



August 12, 2026, Issue Brief

Current Conditions

While there are currently no major wildfires causing widespread travel disruptions across the Kootenay Rockies, wildfire conditions remain elevated, and a number of prevention and access measures are in effect across the region. A [State of Provincial Emergency](#) remains in effect, and the BC Wildfire Service has implemented additional measures to reduce the risk of human-caused wildfires, including a recreational off-road vehicle prohibition throughout the Southeast Fire Centre. Localized [Area Restrictions](#) are also in effect around several active wildfires, and one Evacuation Alert remains in place.

Wildfire smoke remains the most widespread condition affecting the region. Yellow and Orange [Air Quality Warnings](#) have been issued across portions of the Kootenay Rockies in recent days, with smoke conditions varying considerably between communities and throughout the day. Visitors may experience periods of reduced air quality and visibility even in areas that are not near an active wildfire.

Dry conditions also continue across much of the region, with [drought conditions](#) affecting several watersheds. Combined with the potential for [thunderstorms and lightning](#) over the coming days, conditions remain conducive to new wildfire starts. Lightning-caused fires may not become visible immediately following a storm, and wildfire activity can change quickly.

These conditions reinforce the importance of continued wildfire prevention and preparedness, even in the absence of a major wildfire currently affecting the region.

Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Prohibition – Southeast Fire Centre

Effective August 10, BC Wildfire Service has [prohibited the recreational use of off-road vehicles](#) on Crown land throughout the Southeast Fire Centre. The measure applies to ATVs, motorcycles and off-road side-by-side vehicles and is currently in effect until October 9, unless rescinded earlier.

The prohibition does not represent a general closure of Crown land or prohibit all ORV use. Commercial and industrial users operating ORVs for business purposes are exempt, as are customers who remain in the presence of a commercial or industrial operator. Private land and national parks are also outside the scope of the prohibition.

Vehicles that can legally be driven on a highway may continue to use established roads on Crown land, including Forest Service Roads and other qualifying authorized roads, but must remain on the established road. Other road closures, Area Restrictions or access measures may still apply.

What this means for tourism partners

- Be clear that this is a prohibition on recreational ORV use on Crown land, not a general backcountry or Crown land closure.
- Commercial operators should review the order and its exemptions to determine how it applies to their operations.
- Visitors travelling on Forest Service Roads should continue to check for road closures, Area Restrictions and other access measures.
- Refer visitors and businesses to the official BCWS order when questions arise about specific activities or access.

KRT has prepared an Information Bulletin explaining the prohibition and its tourism implications. [\[SE Fire Centre Recreational Off-Road Vehicle Prohibition – Information Bulletin HERE\]](#)

Wildfire Update

There are currently no major wildfires causing widespread travel disruptions across the Kootenay Rockies; however, several active wildfires continue to be monitored for potential community, access and visitor impacts.

One [Evacuation Alert](#) is currently in effect in the region in association with wildfire [N51066](#). An Evacuation Alert means residents and visitors in the affected area should be prepared to leave on short notice if conditions change. It does not mean the area has been evacuated.

Area Restrictions Remain in Effect

Several BC Wildfire Service Area Restrictions remain in effect across the region. An Area Restriction applies to a specific geographic area and may be established to limit the risk of a fire, address a public safety concern or avoid interference with fire control. It should not automatically be interpreted as a closure of the surrounding community, destination or broader backcountry area.

Tourism partners should review the individual order and map when assessing impacts, as proximity to an Area Restriction does not necessarily mean a tourism operation, recreation area or travel route is within the restricted area.

KRT has also developed Understanding Wildfire Prohibitions and Restrictions to help tourism partners interpret these measures and communicate them accurately. [\[Understanding Wildfire Prohibitions and Restrictions\]](#)

Current Area Restrictions include:

- [Mount Rollins](#) – N51257 (SW of Needles) - **New**
- [Hope Creek](#) North – N71254 (NE of Poplar Creek) - **New**
- [Sea Lion Mountain](#) – N41412 (NE of Golden)
- [Jumbo Creek](#) – N21071 (W of Invermere)
- [Matthew Creek](#) – N11020 (W of Kimberley)
- [Calamity Creek](#) – N11036 (NW of Kimberley)
- [Inonoaklin Creek](#) - N51198 (NW of Needles, Hwy 6)
- [Poplar Creek](#) – N71253 (NE of Meadow Creek/Kaslo, Hwy 31)

Visitors are encouraged to check the BC Wildfire Service and DriveBC before travelling and to respect all posted closures and directions from emergency personnel.

Monitoring Resources

Conditions can change quickly between issue briefs. The following official resources provide the most current information on wildfire activity, emergency information, travel conditions, and air quality.

Wildfire Information

- [BC Wildfire Dashboard](#)
- [InciWeb](#) (US)

Travel & Emergency Information

- [EmergencyInfoBC](#)
- [Regional District of East Kootenay](#) emergency page
- [Regional District of West Kootenay](#) emergency page
- [Golden & Area](#) emergency page
- [Revelstoke & Area](#) emergency page
- [DriveBC](#)

Air Quality & Smoke

- [BC Air Quality Warnings](#)
- [Environment Canada Air Quality Health Index](#)
- Government of Canada [FireWork](#)

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