



2018.05.30

## Wildfire Newsletter

### Prescribed burning

To help prevent or reduce the intensity of wildfires, selected areas are sometimes burned deliberately (prescribed burns) to get rid of excess fuel on the landscape. Prescribed burning is a crucial tool that is used to achieve a variety of land management objectives, as described in fire management plans. Those objectives may support:

- fuel management (to reduce accumulations of forest fuels)
- ecological restoration
- enhancement of wildlife habitat
- First Nations traditional uses
- agriculture



Cherry Creek prescribed burn, April 26, 2018

When a fuel management project is completed, future wildfires in that area will have less fuel available to burn and therefore will not burn as intensely. Other fuel management treatments include harvesting, thinning, pruning and chipping.

Fire is a natural process in many of B.C.'s ecosystems. However, wildfires are often extinguished before they spread over large areas, in order to help protect infrastructure, buildings and natural resources. This can lead to accumulations of flammable material on the landscape, which can increase the likelihood of a more intense wildfire in future. Prescribed burns help reduce these accumulations and reduce that risk.

A prescribed burn might involve introducing fire across an entire area and letting it burn to predefined boundaries, or directly lighting piles of branches and other vegetation that crews have gathered together beforehand. Both types of fires are carefully monitored by trained firefighters.

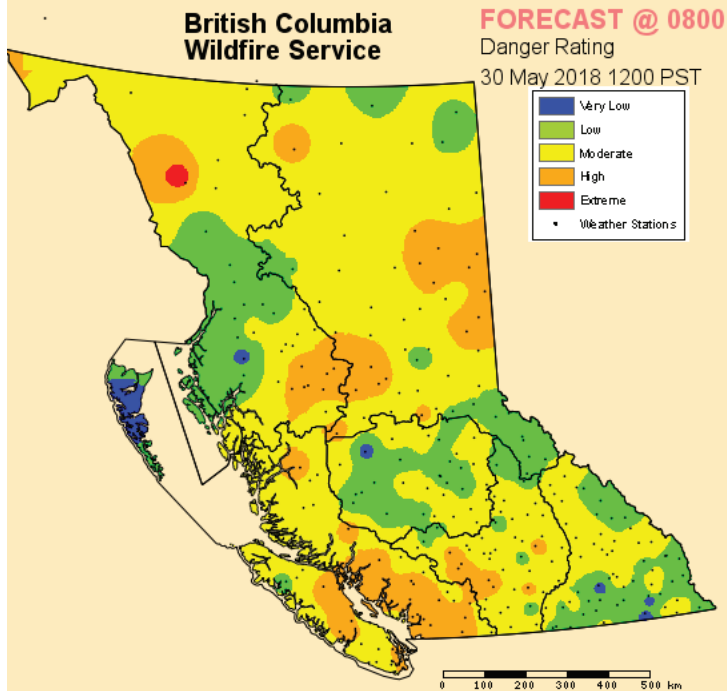
Prescribed burning is a way of carefully reintroducing fire back into the landscape to benefit local ecosystems.

**1 888 3FOREST**

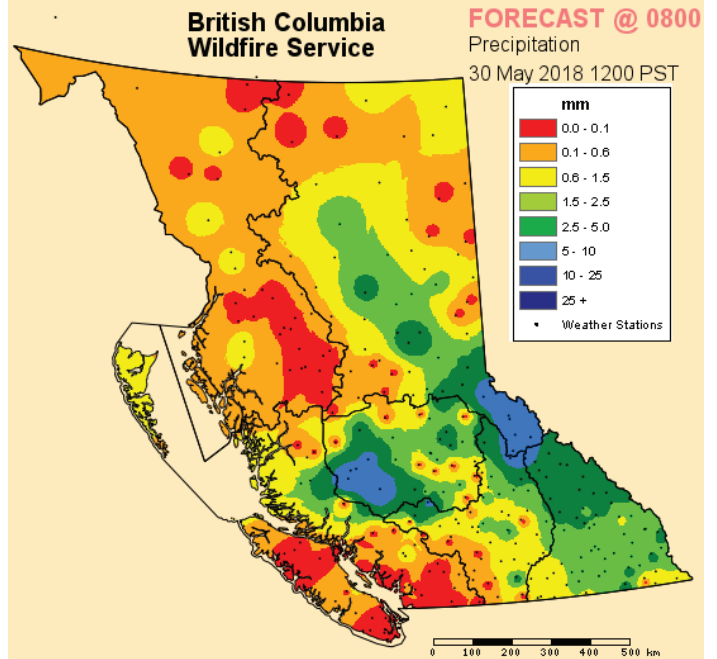
For more information about wildfires and burn prohibitions, visit:

[www.bcwildfire.ca](http://www.bcwildfire.ca)

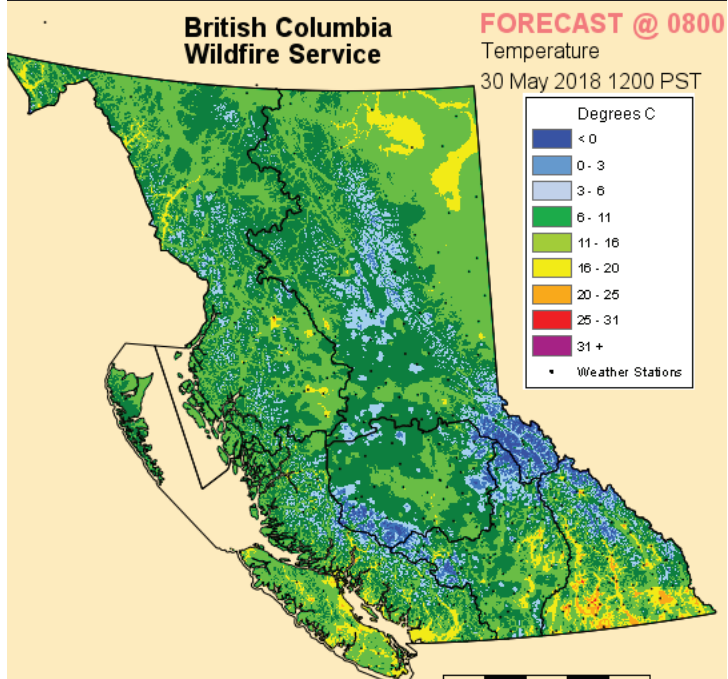
## Fire Danger Rating



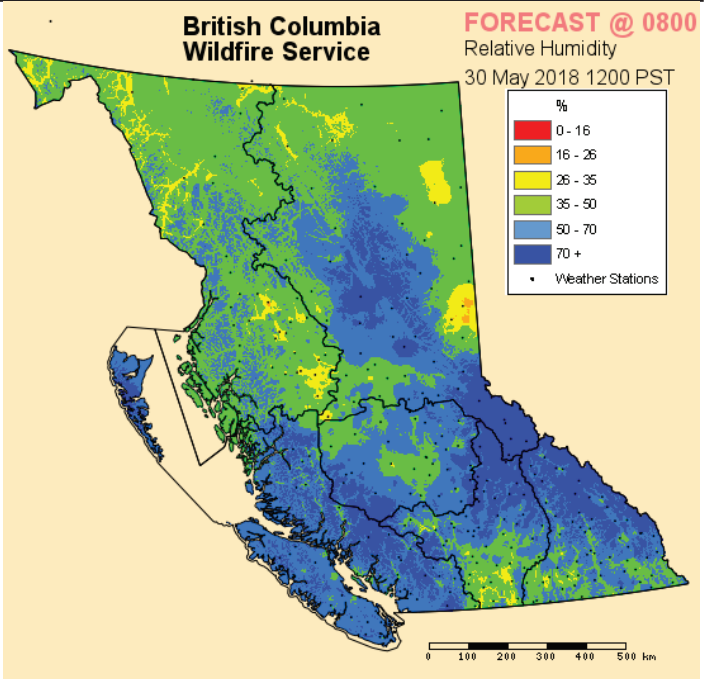
## Precipitation



## Temperature



## Relative Humidity



These maps are current for May 30, 2018.  
For the most recent weather maps, please see  
<http://ow.ly/sGGW30kgelD>

These maps are for informational purposes only and should not be used to make operational decisions.



## Cherry Creek Prescribed Burn

### Southeast Fire Centre Statistics

#### Totals since April 1, 2018:

Fires to date: 16  
Hectares burned: 30  
Human-caused fires: 14  
Lightning-caused fires: 2

#### 2017 at this time:

Fires to date: 9  
Hectares burned: 2  
Human-caused fires: 8  
Lightning-caused fires: 0

#### 2016 at this time:

Fires to date: 29  
Hectares burned: 88  
Human-caused fires: 25  
Lightning-caused fires: 4

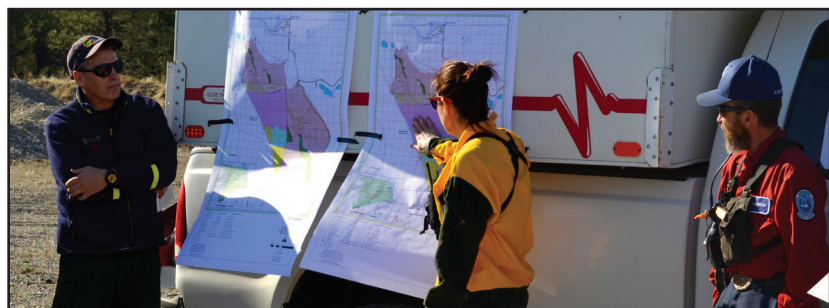


The BC Wildfire Service and ʔaq'am First Nations jointly conducted a 565-hectare prescribed burn in the Rocky Mountain Trench on April 26, 2018, about 15 kilometres north of Cranbrook. This burn covered 180 hectares of Crown land near Cherry Creek and 385 hectares on Kootenay Indian Reserve No. 1.

The Rocky Mountain Trench is a part of a fire-maintained ecosystem and the objective of this prescribed burn was ecological restoration. Prior to igniting this controlled fire, the land on Kootenay Indian Reserve No. 1 was logged and thinned.

Thinning and burning helps bring the landscape back to its historical range of variability. The burning prescriptions allowed land managers to meet their objectives, which were to:

- improve forage and habitat for wild animals
- improve ungulate winter range
- increase biodiversity
- reduce the encroachment of shrubs
- return the landscape back to state of relatively open forest, with large and healthy trees



## Cherry Creek prescribed burn in Cranbrook Fire Zone (continued)

The Cherry Creek burn tied into a larger network of previously completed prescribed burns in the area and added to a landscape-level fuel break. The burn decreased accumulations of combustible material on the landscape and reduced the risk of catastrophic wildfires in the area in future.

Members of the ʔaq'am community have traditionally used fire to manage their land and they hope to bring back the annual cycle of fire. In the past, members of the ʔaq'am community divided their land into six pastures and practised a system of fire rotation on those pastures.

Many years of fire suppression, however, contributed to fewer skilled individuals within the community being able to conduct safe and effective burn operations. The ʔaq'am community now intends to train its members under the mentorship of skilled wildfire personnel from the BC Wildfire Service, so they can conduct burns safely and successfully in the future.





This successful prescribed burn project was the result of careful planning and co-operation between the ʔaq'am community and other stakeholders, including the BC Wildfire Service, the Rocky Mountain Trench Ecosystem Restoration Society, the Ktunaxa Nation, and the Cranbrook and Kimberley fire departments.

This project was a great example of what can be done when different groups work across jurisdictional boundaries to achieve a common goal. It was also an opportunity for mentorship and knowledge-sharing between all of the partners involved.

**For information on the Wildfire Act and Wildfire Regulation, visit:**

<http://ow.ly/Dcoo30kgerG>

## Practice safe fire use

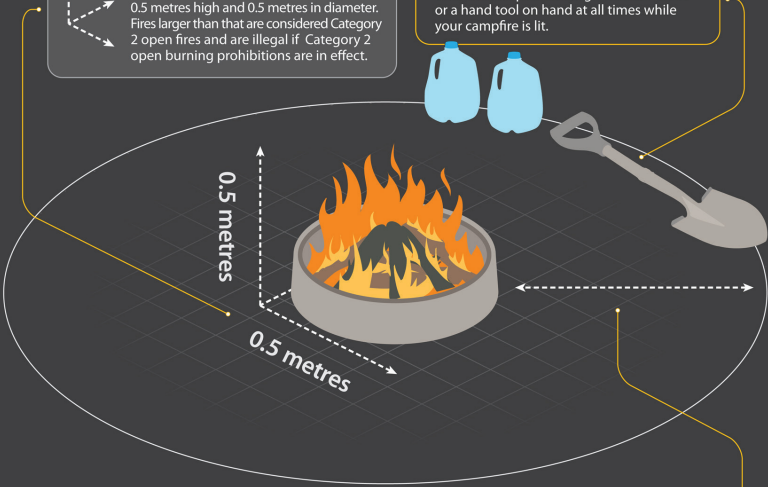
**Violating these regulations could cost you \$1,150.**  
If a violation causes a wildfire, the person responsible may also be ordered to pay all firefighting and associated costs.

**CAMPFIRE SIZE**

A campfire is defined as a fire no larger than 0.5 metres high and 0.5 metres in diameter. Fires larger than that are considered Category 2 open fires and are illegal if Category 2 open burning prohibitions are in effect.

**8 LITRES OR A HAND TOOL**

You must keep at least eight litres of water or a hand tool on hand at all times while your campfire is lit.



**PUTTING OUT YOUR FIRE**




Before you leave the area for any amount of time, your campfire **MUST** be fully extinguished. The ashes of your fire must be cool to the touch.

**FUEL BREAK**

You must have a fuel break around your campfire. This area must be cleared of debris and anything combustible. It needs to be wide enough to stop the spread of the fire. A rock ring around the fire can also help prevent it from spreading.

You **MUST NOT** leave your fire unattended for **ANY** length of time.

Report wildfires, unattended campfires or violations of regulations by calling  
**\*5555** on a cell or **1 800 663-5555** toll-free.

 BC Wildfire Service
 [BCwildfire.ca](http://BCwildfire.ca)
 @BCGovFireInfo

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Report a wildfire  
 Wildfire Information Line  
 Burn Registration Line  
 Southeast Fire Centre: Fire Information Officer

\*5555 on a cell or 1 800 663-5555  
 1 888 3FOREST  
 1 888 797-1717  
 1 250 365-4014

Visit [www.bcwildfire.ca](http://www.bcwildfire.ca)