

**This FAQ includes answers to a collection of questions received by the SLRD.
This document will be updated as additional information becomes available.**

August 11, 2023

Q: What is the current status of the Downton Lake wildfire?

A: The Downton Lake wildfire started as a result of lightning on Thursday, July 13, 2023. As of August 11, the Downton Lake wildfire is reported to be 2,596 hectares in size. There are 63 firefighters, 18 heavy equipment assigned to this fire, with 12 helicopters available to the Bendor Range Complex. A detailed update is available on the BC wildfire Service (BCWS) website:
<https://wildfiresituation.nrs.gov.bc.ca/incidents?fireYear=2023&incidentNumber=K71649>

Q: What is the current status of the SLRD Evacuation Orders and Alerts related to the Downton Lake wildfire?

A: There is an Evacuation Alert and an Evacuation Order in place in relation to the Downton Lake wildfire:

[Evacuation Order: Gun Lake and Lajoie Lake](#) – SLRD Electoral Area A

[Evacuation Alert: Gun Creek and Tyaughton Lake areas](#) – SLRD Electoral Area A

One of the top priorities is getting people safely back into their homes. The SLRD is developing a re-entry and recovery plan, so that when the wildfire situation improves and we are able to rescind the Evacuation Order, we will be able to move quickly to facilitate re-entry in a safe and coordinated manner.

Q: What is the current status of hydro in the community?

A: Initially 127 customers were without power along Gun Lake Road West, due to damage from the fire. As of Thursday, August 10, some restorations have been completed and 99 customers are still out. BC Hydro's first priority was to remove hazards and clear a path for wildfire crews. BC Hydro crews are actively working in areas deemed safe by BCWS for the restoration, including hauling poles and transformers into staging areas near Gun Lake. Residents are asked to be aware of BCWS and BC Hydro crews and equipment in the area.

While the estimated restoration time is August 18 at 8 p.m. on bchydro.com, the wildfire is making this a challenging situation, and the exact restoration time is not available.

This work is being done in coordination with BC Wildfire Services and the SLRD. The safety of our crews working in the area is also of the utmost importance. For the most up to date information, please visit BC Hydro's [Outage map \(bchydro.com\)](http://bchydro.com).

Any planned outages unrelated to the fire in the Gun Lake and Gold Bridge area have been postponed.

Crews are coordinating efforts with BCWS and working through the weekend to restore power. Some customers will come back on through next week, with the last customers targeted to have power by August 18.

Q: When will the Evacuation Order be lifted?

A: The SLRD works in collaboration with BCWS to determine when public safety conditions will allow the re-entry of residents. We continue to work closely with BCWS to assess the risk to public safety and once the conditions are safe, we will move to allow community re-entry.

Q: What can I do to prepare for the lifting of the Evacuation Order?

A: The SLRD is developing a re-entry plan and package for residents on Evacuation Order due to the Downton Lake wildfire. That information will be shared with residents as soon as it is finalized. Additional information is available on the SLRD [website](#).

Q: If my property was affected by the wildfire, when can I return home?

A: This will depend on the scope and nature of the damage/loss. Property owners should consult with their insurance provider to begin the claim process.

Q: What do I do if I need to talk to someone?

A: Wellness supports, including access to counselling, are available. Links to these resources are available on the SLRD [website](#).

Q: Where do I go for more information?

A: Updates are posted on the SLRD [website](#)

Residents can email the SLRD directly at eocinformation@slrd.bc.ca with additional questions.