

Williams Lake and Area Community Wildfire Roundtable

Approved Summary as of May 6, 2025

Meeting Date: November 13, 2024, 1:00PM to 4:00PM

Location: Williams Lake First Nation, 2561 Quigli Drive

Present (for at least a portion of the meeting) (*virtual participants in italics*):

Alkali Resource Management – *Francis Johnson*

British Columbia Wildfire Service (BCWS) Williams Lake Zone – Dylan Simpson, Tom Foley, Peter Holub,
Russell Murphy, Angie Delainey, *Matt Lees*

Cariboo Regional District – Travis Flanagan, Director Maureen Lebourdais, Director Eric de Vries

City of Williams Lake – Evan Dean

CN Rail – *Abigail Campbell*

Forest Enhancement Society of BC – *Brian Watson*

Forsite Consultants – Lorena Tillotson

Fraser Basin Council – Mike Simpson (contractor), Jane Wellburn, *Alex de Chantal*

Interested individuals or consultants – Ken Day

Ministry of Forests, Cariboo-Chilcotin District – Daniel Merth

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship – Becky Bings

Tolko – Marco Passeri

University of British Columbia – *Mike Stefanuk*

Williams Lake First Nation – John Walker

Woodlots BC – Mark Tamas

Xatsull – *Simon Bett*

1. Welcome, Introductions, Agenda and Objectives

Mike Simpson, a facilitator and professional forester on contract to Fraser Basin Council, welcomed everyone and acknowledged unceded Secwepemc Territory. A round of introductions took place for people in the room and those participating online. Williams Lake First Nation was thanked for hosting the meeting. The agenda was accepted as presented, early departures were noted.

2. Approval of previous summary/Status review of action items

The meeting summary from May 15, 2024 was approved and is now posted [online](#). Action items were reviewed; those that remain or new ones are at the end of this summary.

3. What's Underway, Who's Doing What for Wildfire Preparedness

City of Williams Lake Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan (CWRP)

Lorena Tillotson gave an overview and [presentation](#) about the CWRP that the City is developing. Reach out to [Lorena Tillotson](#) if you want to have her present to your group about the **Williams Lake CWRP**, or to provide input to include in the CWRP, which will be finalized in 2025. Key point is that it will cover the City plus a 1km buffer, and not be for the large area of the current community wildfire protection plan (CWPP) which is now 5 years old.

Discussion of what to include in the CWRP, and how to engage residents noted the following:

- Engage residents while the Williams Lake river valley fire is fresh in their minds
- Develop policy to address wildfire resiliency, not just FireSmart education
- Would like to see funding programs to help private landowners FireSmart properties
- Find ways to move from FireSmart assessments to accomplishments
- Promote ways to “blitz the problems” on peoples’ properties, similar to what United Way did pre-COVID, perhaps either with contract crews or non-profit groups
- Consider neighbourhood recognition programs (Alan Westhaver is a fan)

City of Williams Lake – other updates

Lorena noted that the reporting on previous [Union of BC Municipalities Community Resiliency Investment Program](#) finally got completed, which enabled the implementation of the Westridge fuel treatment to finally get started, thanks to the quick efforts of John Walker, Danny Merth. Future funding application includes doing some prescribed burns on small grassy areas within the City.

Cariboo Regional District

Irene Israel, Manager of Emergency Program Services, provided the following in advance of the meeting:

[The CRD have] put in an application for [Union of BC Municipalities Community Resiliency Investment Program](#) for a

- 1) FireSmart position and training
- 2) FireSmart education throughout the CRD
- 3) 6 CWRPs for Electoral Areas D, E, F, G, H, and L

The remaining 6 CWRPs [are] planned to be completed in 2026.

I was also hoping to introduce to you the Project Lead for the CWRPs– Leanne Rivet who is the Emergency Program Coordinator at the CRD

Travis Flanagan noted that he’s now within Protective Services department of CRD, and has been doing a lot of FireSmart education events over the summer and fall.

Electoral Area L Director Eric de Vries noted that he’s keen to see a similar community wildfire roundtable in his area of the South Cariboo and is pushing for funding to implement activities. Electoral Area F Director Maureen LeBourdais noted it will be a big job to get CWRPs completed for all the unique unincorporated communities of the CRD.

Ministry of Forests, Cariboo-Chilcotin District

Daniel Merth noted that there are lots of wildland-urban interface wildfire risk reduction (WUI WRR) plans (formerly known as tactical plans) underway in the Cariboo-Chilcotin, including Anahim Lake, Nimpo Lake, Big Cree and Sheep Creek/Meldrum. Closer to Williams Lake, projects underway that MOF is coordinating include pile burning at Fox Mountain, Comer Hill Trailer Park and IFP unit 29 above West Fraser sawmill. He acknowledged BCWS for their communications work and putting out digital signs to advise the public about pile burning and minimize the likelihood of calls to VFDs. He also noted that Williams Lake Community Forest has been doing spot burning of large juniper clumps.

BC Wildfire Service

Tom Foley noted that City of Quesnel is doing a similar approach in updating their 5 year old CWPP, and that the District of 100 Mile House is preparing a CWRP. Regarding the ongoing mapping action item, he

noted that comprehensive kml (Google Earth) files can be shared of past fuel treatment areas in the short term, and that BCWS is creating an internal dashboard which will also be available in iMapBC. *[Post-meeting, Tom shared a list of data resources, it's in Appendix 1.]* He noted that forest cover is being updated from old fuel treatments conducted under UBCM's Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative (SWPI) which ran 2004-2018. Tom noted that old fuel management prescriptions completed on local woodlot licenses 0552 and 0588 have been updated.

Peter Holub noted that the only prescribed burn completed this fall was at Becher Prairie for ecosystem restoration objectives. BCWS is moving into a support role to help different organizations with burn plans, instead of doing the burn planning themselves. Russell Murphy will be transitioning into a wildfire risk reduction role.

Fraser Basin Council

Alex de Chantal noted that Fraser Basin Council still has some funding to coordinate training (\$100, \$185, incident command system) of community emergency response societies and fire brigades in areas beyond structural fire protection, contact him adechantal@fraserbasin.ca if you want to be put on a list for spring training.

Drybelt Douglas-fir Best Management Practices

As a follow-up to Kristi Iverson's [presentation](#) in May 2024 on what past Douglas-fir forests looked like, their present condition and contributing factors, and what future climate scenarios could mean for future Douglas-fir forests, Ken Day [presented](#) on the best management practices (BMPs) stemming from that research. He noted that current thinking from the Drybelt Douglas-fir Management Committee is to create a Land Act order amendment to incorporate these BMPs.

If anyone has an input for the Drybelt Douglas-fir Management Committee or questions about what was presented contact Ken j.kenneth.day@gmail.com

Williams Lake First Nation

John Walker showed a [map](#) of WLFN-led projects, and reported on the many projects that WLFN is involved in. In addition to the legend on the map, purple = FESBC funded, red = proposed.

From John: "Borland Creek Logging is contracted for many of the projects implemented by the City and MoF. Currently Borland is working to complete some MoF projects that have pile burning remaining from last year, as well as projects from the City on Fox and the Golf course. WLFN also has many IDF restoration projects that have Wildfire Mitigation as one of the benefits. We try to place these blocks near identified WRR projects and grasslands when possible. This strengthens the already proposed WRR project. We have also prioritized key landscape level fuel breaks that are identified in the CWPP at Brunson and the 150 and have been able to secure FESBC funding to start and/or complete this work. Some discussions also occur with the MoF and BCWS for priority areas and we develop both cutting permits for harvest and FLTC's for hand treatments, for example the Dugan CP 11 project. To date WLFN projects have treated approximately 1000ha on crown land from Brunson Lake (Chimney Valley) to Jones Creek (150mile). We also continue to develop areas and have a harvest plan for the next 2 years. On reserve our focus has been on grassland restoration with prescribed burn. We are trying to come up with a burn schedule that rejuvenates some areas that were grassland as well as a maintenance schedule for areas we have already burned. The goal is approximately 150ha/year."

Woodlots BC

Mark Tamas acknowledged funding from BCWS and FESBC to Woodlots BC, an organization representing 841 woodlot licensees in BC (small area-based tenures on Crown land for individuals and organizations to manage forests). Mark's woodlot 1579 is east of 150 Mile House and has a fuel break bisecting his woodlot, adjacent to a BC Hydro line that was identified in the Williams Lake CWPP. Adjacent to his woodlot, he is encouraging BC Timber Sales to continue the planned fuel break to see it completed.

CN Rail

Abigail Campbell introduced herself and noted that CN Rail is stepping up effort to prevent wildfires and expand their network of contacts with others working on wildfire prevention. (Mike Simpson noted that they've showed up at other community wildfire roundtable meetings this fall.) She noted that CN Rail has 3 fire trains to respond to wildfire, but are also looking to work with BCWS, Indigenous communities and others on prevention and mitigation. It was suggested that Darren Wilkinson, Sr. Wildland Fire Officer – Operations, darren.wilkinson@gov.bc.ca is the best point of contact for CN Rail during wildfire season, and that Mike Gash, Fire Centre Manager michael.gash@gov.bc.ca for all other inquiries.

Forest Enhancement Society of BC

Brian Watson, Operations Manager for [FESBC](#), a Crown agency that funds wildfire risk reduction and fibre recovery on Crown land that complements other wildfire risk reduction activities funded by Union of BC Municipalities or Ministry of Forests Wildfire Risk Reduction programs. FESBC can fund a broad variety of applicants, not just local governments, or First Nations. There is an open [funding call](#) right now, but he noted the challenge will be there will be a reduction in funds available going forward (partly due to the fact that Cariboo-Chilcotin is one of their highest functioning districts that has got a lot of funding in the past). Brian's contact information is bwatson@fesbc.ca or 250-919-1471.

Tolko Industries

Marco Passeri noted past work that Tolko has done throughout the Cariboo and encouraged wildfire risk reduction project proponents to reach out and partner with Tolko where a timber harvesting component exists.

Alkali Resource Management

Francis noted briefly that they have been involved in WUI WRR planning in 100 Mile area, conducting maintenance burns near communities, and did a prescribed burn along the Fraser River.

Xatsull

Simon Bett put the following in the chat: "Working with FNESS since August - S100 & S185 Training done for some staff and community members. Purchased a simple type 6 type IA truck/equipment. FNESS FireSmart program kicked off in Oct and hired a FireSmart Coordinator - Roxanne Pop. FireSmart training was completed and is now a certified Local FireSmart Representative Year 1 project concentrates on Soda Creek (15) homes, Critical Infrastructure and Deep Creek Admin buildings and critical infrastructure. Looking to complete a HVRA early 2025. Engagement with CRD to start December."

4. Next Steps:

Possible presentations to line up:

- Cultural burning – timing, outcomes
- 7 natural disturbance types – Dr. Lori Daniels, UBC

Next meetings

Mid-winter, exact date TBD based on a doodle poll Mike will initiate about a month in advance. Focus:

- Upcoming operations – wildfire risk reduction/fuel management, prescribed burns, other

Spring, exact date TBD (but likely not beyond mid-May). Field trip options:

- Farwell Canyon research trials
- Joes Lake Road spot burning
- UBC Research Forest, Knife Creek or Fox Mountain property

Action Items

Task or activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
Maps of past and proposed fuel treatments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing – share kml files, dashboard as they are available	Tom Foley	Ongoing
Communications best practices re: burning <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Utilize the best practices noted in the Feb 20, 2024 meeting summary	Everyone	Ongoing
FireSmart – review what’s worked in other locations (USA as well as BC), consider ways of not making it overwhelming for people, drive-around tour	Everyone	Ongoing
Reach out to Kristi Iverson if you want the presentation on Douglas-fir from May 2024 given to your group	Everyone	Ongoing
Download WUI WRR plan document and spatial files from here or reach out to daniel.merth@gov.bc.ca	Everyone involved in planning and implementation	
Reach out to Lorena Tiltson if you want to have her present to your group about the Williams Lake CWRP , or to provide input	Everyone	By February
Funding sources <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Rangeland Advantage IAFBC here▪ FESBC funding window – new funds announced▪ UBCM’s Community Resiliency Investment Program▪ NRCan	Anyone interested	Ongoing

Appendix 1 – External Mapping Resources

Structure data is derived primarily from the ICI Society AddressBC information and therefore only ICI Society members are eligible to obtain this information via the ICI Society, BCWS no longer distributes structure point data. For information on becoming an ICI Society member please visit <http://www.icsociety.ca/>. A listing of publicly available CI data can be downloaded [here](#).

For Local Authorities or Contractors working on their behalf needing direct access to the ICI Society Data Catalogue or Web Map Viewer, both parties are required to sign the Appropriate Use Agreement. Please contact Steve Mark at smark@icsociety.ca to initiate this process.

The following datasets can be located on the [DataBC Data Catalogue](#) for Public self-serve:

1. [Wildfire Risk Reduction \(group\)](#)
 - i. BC Wildfire Fuel Treatments
 - ii. BC Wildfire PSTA Fire Density
 - iii. BC Wildfire PSTA Fire Threat Rating
 - iv. BC Wildfire PSTA Head Fire Intensity
 - v. BC Wildfire PSTA Human Fire Density
 - vi. BC Wildfire PSTA Lightning Fire Density
 - vii. BC Wildfire PSTA Spotting Impact
 - viii. BC Wildfire Wildland Urban Interface Risk Class
 - ix. BC Wildfire WUI Human Interface Buffer
 - x. BC Wildfire Wildland Urban Interface 1km Buffer
 - xi. BC Wildfire Fire Fuel Types - Public
2. [Fire Locations - Current](#) and [Fire Perimeters - Current](#)
3. [Fire Incident Locations - Historical](#) and [Fire Perimeters - Historical](#)
4. [BC Wildfire Active Weather Stations](#)
5. **Fuel Treatments – Completed** [RESULTS - Activity Treatment Units](#)
Definition Query:
GEOMETRY_EXIST_IND = 'Y' AND RESULTS_IND = 'Y' AND
(SILV_FUND_SOURCE_CODE IN ('CF', 'FEP', 'WRR') OR
(SILV_FUND_SOURCE_CODE = 'FES' AND FIA_PROJECT_ID LIKE 'WR%')) AND
SILV_BASE_CODE NOT IN ('LB', 'SU') AND (SILV_OBJECTIVE_CODE_1 IN ('FRE')
OR SILV_OBJECTIVE_CODE_2 IN ('FRE') OR SILV_OBJECTIVE_CODE_3 IN ('FRE'))
6. **FESBC Wildfire Projects** (no spatial for Activities) [RESULTS - Openings svw](#)
Joined to [RESULTS - Activity Treatment Units](#) on OPENING_ID
Definition Query:
SILV_FUND_SOURCE_CODE = 'FES' AND GEOMETRY_EXIST_IND = 'N' AND
FIA_PROJECT_ID LIKE 'WR%'
7. **Prescribed Fire – Completed** (last 20 years) [RESULTS - Activity Treatment Units](#)
Definition Query:
SILV_TECHNIQUE_CODE = 'BU' AND SILV_METHOD_CODE = 'BROAD' AND
GEOMETRY_EXIST_IND = 'Y' AND ATU_COMPLETION_DATE >= timestamp '2002-01-01 00:00:00'
8. **Prescribed Fire within Opening** (no spatial for Activities) [RESULTS - Openings svw](#)
Joined to [RESULTS - Activity Treatment Units](#) on OPENING_ID
Definition Query:

WHSE_FOREST_VEGETATION.RSLT_ACTIVITY_TREATMENT_SVW.SILV_TECHNIQ
 UE_CODE = 'BU' AND
 WHSE_FOREST_VEGETATION.RSLT_ACTIVITY_TREATMENT_SVW.SILV_METHOD
 _CODE = 'BROAD' AND
 WHSE_FOREST_VEGETATION.RSLT_ACTIVITY_TREATMENT_SVW.GEOMETRY_EX
 IST_IND = 'N' AND
 WHSE_FOREST_VEGETATION.RSLT_ACTIVITY_TREATMENT_SVW.ATU_COMPLET
 ION_DATE >= timestamp '2002-01-01 00:00:00'

9. **Fuel Treatments – Prescribed** [RESULTS - Activity Treatment Units](#)

Definition Query:

GEOMETRY_EXIST_IND = 'Y' AND RESULTS_IND = 'Y' AND
 (SILV_FUND_SOURCE_CODE IN ('CF', 'FEP', 'WRR') OR
 (SILV_FUND_SOURCE_CODE = 'FES' AND FIA_PROJECT_ID LIKE 'WR%')) AND
 SILV_BASE_CODE IN('LB', 'SU') AND (SILV_OBJECTIVE_CODE_1 IN ('FRE') OR
 SILV_OBJECTIVE_CODE_2 IN ('FRE') OR SILV_OBJECTIVE_CODE_3 IN ('FRE'))

10. [WUI RiskClass products](#) developed for external clients and communities and are posted on the ftp site. Includes KMZ and PDF products.

Tools for fuel management:

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status/prevention/vegetation-and-fuel-management/fire-fuel-management>

Results information submission specifications:

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/managing-our-forest-resources/silviculture/silviculture-reporting-results/business-and-policy-documentation>

For additional information on layers specific to the 2021 Wildfire Threat Analysis please see the [Wildfire Threat Analysis Component Report](#), the [BC Provincial Fuel Type Layer Overview Report](#), as well as the documentation provided with the published datasets in DataBC. Please note that some of the datasets are meant to be used for high level strategic purposes only. You can also view provincial maps of PSTA data by clicking [here](#). For information on appropriate use and interpretation of the data please contact Kelly Osbourne at (250) 356-2025 or Kelly.Osbourne@gov.bc.ca. Please note that some of the layers in this data package are updated on a yearly basis. If you are working on new or updated CWPP's in future years, it is strongly recommended that you obtain a copy of the latest information. -

CRI GIS standards are located on the UBCM site within the guides for each year:

- <https://www.ubcm.ca/cri>
- GIS standards: https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/HPR/external/!publish/FuelsManagement/GIS_Template/

For your reference, when submitting spatial data under the Community Resiliency Investment Program, please make sure that you utilize the standards based on your intake year located at <https://www.ubcm.ca/funding-programs/local-government-program-services-funding/community-resilience/firesmart-community>