

WILDFIRE Seasonal Outlook



BC Wildfire Service

MONTHLY UPDATE

Sept. 10, 2021

RECENT CONDITIONS

The hot and dry weather that B.C. endured in July continued through the first half of August and was accompanied by frontal passages that produced lightning and gusty winds. These conditions resulted in 289 new wildfire starts and roughly 300,000 hectares burned. Seventy per cent of new starts in August were caused by lightning.

Significant rain through much of the southern part of the province, in late August, helped to slow growth of many fires, including several of the Wildfires of Note. There was sufficient precipitation to increase fuel moisture content and decrease fire activity enough for crews to make good progress. As a result, the majority of the fires previously considered Out of Control were reclassified to Being Held or Under Control in early September. However, areas in the South Okanagan, the Cariboo, and Southern Vancouver Island still have the potential for new starts and continued fire growth.

SEPTEMBER OUTLOOK:



Across B.C., the conditions have settled into more of a seasonal pattern with cooler conditions and semi-regular rainfall. The long term forecast suggests this will continue throughout most of the province with the exception of the Coast, particularly Vancouver Island.

Based on the models, we are also predicting a moderate amount of precipitation throughout the month of September. The anticipated rain and cooler temperatures will result in the ongoing decrease in wildfire activity and wildfire risk. The risk of further growth of will continue to be low.

STATISTICS TO DATE

Sept 10, 2021	1,586 WILDFIRES	AVERAGE NUMBER OF WILDFIRES				
		5-YEAR AVG.	10-YEAR AVG.	15-YEAR AVG.	20-YEAR AVG.	25-YEAR AVG.
		1,127	1,225	1,476	1,514	1,488
864,541 HECTARES BURNED	AVERAGE NUMBER OF HECTARES BURNED					
	5-YEAR AVG.	10-YEAR AVG.	15-YEAR AVG.	20-YEAR AVG.	25-YEAR AVG.	
	509,019	325,713	264,225	222,936	182,865	

SHORTER DAYS, LONGER NIGHTS

As the days get shorter, the period required for fuels to dry following rain events gets longer. The potential for rapid drying is therefore diminished and fuels take longer to ‘rebound’ after rainfall. The recent cooler conditions also help to increase humidity, further slowing the rate of drying. For many areas of the province, humidity levels are sufficiently high to increase the fuel moisture content, particularly during the longer nights. Combined, these factors reduce the window of time for which wildfires are likely to start and grow.

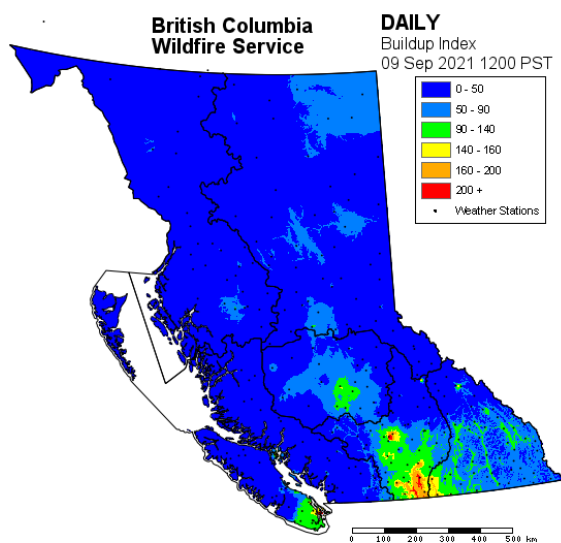


Fig. 1: The Build-Up Index shows the total amount of fuel available for combustion. A BUI value greater than 140 in southern B.C. and greater than 80 in northern B.C. indicates that fuels are at or near a dry enough condition to sustain a persistent, deep-burning wildfire.

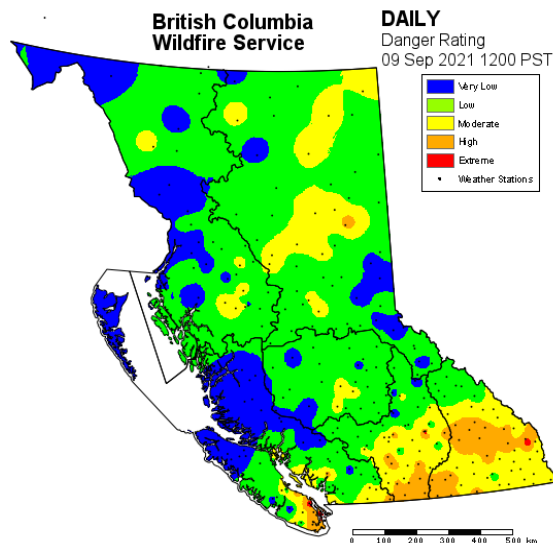


Fig. 1: The Wildfire Danger Rating refers to the potential for wildfires to start and grow. High and extreme ratings mean that fires will start easily, burn into deeper layers of fuel and grow quickly. More information can be found [here](#).

For more information on how to establish wildfire resiliency in our forests and communities, visit:



bcwildfire.ca



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[BC Wildfire Service](#)



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