

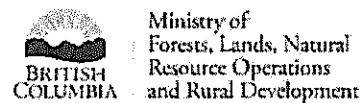
# Engagement Agreement

between

**Federation of BC Woodlot Associations (Licensees),  
BC Community Forest Association (Agreement Holders)**

and

**BC Wildfire Service**



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Version: 1.0

Effective Date: June 12, 2019

### **Engagement Agreement Context**

This Engagement Protocol Agreement outlines the intent and expectation for strengthening engagement between the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS), Federation of BC Woodlot Association (Woodlot Licensees) (WL) & BC Community Forest Association (CFA) (Agreement Holders). It is the intent of this document that all parties will endeavor to seek out and participate in a collaborative manner, opportunities to improve working relationships. Specific working details will be determined between local representatives, Fire Centres and Fire Zones.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the protocol agreement is to provide the basis from which BCWS, WL & CFA holders can build and/or improve their working relationships around emergency management and fire risk mitigation including preparedness, prevention, response and recovery.

### **Building Relations between BCWS, WLs & CFAs:**

WL & CFA holders are important in forest management particularly given their proximity to communities and the opportunities to support wildfire risk mitigation. BCWS, WL & CFA's will continuously work together to:

- Establish key and trustworthy contacts between the groups at both the provincial and local levels.
- Continuously identify and implement ways to improve communications and build better, more productive relationships between Fire Centers, Zones, WLs & CFAs.
- Improve how WLs & CFAs are incorporated into pre-org plans and collaboratively participate in planning and implementation for preparedness, prevention, response and recovery.

The goal for communication between BCWS, WL, & CFA's is to establish and maintain consistent communication and relationships provincially through all fire centres. This will happen at all levels of the organizations and include:

- Provincial level Contacts – Director, Strategic Engagement BCWS, General Manager, BC Woodlot Association, Executive Director, BC Community Forest Association.
- Fire Centre Level Contacts – BCWS has six Fire Centres located in Smithers, Prince George, Williams Lake, Kamloops, Castlegar and Parksville. The Fire Centres will engage with local WL Associations and CFAs.
- Zone Level Contacts – BCWS has 33 zones within the Fire Centres. Zone leads will engage with local WLs and CFAs.
- WLs and CFAs will engage with their Fire Centre and Zone Level contacts.

The BC Woodlot Association, BC Community Forest Association and BCWS commit to an annual meeting of Provincial level contacts to review and discuss progress, identify engagement priorities and mitigate any potential issues of mutual interest. The goal will be to have this meeting in October of each year following the fire season.

### **Engagement in the Four Phases of Emergency Management:**

BCWS and WL & CFAs will work together as outlined above through the four phases of emergency management to prepare for, prevent, mitigate, respond and recover from wildfire emergencies.

**Prevention** - prevention includes activities on WL & CFAs conducted by licence holders to prevent or mitigate fire risk. Ways that BCWS and WL & CFAs can work together in prevention includes:

- Collaborating on fire prevention and fuel mitigation plans, prescriptions and treatments.
- Collaborating on wildfire prevention messaging and public awareness initiatives when possible.
- Better incorporating fire prevention and mitigation into forest management on WLs & CFAs located in Wildland Urban Interface areas and during the planning phases.
- Hazard assessments – help licensees understand and implement the existing regulatory requirements, BCWS Hazard Abatement Standard Operating Procedures and potential tools make the hazard assessment process efficient for WL & CFA's.
- BCWS will provide advice on applications and plans to support WL & CFA's access funds through prevention funding programs (e.g. FES, CRI or others as they may become available).
- Working with Resource Districts to establish silviculturally acceptable, diverse and resilient forests.
- Ensuring that WL and CFA's are included in planning and implementation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP's) or other relevant wildfire planning processes.

**Planning / Preparedness** – planning and preparedness includes activities to plan for fire seasons and prepare to respond in the event of a fire. Ways that BCWS and WL & CFA's can work together in planning and preparedness include:

- Engaging in early season meetings and conversations to prepare and plan for the upcoming season.
- Equipment caches – working together to identify what WL & CFAs have equipment caches and what the locations are.
- Ensuring that local Zones and licensees collaborate over the equipment registry for pre-org and any necessary training requirements.
- Identifying where local community fire crews exist and how they will be contacted.
- Where local crews are being established, BCWS will provide guidance and information on crew configuration requirements and training needs.
- Capitalizing on WL & CFAs spatial knowledge of areas; e.g. figure out ways to better convey and utilize local knowledge; e.g. access, water sources, known critical areas such as archaeological sites and spiritual areas, etc.

**Response** – response includes activities that are conducted as part of responding to and acting on a fire. Ways that BCWS and WL & CFA's can work together in response include:

- BCWS will conduct early communication to WL and CFA holders when a fire involves or threatens to involve area under their tenure; including private land in the case of WL's.
- Providing a mechanism for WL and CFA holders to better understand what their role and obligations are when there is a fire on their WL or CFA.
- Understanding what resources can be deployed / used.
- Engaging CFA holders and WL licensees/association representatives in fire operations and plans in general.
- When established, ensuring that Industry liaisons are aware of local WL's and CFA's.
- Capitalizing on WL & CFAs spatial knowledge of areas; e.g. figure out ways to better convey and utilize local knowledge; e.g. access, water sources, known critical areas such as archaeological sites and spiritual areas, etc.

**Rehabilitation** – the *Wildfire Act* provides for rehabilitation of areas damaged by fire control activities. This work includes the rehabilitation of fire guards, fence lines, roads, etc. Rehabilitation work and coordination is completed by both BCWS and the Resource District offices. Ways that BCWS can support WL & CFA's in rehabilitation include:

- Engagement in plans to rehabilitate guards and trails (in-scope for BCWS) – For example, confirming that WL licence and CFA holders know if it is the Fire Center or Resource District that is doing the work (relates to prescription sign-off and accountability), who the person doing the work is, and ensuring the prescribed work is consistent with approved plans for the area, etc.

Ensuring licence holders know what steps to take and what options exist for claims support Connecting WL & CFA's with Resource District offices specific to rehabilitation coordination work not within BCWS scope.

#### **Reporting**

Progress will be reported annually via engagement and collaboration and as an outcome of the annual meeting. The report will be prepared and distributed jointly.

#### **Funding**

This is a no-fee collaborative initiative between the Woodlot Licensees, Community Forest Agreement holders and BCWS.


#### **Duration**

This Local Agreement is at-will and may be modified by mutual consent of authorized officials from Woodlot Licensees, Community Forest Agreement holders and the BC Wildfire Service. This Agreement shall become effective upon signature by the authorized officials and will remain in effect until modified or terminated by any one of the partners by mutual consent.

#### **Contact Information**

Each party endeavors to keep contact lists up to date and to notify key contacts of any changes.

Partner Signatures



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Brian McNaughton, General Manager  
Federation of BC Woodlot Associations

June 15, 2019

Date



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Jennifer Gunter, Executive Director  
BC Community Forest Association

June 19, 2019

Date



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Ian Meier, A/ Executive Director,  
BC Wildfire Service

June 12, 2019

Date

