

MARATHON INFORMATION CENTRE



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THE FOREST FIRE AT WHITE LAKE

On May 3, 1999 at 1:50pm, the first of the Ministry of Natural Resources personnel arrived on scene to a fire that would later be named WAWA #5.

Burning approximately 38 500 hectares of land over an eight week period, WAWA #5 was a man caused fire by the railway workers at Crocker Lake.

During the eight weeks it burned, the nearby Mobert Reservation would have to be evacuated, while any changes in the wind would have caused certain destruction for the small community of White River.

The heat from the fire, causing highway shutdowns several times in a 2-day period, was so intense that having all the water bombers in Canada would have no serious effect on it.

At its end, firefighters were still on duty searching and extinguishing any remnants of the massive WAWA #5.