



Bella Coola Emergency Response Plan

HAZARD ANNEX – Interface Fire Response Plan

Central Coast Regional District

*Updated by Frontier Resource Management Ltd
January, 2018*

Fire Emergency Response Plan

Table of Contents

1	<i>Fire Emergency Contact List</i>	3
1.1	Fire Emergency Action Plan Schematic	4
2	<i>2. Fire Response Organization</i>	5
2.1	Local Government Responsibility	6
2.1.1	Local Fire Response Team	6
2.2	Fire Danger Rating System	6
2.3	Bella Coola Valley Community Wildfire Protection Plan	7
3	<i>Fire Response Activation Levels</i>	7
3.1	Pre-Event Preparedness and Response	7
3.2	Interface Fire Immediate Response	8
3.3	Areas of Special Concern and Damage Potential	8
3.4	Infrastructure Prioritization	9
4	<i>Fire Emergency – Evacuation Plan</i>	9
4.1	Scale of Evacuation	9
4.2	Evacuation Routes and Safe Zones	10
4.2.1	Establishment of Road Blocks	11
4.2.2	Special Evacuation Requirements	11
5	<i>Fire Emergency – Prolonged Response</i>	11
6	<i>Fire Emergency – Recovery</i>	11

1 Fire Emergency Contact List

Refer to Bella Coola EOC call out list.

High Fire Hazard Conditions:

Notify the local Fire Response Team, consisting of:

Emergency Executive Committee – Coordinator

- CCRD Rep
- Secretary
- Nuxalk Rep

Emergency Response Core Team – RCMP

- Ambulance
- Communication Officer
- Public Information Officer
- ESS Officer
- Hospital

Emergency Response Operations – Fire Halls – Townsite,

- Nuxalk (2),
- Hagensborg
- Nusatsum
- Wildfire BC
- Highways
- Parks

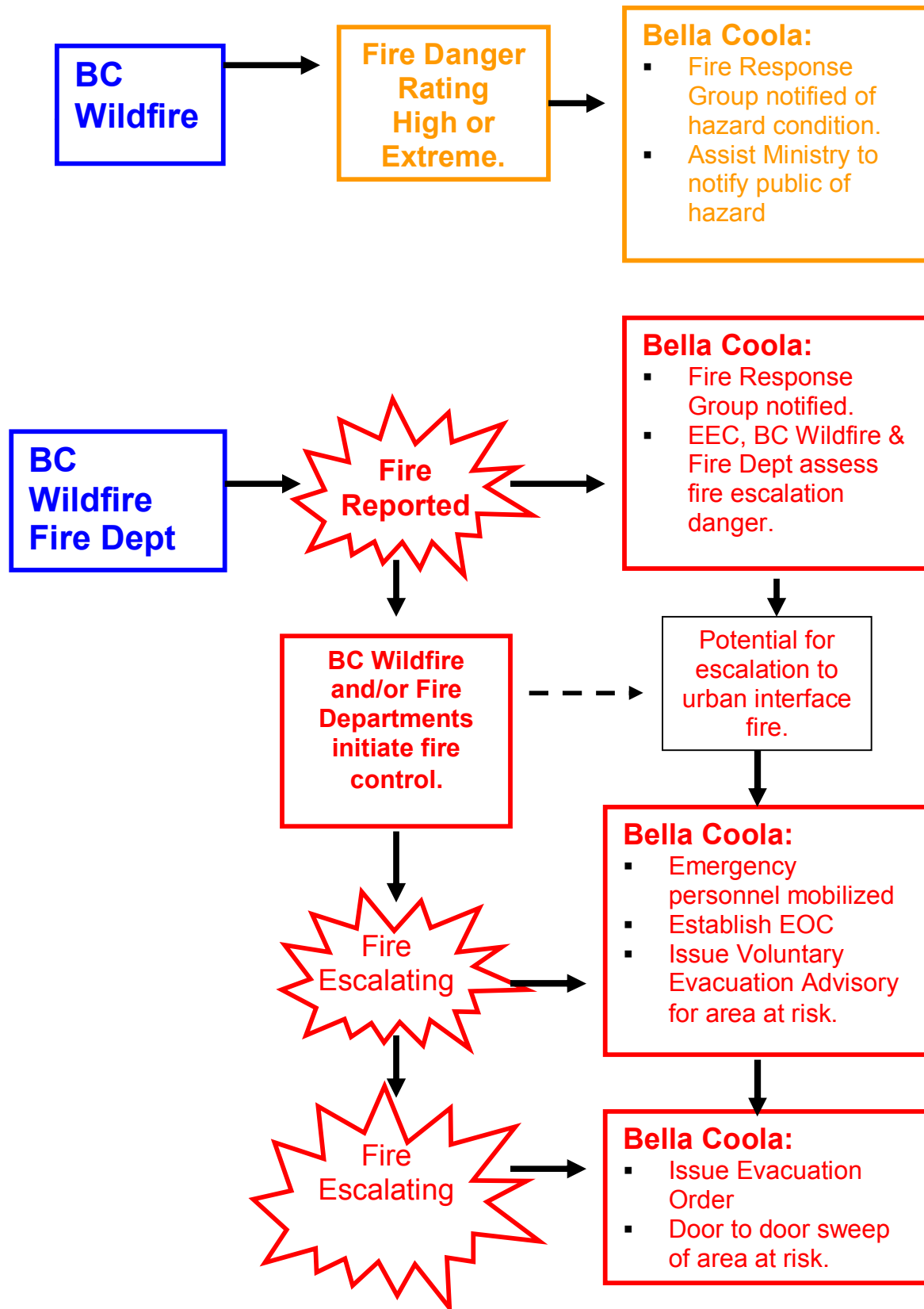
Fire Reported:

All of above.

EEC, Wildfire BC and Fire Departments evaluate threat of escalation to urban interface fire and decide on course of action.

Initiate Call out to residents in Danger zone.

1.1 Fire Emergency Action Plan Schematic



2. Fire Response Organization

The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development through BC Wildfire Service is responsible for fires on crown forest lands. Local governments have the primary responsibility for fire protection and response for areas within their jurisdiction. However, protocols are in place whereby the MFLNRORD will direct and control urban interface fire operations. For further details about Provincial system for interface fire control see the “British Columbia Provincial Coordination Plan for Wildland Urban Interface Fires” (2016) in CCRD EMP Annex D – EMBC Supporting Emergency Response Manuals.

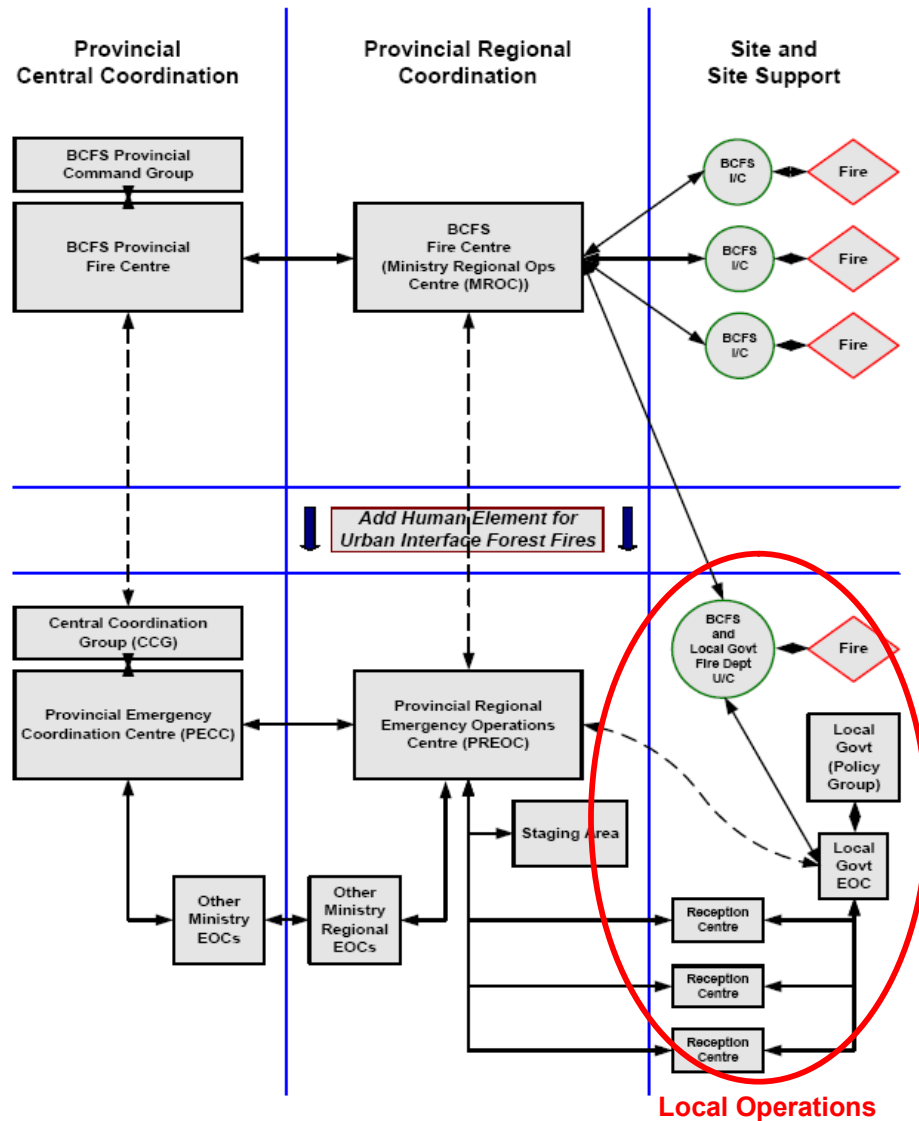


Figure 1 - Provincial Emergency Response Structure for Wild-Land/Urban Interface Fires

2.1 Local Government Responsibility

- Monitor interface fire risk
- Implement fire prevention/mitigation measures
- Identify and source equipment and other resources
- Establish response parameters in consultation with MFLNRORD officials
- Establish EOC to support on-site structural fire fighting.
- Direct local response (structural fire fighting) and assist MFLNRORD fire crews as requested.
- Coordinate evacuation and care of residents.
- Maintain liaison with the Incident Commander (Fire Boss), Fire Control Center and Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Center (PREOC).

2.1.1 Local Fire Response Team

The local Fire Response Group consists of the following individuals and organizations:

EEC	ESS Officer	PI Officer	Comm Officer
BC Wildfire	Ambulance	RCMP	
Fire Dept's	Hospital	Highways	

2.2 Fire Danger Rating System

The Ministry of Forests monitors fire danger throughout the Province during the March 1- November 1 fire season. Detailed Fire Danger Class Reports by geographic region can be obtained on the MOF website

<http://bcfireinfo.for.gov.bc.ca/hprScripts/DgrCls/index.asp?Region=2>

The Danger Class Ratings are as follows:

Very Low	
Low	Low fire danger.
Moderate	Carry out any forest activity with caution, fire watch may be required for industrial activities
High	Fire hazard is serious. Extreme caution must be used in any forest activity. Burning permits and industrial activities may be restricted.
Extreme	Extremely high fire hazard. General forest activities may be restricted or banned, including burning permits, industrial activities and campfires.

2.3 Bella Coola Valley Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Refer also to the Bella Coola Valley CWPP (2006) for further information on fuel hazard ratings throughout the valley.

3 Fire Response Activation Levels

Bella Coola Fire Emergency Plan may be activated by EEC or Fire Response Group when there is potential for urban interface fire.

Threat Assessment/Monitoring

General monitoring of fire threat. EOC open during regular working hours. Provide information to public about fireproofing property in threatened areas. Strategically preposition structural fire fighting resources.

Enhanced Mitigation/Evacuation Stage 1 Alert

Situation deteriorating. EOC may become fully staffed 24/7. Enhanced mitigation activities implemented and preparations made for orderly evacuation of affected area. Voluntary evacuation initiated.

Fire Fighting/Precautionary Evacuation

Fire fighting commences in problem areas. Affected area patrolled 24/7. Precautionary evacuation of vulnerable populations commenced.

Fire Fighting/Evacuation Stage 2 - Order

High probability of interface fire. Full fire fighting implemented. State of Emergency declared. Mandatory evacuation ordered.

Evacuation Stage 3 – All Clear

Return to area permitted, demobilization and recovery commenced. EOC remains active at reduced level in case situation deteriorates and to help with recovery operations.

3.1 Pre-Event Preparedness and Response

During fire season (March 1 – November 1), the local Fire Response Group is to be notified when the local Fire Danger Class reaches 'High or Extreme' levels. The intent of this is to notify emergency personnel of imminent potential for fire. No actions taken at this time except to help notify local population of hazard.

Fire Response Group to be notified of any fire in the Bella Coola watershed by MOF. This includes fires that do not initially pose a threat to the community. This will put emergency personnel on stand-by alert. Initiate **Threat Assessment/Monitoring Activation level**.

3.2 Interface Fire Immediate Response

Upon notification of fire in vicinity of the community, the Fire Response Group is to be put on high alert. EEC in consultation with FLNROD and Fire Department Officials will assess risk of fire escalating to interface fire and determine appropriate action. If potential exists, then initiate **Enhanced Mitigation/Evacuation Stage 1 Alert** activation level:

- Establish EOC.
- Mobilize Fire Response Group.
- Initiate call out to affected area.
- Initiate door to door warning.
- Assess need to pre-mobilize fire fighting resources.

Activation level may be upgraded to **Fire Fighting/Precautionary Evacuation**:

- Notify affected parties of increasing threat.

Continued deterioration of fire conditions will initiate **Fire Fighting/Evacuation Stage 2 – Order** activation level:

- State of Emergency is declared
- Evacuation becomes mandatory.
- Conduct door to door sweep.

3.3 Areas of Special Concern and Damage Potential

The primary infrastructures at risk from interface fire are homes and associated valuables along with power/phone lines. Farm structures like barns and sheds are also scattered throughout the valley. The Columbia Fuels tank farm at the harbour is also vulnerable due to the close forest proximity. Power and phone lines may be down for extended periods.

Refer also to the Bella Coola Valley Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2006) for additional information on fuel and fire hazard.

There are three major events during the summer fire season that may warrant special evacuation needs:

- Rodeo – July long weekend
- Music Festival – mid-July
- Fall Fair – Labourday weekend

3.4 **Infrastructure Prioritization**

Fire crews will prioritize suppression action to:

- 1 Working phone lines to maintain communications
- 2 Roads and bridges to ensure evacuations can take place
- 3 Critical facilities – hospitals, power stations

4 **Fire Emergency – Evacuation Plan**

Interface fire can occur anywhere in the Bella Coola valley and individual evacuation plans that address the specific circumstances of each fire event will have to be formulated on the spot. Key components of a fire evacuation plan are outlined here along with important considerations and constraints.

Evacuation planning will commence during the **Threat Assessment/Monitoring** activation level and the evacuation plan will be activated at the **Enhanced Mitigation/ Evacuation Stage 2 – Alert**.

Three stages of evacuation:

Evacuation Alert	People in fire threatened area are notified of potential evacuation and people should prepare for likelihood of quick evacuation.
Evacuation Order	State of Emergency issued. High likelihood of Interface fire. People are ordered to evacuate. Perimeter secured. Road blocks established. Door to door sweep of affected area.
All Clear	Danger has passed. People allowed to return to area.

4.1 **Scale of Evacuation**

Depending on fire size, location, weather and fuel conditions, the whole valley may need to be evacuated or a particular neighborhood or just a few homes. For smaller scale evacuations, people can likely be cared for at safe locations in the valley. For large scale evacuations, people need to travel east by Hwy 20 to Anahime Lake and beyond or west by boat/ferry, if available, to Bella Bella or Port Hardy. Except for the most extreme and desperate situations, people should not evacuate along forest roads to the side valleys as access may get cut off stranding people without supporting services.

4.2 Evacuation Routes and Safe Zones

First Option:

People should evacuate along Hwy 20 to safe zones in the valley or if necessary out of the valley. If available, boat/ferry can also be used to travel west. If people head up into side valleys, they may become stranded there.

Second Option:

If evacuation along Hwy 20 or by marine vessel is not possible, then people should evacuate to nearest safe side valley using existing logging roads. People should stage in an area where helicopters can land to provide support or continue evacuation.

Third Option:

In extreme case, where vehicular evacuation is not possible, people should proceed to the Bella Coola River and find a wide gravel bar to wait for assistance or for fire to pass.

Table 6-1 Evacuation Areas and Route Options

Location	Evacuation Options
Bella Coola Town Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interface fire will likely occur east of town site, so people should head to harbour area and wait for instructions and possible marine evacuation. • If necessary, evacuate up Clayton Falls Forest Service Road. 4X4 assistance may be necessary. • If fire west of town site, evacuation options are to Acwsalcta school, Lobelco Hall or SAMS school in Hagensborg.
4 Mile Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interface fire will likely occur east or south of reserve, so people should head to harbour area and wait for instructions and possible marine evacuation. • If necessary, evacuate up Clayton Falls Forest Service Road. 4X4 assistance may be necessary. • If fire west of reserve, people should evacuate to SAMS school in Hagensborg.
Hagensborg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If fire east of settlement, evacuate to Harbour for possible marine evacuation. • If fire west of settlement, evacuate to Floyd Mechams Farm, Tweedsmuir Lodge or Anahime Lake school. • If Hwy evacuation not possible, people should evacuate up 1) Nusatsum logging road 2) Salloompt logging road.
Nusatsum to Firvale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If fire east of settlement, people should evacuate to SAMS school. • If fire west of settlement, people should evacuate to Tweedsmuir Lodge. • If Hwy 20 evacuation is not possible, evacuate up 1) Nusatsum logging road, 2) Noosgulch logging road, 3) Cachootin (Glacier) Creek logging road.
Tweedsmuir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If fire east of settlement, evacuate to SAMS school. • If fire west of settlement, evacuate to Anahime Lake school. • Talchacko logging road could be used, but not recommended.

See Bella Coola valley hazard maps in Bella Coola ERP Annex D.

4.2.1 Establishment of Road Blocks

Location for safe road blocks will be determined on a case by case basis.

RCMP and Highways crews to staff road blocks.

4.2.2 Special Evacuation Requirements

Special evacuation assistance on a large scale only applicable if Bella Coola (hospital and old age home) is threatened.

There may be invalid, house-bound people scattered throughout valley and this will have to be determined on a case by case basis.

Evacuation of livestock and animals will require special vehicles and coordination.

5 Fire Emergency – Prolonged Response

A prolonged fire emergency will likely entail an expanding evacuation program as fire moves throughout valley. This will mean that people will have to evacuate out of the valley to Anahime Lake and beyond. A ferry may be required to move people out by marine route to Port Hardy.

6 Fire Emergency – Recovery

Damage from fire can be expected to be severe and extensive so recovery may take months or even years.

Many people may not have fire insurance, and will require substantial assistance in order to recover and rebuild.

Power and phone lines can be expected to be down and new power poles will require installation. This may take a period of weeks, depending on how extensive the damage is.