

# BC Wildfire Service Chief Forester Presentation



BC Wildfire  
Service

- Total number of fires is **decreasing**
- Number of hectares burned **increasing**
- Number of extreme fire seasons **increasing**
- Cost is **increasing**



Trends are attributed to the following:

- Increasing **Wildland Urban Interface**
- Expanded **industrial activity**, most notably oil and gas operations in the northeast
- **Climate change**
- Changing **forest stand conditions**
- **Escalation of fire risks** in other provinces and jurisdictions

## BCWS Resources

- 138 Initial Attack Crews
- 30 Unit Crews
- Contract Fire Crew
- Air Tankers and Helicopters on contract
- TEAMS members



## Traditional agreements currently in place include:

- Pan Canadian resource sharing facilitated by the **Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre**
- The North West Fire Compact which consists of Canadian and American jurisdictions

## PAST

- Limited response to build-up of hazardous fuels
- Passive approach to ecological benefits of fire
- Limited inter-agency management of wildland fire
- Escalating costs and impacts

## FUTURE

- Proactive management of fuel build up
- Active management for ecological benefits of fire
- Collaborative inter-agency land management
- More efficient response to wildfire outbreaks



## **Suppression activities must be coupled with strong prevention and mitigation programs**

- Wildfire suppression is funded through the Fire Prevention Vote which includes a statutory appropriation to expend funds required to suppress wildfires
- Prevention and mitigation through funding of:
  - Forest Enhancement Society of British Columbia
  - Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative
  - BC Wildfire Service Prevention Program

## **Prevention and mitigation of wildland fires is a shared responsibility:**

- The risks and impacts of wildland fires are more than a forestry issue; they are public safety and economic sustainability concern
- All partners and stakeholders have a role to play: all levels of government, industry, and the general public



# 3 E's of Prevention



## Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy Strategic Objectives

- Public education/awareness and policy/risk analysis;
- A Canadian FireSmart initiative;
- Preparedness and response capability; and
- Innovation



## Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy Actions

- Enhance Horizontal Collaboration and Integration
- Enhance Prevention and Mitigation Capability
- Increase Investment in Innovation
- Enhance Commitment to FireSmart
- Increase Preparedness Capacity

# QUESTIONS



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