

### IN THIS ISSUE

- Surface Patrols
- Building resilient minds in BC Wildfire Service
- Wildland Firefighting Agency Partnerships
- Complex resource management and the Sendai Framework
- Fire Weather Forecast
- At Coastal
- 2020 Contact Information

### CURRENT STATISTICS

Fires to-date: 52

Hectares burned: 70

Human-caused: 52

Lightning-caused: 0

### BANS AND PROHIBITIONS

**Campfire:** No Ban

**Category 2:** No Ban

**Category 3:** No Ban

**Forest Use Restrictions:** No Ban

[Prohibitions section of bcwildfire.ca for full details.](https://bcwildfire.ca/prohibitions)

## Surface Patrols

### Gearing up for 2021

Surface patrols within the Coastal Fire Centre have a prevention focus with an emphasis on assisting with prevention trail signs, public messaging, and monitoring campfire safety at busy recreation sites. Their role is to meet with the public in areas that have elevated fire risk, and high recreational use.

Each fire zone within the Coastal Fire Centre hires, trains and provides this valuable resource with a variety of prevention messages for their interaction with the public. Patrollers are usually a local resource, who have good knowledge of their community and local geography, and are readily available for dispatch.

Surface patrols are normally used in prevention and detection but in some specific cases many also provide Operational support. They act as a community contact to provide local knowledge to BCWS or during times of high activity, provide a variety of tasks at a zone or fire centre, which may include functions such as:

- Investigating smoke reports;
- Expediter;
- Participating in fire control duties, as assigned
- Providing logistical support

Fire Warden's will be introducing everyone to the new FireSmart™ mascot, Ember. For more resources including Ember's story, colouring pages, and games go to:

<https://firesmartbc.ca/ember/>

\* Note - FireSmart™ and associated Marks are trademarks of the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC)



## Building resilient minds in BC Wildfire Service

Wildland firefighting is a physically demanding and mentally taxing position. To meet the requirements to work on a BC Wildfire Service crew, an individual must meet multiple physical fitness standards and pass a fitness test. But what about mental toughness, and how is that evaluated?

Mental toughness has become an increasing part of the dialogue in recruitment and staff development since the extremely active wildfire years of 2017 and 2018. The need for more mental health resources for BC Wildfire Service staff has resulted in new essential training.

Resilient Minds is a new program being offered specifically for BC Wildfire Service first responders. The course is designed to build the psychological strength of firefighters. The course tackles four crucial areas relevant to this work: trauma, psychological distress, trauma-informed responses and building resiliency.

Bryce Moreira, an instructor of the Resilient Minds course and a BC Wildfire Service staff member, committed to the materials during his own training session in hopes of helping more people with mental health struggles in the organization.

“We take care of our physical bodies and are taught how to achieve that in a lot of different ways. However, we don’t really get taught how to take care of our minds or what kind of mental diet is best. The course teaches people how to do that and it lays the groundwork for people to continue to practice the skills over the years.”

Since introducing this course, dialogue about personal experiences and mental health are becoming more common, not only amongst BC Wildfire Service staff, but also with friends and families.

“We didn’t have the knowledge or shared language to talk about [mental health] openly. Resilient Minds gives people the knowledge and skills to start talking about it openly which is why I believe it is the most important course we have” said Moreira.

### What does Resilient Minds strive to achieve?

- Recognize effects of psychological stress/trauma in self and peers
- Respond promptly, safely and appropriately to distressed citizens
- Communicate with peers who may be struggling
- Apply personal strategies for managing stress, mitigating trauma and boosting resilience

## Wildland Firefighting Agency Partnerships

More than 1,700 BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) firefighters and support staff are in place for the 2021 fire season. When personnel are stretched to capacity, BCWS can call on other resources from national and international partners. Requests for out-of-province and international assistance are made through the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC), which co-ordinates the sharing of firefighting resources nationally and internationally. Generally, the closest and most suitable resources are considered when looking to fill resource requests and all costs are



*BCWS personnel were deployed to the Yukon in the spring of 2019 (June 30, 2019).*



*A Canadian Incident Management Team with two BCWS personnel was deployed to Australia in 2020 (January 31, 2020).*

covered by the jurisdiction that requested the resources. In addition to this, any incoming firefighting crews are trained to CIFFC's national standards.

In the fall of 2020, the National Interagency Coordination Centre (NICC) reached out to CIFFC for assistance with an unprecedented wildfire season along the west coast of the United States. In response to the request for assistance, an agreement between NICC and CIFFC was made with

support from numerous Canadian provinces and territories. Over 800 BC Wildfire Service personnel volunteered to support the U.S. with an end total of 429 personnel being deployed. Personnel were deployed to both Redmond, Oregon and Quincy, California.

As a safety precaution in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, BCWS personnel remained within their own "bubble" and conducted firefighting operations separately from American counterparts. This was coordinated by the U.S. Forest Service and other relevant authorities. To safeguard staff from COVID-19 extra precautions were taken, including physical distancing and enhanced safety and sanitation protocols. Personnel were required to complete a 14-day quarantine upon their return to B.C.



*BCWS personnel working on the North Complex in California (Oct. 27, 2020).*



*A B.C. fire camp set up in Oregon.*

## Complex resource management and the Sendai Framework

With the 2021 wildfire season now upon us, it's important to remember the British Columbia Wildfire Service (BCWS) staff provide an essential service to all natural-hazard emergencies. As firefighters train and prepare to fight wildfires, the BC Wildfire Service senior staff members are also paying close attention to the potential for emergencies in international, national and regional settings. The BC Wildfire Service works closely with [Emergency Management BC](#) (EMBC), who is the lead coordinating agency in the provincial government for all emergency management and business continuity activities.

The BC Wildfire Service is the subject matter expert in all fire-related emergencies and fully supports EMBC with response to other hazards where possible. BCWS also supports local authorities, Indigenous communities and the public. The BC Wildfire Service is defining its role in all-hazard response, has instigated a Catastrophic Response Action project team and is working with our partners to enhance public safety through coordinated preparedness and response to all-hazard disasters.

The devastating flood and wildfire seasons of 2017 led the Province to commission a comprehensive and independent review of these events.

The Abbott/Chapman Report, *Addressing the New Normal: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Disaster Management in British Columbia*, provided 108 recommendations for making positive changes to our emergency management system and together with subsequent after action reviews, provided the foundation for a whole of society approach grounding in the four pillars of emergency management – prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

This whole of society approach has also been endorsed by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers as the mechanism to transform wildfire management and aligns with the [United Nation's Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction](#).

The United Nations' Sendai Framework is the global standard for jurisdictions to implement a strategic and structured approach for Disaster Risk Management – one where risk information is freely shared and understood so the public can make informed decisions and governments and stakeholders can align efforts to limit the collective impacts of disasters. For BC Wildfire Service, it is a beacon, as our Strategic Plan reflects the principles of the Sendai Framework.

The Province and the Government of Canada have adopted the Sendai Framework as a key element of cross-government emergency management improvement.

## Complex resource management and the Sendai Framework continued

The Sendai Framework states “There is a need for focused action within and across sectors by States at local, national, regional and global levels in the following four priority areas.

Recognizing that emergency management is a multi-agency effort and must also include engagement at the community level, BCWS is a partner in the [FireSmart Program](#) – an excellent model for this level of cooperation.

The BC FireSmart Committee incorporates [membership](#) from multiple partners including the BCWS, EMBC, and nine other provincial and national organizations.

FireSmart BC calls on homeowners, community members, First Nations and Local Governments to have a role in wildfire risk mitigation and preparedness.

Communities are eligible for funding through the Community Resiliency Investment Grants, aligning with the Sendai Framework’s priority to “invest in disaster risk reduction for resilience.”

Another program that BCWS utilizes to ensure that there is an appropriate depth of human resources to call on in times of need is the Temporary Emergency Assignment Management System (TEAMS). TEAMS members are BC public servants from other agencies who receive specialized training and are ready to direct their efforts and skills towards emergency response when called upon.

### Sendai 4 Priorities

<b>Priority 1:</b>	Understanding disaster risk
<b>Priority 2:</b>	Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk
<b>Priority 3:</b>	Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience
<b>Priority 4:</b>	Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to Build Back Better in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.”

### Fire Weather Forecast

**Issued:** 11:30am PDT Friday, June 4th, 2021.

**SYNOPSIS:** An upper trough over the BC Coast will maintain cooler and cloudier conditions over the Coastal Fire Centre than earlier this week. Showers associated with a frontal system over the North Coast will slowly push southwards from Mid Coast to North Island this morning and eventually reach the southern zones late tonight. The system will also create strong southerly winds of 20-30 km/h for many sections of the fire centre. Exposed coastal sections and the mainland fjords and deep canyons will see the strongest winds of 40-50 km/h with gusts upwards of 70 km/h. Most areas will have received light showers by Saturday morning. A second trough will support additional showers through the weekend.

**OUTLOOK:** Another upper trough reaches the Fire Centre Saturday afternoon delivering more cool and unsettled weather. The associated south-westerly flow will carry showers inland however the subsident rain shadow effect along the East Island and Gulf Island should keep those areas dry. Manning Park and the Fraser Canyon might very well remain mostly dry through the weekend as well. Nonetheless, temperatures will be below seasonal with daytime highs in the mid-teens and RH's rising to 50-70%. The trough persists into early next week, but the flow weakens limiting the dynamics and necessary support for widespread showers. Monday and Tuesday will therefore remain cloudy and cool but with showers becoming more isolated.

**CONFIDENCE/DISCUSSION:** Fair. The transition to the cool and unsettled pattern is certain. The extent of rain into eastern sections of the Pemberton and Fraser zones is however uncertain. Similarly, models are likely over-forecasting rainfall on the east side of the Island and the Gulf Islands.

### At Coastal

**The Coastal Fire Centre currently has no active fires.**

On May 26, 2021, the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) deployed seven initial attack crews, one unit crew and two support personnel to Manitoba where they will assist Manitoba Wildfire Service with firefighting efforts. No Coastal crews were sent on this deployment.

The Temporary Emergency Assignment Management System (TEAMS) program was developed to provide additional capacity for the BC Wildfire Service by utilizing staff from other Ministries within the BC Public Service. The advantage of using staff from other parts of government is that they understand government systems are, for the most part, from the forestry sector and are made available by their supervisors when required. The Coastal Fire Centre has been actively training members of TEAMS in case they are needed for this upcoming season.

Crews are currently working on fuels management projects and continuing to prepare for the fire season ahead.

BC Drought Information Portal: <https://governmentofbc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?>

**Report a Wildfire: \*5555 on a cell or 1 800 663-5555**

**Wildfire Information Line: 1 888 3FOREST**

**Burn Registration Number: 1 888 797-1717**

**Coastal Information Phone Number: 250 951-4209**

**Information Officer Email:**

[BCWS.CoFCInformationOfficer@gov.bc.ca](mailto:BCWS.CoFCInformationOfficer@gov.bc.ca)