



Reference: 281218

March 7, 2025

VIA EMAIL: JFreund@csrd.bc.ca

Natalya Melnychuk, Board Chair
Columbia Shuswap Regional District
PO Box 978
Salmon Arm, British Columbia
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Dear Natalya Melnychuk:

Thank you for your letter of February 20, 2025, to Honourable Ravi Parmar, Minister of Forests, regarding Cooperative Community Wildfire Response (CCWR). I have been asked to respond.

The main goals of the CCWR model are to:

- Understand and support the development of Indigenous and rural non-Indigenous community wildfire preparedness and response capacity.
- Develop pathways, building on what already exists, for both Indigenous and rural, non-Indigenous community wildfire response, in cooperation with the BC Wildfire Service.
- Acknowledge and highlight local and traditional knowledge and experience in fire management.
- Improve engagement and cooperation between communities and the BC Wildfire Service and local authorities.

The Regional District Cooperative Community Wildfire Response Organization program is one avenue for community participation in wildfire preparedness and response, the program originated from significant demand from the public for citizen and community involvement in wildland fire response and prevention. Though, this program is not the only pathway for participation.

We recognize there are changes to the funding aspect of the community response model that affect local governments. Our main priority is to enhance community resilience across British Columbia.

To this end, I would value the opportunity to engage and get your perspective on CCWR and its intent. To facilitate a meaningful conversation, if there is interest on your end, we would like to set up a meeting with the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) to discuss barriers and gaps, as well as opportunities within the Regional District Cooperative Community Wildfire Response Organization program.

While the funding model is a joint program with the Union of BC Municipalities and there may be limitations to change for this current intake, activation and management of response groups within the CSRD can be discussed.

Please let me know if you would like to meet and I can start to arrange a preseason meeting to address the concerns you have highlighted.

Sincerely,



David Greer
Executive Director
BC Wildfire Service

pc: Honourable Ravi Parmar, Minister of Forests