

Fire Camp at Pelly Crossing houses upwards of 150 firefighters and support staff

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Over the past week, firefighters and support staff from British Columbia have been imported to the Yukon to assist Wildland Fire Management. The request for assistance was made through the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre, which co-ordinates the mutual sharing of firefighting resources between the Government of Yukon and other jurisdictions.

Most of the imported personnel will be focusing their efforts on suppressing the Crystal Creek fire (MA-021) and the Upper Willow Creek fire (MA-029), both of which are impacting travel on the North Klondike Highway.

To house these personnel, Yukon government has imported a self-contained fire camp from BC. The BC Wildfire Service routinely sets camps up to house and feed firefighting personnel and support staff through the duration of an incident. The fire camp provides kitchen facilities, wash cars, warehouses, and incident management offices.

The fire camp is being strategically set-up at Pelly Crossing in order to resource incidents in the Northern Tutchone and Tatchun fire management regions. Once fully established, the camp will house a total of 165 personnel, including:

- 6x unit crews (124 personnel)
- 8x initial-attack crews (30 personnel); and
- 1x incident management team and additional support staff (20 personnel).

The high level of fire activity near Yukon communities has challenged our local firefighting resources. Once fully staffed up early this week, these sustained action resources from BC will alleviate pressures on our fire management regional offices and allow Yukon initial-attack crews and officers to focus on potential new wildfires, and on controlling existing fires in the strategic and transitional zones. There are currently 166 active wildfires in the Yukon.

Quick Facts:

- **Unit crew:** A 20-person sustained action unit crew typically works on large fires and can remain self-sufficient in the field for up to 72 hours at a time. Crew members receive extensive training and are knowledgeable about wildfire behaviour, fire management tactics, and fireline equipment use.
- **Initial-attack crew:** Initial attack firefighters operate as part of a three to four-person crew and are usually the first on scene of a new wildfire. Once there, the initial attack crew works quickly to set up water pumps, remove fuel from the fire's path and dig fireguards to help control or extinguish the blaze.
- **Incident management team (IMT):** When wildfires burn for extended periods, or when complex fires or groups of fires occur, incident management teams are called in to assume their overall management.

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