
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2022FOR0064-001427
Sept. 22, 2022

Ministry of Forests
BC Community Forest Association

Partnerships in Kootenay-Boundary region reduce wildfire risk in community forests

CASTLEGAR – People in the Kootenay-Boundary region will have greater protection from wildfires through a provincial investment in a series of community-led projects.

The BC Community Forest Association co-ordinated with 15 community forests on 48 Crown Land Wildfire Risk Reduction (CLWRR) projects, including 15 within the Southeast Fire Centre region. These projects are part of the ongoing work to adapt and better prepare for climate change.

“Managed by local communities and First Nations for the benefit of the entire community, community forests are key partners in our work to reduce wildfire risks across the province,” said Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests. “Along with the historic investments in Budget 2022 to transform the BC Wildfire Service into a year-round service and double funding for proactive wildfire prevention, these new projects will help build communities that are safer and more resilient to climate change.”

Completed or underway projects within the Southeast Fire Centre region are:

- Harrop Procter Community Co-operative: \$184,070 for one prescription development project and four operational treatments.
- Creston Community Forest: \$188,680 for one operational treatment and one prescribed fire project.
- Kaslo and District Community Forest Society: \$260,505 for a combination of three prescription development projects, with one of those projects also incorporating an operational treatment.
- Nakusp and Area Community Forest Inc: \$30,000 for a prescription development treatment.
- Slocan Integral Forestry Cooperative: \$148,500 for two operational treatments and two prescription development projects.

Community forests led \$5 million in CLWRR projects to increase wildfire resiliency for communities and critical infrastructure. These projects include cultural burning and prescribed fire, hazard reduction, tactical planning, fuel treatment and prescriptions, and other actions.

“Community forests are important partners in managing forested land near communities,” said Jennifer Gunter, executive director, BC Community Forest Association (BCCFA). “By partnering with the BC Wildfire Service, community forests are demonstrating an effective and efficient path forward to address wildfire risk while also supporting local employment opportunities.”

These projects are part of the Community Resiliency Investment Program administered by the BC Wildfire Service. It supports wildfire risk reduction treatments on provincial Crown land near

communities, around critical infrastructure and in areas facing a higher wildfire risk. Year-round action is required to reduce the risk and severity of wildfires by promoting local leadership in building local networks for training, planning and implementation.

Quotes:

Doug Routley, Parliamentary Secretary for Forests –

“Community forests are an innovative form of forest management that generate economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits for local communities, the province and environment. These 48 projects help support forest resiliency to the impacts of climate change and gives local communities the opportunity to become leaders in wildfire risk reduction.”

Brittney Anderson, MLA for Nelson-Creston –

“We know that it takes more than a single-season approach to protect our communities from forest fires. By taking year-round action and making record investments, we are ensuring that our forests are safer and more resilient to the devastating effects of climate change. These partnerships ensure that local people with local knowledge are working on the ground to keep community forests safe and protected.”

Quick Facts:

- The 48 Crown Land Wildfire Risk Reduction projects align with the largest investment in B.C.’s history in wildfire protection.
- Community forestry is a forest operation managed by a local government, community group, First Nation, or community-held corporation for the benefit of the entire community.
- Wildfire risk reduction treatments include:
 - fuel-management planning, including tactical planning, as well as prescription development prior to initiating operational treatments that focus on provincial Crown land located around communities that identify how to reduce wildfire risks in particular areas;
 - prescribed fires (including planning and operational treatments) to remove flammable material and reduce hazard; and
 - thinning of forest fuels and cutting back underbrush and low branches (ladder fuels).

Learn More:

To view all projects, visit: <https://bccfa.ca/wildfire-risk-reduction/>

Community Resiliency Investment program:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status/prevention/funding-for-wildfire-prevention/crip>

BC Community Forest Association: <https://bccfa.ca>

StrongerBC Economic Recovery Plan: <https://strongerbc.gov.bc.ca>

FireSmart BC: <https://firesmartbc.ca/>

Contacts:

Ministry of Forests
Media Relations
250 896-4320

Susan Mulkey
Manager, Communication and Extension
BC Community Forest Association

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect