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Wildfire activities across the Kootenay Rockies have begun to stabilize following the significant wind event over the weekend. Highway 95 has reopened, power has been restored throughout the Columbia Valley, and essential travel services, including fuel and EV charging, have resumed along major travel corridors. However, localized evacuation measures, Area Restrictions, and active wildfire response continue to affect several areas. This issue brief summarizes the latest conditions, wildfire updates, and visitor considerations.

Wait Creek Wildfire (N11360) – Travel Access Improving

The [Wait Creek](#) wildfire remains the primary operational incident affecting the Columbia Valley. An [Evacuation Order](#) remains in effect for properties in the immediate vicinity of the fire, while some surrounding areas have been downgraded to an [Evacuation Alert](#). Highway 93 has reopened, but a portion of [Highway 95A](#) remains closed, and emergency response operations continue.

What does this mean for visitors?

Visitors travelling through the Columbia Valley should continue to respect all evacuation areas, road closures, and traffic control measures, and should not attempt to access closed areas. Do not attempt to bypass closures using local roads or forest service roads, as they may be required for emergency operations, evacuation traffic, and wildfire operations.

Bootleg Complex / Matthew Creek Wildfire (N11020) – Kimberley Area

The [Matthew Creek](#) wildfire experienced wind-driven growth during Saturday's strong wind event, and BC Wildfire Service is expected to update the mapped fire perimeter to reflect recent fire

growth. Firefighters continue suppression efforts, and the Area Restriction for the Matthew Creek area remains in effect.

What does this mean for visitors?

Visitors should continue to avoid the restricted area and respect all closures around the Matthew Creek wildfire. Kimberley remains open to visitors, and there is currently no indication that an Evacuation Alert for the City of Kimberley is anticipated. Visitors should check current conditions before travelling, particularly if planning outdoor recreation west of Kimberley.

Area Restrictions Remain in Effect

Although travel conditions have improved in parts of the region, Area Restrictions remain in effect around several active wildfires, including:

- [Matthew Creek](#) (Bootleg Complex) – West of Kimberley
- [Poplar Creek](#) – northwest of Meadow Creek
- [Calamity Creek](#) – West of Dewar Creek
- [Inonoaklin Creek](#) – Near Needles
- [Jumbo Creek](#) – West of Invermere

Visitors planning backcountry recreation should confirm that their destination remains open before travelling and choose an alternative destination if their planned route or recreation area is affected.

Know Before You Go

Most of the Kootenay Rockies remain open to visitors; however, localized wildfire activity continues to affect access in some areas. Before travelling:

- Check DriveBC before travelling, as road conditions and closures can change quickly.
- Review BC Wildfire Service information for current wildfire activity, Area Restrictions, and evacuation information.
- Confirm that hiking trails, campgrounds, and backcountry recreation areas are open before travelling.
- Respect all Area Restrictions, evacuation areas, and road closures. Do not attempt to bypass closures using local roads or forest service roads.

- Be prepared for changing smoke conditions and allow extra travel time where wildfire response operations are underway.

**This report includes content generated with AI assistance, with all information verified and approved by Kootenay Rockies Tourism staff. Final content reflects our organization's expertise and commitment to accuracy.*