme 1, 2, 3 and Primary Response Information Zone maps. These maps show the spatial location within the Zone of BCWS Priority Values 1, 2 and 3: Human Life and Safety, Critical Infrastructure and Property and High Environmental and Cultural Values. Due to the size and content of these maps, there are 4 separate maps for each corner of the Zone.

Scan the QR codes below for PDF maps for follow this link:

G:\!Publish\Zones\Bulkley\Operations\Mapping\2022 Bulkley Response Navigation Maps

Bulkley NE:

Bulkley NW:

Bulkley SE:

Bulkley SW:

Additional Resources

NWFC Home Page

The NWFC home page has links to many useful resources. It is best opened in Internet Explorer.
https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/bcws/fire-centres/northwest

Resources include:

- Contact and address lists
- Preparedness Advisories
- Rosters
- Zone Pre-orgs
- Coordination Centre Information
- Program Area information
- Mapping Resources

Bulkley Zone Pre-org

For quick access Zone pre-org information, open the link below: (also found through the NWFC Home Page)
https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/bcws/fire-centres/northwest/pre-org

Resources include:

- Zone and Industry Rosters
- Zone and MZOC Information
    - Bulkley Alarm Systems Information
    - Zone Mapping Resources
    - Helibase and Fuel Cache locations
- Heavy Equipment Resources
- Emergency Response Resources
    - RCMP, BC Ambulance, SAR, Infrastructure Operators, Spill Response
- Operation Service Providers
- Logistics Service Providers
- Stakeholder and Partner Contact

Hospitals

HOSPITAL/CLINIC	LOCATION/COORDINATES	HELIBASE (YES/NO)	CONTACT	COMMENTS
Bulkley Valley District Hospital	Smithers, BC 3950 8th Ave V0J 2N0	No	Phone: 250-847-2611 Fax: 250-847-2446	✓ Emergency room ✓ Lab ✓ Medical Imaging ✗ Burn Unit ✗ Heli landing
Houston Health Centre	Houston, BC 3202 14th St. V0J 1Z0	No	Phone: 250 845 2294	✓ Emergency room ✓ Lab ✓ Medical Imaging ✗ Burn Unit ✗ Heli landing
Wrinch Memorial Hospital	Hazelton BC 2510 62 Hwy V0J 1Y0	No	Phone: 250-842-5234 Pharmacy: 250-842-6040	✓ Emergency room ✓ Lab ✓ Medical Imaging ✗ Burn Unit ✗ Heli landing
Mills Memorial Hospital	Terrace BC 4720 Haugland Ave V8G 2W7 54°30'36.24"N 128°35,47.35"W	No	Phone: 250-645-2211	✓ Emergency room ✓ Lab ✓ Medical Imaging ✗ Burn Unit ✗ Heli landing *39 acute care beds
Stewart General Hospital	Stewart BC 904 Brightwell Street V0T 1W0	Yes	Phone: 250-636-2221	✓ Emergency room ✓ Lab ✓ Medical Imaging ✗ Burn Unit ✓ Heli landing