Networking for Wildfire Preparedness, Recovery and Resiliency

Panel:

Lori Daniels, Centre for Wildfire Coexistence, UBC
Larry Price, First Nations Emergency Services Society
Fons Raedshelders, BC Wildfire Service
Carly Dow and Jen Gunter BC Community Forest Association

BC Community Forest Meeting, June 2024 Image: Shawn Talbot / Globe and Mail

Wildfires in BC 1919 - 2023 Top 10 fire years: Fort Nelson 1958 1961 Fire Year 2021 2023 2017-2022 Fort St. John 1919-2016 Top 10 fires: Prince George Williams Lake Plateau Complex (520,885 ha) 2023 **Hossitl Creek** 2017 (287,957 ha) Cranbrook 300 km

Wildfires and weather in BC are setting new records Fire Danger maps show High to Extreme conditions

Firestorm 2003 (old benchmark) August 2003

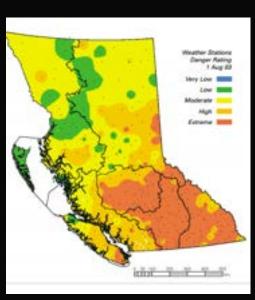
States of Emergency 2017 + 2018 + 2021 + 2023 – our new reality

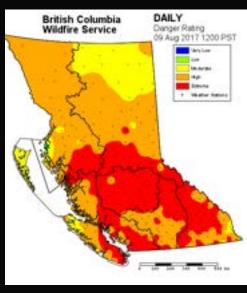
August 2017

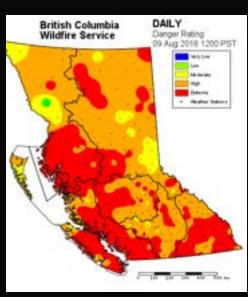
August 2018

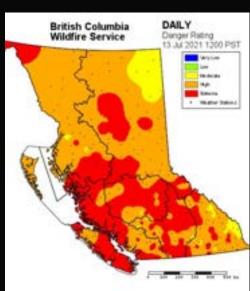
July 2021

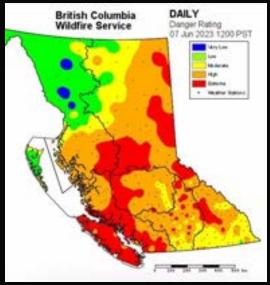
June 2023











2500 fires 265,000 ha burned \$371M to suppress

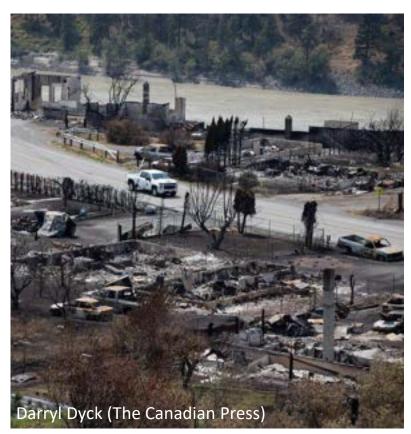
1353 fires 1,216,053 ha burned \$649M to suppress

2117 fires 1,354,284 ha burned \$615M to suppress

1642 fires 868,203 ha burned \$719M to suppress

2245 fires 2,840,545 ha burned >\$1B to suppress

Not if, but when: Inevitable impacts





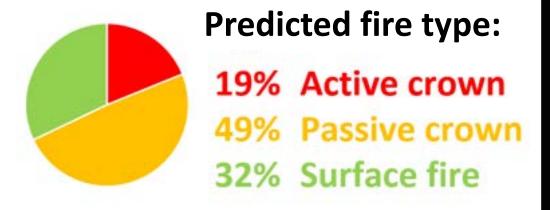


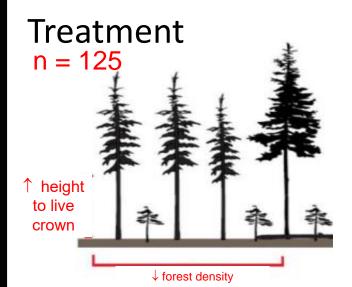


Proactive Fuels Mitigation: Treatment Efficacy













Logan Lake: Treatment Effectiveness

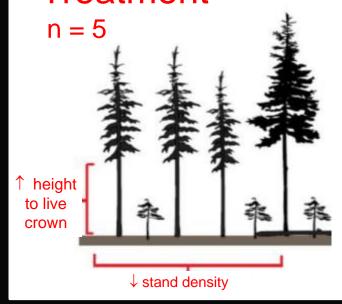




Actual > Predicted (planned ignition)

76% mortality of 286 trees 94% crown scorch 90% ground scorch to mineral soil (n = 9)

Treatment

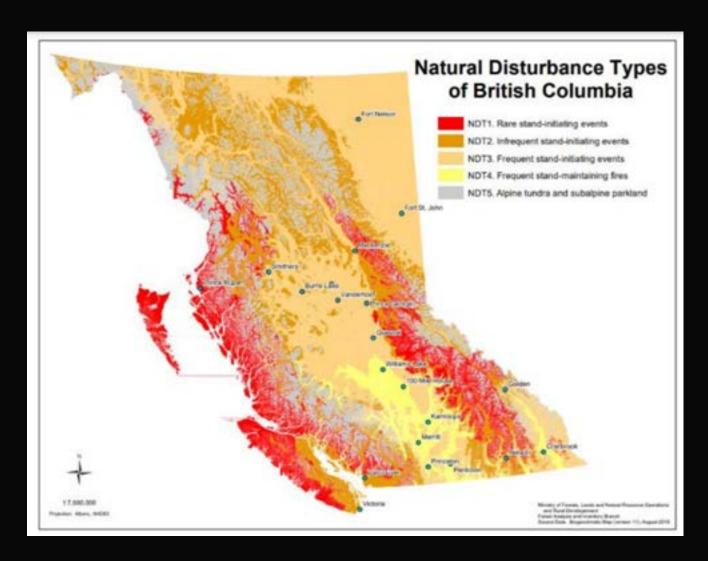




Actual < Predicted (suppression)

18% mortality of 95 trees13% crown scorch73% ground scorch withFF+duff intact (n = 4)

Pyrodiversity: Fire and Historical Regimes across Ecosystems of British Columbia



Research questions:

How well do treatments mitigate fuel hazards and fire risk across diverse forests?

What treatment configurations increase landscape resilience to wildfire?

Share and Shift

Form groups by Fire Centre (Coastal, Cariboo, SE + Kamloops, NW, PG) Five discussion topics, 10 minutes each, take notes to share

Topics:

- Fons Cultural + prescribed burning
- Erik BCCFA networking supports
- Lori Research priorities
- Larry FNESS
- Steve FESBC

Resource/facilitators:

- Mitch Sorensen BCWS HQ Fuels
- Mike Gash Cariboo FC
- Peter Nicolson Northwest FC
- Dave Clark Prince George FC
- Paul Eaton Prince George FC

BC 2023 Wildfire Index*

Total number of fires: 2,245
Number of fires ignited by humans: 553

Days in a provincial state of emergency: 38

Number of lightning strikes igniting 200 fires July 7-10: 33,381

Wildfires simultaneously burning on July 24: 481

People affected by 208 evacuation orders: 48,000

And 386 evacuation alerts: 137,000

Record area burned in hectares across Canada this year: 18,496,051
Megatons of carbon released, tripling the previous record: 410
Record area burned in BC, despite modern suppression technology: 2,840,545
Size of BC's largest fire in a century, the Donnie Creek fire: 619,073

Projected costs of BC fires, in Canadian dollars: 1,000,000,000

Kilometers of fire guard needing rehabilitation: 5,133

Fires still burning: 106

Out of control: 39