



2015 High Level Wildfires

A Lesson in Regional Cooperation

Rodney Schmidt, Fire Chief High Level Fire Department

Welcome to High Level!



"Gateway to the South"



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Working relationships



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Day 1 – June 26th



Fire 217



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Logyard



"Gateway to the South"



Logyard



"Gateway to the South"

Sprinklering



"Gateway to the South"

Sprinklering



"Gateway to the South"



Sprinklering



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Public Works Assistance



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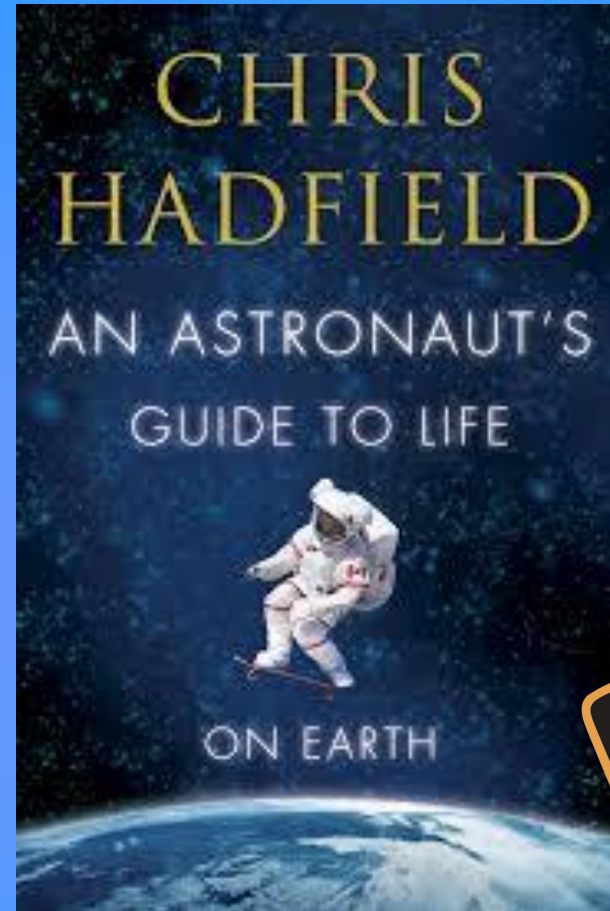
Saturday – Fire 250



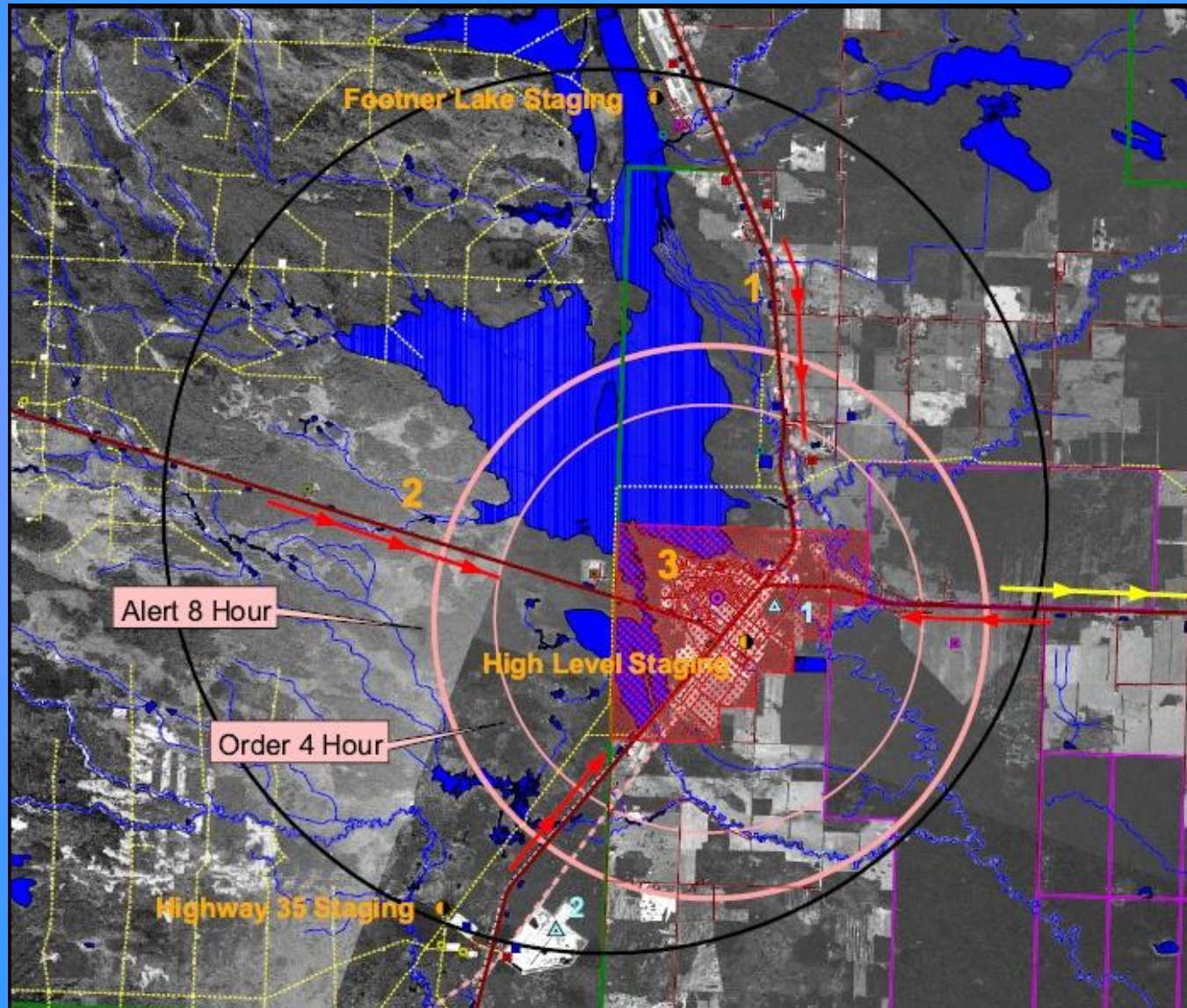
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The Power of Negative Thinking

- “Anticipating problems and figuring out how to solve them is actually the opposite of worrying.”



Wildland Urban Interface Plan



Saturday

- Meeting with Wildfire Management
- Meeting with Mayor and CAO
- Resource ordering
 - Peace River / County of Northern Lights
 - Slave Lake

Date & Time: Sat Jun 27 20:20:35 MDT 2015
Position: 058°23'42.2"N / 117°18'28.0"W
Altitude: 812m
Azimuth/Bearing: 331° N29W 5884mils (Magnetic)
Elevation Grade: +012%
Horizon Grade: +003%
Zoom: 1X
HLF250



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Sunday – Flight with Mayor



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Sunday – Fire 255 Hutch Lake

Date & Time: Sun Jun 28 16:40:30 MDT 2015

Position: +058°35'53.6" / -117°08'36.2"

Altitude: 497m

Azimuth/Bearing: 291° N69W 5173mils (Magnetic)

Elevation Angle: -07.2°

Horizon Angle: +01.7°

Zoom: 1X

hwf255 grp 4 -aao macneil landing high level



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Sunday – Fire 255 – Hutch Lake



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Fire 255



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Fire 255 – Water Shuttle Work



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Fire 255 – SOLE – Hutch Lake



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Fire 255 – Slave Lake Sprinklers



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Fire 255 Sprinkler Work



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Fire 255 Sprinkler Work



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if you have the time,
use it to get ready

Col. CHRIS HADFIELD - astronaut



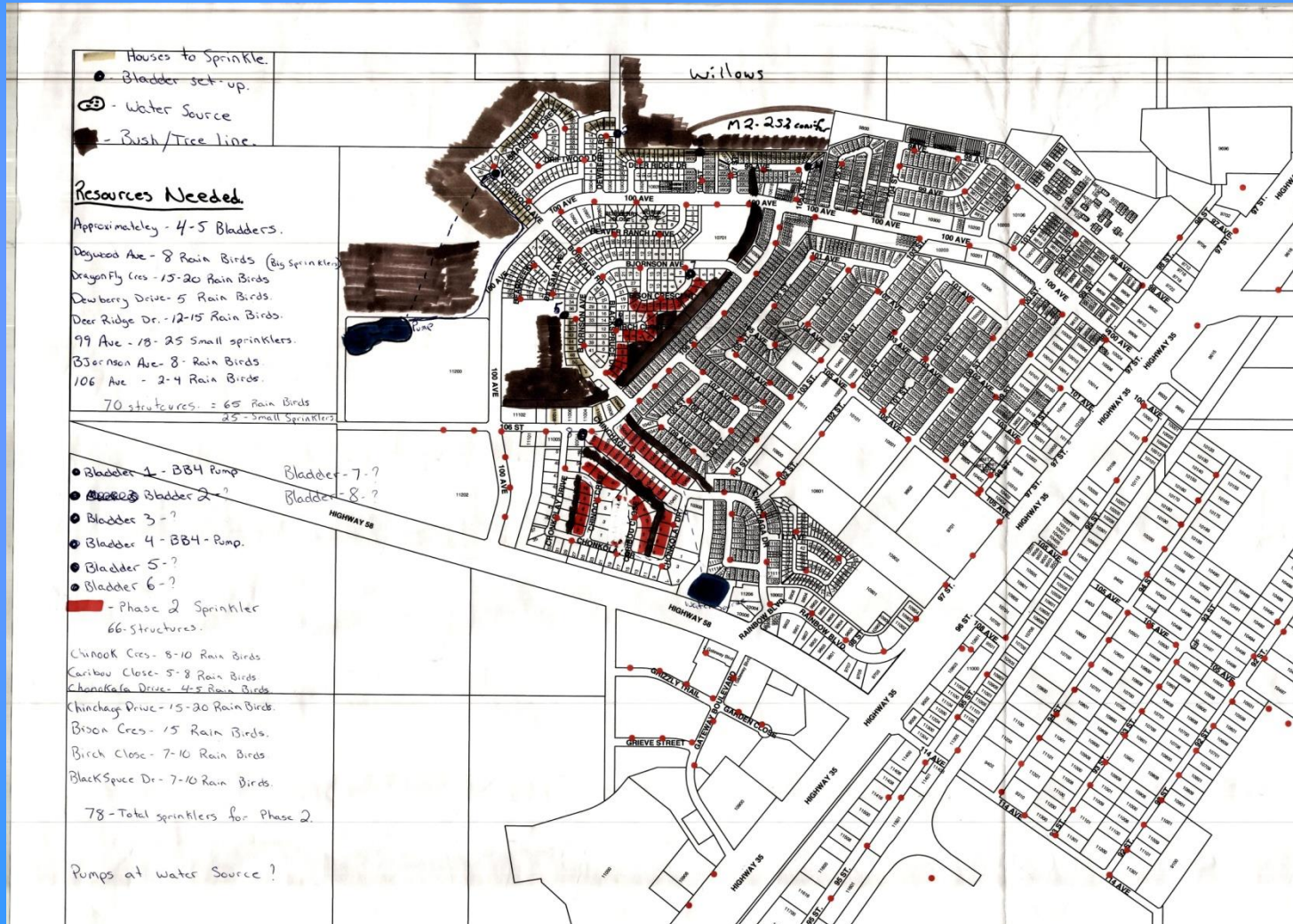
AN ASTRONAUT'S GUIDE TO EARTH

created by GraphicVent.com

"Gateway to the South"

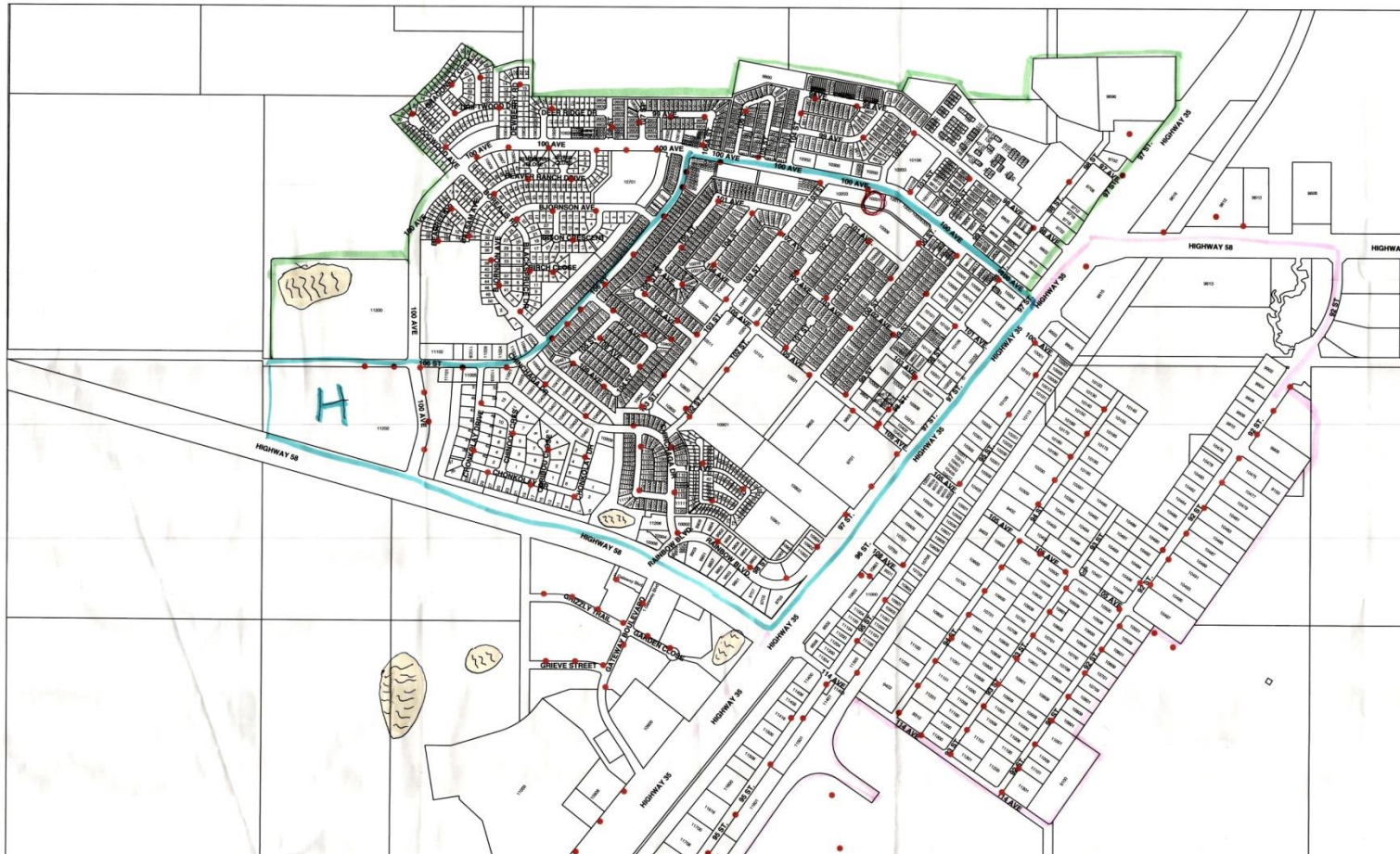


Monday – Sprinkler plans and training preps



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Monday – prep for fire to High Level



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Monday – June 29th

- Slave Lake provides more resources
- EOC set up
- Roles reviewed



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Tuesday June 30th

- Preparing for wind events
- Peace Region IMT put on standby to assist TOHL
- Sprinkler Trailers from MD Greenview and GP County arrived



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Tuesday

- North Tall Cree put on evacuation alert
- Notified of Fire affecting Hay River – possible evac
- Request for AEMA assistance
- More resources ordered from Slave Lake



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More Joint Training



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Train when you can!



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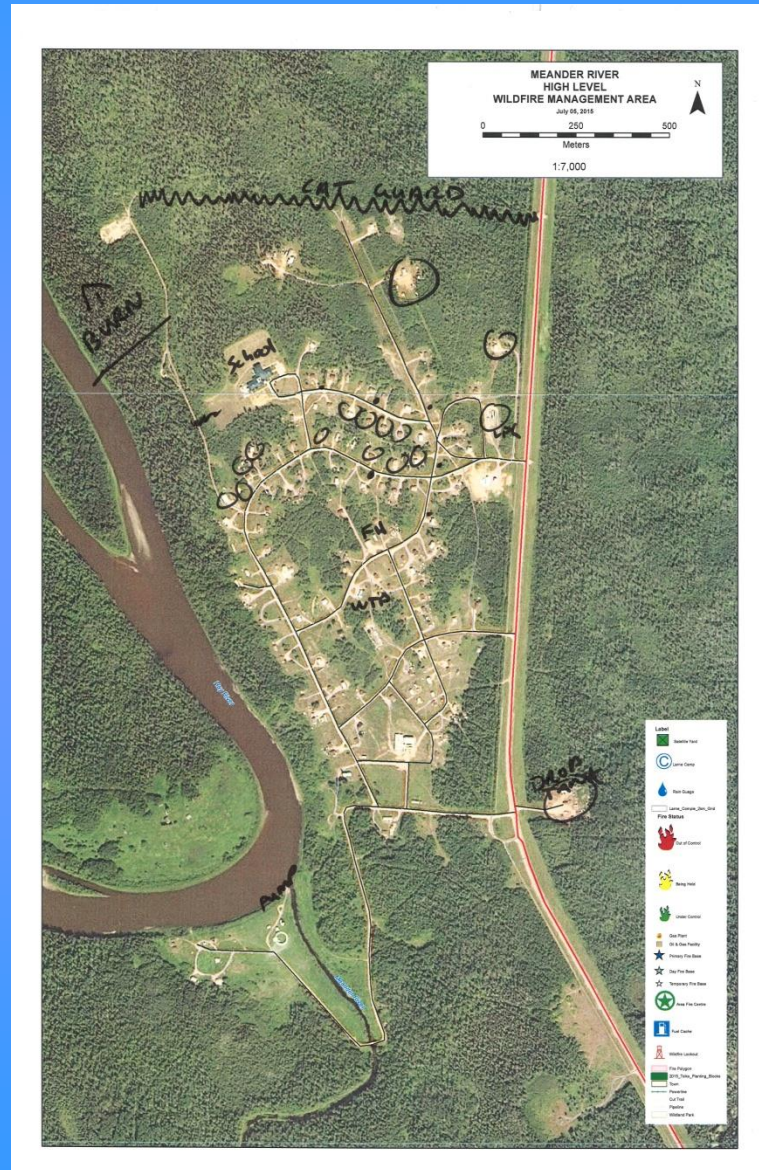
Wednesday – Canada Day



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Wednesday – Curve Ball!

- Briefing after parade – not good – 60 km winds predicted for Thursday.
- Meander River under threat
- Sprinkler plan done for Meander River

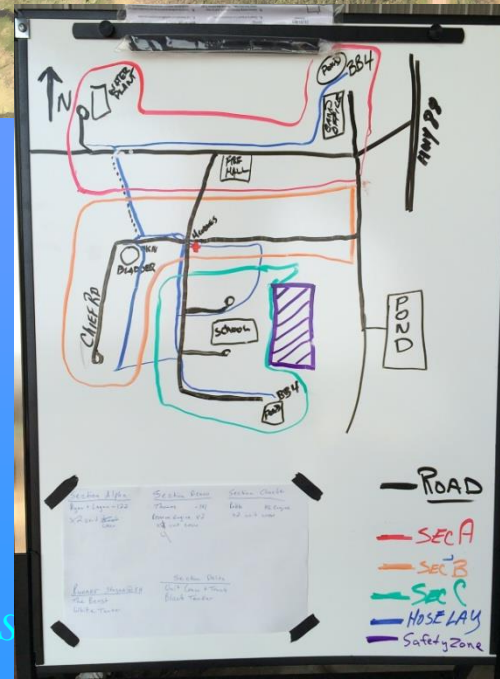


Wednesday – Curve Ball #2

Date & Time: Thu Jul 2 14:44:38 MDT 2015
Position: 058°03'4.3"N / 115°36'44.4"W
Altitude: 825m
Azimuth/Bearing: 007° N07E 0124mils (Magnetic)
Elevation Grade: +006%
Horizon Grade: -008%
Zoom: 1X
hwf249



- Slave Lake Crew Sent to North Tall Cree
- Reception Center on Standby and set up for potential evacuees

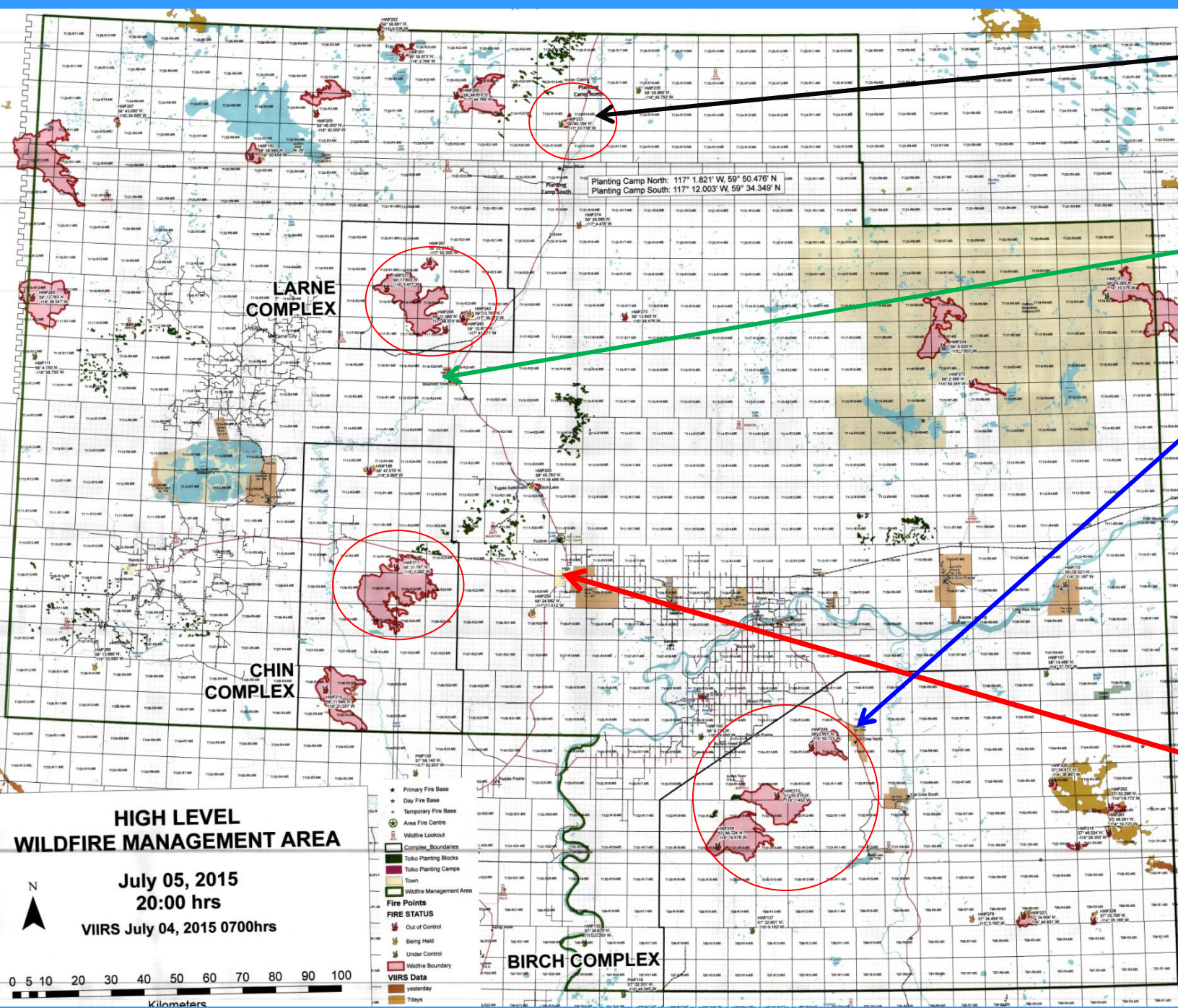


"Gateway to the S"

Steen River

Meander River

Tall Cree



HIGH LEVEL WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT AREA

July 05, 2015
20:00 hrs
VIIRS July 04, 2015 0700hrs

0 5 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Kilometers

- Primary Fire Base
- Day Fire Base
- Temporary Fire Base
- Area Fire Centre
- Wildfire Lookout
- Complex Boundaries
- Tolko Planting Blocks
- Town
- Wildfire Management Area
- Fire Points
- FIRE STATUS
- Out of Control
- Being Held
- Under Control
- Wildfire Boundary
- VIIRS Data
- yesterday
- Today

Planting Camp North: 117° 1.821' W, 59° 50.476' N
Planting Camp South: 117° 12.003' W, 59° 34.349' N

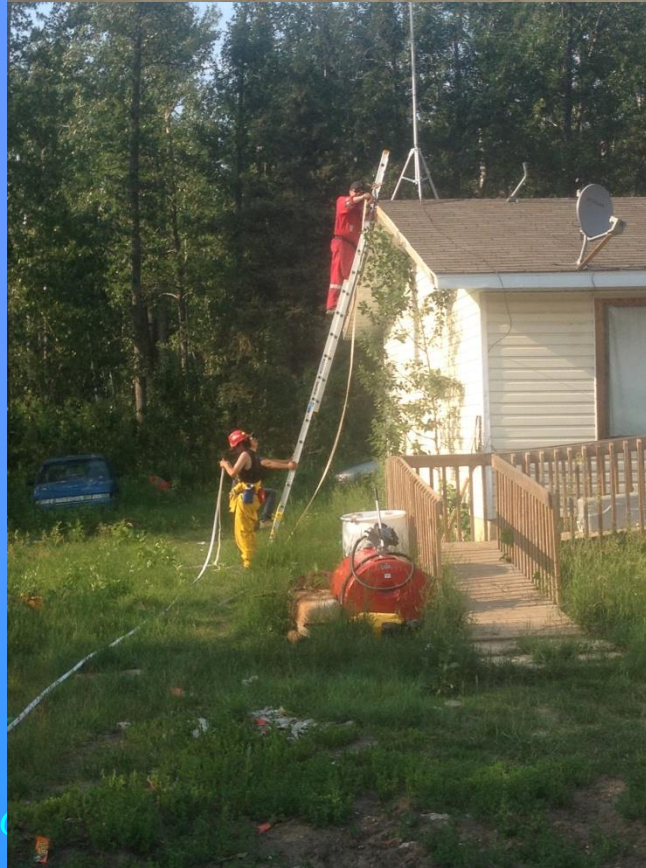
LARNE COMPLEX

CHIN COMPLEX

BIRCH COMPLEX

Thursday July 2

- High Winds – High Temps
- Fire west merged with other fires now over 20,000 ha.
- Tall Cree Evacuates – Second fire south of Tall Cree blocking highway.



Thursday

- AEMA in High Level Assisting with reception
- Tall Cree residents going to hotels
- Cots ordered for Arena and Friendship Center from AEMA
- ESS for TOHL fully stood up.
- Potential of up to 800 evacuees



Thursday

- HLFDD met with AESRD to discuss regional resourcing
- Agreed to provide operating and standby costs
- More resources ordered to cover region
- Structure fire call in High Level



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Thursday – Steen River



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Friday July 3rd

- HLFD – deploys to North Tall Cree with Slave Lake
- Now plans for protection of 3 communities



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Friday – Evac Centers



Friday – More Resources



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Saturday July 4th

- Preparing for PRIMT Command Team arrival – long term planning
- Evacuees still in High Level
- Running shift schedules for Tall Cree



Saturday

- Team Training
- Fire At Norbord
- Multi Department response



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Sunday July 5th

- Transfer of Command to DC Colin Buchan and PRIMT
- Fire Situation stabilizing
- Training daily occurrence



Monday – July 6th

- Meeting with AESRD
- Out of Town resources in High Level being released
- Fire Situation stabilizing due to rain
- Tall Cree resources being sent home
- Evacuees returning
- Closing of reception center



Tuesday July 7th

- Last of resources being sent home.
- Rain assisting
- Evac order lifted for Tall Cree



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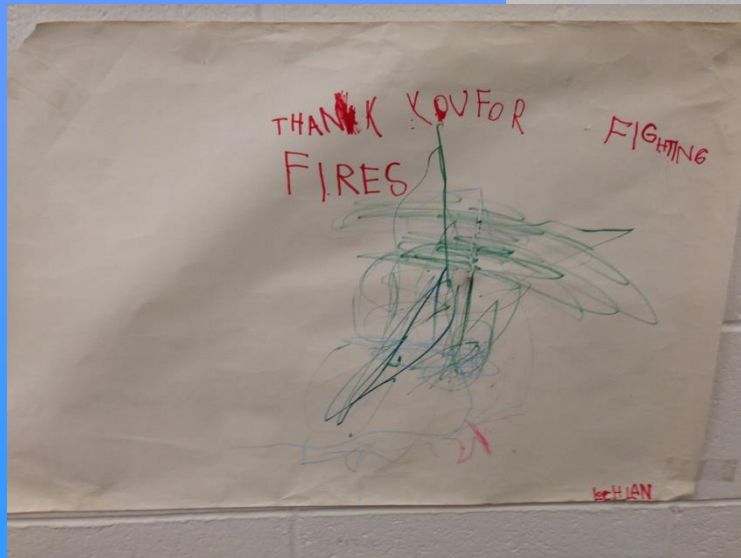
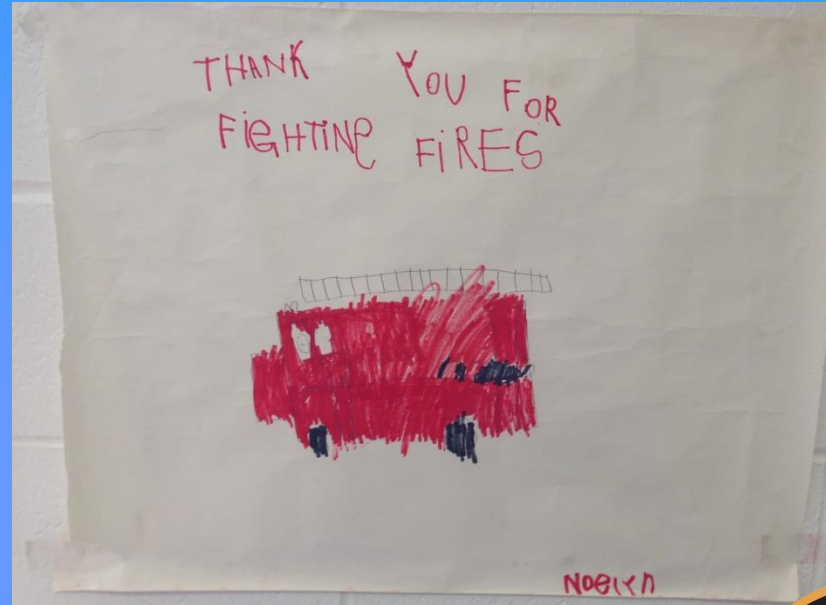
Wednesday July 8-12th

- Incident Command Trailer left in place
- Crews on recall
- Back to normal duties



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The Cool Stuff....



The Cool Stuff....



"Gateway to the South"



The Cool Stuff....



"Gateway to the South"

The Cool Stuff....



"Gateway to the South"

The Cool Stuff....



"Gateway to the South"

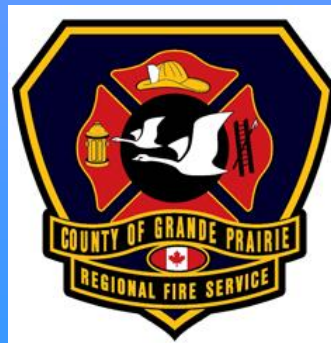
The Cool Stuff...



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What did we learn?

- Pre Planning
- Relationships
- Get Big Quick
- Communication



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Best Practices – What Worked and what we need...

- Regional WUI Teams
- Expertise
- Availability
- Flexibility



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Best Practices – What Worked and what we need...

- Type 3 IMT
- First Test of the PRIMT



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What we are now working on...

- Strengthening Regional Planning
- Northwest Alberta Emergency Resourcing Agreement



QUESTIONS?



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