

# Strengthening Public Safety and Landscape Resilience through Potential Operational Delineations (PODs)

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Kelly Osbourne RPF BCWS



# AGENDA



1. Review Scales of Landscape Fire Management
2. Introduce Potential Operational Delineation (PODs) concept
3. Planning: WUI, PODs and CFAs – Opportunities
4. Current State of Provincial POD Project

## Landscape



## Interface



## Community



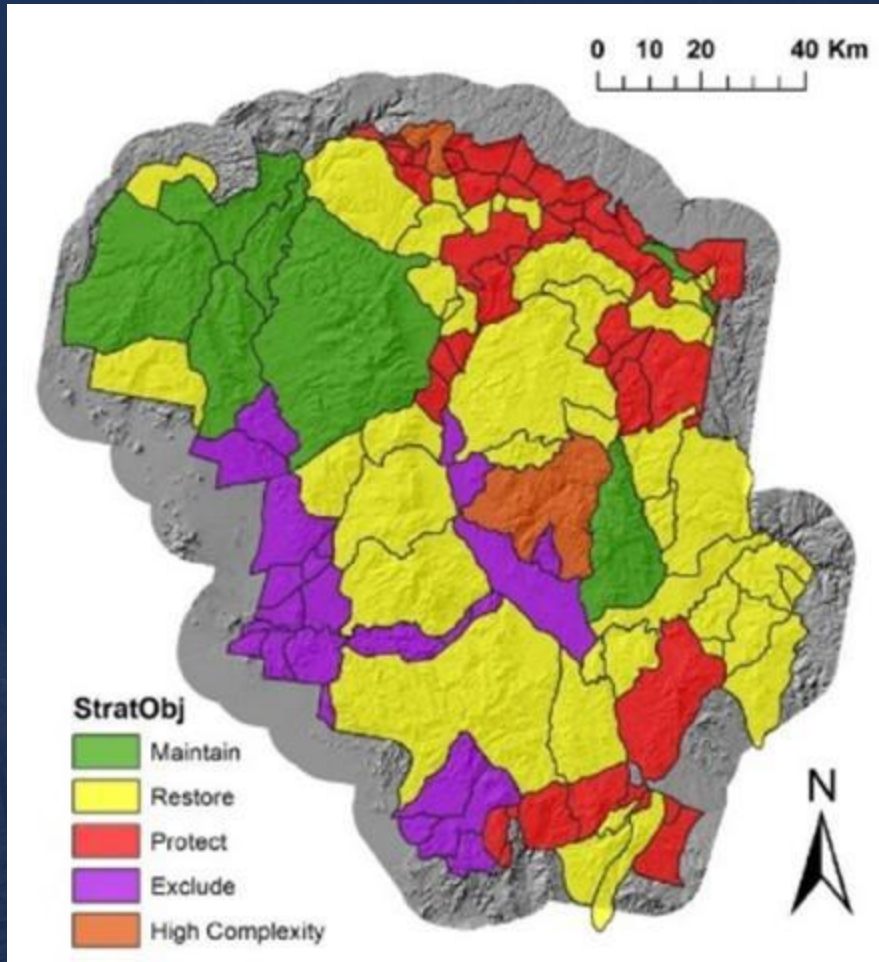
Level	Goals	Strategies
<b>Landscape – How to move from WUI...?</b>	<b>Manageable Fires</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Prevent unwanted human-caused fires, and</li><li>2. Contain fires prior to harm, then</li><li>3. Manage fires on the landscape for resilience and ecosystem health benefits</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Strengthen control features on the landscape to improve containment opportunities, and</li><li>2. Manage fuel conditions to mitigate the risk of fires becoming uncontrollable by</li><li>3. Integrating wildfire resilience principles into forest management policy, plans and practices</li></ol>
<b>Interface – Primary focus with CFAs to date (WRR, FESBC, FCFS etc.)</b>	<b>Defensible Space</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Prevent unwanted human-caused fires, and</li><li>2. Exclude harmful fires from the built environment, then</li><li>3. Manage for diverse values in the interface</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Accelerate and scale up fuel treatments as durable response infrastructure in the interface by</li><li>2. De-fragmenting governance and planning, and</li><li>3. Streamlining and integrating delivery models</li></ol>
<b>Community</b>	<b>Resilient Communities</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Avoid or mitigate harm to values in the built environment, and</li><li>2. Build and sustain local capacity for coordinated action</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Build and sustain local FireSmart capacity and partnerships, and</li><li>2. Expand and strengthen local FireSmart policies and tools</li></ol>

# PODs – Potential Operational Delineations

- Spatial planning units that support operational/tactical response planning at various WUI and landscape scales
- Science-based and operationally informed design
  - Grounded in fire behaviour suppression tactics and potential modeling
  - Integrates local and operational knowledge
- Designed around potential control lines (PCLs): roads, ridges, water, cutblocks, burn scars. Organize PCL networks into meaningful operational units - PODs
- Reflects potential wildfire spread, operational feasibility, and enables proactive planning

*How can PODs support wildfire response operations?*

- Identify where control features are strong, weak, or require reinforcement before an incident occurs
- Incorporate key factors – access, fire behaviour, control feature strength
- Enables scenario planning under different conditions
- Improve speed and consistency of planning and tactical decision-making



## Potential Control Features (PCFs)

Natural and constructed features where fuel conditions are more conducive to fire control (e.g., roads, ridges, lakes, rights-of-way)

## Potential Control Lines (PCLs)

Operationally validated PCFs considering access, slope, safety, and fire behaviour

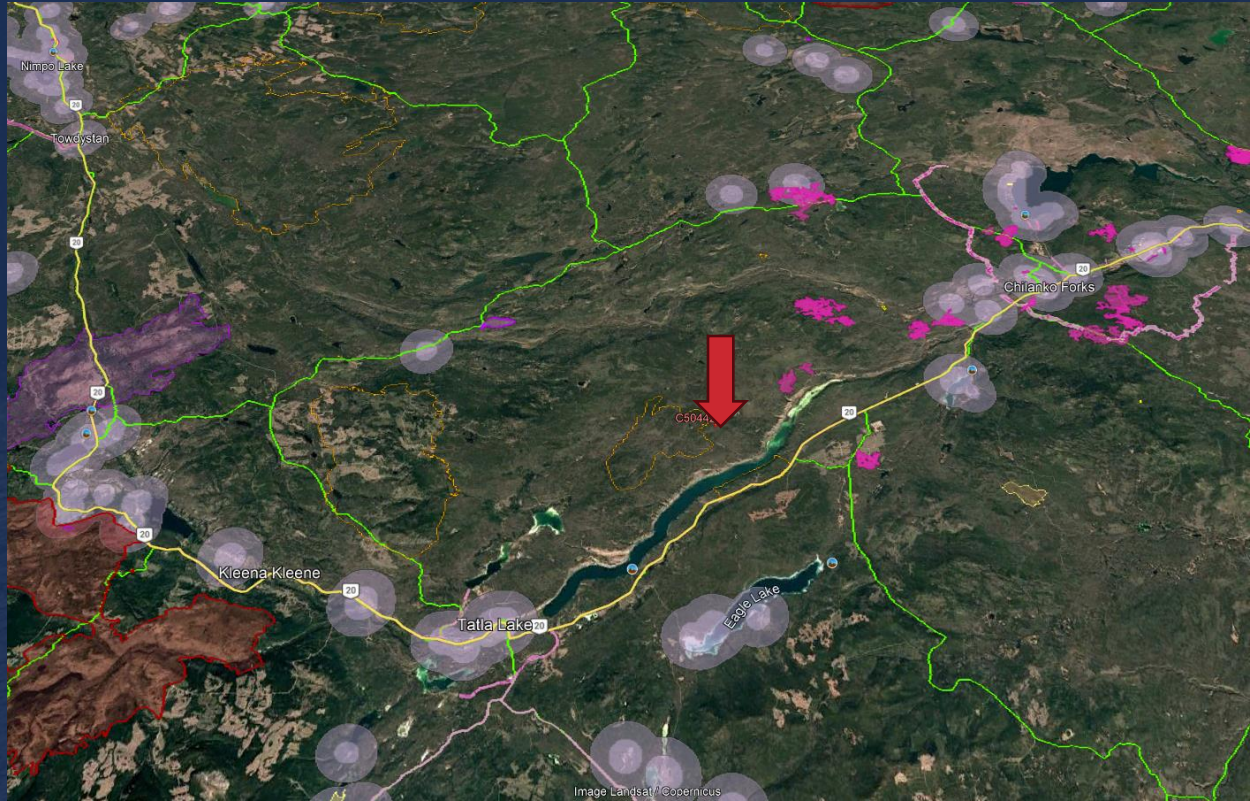
## Potential Operational Delineations (PODs)

Networks of PCLs that form landscape fire management units aligned with fire spread and operational feasibility

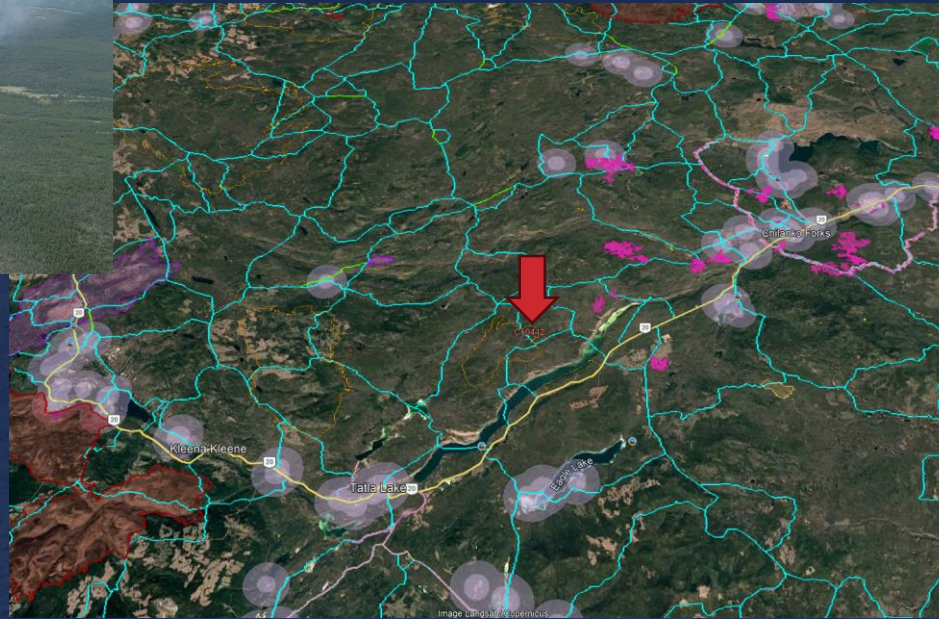
## Modeling and Local Knowledge Foundation

Model outputs identify spread pathways and resistance features, local knowledge refines placement through place-based validation and operational lens

# PODs – Application in Response



# PODs – Finer Scales for Management



# WUI & Landscape Scale PODs

## WUI Scale

- Life, safety, critical infrastructure, access/egress (e.g., evac routes) are the priority (public safety focus)
- Smaller units (more lines of defense)
- Create and maintain defensible space for responders (direct attack) and mitigate spotting risk

## Landscape Scale

- More flexible options to bend PODs around other priority values (forest management focus)
- Moderate fire spread rates and exploit existing features to facilitate indirect attack
- Cool down “hot PODs” progressively over time (e.g., stocking standards, deciduous component, Cultural and Prescribed fire)



# Provincial Progress & Delivery Model

## 1. Build the Foundation (CFS + Pilots)

Provincial modelling to map fire spread, control features, and draft PODs

Pilot areas (e.g., Cariboo, Bulkley-Morice) refine methods and validate outputs

Expansion underway as methodology is standardized

## 2. Operational Validation (BCWS)

Fire Centres and Zones refine PODs based on:

- Access and suppression feasibility

- Control line strength (PCLs)

Structured, operational feedback improves consistency and usability

## 3. Cross-Agency Alignment

Engagement with:

- Tenure holders and BCTS / First Nations and FLP tables / Local governments and WUI partners

Align PODs with land use planning and community protection priorities

## 4. Advancing to Decision Support

Additional analyses (values, suppression difficulty, fire management intent)

Identification of priority fuel treatments and containment strategies

Scenario-based planning to support response operations



# Community Forests (BCCFA) + PODs Alignment

**Operational alignment:** shared spatial framework to align harvesting, silviculture, and road networks with wildfire control opportunities across tenure holders, First Nations, local governments, and provincial programs

**Targeted fuel management:** Identifies highest-risk areas and key control points e.g., access/egress, defensible space, guiding placement of fuel breaks, thinning, and surface fuel

**Systems-based approach:** Moves from stand-by-stand treatments to connected fuel break networks (PCLs) that improve usability during fire response

**Scalable across BC:** Applies consistently across diverse WUI and local context

**Integration with WUI WRR / CWRPs:** Adds operational context - how fires will be fought - strengthening community forest-based planning

**Strategic investment (FESBC/WRR):**

- Provides a risk-based, spatial rationale for funding
- Shifts from opportunistic projects to prioritized, system-level investments
- Aligns funding with BCWS operational priorities and FLP wildfire objectives

**Local knowledge + validation:** Community Forests contribute place-based expertise to refine POD boundaries and control lines

**Thank You**

