

July 27, 2026

**Mayor's Report –
Recognition and Appreciation Following the 2026 Wildfire Emergency**

Mayor Les Wright

Good evening, Members of Council, Administration, and residents of Fort Simpson.

Before I begin my regular report this evening, I would like to take a few moments to recognize and sincerely thank the many individuals and organizations whose dedication, professionalism, and generosity helped our community through one of the most challenging periods in our history.

The wildfire emergency tested our community in ways we could never have imagined. Throughout this difficult time, we witnessed remarkable courage, cooperation, and resilience. On behalf of the Council of the Village of Fort Simpson, I extend our deepest appreciation to everyone who contributed to protecting our residents and supporting our community.

First and foremost, I would like to recognize the Village of Fort Simpson Fire Department. Our firefighters demonstrated exceptional commitment and professionalism throughout the emergency. Their willingness to serve under difficult and often dangerous conditions is something our entire community can be proud of.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to our Fire Chief, whose outstanding leadership, calm decision-making, and tireless dedication helped guide our emergency response from beginning to end.

Our gratitude extends to the staff of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) for their continuous guidance, expertise, and support throughout the emergency response and recovery efforts.

I would also like to thank Chief Antoine for his leadership, cooperation, daily Community update and commitment to working together in the best interests of our entire community.

Special recognition is extended to all LEMO members who faithfully attended the daily emergency meetings. Your commitment, thoughtful discussions, and coordinated decision-making ensured that important information was shared and that critical decisions were made in a timely manner.

To my fellow Members of Council, thank you for your dedication throughout this emergency. Whether assisting evacuees in Yellowknife or supporting residents here in Fort Simpson, your willingness to serve our community during a time of uncertainty demonstrates true public service.

I would also like to acknowledge the outstanding work of the staff of the Department of Environment and Climate Change and the Department of Infrastructure for their exceptional support. Their long hours, expertise, organization, and commitment ensured that emergency operations continued smoothly and that residents received timely and accurate information.

A special thank you is extended to the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Fire Crews from the Northwest Territories, Yukon, Alberta, and British Columbia, whose courage, professionalism, and tireless efforts played a critical role in protecting our community.

We also wish to recognize the dedicated Incident Management Teams, the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) crews, and the forestry staff, whose expertise, planning, coordination, and countless hours of work ensured that emergency operations were carried out safely and effectively.

Together, these highly skilled teams worked around the clock under extremely challenging conditions, providing confidence and reassurance to our residents throughout the emergency.

We also extend our heartfelt appreciation to our health care workers, who continued to provide essential medical care and support to residents throughout the evacuation and recovery. Your compassion, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to our community's well-being are deeply appreciated.

To our Village staff, thank you for your flexibility, professionalism, and willingness to assume whatever responsibilities were required. Every department contributed to the emergency response, and your efforts did not go unnoticed.

Our sincere thanks also go to the many local contractors and retailers who stepped forward whenever assistance was needed. Your cooperation and support played an important role in helping our community respond quickly and effectively.

I would also like to recognize the members of the RCMP for their professionalism, dedication, and commitment to maintaining public safety throughout the emergency. Your presence and service provided reassurance to our residents during an uncertain time.

To the many volunteers who generously gave their time, energy, and compassion, we are deeply grateful. Your willingness to help neighbors and support those affected by the evacuation reflects the very best of the Village of Fort Simpson.

I would also like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the City of Yellowknife, its staff, partner organizations, volunteers, and everyone involved in welcoming and supporting the residents of Fort Simpson during the evacuation. Your hospitality, kindness, and organization provided comfort and reassurance during an incredibly difficult time.

While it is impossible to mention every individual and organization that contributed, please know that your efforts were seen, appreciated, and will not be forgotten. Every act of service—large or small—made a meaningful difference.

This emergency reminded us that the strength of Fort Simpson is not found only in our buildings or infrastructure, but in our people. It demonstrated what can be accomplished when governments, Indigenous leadership, emergency responders, volunteers, businesses, and residents come together with a shared commitment to protecting one another.

On behalf of Council and the residents of the Village of Fort Simpson, thank you for your dedication, your sacrifice, and your unwavering commitment to our community.

Together, we faced an extraordinary challenge, and together, we emerged stronger.

Finally, to the residents of Fort Simpson who were forced to evacuate their homes, we recognize the uncertainty, disruption, and personal hardship that this emergency placed upon you and your families. We know that leaving your homes and community was not easy, and we sincerely thank you for your patience, resilience, and cooperation throughout this difficult time. Your understanding and support allowed emergency responders and partner agencies to carry out their work safely and effectively. We are grateful for the trust you placed in us, and we are pleased that, together, we were able to welcome you home safely.

Thank you.

Les Wright
Mayor