

4. Communication Management Strategy

Date: March 31st, 2018

Wells Gray Provincial Park and the surrounding areas have unique communications challenges. Vast areas of the park have no reliable communications (“Cold spots”) which may have significant impact during an emergency situation.

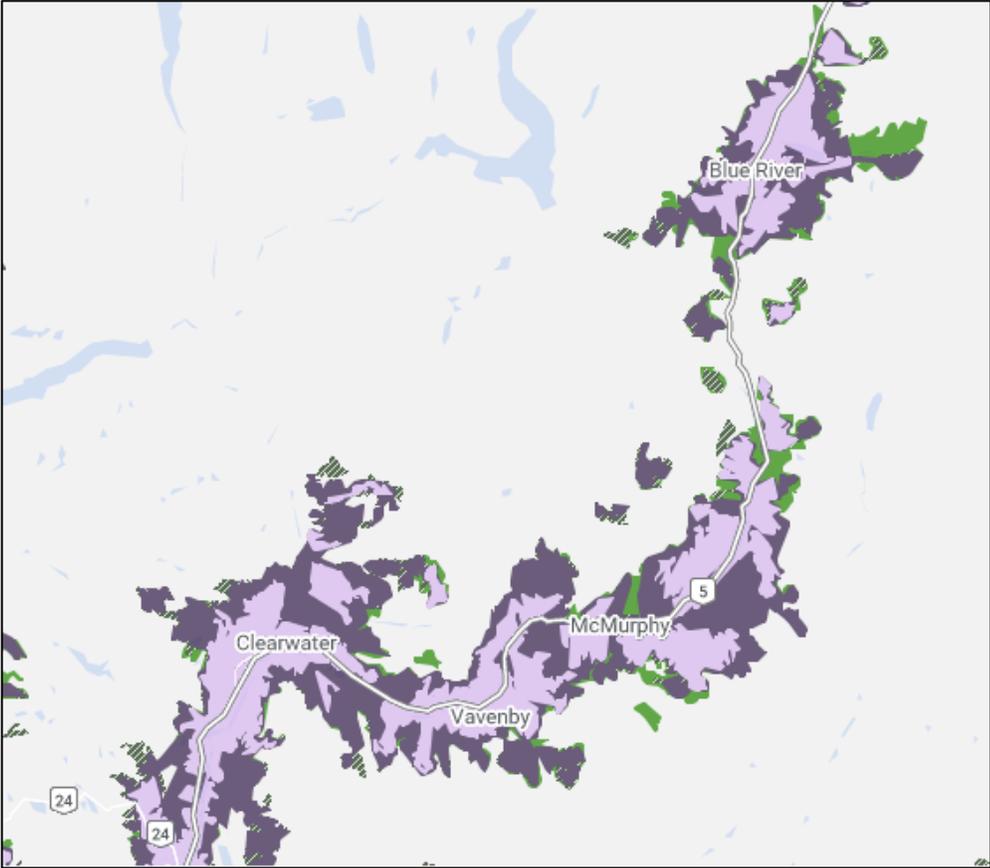


Figure 1: Telus Cell Coverage Map¹

¹ <https://www.telus.com/en/bc/mobility/network/coverage-map>

Management Strategies

4.1 CONSIDER THE EXPANSION OF COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN WELLS GRAY PARK

DISCUSSION: There is limited communication within Wells Gray Park, with no cell service after Spahats turnoff on the Clearwater Valley Road. While communication links exist to parks staff at Ranger Stations and Clearwater Lakes Campground, most of the park is absent of any communication besides in-reach and satellite phone, which can be unreliable. This lack of communication poses a significant obstacle to communicating risks during a wildfire event to park visitors and staff.

ACTIONS:

1. Consider methods to improve communication within Wells Gray Park including (but not limited to):
 - additional satellite phones
2. Continue to engage in conversations with applicable partners regarding additional cell service and radio repeaters in Wells Gray Parks.

RESPONSIBILITY: BC Parks

PARTNERS: District of Clearwater/Government of Canada/Provincial funding mechanisms/TNRD

RISK RESPONSE GOALS: Reduce risk through improvement in emergency communication capability.

4.2 MAINTAIN AND EXPAND COMMUNICATION PLANNING AND PROTOCOLS BETWEEN BC PARKS AND OTHERS

DISCUSSION: There is a previous Communication Document for permittees and Wells Gray Park staff. This plan establishes communication protocols during emergency events. Maintaining and expanding these communication protocols will ensure efficiency within emergency planning in Wells Gray Park.

ACTIONS:

1. Update and expand current Wells Gray communication plan to encompass a broader spectrum of emergency management communication protocols. Consider the following factors:
 - Ensure that permittees communication protocols are appropriate for wildfire evacuation.
 - Consider this strategy in conjunction with the strategy to consolidate and coordinate all evacuation plans within the park (**Management Strategy 2.1: Create a Consolidated Evacuation Plan for Wells Gray Provincial Park**)
 - Expand communication plan to encompass inter-agency communication including:
 - i. BCWS,
 - ii. First Responders including RCMP
 - iii. MoTI

RESPONSIBILITY: BC Parks

PARTNERS: Operators/Permittee Holders/First Responders/MOTI/BCWS/EMBC

RISK RESPONSE GOALS: Reduce risk through establishing stronger communication protocols.

4.3 ESTABLISH PUBLIC-FACING COMMUNICATION FOR WILDFIRE IN WELLS GRAY PROVINCIAL PARK

DISCUSSION: Information sharing with the public during emergency management is critical to maintaining a consistent and controlled message and public trust. Through the establishment of emergency management communication protocols, including wildfire, Wells Gray Park can ensure efficient and timely public communication. Media messaging

including social media and web presence is established through provincial communication programs, and is out of scope of the Wells Gray WRMP project.

ACTIONS:

1. Establish a communication plan for wildfire within Wells Gray Provincial Park. This may encompass communication protocol and information sharing with:
 - BC Wildfire Service
 - Information Wells Gray
 - Tourism Wells Gray
 - District of Clearwater
 - Thompson Rivers Regional District
2. Consider additional signage for public in Wells Gray Provincial Park. This may include:
 - A Fire Danger sign at the entrance to the park to communicate fire risk to tourists
 - An portable electronic sign for use during emergency events

RESPONSIBILITY: BC Parks staff

PARTNERS: BCWS/Tourism Wells Gray/Information Wells Gray/EMBC

RISK RESPONSE GOALS: Manage risk through effective communication goals and practices

4.4 INTEGRATE WRMP WITH CLEARWATER CWPP RESULTS

DISCUSSION: The District of Clearwater is currently undergoing an update to their Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). There is overlap between the CWPP and this WRMP process and efforts should be coordinated to reduce costs and risk. Solidify partnerships amongst key players, all of whom are managing the risk to the similar set of values.

ACTIONS:

1. BC Parks to communicate the results of Wells Gray WRMP with the District of Clearwater to inform the CWPP process.

RESPONSIBILITY: BC Parks

PARTNERS: BCWS/District of Clearwater/TNRD/Wells Gray Community Forest/BCWS fuels management specialist

RISK RESPONSE GOALS: Manage risk through effective communication goals and practices.

Appendix A: Radio Repeater Coverage for Clearwater Fire Zone

