



*Pacific NorthWest  
Economic Region*

*The Pacific Northwest Economic Region Presents:*

# **Managing the Unprecedented 2023 Wildfire Season**

**Thursday, November 16 | 2:15pm-3:15pm**



# NWT EMO – 2023 Wildfire Season

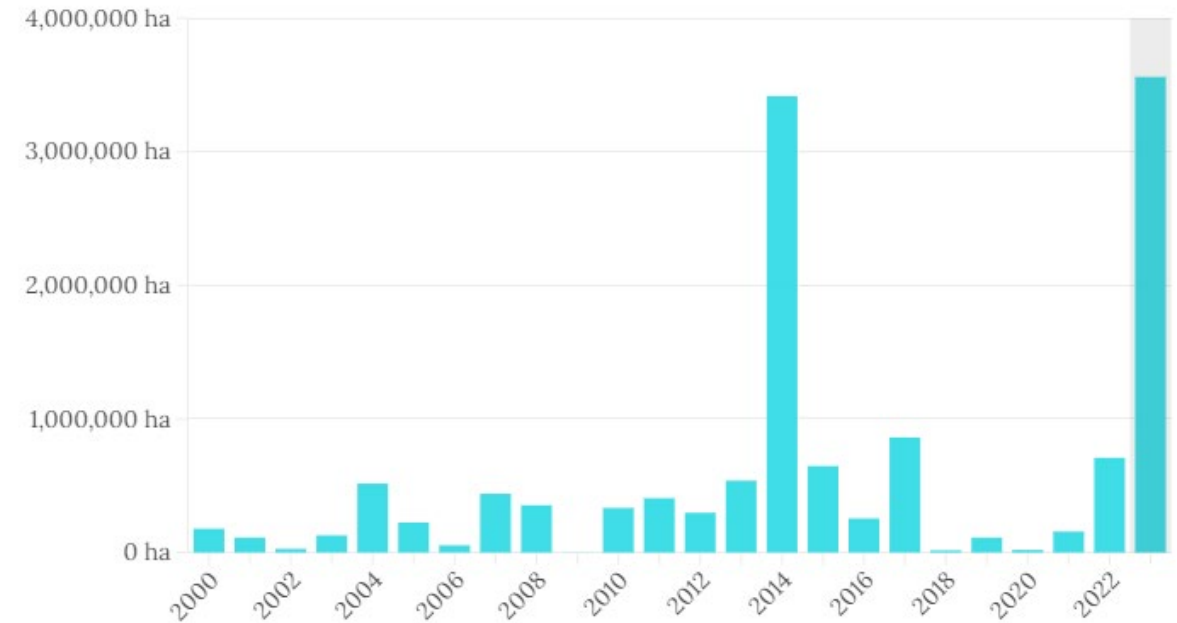
November 2023



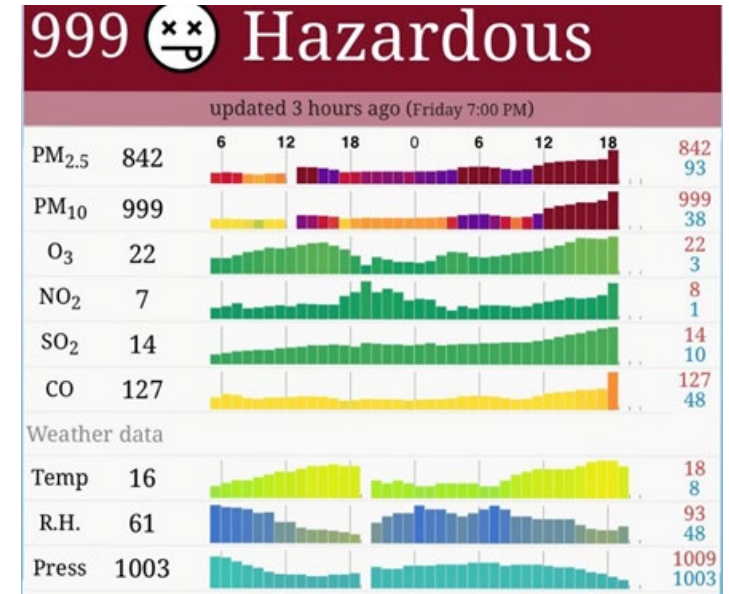
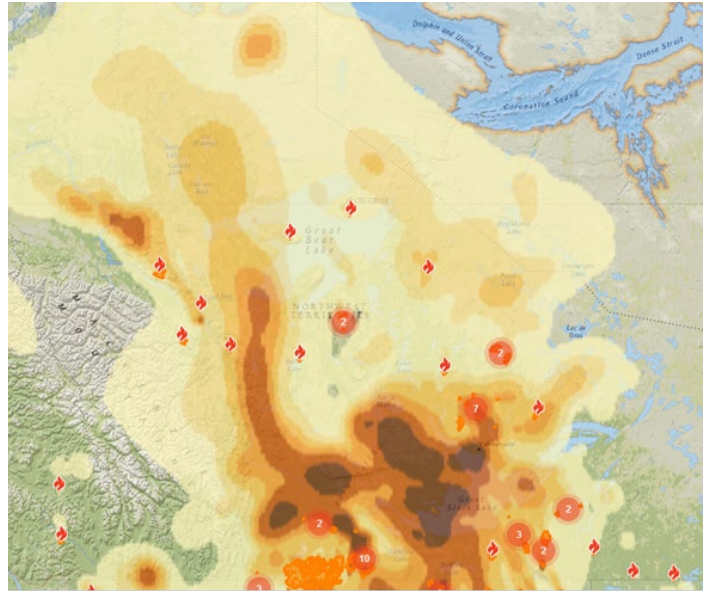
Government of  
Northwest Territories

# 2023 Wildfire Statistics

- 303 fires in total
- 4,163,423 hectares burned within the NWT
- 91 fires still active as of October 18



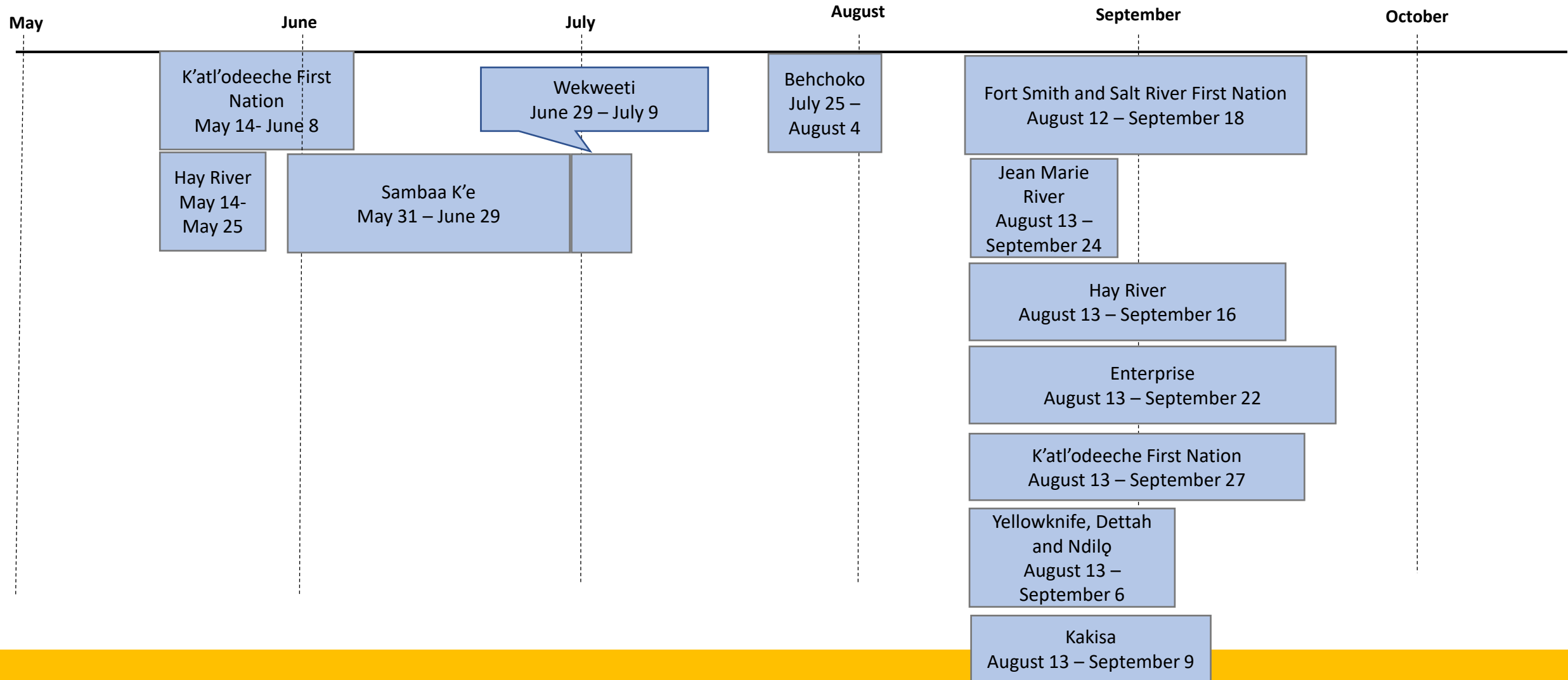
Source: [CIFFC](#) • \* 2023 values include the season up to September 2.

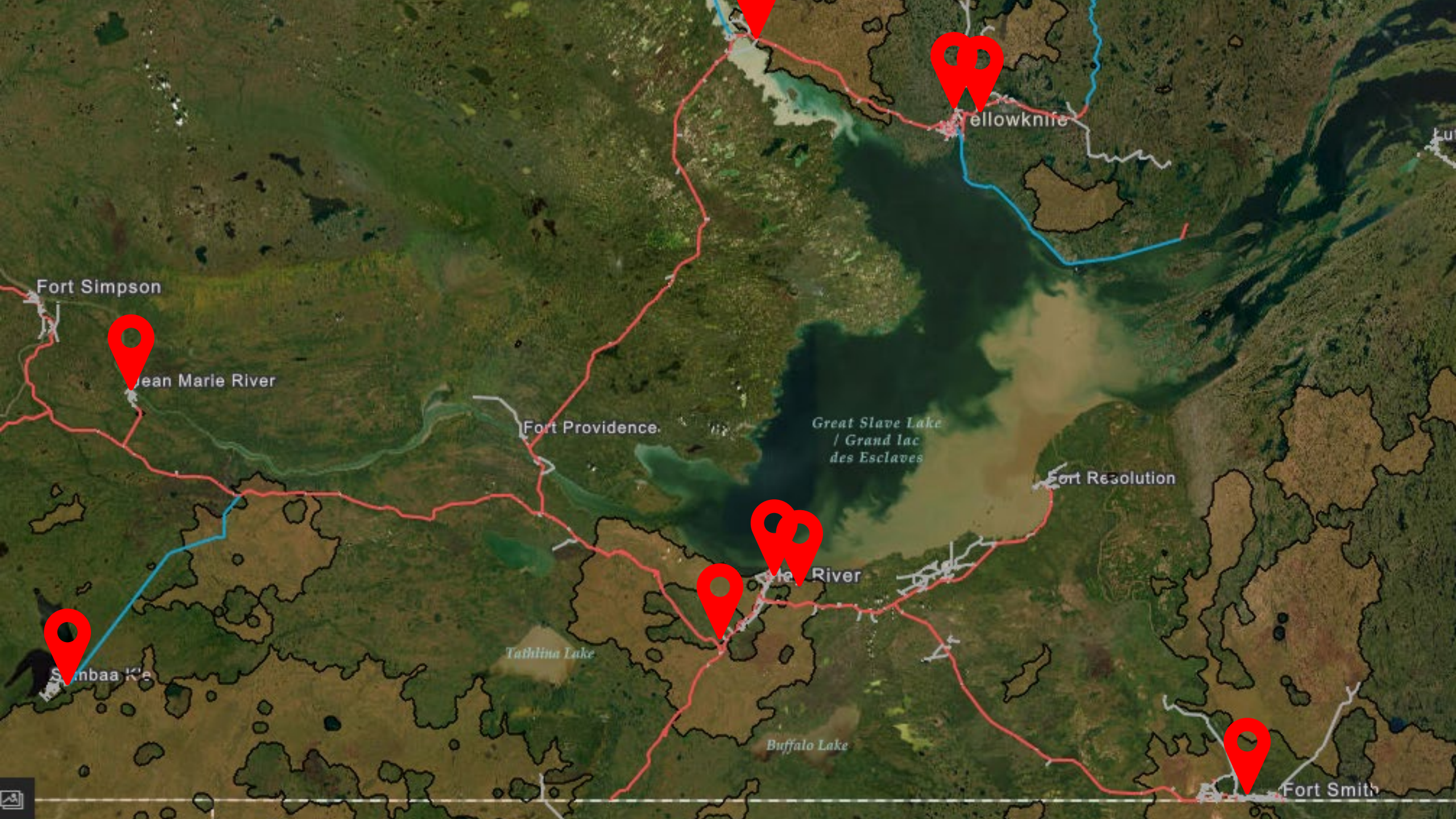


# Wildfire Smoke

- FireSmoke.ca – impacts across the territory all summer long
- CBC News - mid-day in Yellowknife
- Air Quality Index - PM 10 - 999, PM 2.5 - 842

# Summer 2023 Evacuation Orders





Fort Simpson

Jean Marie River

Fort Providence

Yellowknife

Great Slave Lake / Grand lac des Esclaves

Fort Resolution

Slave River

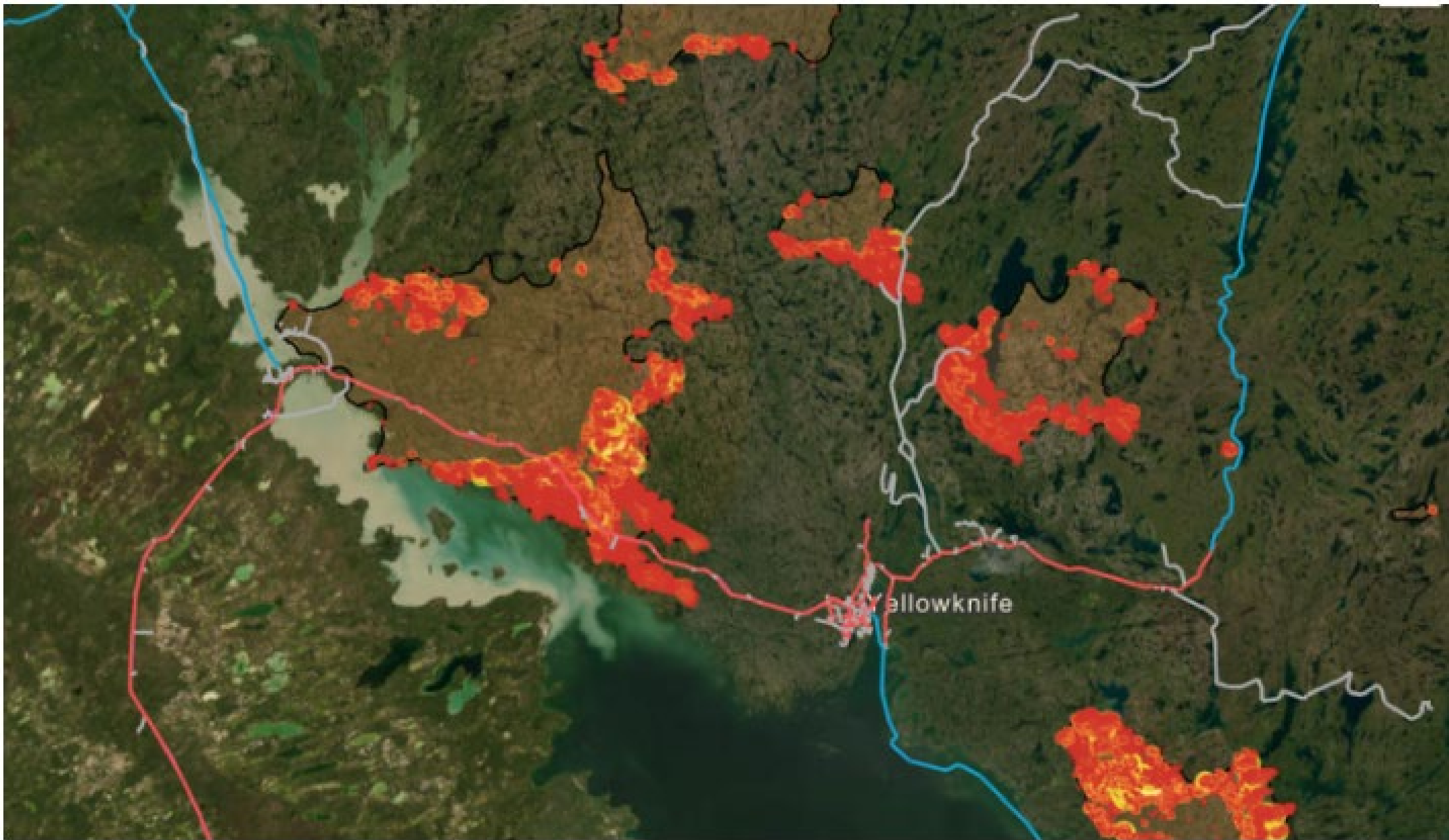
Tathlina Lake

Buffalo Lake

Fort Smith



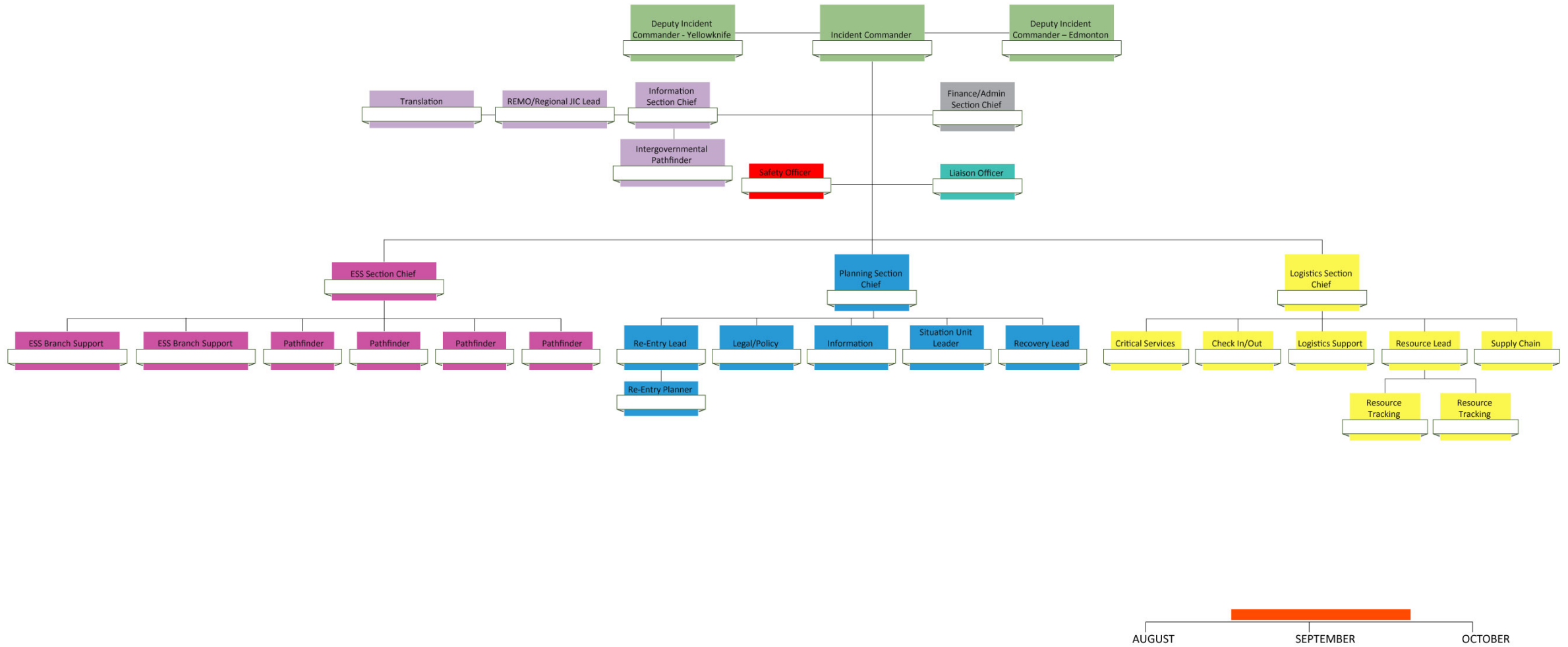
Burned vehicles outside Enterprise, N.W.T. on Monday. RCMP on Monday morning reported that about 12 vehicles had been 'immobilized or destroyed by the fire.' (Submitted to CBC by Ron Pierrot)



Satellite imagery of burned areas and hot spots of wildfire ZF105 on August 16



# Incident Management Team Structure: Mid-August – Mid-September



# Challenges

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- Constant state of change
- Surge Staff
- Sustainment of Staffing
- Appetite for information
- Compounding events:
  - Communications
  - Supply Chain
  - Hosting Capacity
- Damage
  - **Enterprise:** 90% of the community was destroyed including severe damage to critical fibre line infrastructure
  - **Hay River, K'atlodeeche First Nation, Behchoko:** Several homes and structures destroyed





# Successes

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- Public Safety
- Incident Command System
- Outside agency support and collaboration
  - Yukon, Alberta and Manitoba EMOs
  - Public Safety Canada – Coast Guard, 1st Canadian Ranger Patrol Group, CanTask Force 2
- Public Alerting System

# Questions?

For a review of the 2023 NWT wildfire season chronology see:

[https://www.ntassembly.ca/sites/assembly/files/td\\_1007-192.pdf](https://www.ntassembly.ca/sites/assembly/files/td_1007-192.pdf)

Steve Roberts

Vice President Operations,  
AE – Aviation Operations,  
Chief Operating Officer



The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (SPSA) is a Treasury Board Crown Agency responsible for provincial emergency management, fire safety and wildfire management in our province and managing Saskatchewan's 911 emergency dispatching services.

Our vision is to enhance, support and integrate public safety in Saskatchewan.

Our mission is to safeguard and protect the people, property and resources of Saskatchewan through partnerships, coordinated planning, education, prevention, mitigation, response and recovery. SPSA staff work according to our values of accountability, collaboration, excellence, innovation and service.



SPSA is an All-Hazard provincial agency which includes all four pillars of Emergency Management

- prevention
- response (floods, wildfires, weather events, evacuations and other events)
- mitigation
- recovery.



SPSA manages the following:

- the 911 system
- the Office of the Fire Commissioner
- the public safety telecommunication network
- the wildfire air tanker fleet (own/operate/maintain)
- the Disaster Assistance Program
- the provincial notification system
- the provincial Emergency Operations Center
- national and international emergency management mutual aid agreements



[saskpublicsafety.ca](http://saskpublicsafety.ca)



**Saskatchewan**  
PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCY

## 2023 season summary

497 wildfires occurred with 1,466,644 hectares burned. Power poles and remote cabins were burned.

2023 was one of the longest and most impacting seasons in the last decade.

SPSA supported the evacuation of 340 residents from 3 northern communities and assisted our partner, Meadow Lake Tribal Council, with the evacuation of 1060 residents from 6 northern communities due to wildfire threat and/or wildfire smoke impacts.

SPSA was able to provide wildfire assistance to our mutual aid partners in Alaska, Alberta, Quebec, British Columbia, Yukon, Parks Canada as well as firefighters, Incident Command Team members, air tankers, equipment and support staff to the Northwest Territories.

[saskpublicsafety.ca](https://saskpublicsafety.ca)

