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For Information about Wildfires go to:

Facebook
BC Forest Fire Info

Website
BCWildfire.ca

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BCGovFireInfo

See detailed weather forecast page 4

Know the Essentials–The Fire Triangle

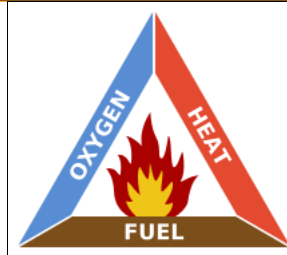
Three elements must be present for a fire to start and continue burning:

Oxygen, Heat and Fuel.

Oxygen is present in the air, B.C.’s forests and grasslands provide the fuel (both light and heavy fuels) and heat is introduced through ignition.

Light fuels include grass, dead leaves, brush and small trees and serve as kindling for larger fuels. They can ignite quickly and fire will spread rapidly through them. Heavy fuels include logs, stumps and trees, which generally burn slower and for a longer period.

All fire suppression efforts are based on the “fire triangle” principle. When a firefighter reduces any of these three elements, combustion slows, the fire movement stalls, and the fire eventually consumes the fuel and the fire peters out. When any of these elements is removed completely, the fire will go out quickly. In the case of a wildfire, it’s often the removal or management of fuels that retard the growth and vigour of the fire and allow firefighters to make progress extinguishing it.



Crews work hard to reduce the heat of the fire, which allows firefighters to work closer to the flames. Any change in weather that creates cooler, damper conditions (including nighttime and morning) is also welcome, as it will reduce, but not eliminate, the fire’s activity. (That’s why we always say,

“Aircraft don’t put out fires, ground crews do.”) Conversely, an increase in air temperature will also increase fire behaviour.

Crews also attempt to keep the flames away from other available fuel sources by creating a “break” to separate the fire from nearby fuels such as a constructed fire guard or by using and strengthening a natural fire break such as a road, river or lake.

The decision to manage a fire or to have crews fully extinguish it is based on the fire’s size, location and proximity to identified values, such as populated areas, natural resources and infrastructure. Safety of people is always the primary consideration. Other factors include weather conditions and forest health in the area.

The 2016 Season

At the end of every season we inevitably end up wondering what we did right and where more work is required. How can we, as Information Officers, provide better service to the public?

Wildfires definitely made their presence felt in the Coastal Fire Centre in 2015. Although we didn’t experience large lightning storms that could have made the situation much worse, we want to do more to educate the public about wildfire threats and how the BC Wildfire Service tackles wildfires in our region.

With about 70% of the wildfires in the Coastal Fire Centre last year caused by humans, we are once again urging everyone to adhere to any open burning prohibitions and use extreme caution wherever open fires are allowed. We also want to remind the public that the B.C. government is taking a much tougher stand on irresponsible behaviour that contributes to increased wildfire risks, in an effort to protect communities, natural

resources and infrastructure from damage. We can provide the science, the reasoning, and examples of why decisions are made by the professionals at the Fire Centre and in the field.

In this season’s newsletters, we will share the science and the reasoning behind the decisions made by the Coastal Fire Centre’s firefighters and fire management professionals.

We will start right from the beginning, with the basic principles of fire behaviour. We will also try to highlight one local wildfire each issue. It could be a nuisance fire, a “smoke chase” or an interface fire, but the exercise is meant to illustrate the complex decision-making process that our crews and support staff go through on a daily basis.

Please become our partners and do what you can to reduce wildfire risks. We’re all in this together.

This is the perfect time to FireSmart your property!

For new material from FireSmart Canada go to:

<http://bcwildfire.ca/Prevention/firesmart.htm>

Coastal Fire Centre

hot topics in Wildfire on the Coast

Wildfire news

2015

Total Number of Fires
195
Human-caused
136
Lightning
57









The cause of an ignition is always a concern for the BC Wildfire Service, since fires that are not caused by lightning or are part of a prescribed burn plan are most often started by careless human behaviour.

Although some fires are accidental, most are preventable.

In 2015, about 70% of the fires in the Coastal Fire Centre were human-caused, while only 30% were sparked by lightning.

FireSmart Projects

Forestry students at Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo took on a project to practice the principles of FireSmart on the University's campus, April 9th and 10th, 2016. Both staff and students enjoyed the weekend and were very happy with the results. 2—40 yard bin were full of debris were hauled away. This kind of project benefits both the community and the students. VIU instructors Brad Wood, Assistant Chief - Operations, "A" Platoon, Nanaimo Fire Rescue, and former BCWS employee Pat Hayes supervised and instructed students during the project.

FireSmart Principles	Before	After
Look for opportunities to create a fire break by creating space between trees and other potentially flammable vegetation. Thinning and pruning is effective here.		
Space trees at least 3 metres apart as it will help reduce the intensity of a wildfire. Reduce surface fuels by clearing and pruning brush.		
Changes within 10 metres of your home, including the removal of combustible surface material, will have the biggest impact. Clear brush and twigs from around buildings.		
Zone 1 around your home should be a fire-resistant zone, free of all materials that could easily ignite from a wildfire. Clean the debris from your roof. Dry needles and twigs are small fuel that can dry quickly and act as kindling on your roof.		

We would like to remind everyone that if you initiate any burning you must monitor it at all times. The coast is often windy in the spring, and any open burning must be done with caution.

Please check with your local governmental jurisdiction to find out what local regulations apply.

Garry Oak Restoration

The Cowichan Garry Oak Preserve in Duncan, BC, held a
'In Bloom Wildflower Festival'

Saturday April 30, 2016 at 1241 Maple Bay Road

The festival celebrated the restoration and research projects carried out by the Society.



In 2013, the BC Wildfire Service assisted the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) by helping to develop a burn plan and took part in the burning of five plots that were .1 and .2 hectares in size.

The NCC proposed the project, which helped to restore a 22 hectare site, near Duncan. The BCWS worked with the NCC to develop a prescribed fire burn plan and provided crews from the nearby Cobble Hill base to conduct the burn. The NCC provided staff and volunteers to assist with the project.

Garry Oak ecosystems are restricted primarily to the Southeast coast of Vancouver Island and the Southern Gulf

Islands. These ecosystems are small and are among the most endangered in Canada. It is an important project in that, not only does it allow the NCC an opportunity to better understand this type of ecosystem, but also provides information on what elements are necessary to allow this ecosystem to thrive under existing conditions. The main threats to the Garry Oak ecosystem are land development, fire suppression, and the introduction of invasive species.

This was a great project and provides an opportunity to see some of the short term results of this 'Restoration Burn'.



To Date
in Coastal

Fires to Date

Person Caused 7

Lighting Caused 0

Total Number of Fires 7

Fire Danger Rating today



Current Prohibitions
(within BCWS jurisdictional area)

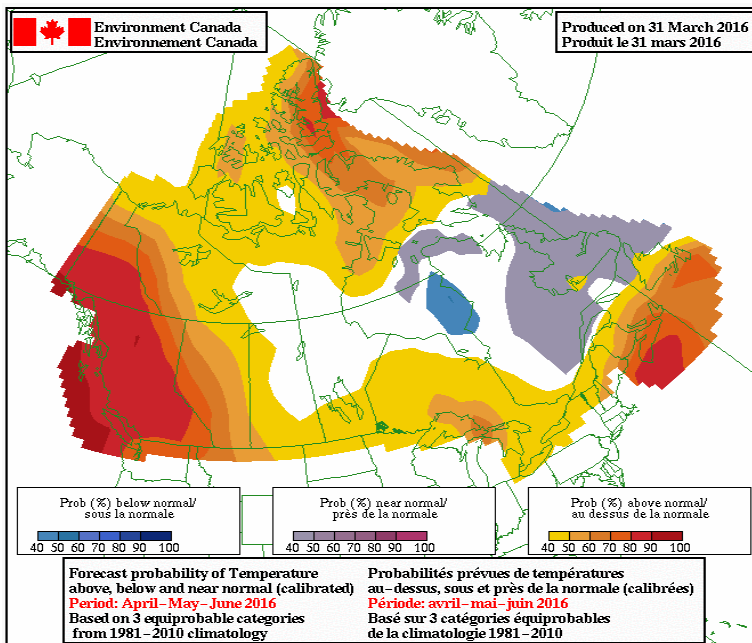
None—check with local gov't first!



Coastal Seasonal Outlook

Our forecasters have released their forecast as of April 1, 2016, and they tell us that weather to date has been 'near normal'. The long range forecast, and as you all know is expected to deliver 'near normal wildfire severity' within Coastal. And as always within the Coastal Fire Centre it all depends on the June rains and the number of ignitions by people.

For more information go to: http://weather.gc.ca/saisons/index_e.html



At Coastal

The first deployments of the season occurred somewhat earlier than usual on April 19, when Coastal staff were sent Prince George to help out. Those people have returned to rest, but others have left to take their place on the fireline. Low snowpack, dry conditions, wind and multiple human-caused fires have created these conditions in the Peace, with no end in sight.

Here in Coastal we are more fortunate: we have had seven human-caused fires. The largest of these was at Tugwell Creek, 8 kilometers NW of Sooke. This area is in high fire danger rating today, and you can see from

the picture how deeply the fire burnt underground. This fire was human caused, and is now in patrol.

Weather

SYNOPSIS: Friday/Saturday will be sunny and warmer with light winds. Easterly outflows last night led to moderate humidity recovery for many areas, which will see low afternoon readings as daytime heat rises. Clear skies tonight mean cool temps and fair recovery for valley stations and moderate recovery for higher elevations. Bands of high cloud Saturday afternoon provide no rainfall south of northern Vancouver Island. Saturday afternoon heating continues to rise and daily highs reach the low 20s along the coast to a few high 20s inland. Winds increase late Saturday.

OUTLOOK: Late Saturday/early Sunday a surge of much cooler air pushes across all zones bringing chilly Sunday morning temperatures and gusty winds. Fire Weather forecast indices on Sunday show widespread FFMCS in the low 90s and ISIs in the 10 range. About half Coastal stations pop up to a high Danger Class. Winds decrease Monday and stay lighter through Tuesday. A few showers are expected to northern stations both Sunday and Monday but dry and cooler over the south.

6 TO 10 DAY: (Wednesday-Sunday next week)
The ridge once gone does not come back in a hurry but for most zones the weather will continue dry with near normal temperatures. At the moment forecast models keep it dry all next week.