

Aw

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Bush Creek East Wildfire

Summary Report for the Columbia Shuswap Regional District

MARCH 7-14, 2024



PREPARED BY:

M monogram
COMMUNICATIONS

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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this Community Conversations Summary Report is to provide an overview of the public engagement that took place regarding the Bush Creek East Wildfire, in March of 2024.

These conversations were intended to share information and listen to community members' experiences during the wildfire. It was also an opportunity for community members to ask questions of Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) team members and provide feedback and suggestions for improvements in dealing with future wildfire and emergency situations within their communities.



BACKGROUND

The CSRD activated an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) on July 12, 2023, to manage the Lower East Adams Lake wildfire, later renamed the Bush Creek East Wildfire. Thousands of residents, and hundreds of homes, were evacuated or placed on evacuation alert, based on the recommendation of the BC Wildfire Service. Through the event, 176 structures were lost and another 50 were damaged. There were no lives lost. CSRD rescinded the evacuation alerts and orders on October 5, 2023.

This report includes methods used to communicate with community members and any key themes resulting from the engagement. It also includes a detailed overview of the community conversations, questions arising at the events and recommendations for improvements.

In addition to the in-person and virtual events, the report covers the outcomes of a survey and metrics found therein.



ENGAGEMENT GOALS

There were several goals as part of community engagement efforts for the Bush Creek East Wildfire. These included:

- Hear from community members about their experiences during, and after, the wildfire.
- Provide an opportunity for the CSRD to share information about their roles and responsibilities, emergency preparedness, communications, FireSmart, fire services, and emergency support services (ESS).
- Communicate the process for an evacuation order or alert.
- Learn from community members how they received their information during the wildfire event.
- Answer questions related to CSRD's role in the wildfire.
- Listen to and capture information from community members on how things could be improved for next time.
- Offer a venue for sharing and communication, in community and online.





ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

With support from Monogram Communications, the CSRD held four in-person events on March 7, 9, 10 and 11. In total, approximately 250 members of the public attended and participated in these events.

The events took place in Sorrento, Celista, Anglemont, and Quaaout Lodge. We sincerely thank the hosts for their gracious support in delivering these events. Sandra at the Sorrento Hall, Terry at North Shuswap Elementary School, Jim and Darla at the Lakeview Community Centre and the entire staff at the Quaaout Lodge, the team is indebted to you.

The CSRD and Monogram teams also thank Tkʷemíple7tn, Dawn Francois, Councilor with the Skw̓lāx te Secwepemcú'lecw for the kind welcome to their traditional territory where Quaaout Lodge is located. We extend our appreciation to CSRD Board Members including Directors Natalya Melnychuk, Marty Gibbons, and Jay Simpson for their attendance and participation in many of these events.

Monogram Communications conducted pre-interviews, for situational awareness, with Directors Melnychuk and Simpson, and other community members. These one-on-one sessions provided useful context and background information. We truly appreciate the time that these individuals shared with us. In addition to the in-person engagement sessions, the team also hosted two virtual community conversations on March 13 and 14. Just over 40 members of the public attended.

4
DAYS
OF EVENTS

SORRENTO
CELISTA
ANGLEMONT
QUAAOUT LODGE
VIRTUAL

250
MEMBERS OF THE
PUBLIC





ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW CONT'D

Representatives from the CSRD who participated in the events included:

- Chief Administrative Officer, **John MacLean**
- Protective Services Team Leader, **Derek Sutherland**
- Protective Services Team Emergency Program Coordinator, **Cathy Semchuk**
- Protective Services Team Emergency Program Coordinator, **Tom Hansen**
- FireSmart Program Interim Coordinator, **Sophie Randell** and team member **Sara Whelen**
- Fire Services Deputy Regional Fire Chief, **Sean Coubrough**; Deputy Regional Fire Chief, **Len Youden**, and team members Scotch Creek Lee Creek FD **Ben Pellett**, Shuswap FD **Gary Holt**, Deputy Chief **Ty Barrett**, Anglemont FD **Graham Lucas**, and Celista FD **Roy Phillips**
- Communications Coordinator, **Tracy Hughes**





ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW CONT'D

Notification about these dialogue sessions was made available through the following mediums:

- Social media (Appendix A)
- Print and digital advertising (Appendix B)
- Printed posters throughout communities (pictured here)
- Press releases and media interviews

The in-person sessions included a slide presentation (Appendix C) and poster boards (Appendix D).

The engagement also included a survey with both closed and open-ended questions. Transcription of the questions from the events can be found in Appendices E and F.

The virtual session format included an identical slide presentation to the in-person events and an opportunity for participants to ask questions using the Zoom Breakout Room function.





CSRD IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENT FORMAT

The in-person engagement sessions were deliberately designed to encourage interaction and personal connection between the participants with CSRD staff and as a community.

Each session was physically arranged based on the availability of space in the rooms. CSRD subject matter experts (SMEs) from different emergency functions were present to receive information back from participants on their area of expertise.

Community 'hubs', like schools, Community Centres and gathering places, were chosen for their proximity to the fire-affected areas, connection to community, and familiarity.

There was initial frustration from some participants at the beginning of each session. Those participants were expecting a 'town hall' feel, with an open mic and Q+A. However, such a format is not inclusive of all styles of communication nor considerate of participants' comfort speaking in front of an audience.

These sessions were specifically designed to promote accessibility of multiple participants to information sources and to enhance the ability for a large cross-section of participants to share stories, recommendations and feedback.

On average, each CSRD staff member interacted with dozens of community members at each event, taking active notes and supplying information. This format enabled participants to be heard, and CSRD team members to listen deeply.

Each session wrapped up with a CSRD and Monogram debrief and information capture of all themes, questions and feedback.

Participation Levels

CSRD held four active, community engagement sessions and two virtual sessions with broad representation from the CSRD team. Community members were able to draw upon knowledge about emergency preparedness, FireSmart, and Emergency Support Services. The role of the CSRD in emergencies was clearly articulated to all attendees providing a better understanding of the local government's role in Emergency Management.



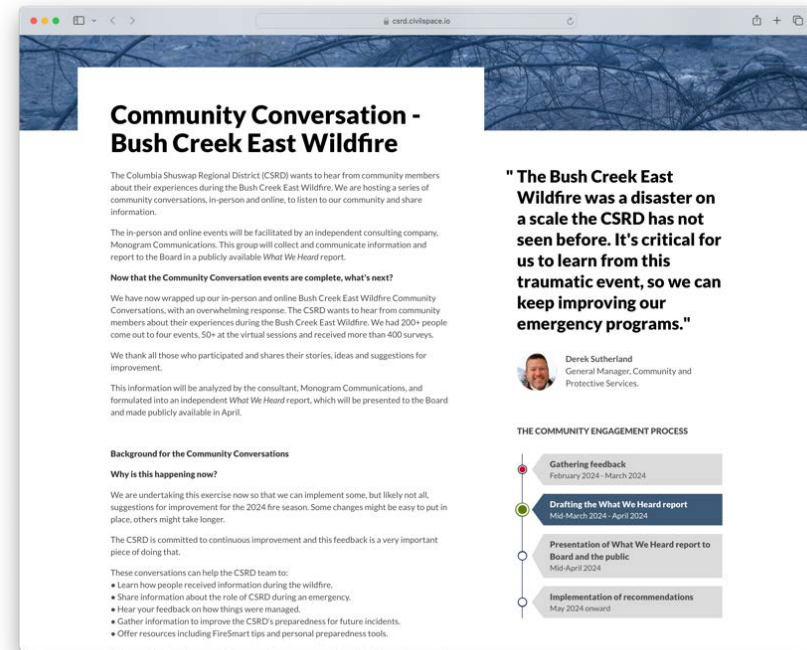
CSR WEBPAGE

A **dedicated webpage** was created to share information about the Community Conversations. A video recording of the March 14 online presentation was also posted to the page for those individuals who were unable to join any of the in-person or virtual sessions.

The page continues to invite public feedback through CSR's communications email address.

From February 27 to present the webpage has had thousands of page views. The webpage includes the following:

- Community conversation details including registration information, locations, times, and format
- An email address to ask questions
- A 10-question survey to gather even more community feedback on residents' experiences with the wildfire
- A **video** of the community engagement session from March 14



CSR Communications Email

Contact information for a monitored inbox was shared at all of the community conversations.

This inbox will continue welcoming questions and feedback.



communications@csrd.bc.ca

SURVEY

The CSRD webpage included a survey designed to capture feedback and experiences from the Bush Creek East Wildfire.

A total of 473 individuals completed part of the survey; 366 individuals completed the entire survey. In total, we collected 7,581 data points. Some high-level metrics are included below and all results are included in Appendix G.

We learned significant details from the survey and interactive engagement from the in-person sessions about where participants got their information during the wildfire. This will inform tactics in the future.

366 SURVEYS
FULLY COMPLETED

473 SURVEYS
PARTLY COMPLETED

7581 DATA POINTS
COLLECTED

We also got a good snapshot of numbers for emergency support services and the experience of those who used the program. Additionally, we gleaned much insight into the comments received through the survey.

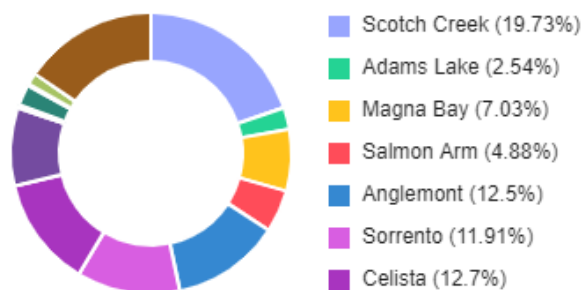
While much of the information mirrored what we heard in the community conversations, we heard more directly about people's experiences.

"We left because we knew that the road out was likely to be blocked and didn't want to get trapped in the area. In hindsight I would have stayed longer but with limited exit routes I chose not to put my family at risk."

**TELL
US**

? SURVEY CONT'D

Where do you live or own property?

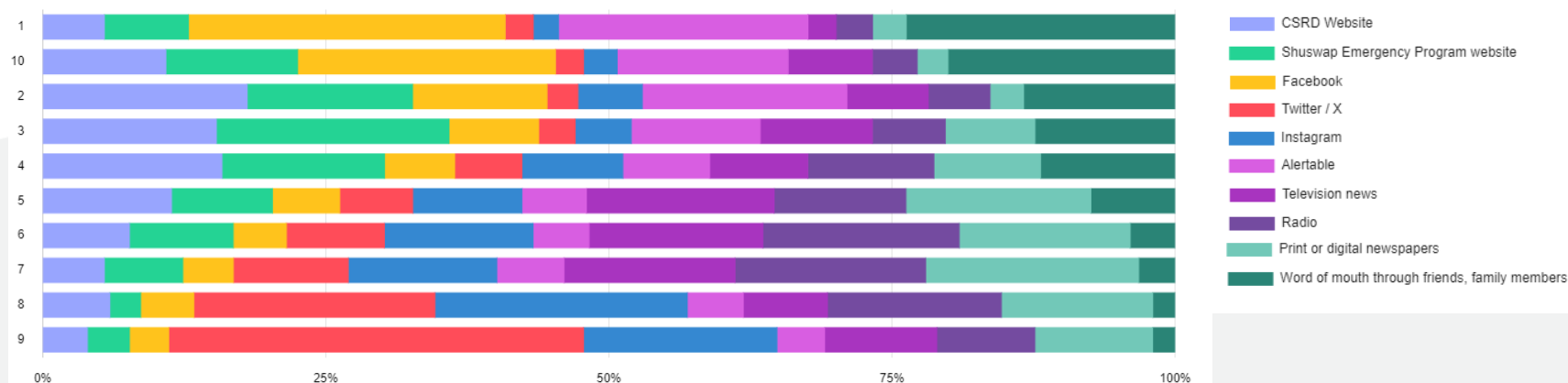


How would you describe yourself?



Rank the source of information you used most frequently during the wildfire.

(1 is most frequently used, 10 is the least frequently used)



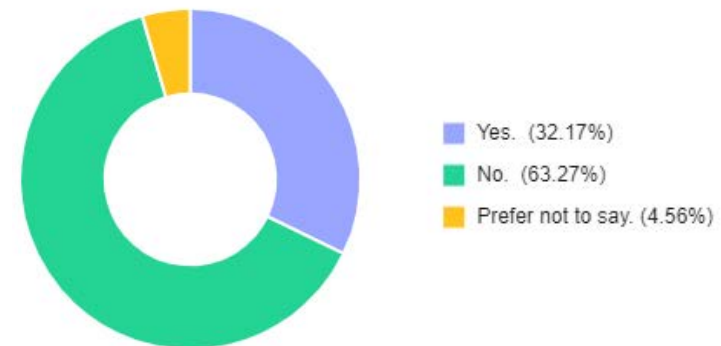


SURVEY CONT'D

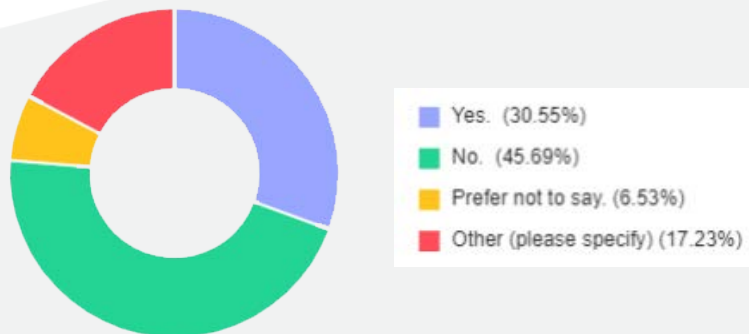
Did you evacuate during the wildfire?



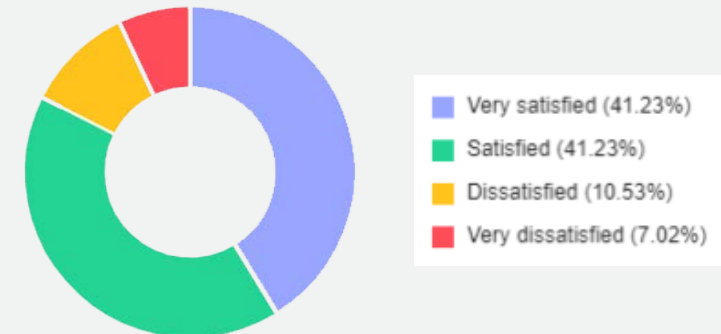
Did you receive Emergency Support Services after being evacuated from the wildfires?



Do you think you would make a different choice about evacuating if there is another fire in coming years?



How satisfied were you with the Emergency Support Services you received as a result of being evacuated from the Bush Creek East Wildfire?





SUMMARY OF THEMES

Several common themes emerged from the conversations and were consistent across all the locations of the in-person engagements, and the virtual sessions. These are:

- 1** Timing of evacuation alert on August 18, 2023. Community members as a whole found the notification came too late and for some individuals, it did not come through at all.
- 2** Difficulty with the CSRD's Alertable app and the broadcast-intrusive federal app.
- 3** Lack of communication leading up to Evacuation Alerts and disappointment with the ongoing communication throughout the wildfire.
- 4** Support and appreciation for CSRD's Fire Services team was counterbalanced by feelings that the fire services teams did not do enough to support and share resources with locals who chose to remain behind after the evacuation order.
- 5** Distress about the treatment of those who chose not to evacuate and were treated like 'criminals'.
- 6** Request for the development of community groups who could support fire and wildfire efforts in the event of another emergency.
- 7** Acknowledgment for the important role of emergency support services such as shelter, clothing, food, and money.
- 8** More access to mapping information, and better signage for emergency exits from the community, i.e. to Seymour Arm.
- 9** Recognition of the necessity of emergency preparedness.
- 10** Uptake in requests for FireSmart information and assessments (23 new requests over the course of the meetings).
- 11** Several new volunteers for emergency support services (nine volunteer applications and three new Neighbourhood Emergency Program (NEP) coordinator applications).
- 12** Questions about S-100 training for basic firefighting knowledge.



Each in-person location had more specific, detailed themes, captured below.
The virtual sessions also informed other themes, which are also listed herein.

SESSION 1: SORRENTO

Sorrento Memorial Hall | 35+ community members
Thursday, March 7 | 6:00 – 8:00pm

- Lack of information about the wildfire as related to their region. While there was no Evacuation Order for this geographic region, people were concerned about the wildfire and unclear about its impact on them.
- Reliance on community communications channels (non-CSRSD Facebook, word-of-mouth, neighbours, key community leaders) which spread misinformation, confusion, and frustration.
- Alerting earlier would benefit people with agricultural needs and livestock. More ESS info for this group is needed.
- People seeing the benefits of FireSmart and appreciating ESS supports—would like to begin preparing earlier or throughout the year with CSRSD direction. Interest in the Neighbourhood Emergency Program (NEP) but a lot of confusion on how to participate and its benefits.
- Calls for CSRSD to develop a community database of supplies, equipment, and human resources and expertise to support collaboratively during emergency alerts.



TELL
US

"There's a lack of trust after what happened, but coming together tonight is the way to move forward together on this and future emergencies. We know they're going to keep coming so we need to work together more."

"We felt punished for helping our families and neighbours—that's what we've been doing for generations."

"Thank you for hosting these. I understand now why you did it this way. It would be helpful to have more of these throughout the year."

SESSION 2: CELISTA

North Shuswap School | 100+ community members
Saturday, March 9 | 2:30 – 4:30pm

- Suggestion to build more connection with the community of Chase as an ESS location.
- Shock and anger over perceived abandonment by BC Wildfire Services.
- Questions about the rebuilding process and environmental impact on the land.
- Calls for much earlier preparation sessions with community: free training for wildfire and first aid, sharing maps for evacuation, advanced identification of ESS locations, key contacts during emergencies, first aid, taking stock of local supplies, testing Alertable app, and honing communication channels.
- Questions about road closures, CSRD working relationship with RCMP, and who makes decisions on road closures.
- Requests for recognition of 'local heroes' who did not evacuate with the Order and remained behind. Many of these individuals supported firefighting efforts and were successful in keeping homes and structures from fire destruction.



TELL
US

"The biggest mistake the CSRD did was to not utilize and work with the local people who have extensive knowledge of the bush and their own communities."

"The Alertable app was terrible. It was slow and the fire was in front of it. I couldn't figure out how to work it, and the maps weren't working. I've stopped trusting it as a key source of information."

"The way we were treated was criminal. Being charged and threatened with fines for helping our own neighbours doesn't make sense."

SESSION 3:

ANGLEMONT

Lakeview Community Centre | 65+ community members
Sunday, March 10 | 2:30 – 4:30pm

- More instruction and planning for waste disposal during the wildfire.
- The establishment of a more formal community hub during emergencies.
- The recommendation of CSRD information officers in all CSRD communities in the event of emergencies to speed up relaying of information.
- Questions about water sources and public access to pumps.
- Requests for recognition for those who supported neighbours, community and others during the Alert.
- Demands for CSRD to lobby government to upkeep roads; clearly indicate advanced escape routes with maps and signage.
- Fears and questions regarding the Scotch Creek wooden bridge and possible replacement.
- Confusion and blame towards CSRD for road closures and lack of support.
- Shock and despair with perceived abandonment by BC Wildfire Services.
- Calls for CSRD to develop a community database of supplies, equipment, and human resources and expertise to support collaboratively in an emergency.



TELL
US

"You need to make an information database on all of the skillsets of people in our communities. We have so much to offer . . . Why are you bringing in people from other countries when we know our own land and resources?"

*"This community centre was **the** place where we came to get information, support each other and connect."*

"We're scared of those wooden bridges, and need their replacement to be a priority."

SESSION 4:

QUAAOUT LODGE

25+ community members

Monday, March 11 | 6:00 – 8:00pm

- Confusion and concern about individuals who live on leasehold land and in the valley with how they are communicated with during emergencies. Nation and TNRD use different apps from CSRD, therefore they were left with a communication gap. People relied on communication from CSRD “that never came”.
- Complications with district / provincial / federal boundaries and responsibilities.
- Lack of information on ESS services for agricultural needs, pets, those on leased land, billeting, and other supports for neighbours.
- Calls for CSRD to work more closely with community expertise, volunteer firefighters, and resources to build capacity and sustainability as emergencies occur more often.
- Requests for recognition of ‘local heroes’ who did not evacuate with the Order and remained behind. Many of these individuals supported firefighting efforts and were successful in keeping many structures from fire destruction.
- Indignation that locals need to be even more self-reliant because of their unique living situation on leased land and in the Valley close to other Regional District boundaries.



TELL US

“We didn’t hear anything from the Nation and we didn’t hear anything from the CSRD. Who do we go to in a crisis? We were completely abandoned in this event . . . 45 homes were lost on leased land and this hasn’t even been recognized.”

“I’m glad that I came to all four sessions. I needed to know what was said in each. We need the government to hear what happened, and for an inquiry to occur. We need for David Eby to come here and see the damage, listen to our stories.”

SESSION 5:

VIRTUAL

March 13 & 14 | 6:30 – 8:30pm

- More preparedness education needed—you don't know until you know!
- Calls for CSRD to develop a community database of supplies, equipment, and human resources and expertise to support collaboratively in an emergency.
- Large amounts of interest in FireSmart and clarification on how the program works.
- Specific conversations around alternate routes, including logging roads.
- Inquiries about reimbursement for billet families who support evacuees.
- More communication about FireSmart programs—suggestion to put signage up at the transfer station. "For FireSmart, word of mouth is important—good on the CSRD for hosting these meetings."
- Private property versus crown land for FireSmart and how commercial property can be made to FireSmart.
- Next steps process -> report is being shared with the Board and partner agencies.
- How do we say thank you to those who were behind the lines, eg. food trucks and grocery stores.



TELL US

"I really appreciate this time and communication from you all."

"Looking forward, does the CSRD see a role for local contractors and loggers (with all their heavy equipment and knowledge) to have approval to help fight wildfires in rural areas?"

"Shoutout to all the volunteers."

"This has been so informative. I hope CSRD will do more of these, so we learn more and so that those who are still away for the winter will participate."



RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION AREAS

Communications

- More regular communication throughout the fire and in future emergency situations.
- Consider daily wildfire updates to be included on CSRD's emergency mapping dashboard.
- Fix Alertable bugs, undertake an additional review of the system and consider its capabilities.
- Explore enhancements to Alertable for reminders and updates.
- Look into getting more wildfire information on NL radio (Kamloops).
- Maintain relationships with media and help to supply them with information and particularly visuals (photos, video) to enhance their reporting.
- Review communication channels and consolidate where possible.
- Work on improvements to emergency communications to increase accessibility to audience members with diverse abilities.
- Consider having community information officers located in other CSRD communities as part of the extended communications team during emergencies to provide real-time information back to emergency operations centre (EOC).



RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION AREAS

Emergency Support Services

- Work more closely with First Nations to ensure the needs of leasehold landowners are met.
- Work with communities throughout the year for ESS, emergency preparedness and FireSmart: expand Neighborhood Emergency Programs (NEPs) and host regular meetings to build capacity and prepare for emergency seasons.
- Maintain contact with NEP groups when EOC is activated.
- Address issues with province about pre-registration for ESS.
- The term Self-Registration used by the province caused confusion for people who thought signing up online was all they had to do. In reality, to receive services, residents needed to still go to a reception centre in person.
- Work on remote ESS assistance protocols and information-sharing.





RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION AREAS

Emergency Preparedness/Fire Smart

- Provide emergency information annually (new and current information).
- Have an event in spring to thank Seymour Arm/Anglemont for evacuation support.
- Review communication channels and consolidate where possible.
- Work on improvements to emergency communications to increase accessibility to audience members with diverse abilities.

Fire Services

- Share information about mental health options for firefighters with First Nations Bands and volunteer firefighters.
- Better communicate (prior to an emergency and throughout) the services available and unavailable during an evacuation Alert and Order (ambulance, etc).



RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION AREAS

Operations

- Organize garbage collection / disposal of goods for those who were cut off from services.
- Engage with community to debrief and connect after every crisis and/or emergency.
- Set up work to clear any CSRD-owned lots of overgrown areas.
- Lobby the province for wildfire mitigation work on Crown land.
- Reassess levels of sharing regarding fire boundaries—working with other local governments and First Nations to better coordinate plans.
- Establish increased signage for alternate evacuation routes throughout the CSRD. There are many areas with only one main road in and out.

Other

- Discuss plans for community education events or projects this year as a CSRD team.



CONCLUSION

CSRD allowed for three weeks to notify and communicate with the community about this engagement opportunity. At a glance engagement numbers included:

- Four open, in-person engagement sessions for community members on March 7, 8, 10 and 11
- Two open, virtual engagement sessions for community members on March 13 and 14
- Thousands of views of the project webpage
- 523 surveys undertaken
- Five community member pre-interviews
- More than 250 community members attended in-person engagement sessions
- More than 40 community members attended virtual engagement sessions

We are confident that the mechanisms to reach the public were sufficiently broad and provided for inclusion and accessibility.

Notably, ‘word of mouth’ proved to be an important mechanism to reach the public and we thank those who shared information about these conversations with friends and neighbours.

Monogram Communication & Consulting is a full-service public relations firm founded in Prince George, BC on the Traditional Territory of the Lheidli T'enneh. Launched in 2019, the dedicated team at Monogram Communications provides outstanding service to clients in a variety of sectors with significant experience in sport, post-secondary education, non-profits, industry, tourism, Indigenous relations, strategic planning and project management. Areas of focus include public participation and stakeholder engagement, crisis and issues management, rebrands and website/intranet designs, major events and digital strategy. With an incredible work ethic, attention to detail, and creativity in problem-solving, Monogram Communications has the award-winning collective experience of a large firm, with the agile output of a small but mighty team.



hello@monogramcomms.ca
www.monogramcomms.ca



APPENDIX A:

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

The CSRD promoted the event on several occasions across their platforms. The image on the right was shared and the body of the text included details about the events, their timing, and the survey.

Measurements of reach include:

- **3,105 views** on CSRD and Shuswap Emergency Program (SEP) accounts combined
- **45,120 views** on Facebook:
CSRD - 18,544
SEP - 26,576
- **5,414 accounts** reached on Instagram



APPENDIX B: ADVERTISEMENTS

The ad was placed in the North Shuswap Kicker on March 1, the South Shuswap Scoop on March 8, and the Shuswap Market News on March 8.

Digital ads were also placed on the home page of the North Shuswap Kicker and South Shuswap Scoop websites to promote both the events and included the direct link for the survey.



The advertisement features a dark blue background with a white header bar. On the left, the CSRD logo (Columbia Shuswap Regional District) is displayed next to the text "JOIN THE COMMUNITY CONVERSATION". Below this, a green bar contains the text "We'd like to hear from you." The main body of the ad has a background image of a man in a dark shirt pointing at a document. Text on the left side of the image reads: "In early March, the CSRD is hosting a series of public events to hear about your experience with the Bush Creek East Wildfire." Below this, it says: "Learn more, fill out our survey and register for an event near you: csrd.civilspace.io". To the right of this text is a QR code. At the bottom, a green bar contains the text: "Events will be held in Sorrento, Celista, Anglemont, Quaaout Lodge and online."

CSRD JOIN THE
COLUMBIA SHUSWAP REGIONAL DISTRICT **COMMUNITY CONVERSATION**

We'd like to hear from you.

In early March, the CSRD is hosting a series of public events to hear about your experience with the Bush Creek East Wildfire.

Learn more, fill out our survey and register for an event near you: csrd.civilspace.io

Events will be held in Sorrento, Celista, Anglemont, Quaaout Lodge and online.

APPENDIX C:

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION SESSION SLIDES

Session 1: Introductions made by Natalya Melnychuk, Acting Board Chair, and Regional Director of Electoral Area G - Blind Bay, Sorrento, Notch Hill.

Session 2 and 4: Introduction made by Natalya Melnychuk, Acting Board Chair, and Regional Director of Electoral Area G - Blind Bay, Sorrento, Notch Hill; and Jay Simpson, Regional Director of Electoral Area F - North Shuswap.

Session 3: Introduction made by Jay Simpson, Regional Director of Electoral Area F - North Shuswap.

A 30-minute presentation was delivered to community-members via PowerPoint by facilitator, Alyson Gourley-Cramer, Monogram Communications; Tracy Hughes, CSRD Communications; John MacLean, CSRD CAO or Derek Sutherland, Protective Services Team Leader; Sean Coubrough, Deputy Regional Fire Chief.

Each session concluded after two hours, with the CSRD team debriefing with Monogram Communications, sharing key themes, questions, and feedback.



APPENDIX C:

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION SESSION SLIDES CONT'D




**JOIN THE
COMMUNITY
CONVERSATION**

**Bush Creek East Wildfire
Lower East Adams Lake Wildfire**

**Quaaout Lodge, BC
MARCH 11, 2024**

CSRD



FOR OUR TIME TOGETHER

We commit to:

- Come together in the spirit of community
- Share information openly and transparently
- Balance time for sharing information and answering questions

We ask that all participants:

- Use respectful, people-first language
- Ask brief, genuine questions and allow space for answers
- Consider there may be people with different experiences present
- Understand that we cannot speak for other agencies

CSRD



INTRODUCTIONS

STATION 1: Emergency Support Services - Cathy Semchuk
STATION 2: Roles & Responsibilities - John MacLean
STATION 3: FireSmart - Sophie Randall
STATION 4: Personal Preparedness - Tom Hansen
STATION 5: Communications - Tracy Hughes
STATION 6: Fire Services Representative - Sean Coubrough

CSRD



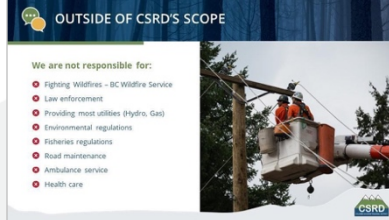
THE ROLE OF TRUST IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Misinformation is spreading and we acknowledge that trust in government systems is low.

We want to do the best job we can.

We care because we are members of your community, with homes and families here, too.

CSRD



OUTSIDE OF CSRD'S SCOPE

We are not responsible for:

- Fighting wildfires - BC Wildfire Service
- Law enforcement
- Providing most utilities (Hydro, Gas)
- Environmental regulations
- Fisheries regulations
- Road maintenance
- Ambulance service
- Health care

CSRD




CSRD FIRE SERVICES

CSRD Fire Services was there during the entire fire season for **structure protection** and **interface firefighting**.

The CSRD and the community owe all our firefighters a **debt of gratitude** for their tremendous efforts. We are proud of everyone.

Some of our firefighters **lost their own homes** to this fire, but they continued their work to try and protect other homes.

CSRD



HOW WE GOT HERE

Community Conversations: Why now?

As soon as we got funding, we got these events underway.

We want to hear from our community in time to implement some of the recommendations for this coming season.

CSRD




CSRD ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

CSRD is responsible for:

- Structure firefighting
- Issuing Evacuation Alerts and Orders
- Administering Emergency Support Service programs under Provincial policies
- Supporting evacuated areas and community members
- Providing information for residents regarding emergency situations
- Providing security to evacuated areas
- Working with community partners to coordinate response and recovery efforts
- Managing operations
- Supporting agricultural producers
- Providing recovery services
- Servicing CSRD water systems
- Providing landfills for debris removal
- Emergency preparedness

CSRD



PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS

In an emergency you may need to evacuate your home or move your animals with little or no notice.

Have supplies at home as you may have to 'shelter in place' with little or no access to external sources of food, water or other supplies for up to 72 hours.

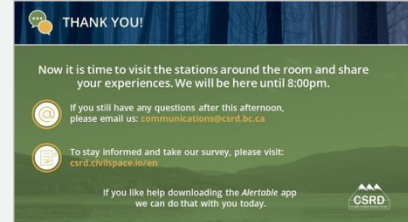
Look into insurance options to help protect your home and family.

Be Emergency ready. Make a home emergency plan with:

- contact information for your family and neighbours
- health information (including medications and prescriptions) for you and your family
- a basic Emergency Kit 'Grab and Go Bag'

Our website has excellent resources for emergency preparedness: csrd.bc.ca/2023/EmergencyPreparedness

CSRD



THANK YOU!

Now it is time to visit the stations around the room and share your experiences. We will be here until 8:00pm.

If you still have any questions after this afternoon, please email us: communications@csrd.bc.ca

To stay informed and take our survey, please visit: csrd.civillspace.io/en

If you like help downloading the Alerttable app we can do that with you today.

CSRD

APPENDIX D:

IN-PERSON COMMUNITY CONVERSATION POSTER BOARDS

These were printed as 3' x 4' foamcore posters on easels in a circle throughout the event spaces. CSRD functional area leads stood near them and interacted with participants, taking notes, answering questions and providing more information.

At sessions 3 & 4, CSRD functional area leads sat with participants at tables provided by the venues.



APPENDIX E:

IN-PERSON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SESSION EVENT SUMMARIES

Sorrento Memorial Hall

Thursday, March 7 | 6:30 - 8:30 PM

Participants discussed ways to improve community engagement and information sharing during natural disasters. They emphasized the importance of effective communication, clear evacuation plans, and practical training for community members. Speakers also shared their experiences and perspectives on the challenges and opportunities in sharing information with BC Wildfire Services, as well as their thoughts on preparedness and response to recent wildfires. Frustration was expressed with the lack of response from BC wildfire after reaching out for a debrief, and the importance of BC wildfire being approachable and open to communication during crises was highlighted.

Community Feedback

- Speaker 2 expresses concern about the upcoming presentation, feeling it may be overhyped.
- Participants discuss improving the format of a support group meeting to better accommodate attendees' needs.

Community engagement and feedback

- Speaker 3 listened to feedback and considered changing the format, while Speaker 5 and Speaker 7 shared insights from the community.

Improving communication and navigation during emergency evacuations.

- Speaker 4 discussed how a community event helped connect neighbors and share information, with a focus on the importance of timely communication.
- Speaker 6 mentioned the need for someone to facilitate communication between neighborhoods or retirement communities, using examples from their own experience.
- Speaker 5 suggests designating heroes to help lost people find their way and providing a route indicator.
- Speaker 3 requests designating alternate routes in advance to avoid getting stuck.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY: THURSDAY, MARCH 7

Evacuation plans and community trust

- Speaker 2 and 5 discuss evacuation plans, personal information, and trust in the community.

Community safety and response

- Speaker 1 acknowledges that things can be done better and is working with partners to make changes.
- Speakers agree on the importance of promoting good work and improving for next time.
- Speaker 3: Practical training for volunteers, like fire number volunteering.
- Speaker 2: Thieves hiding behind good people, jeopardizing safety of first responders.
- Speaker 3 describes feeling abandoned for 6 days in Scotch Creek, with Speaker 1 expressing empathy and acknowledging the dangerous situation.
- Speaker 6 raises concerns about liability waivers and the need for face-to-face communication to understand the situation.

Local politics and community involvement

- Speaker 5 and 8 discuss potential solutions to address local resistance to a new program, including finding a respected and well-connected person to promote it.

Sharing report with BC wildfire officials

- Speaker 6 expressed frustration with lack of response from BC wildfire after reaching out for a debriefing session.
- Speaker 3 suggested publicly stating that the report will be shared with BC wildfire to encourage action.

Improving emergency response for vulnerable populations

- BC wildfire services were praised for being approachable during Scotch Creek fire, but criticism arose when they were unavailable during crisis.
- Speaker 5 highlighted the importance of considering agricultural areas in alert processes, as livestock may need more time to be moved to safety.
- Speaker 6 shared concerns about vulnerable populations living near the border, and the impact of alerts on their well-being.
- Speaker 5 suggests improving communication with vulnerable populations during emergencies by educating team members on how to identify and assist those with mobility challenges.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY: THURSDAY, MARCH 7

- Speaker 5 made decisions quickly during an emergency situation without needing to consult the UFC, highlighting the importance of quick decision-making in high-pressure situations.

Fire safety and preparedness in a community

- Speaker 1 had a difficult conversation with a neighbor who was angry and wanted to be angry, but the venue provided a space for them to express their emotions without becoming a critical mass.
- Speaker 9 highlighted the importance of preparedness and prevention in the aftermath of a fire, emphasizing the need for ongoing promotion and education to prevent similar incidents in the future.
- Speaker 10 listened to the session and noted efforts to improve communication during disaster response.

Fire safety and community preparedness

- Speaker 4 discussed preparedness and fire safety with a homeowner who is determined to stay and defend their property, despite potential risks.
- Speaker 2 mentioned that firefighters may operate sprinklers in the area, and the homeowner is still set on staying despite concerns about safety.

- Speaker 5 expresses frustration with a group's lack of awareness about their own Facebook page and social media presence.
- Speaker 3 shares their encouragement at seeing people move around and engage with each other, rather than staying behind tables.

Social media outreach and community engagement

- Speaker 6 discusses challenges with reaching diverse audiences through social media, including relying on third-party sites and cultivating administrators.
- Directors and coordinators valued communication and collaboration during COVID-19.

North Shuswap Elementary School
Saturday, March 9 | 2:30 - 4:30 PM

During the conversation, participants discussed various strategies for disaster response and recovery, including improving communication and coordination, setting up utility systems, and addressing concerns about notification processes and evacuee reentry. They also expressed concerns about media invasion of privacy during emergency evacuations and the need for better communication and education to ensure public safety. Additionally, speakers discussed various aspects of fire protection and safety in their community, including the discontinuation of the fire warden service and the importance of access to the fire department during emergencies. They highlighted the prevalence of misinformation and misunderstandings in wildland firefighting and emphasized the importance of training and education.

Community Feedback

Disaster response and recovery efforts

- Discussions centered around the effectiveness of the RCMP's response to the wildfire, with questions about permitting and notification processes.
- Speaker 2 discusses landslides, notifications, and funding approval with Speaker 1.

Media relations and evacuation during natural disaster

- Speakers discussed evacuation concerns, police enforcement, and local criticism during a community meeting after a natural disaster.

Emergency evacuation routes and communication during wildfire

- Speaker 4 echoed Derek's sentiments about better evacuation routes and pre-planned signage.
- Many attendees were critical of the broadcast alert system, finding it intrusive and onerous.
- Speaker 4 discussed the importance of accurate information during a crisis, with a focus on the speed of fire spread and the need for reliable sources.
- Speaker 1 and 4 mentioned the use of local key contacts and digital resources to disseminate information, while also acknowledging the potential for misinformation.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY: SATURDAY, MARCH 9

Community support during wildfire evacuation

- Speaker 7 shares their experience of helping neighbors during the flood, mentioning the importance of communication and understanding roles and responsibilities.
- The group discusses the role of social media in the disaster, with some expressing concerns about misinformation and others sharing their experiences of relying on it for support.
- Speaker 7 mentions a fire warden service discontinuation and people asking for more protection beyond fire protection areas.
- Speaker 8 shares a challenge with first responder access during evacuations and overtime pay for deputies in charge of responding to calls.

Wildfires, firefighters, and safety

- Speaker 9 had a chat with two individuals who were upset about the firefighters being made to be criminals and left abandoned in their opinion.
- The speaker used the phrase "CSRD banners" to refer to the company's policy of prioritizing firefighter safety.

- Speaker 9 and Speaker 4 discussed the BC wildfire ban and the difference between the backbone and the original fire that came from SE.
- Speaker 1 questioned the importance of naming the fire and whether it was a wild card issue.

Wildfire trauma and misinformation

- Speaker 9 was upset about the delay in hearing about the fire and felt torn between leaving and protecting their property.
- Unknown Speaker thanked everyone for their support and expressed gratitude for the help received.
- Speaker 9 shared their experience of losing someone in the fires, while Speaker 10 provided comfort and support.
- Common themes and questions emerged, including the importance of acknowledging trauma and seeking support.

Wildfire mitigation and community involvement

- Speaker 8 discusses the importance of community involvement in wildfire mitigation, highlighting the need for education and training on how to fight fires.
- Speaker 3 raises concerns about the lack of progress in 2020 and how to communicate with Natural Resource Districts better.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY: SATURDAY, MARCH 9

Emergency planning and evacuation support

- Speaker 10 observes that the process of visiting each station is working, as individuals are taking the time to go around and learn from each place.
- A suggestion is made to provide quick check-in options for individuals who are unsure of where to go, such as a roadside check-in or check-out system.
- Speaker 10 suggests developing a better relationship with the village of Chase to provide support during an evacuation, as they have housed people in the past.
- Speaker 4 mentions that some people were annoyed with the distance they had to travel to the Resiliency Center during an earlier evacuation.

Disaster response and communication

- Chase was mentioned as a preferred place for ESS for those without phones or laptops.
- Churches can help with communication during disasters by disseminating information through various channels, including social media.
- Speakers discussed the challenges of sheltering in place during a disaster, including the need for food, power, and other essential supplies after 72 hours.

- The RCMP was working against the speakers' efforts to help those in need, with one speaker expressing frustration at being told to "just get them out" instead of providing support.

Wildland firefighting training and misinformation

- Speaker 6 addresses concerns about fire department recognition and provides factual responses.
- Speaker 6 shares a personal experience where one person asked about a two-day course on wildland firefighting, and the reaction was revealing about the lack of understanding of the subject matter.
- The group discusses the importance of proper training and education for wildland firefighters, with Speaker 6 emphasizing the need for more comprehensive courses beyond the two-day training often offered.

Wildfire response and miscommunication

- Speaker 6 encountered confusion among callers regarding jurisdiction and wildfire, and provided clarification on who is in charge of roadblocks and wildfire orders.
- Misinformation was spread about fines for fighting wildfires, with one caller mistakenly believing they would be fined for fighting a fire on their own property.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY: SATURDAY, MARCH 9

- Speaker 6 explains that some people in the community don't understand the importance of wildfire response and need education on the topic.
- Speaker 7 struggles to distinguish between those who are genuinely helping and those who are not, and wonders how to address this issue in the community.

Fire evacuation and communication with RCMP

- Residents express frustration with being called criminals while protecting their properties.
- Speaker 4 heard people saying they won't evacuate, while Speaker 1 heard people expressing frustration with the RCMP's handling of the situation.
- Community trust and resource utilization after a disaster.
- Community members prioritize trust and mutual support in rebuilding efforts after a disaster.

Wildfire response and community preparedness

- Speaker 9 mentioned that some people were not prepared for the wildfire and didn't have a plan in place, leading to confusion and frustration during the evacuation.
- Speaker 4 shared that the lack of information and communication during the evacuation caused frustration

and confusion, with some people not knowing where to go or how to get help.

- Speaker 4 expresses frustration with lack of communication and support from the team, while Speaker 10 raises concerns about the community's role in looking after each other.
- Speaker 2 expresses gratitude for support from EOC team and firefighters, mentioning they were "wonderful" and "had everything we asked for."
- Speaker 6 discusses preparedness and training for firefighters, mentioning the need for "people who are 100 trained" and the importance of having a call list for evacuations.
- CSRD - Community Conversations Debrief

Lakeview Community Centre
Sunday, March 10 | 2:30 - 4:30 PM

The conversation revolved around emergency preparedness and community involvement in the event of a disaster. Speaker 13 highlighted the need for recognition and support for local heroes who have been instrumental in the recovery efforts following the floods. Speaker 9 emphasized the importance of utilizing local supplies and skill sets during emergencies. Speaker 7 expressed concerns about the alert system during the wildfire, while Speaker 11 acknowledged the efforts of the CSRD. Unknown Speaker brought up the issue of trust in the way CSRD treats people throughout the year. The speakers also discussed the need for better communication and planning during emergency evacuations, including mapping out priority areas for cleaning and maintenance, improving communication during emergency situations, and having a clear communication plan in place during evacuations. Unknown Speaker provided valuable insights on the need for publicly available information and emergency contact numbers.

Community Feedback

- Provide information to community members on Englemont mitigation plan progress.
- Set up work to clear CSRD lots in fall.
- Send email to get information on the Anglemont mitigation plan to share with the fire department.
- Put together information on site at Lakeview Hall for evacuees.
- Start recruiting volunteers for North Shuswap.
- Have a barbecue in spring to thank Seymour Arm.
- Ensure continuity plans for water systems have dedicated emergency contacts.
- Maintain contact with NEPS groups when EOC is activated.

Wildfire response and community concerns

- Speaker 7 mentions concerns about alerts not being sent out quickly enough during the wildfire evacuation, with one example of a delayed alert causing confusion on scene.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY: SUNDAY, MARCH 10

- Speaker 7 also raises concerns about the BC Wildfire Service's handling of things, including roadblocks and recognition for those who stayed behind to fight fires that were not qualified to do so.
- Speaker 7 shares their personal experience with the CSRD meeting, emphasizing the importance of community involvement and trust-building.
- Unknown speaker expresses gratitude for the speaker's efforts and encourages them to stay engaged.

Fire safety and property maintenance in a community

- Speakers discuss fire safety plans for a community, including piling debris and communication strategies.
- Residents express concerns about unkempt lots near homes, potential fire hazards, and lack of communication with property owners.

Emergency preparedness and evacuation plans in a small town

- Community members discuss forest management and wildfire mitigation strategies with local government representatives.
- Colleague suggests local marinas could provide emergency support.

Evacuation experiences and access to water during a natural disaster

- Residents share stories of evacuation and access to amenities during the flood.

Water access and infrastructure in a small town

- Resident expresses frustration with lack of response to concerns about gentrification and lack of services in the community.
- Residents discuss water options for fire trucks in Magnum Bay.

Emergency preparedness and response in a rural community

- Speaker 1 highlights concerns from community members, including the need for a database of local skills and resources, a designated information officer in each community, and best practices from other communities or countries.
- Speaker 1 also raises questions about the wooden bridges used in the area, including why they are not being replaced with steel bridges used by logging companies, and the actual damage caused by the back burn.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY: SUNDAY, MARCH 10

Evacuation routes and supplies during wildfire

- Speaker 10 highlights the need for better communication during the evacuation, particularly in regards to rumors and factual information.
- Residents express frustration with the lack of power and information during the evacuation, with some suggesting a hotline or call center to address these issues.
- Speaker 10: Food shipments were delayed or blocked due to miscommunication or rumors, causing frustration among residents.
- Speaker 13: Residents were confused about who was allowed to receive food, leading to disagreements and dissension.
- Speakers discuss the idea of drafting children as young as 9 years old to fight fires, with some supporting the idea and others expressing concerns about safety and logistics.

Evacuation plans, communication, and resource access during wildfires.

- Speaker 9 discussed the challenges of evacuation routes and communication with the public during a wildfire, highlighting the need for more information and preparation.

- The group discussed the location of the Ross Creek store in relation to the evacuation area and the desire to access the store during an emergency.
- Speaker 9 mentions that providing information on basic needs like access to score is a priority for the center, and Jim recommends having a publicly available number for emergencies.
- Speaker 7 shares that the Sunnyside store did not stay open during the evacuation, while the Ross Creek store left and then returned after people called them, showing the importance of clear communication and access to resources.
- Unknown Speaker: There was a lot less contentiousness and more productive discussions.

RCMP role in community during crisis

- Speaker 2 emphasizes the importance of securing homes and stopping people from wandering aimlessly, while acknowledging the RCMP's role in providing security.
- Speaker 11 highlights the discrepancy between the RCMP's actions and the community's perception of their role, with a focus on the permitting system as a point of contention.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY: SUNDAY, MARCH 10

- Speaker 2 mentions the RCMP were less than discreet about wanting to kick everyone out of Anglemont, making their job easier.
- Speaker 2 acknowledges the province had a provincial interest in the matter and the RCMP were not completely rogue in their actions.

Wildfire evacuation, trust, and enforcement.

- Residents express frustration with lack of access to back roads and deactivated forest roads.
- Community members express frustration with lack of action from province and RCMP in addressing flooding issues.
- Disaster recovery efforts and infrastructure improvements.
- Speaker 13 emphasizes the importance of providing clear instructions and support during emergencies.
- Speaker 13 highlights the importance of recognizing and thanking local volunteers who helped during the flood, citing their countless hours of work and effort.
- Speaker 9 raises concerns about the lack of sprinklers in critical infrastructure, including the hall where the meeting was held.

- Speaker 13 highlighted the importance of a continuity plan for emergency water systems, particularly during a fire, and suggested having a dedicated person to ensure generator maintenance and fueling.
- Speaker 11 brought up the neighborhood emergency program, with Chloe noting its significance in emergency situations.
- Participants discuss the importance of communication and organization in nap groups.

Communication strategies for community events.

- Residents express frustration with lack of specific information on emergency preparedness.
- Jim Cooperman is working on a book and video project related to the Kamloops event.
- The director opened today's session to address attention towards the event and to have John's experience as helpful.

Quaaout Lodge

Monday, March 11 | 4:30 - 6:30 PM

The importance of community engagement and preparedness for wildfires was discussed. Speakers emphasized the need for more information sharing among neighbors and better fire preparedness for older homes. They also stressed the importance of helping families at risk and inviting community champions to events. In addition, the need for a unified response to wildfires and the challenges of receiving accurate information during a crisis were highlighted. Finally, ways to improve emergency alert systems were discussed, including using daily alertables, providing reminders of emergency contact information, and integrating multiple agencies onto a single website.

Wildfire response, evacuation issues, and government actions

- Speaker 1 and 2 discuss potential solutions for dealing with a concerned community member.
- Speakers shared concerns about logging practices and government response in BC communities.

Community firefighting efforts and CSRD recognition

- Speaker 2 discusses ways for communities to prepare for wildfires, including setting up societies or groups to fight them.

Wildfire response and media coverage in West Kelowna

- Speaker 4 discussed the challenges of having multiple emergency alert systems in place, including the need for a single agency to handle all alerts.
- Speaker 5 brought up the issue of traditional media being dominated by Kelowna, making it difficult for other areas to get information and feel represented.
- Speaker 4 expresses frustration with media attention, feeling abandoned and upset about the lack of coverage.
- Speakers discuss the impact of the wildfire on their community, with some expressing gratitude for media attention and others feeling ignored.

Fire preparedness and evacuation in British Columbia

- Speaker 7 shared concerns about the lack of information and preparation for some residents, particularly leaseholders and elderly residents in Turtle Valley.
- Speaker 8 expressed regret that some residents, including an elderly couple with pets, did not receive enough support during the event.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY: MONDAY, MARCH 11

- Speaker 8 highlights the importance of helping families who are not prepared for wildfires, while Speaker 7 mentions that some people are resistant to change and prefer to suffer through it.

Mental health support for firefighters.

- Speaker 1 mentions a mental health support program for firefighters, suggesting they reach out to WorkSafeBC or chaplains in the system.
- Speaker 2 corrects Ellison's long response and offers information on CISM training, while Speaker 8 expresses surprise at not reaching out to Andrea.

Community engagement and outreach strategies.

- Speaker 3 emphasizes community recognition program for neighbors with overgrown properties.
- Speaker 3 shares information about their team's daily job of communicating with the public and educating them about CSRD services.
- Speaker 3 suggests using an upcoming event as an opportunity to communicate with South Shore residents and potentially address censorship concerns.

Community events and education.

- Speaker 8 suggests coordinating a plan for the year, as they are approached for 20-30 events.
- Speaker 3 mentions the importance of educating the community on water resources, inviting ties from the Fire Department to talk about wildfires.
- Speaker 3 suggests hosting a barbecue open house for people to learn about the program and register in person.
- Speaker 8 expresses frustration with self-registration misinformation and the need for education on the program.

Wildfire evacuation challenges and resources.

- Family and friends played a crucial role in disaster evacuation, with many seeking shelter with loved ones rather than in emergency shelters.
- Speaker 8 describes challenges with remote assistance in Kamloops, including overwhelmed staff and lack of face-to-face interaction, leading to delays and lost services.
- Speaker 8 helps an individual family who were not informed about the closure of Kamloops services and were left without support, despite efforts to connect them with alternative resources.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY: MONDAY, MARCH 11

- Speaker 8 mentions woman from Turtle Valley who is struggling to find resources for her farm after losing her pasture due to bird flu.
- Speaker 9 suggests donating food to help her with the overwhelming task of caring for her animals.

Communication and alert systems in emergency situations

- Participants discuss frustrations with communication and alert systems during a disaster, including the Australia model and the use of Alertable for reminders.

Emergency alert systems and information dissemination

- Speaker 4 mentions that the more they use the alert system, the more they get dropped off because people don't want to receive too many notifications.
- Speaker 9 suggests analyzing drop-off rates to understand how many people subscribe and how many drop off from the alert system.
- Speaker 4 mentions the importance of having a centralized location for emergency information, such as a mapping dashboard with daily updates.
- Speaker 9 highlights the reliance on text messages for emergency alerts and the need to keep in mind the volume of misinformation that can be shared.

- Speaker 4 mentions that multiple agencies are working on a common operating picture for wildfires, but they're failing miserably.
- Speaker 9 suggests using alertable to put out pre-messaging for emergencies, but acknowledges that there are too many websites and social media pages for people to keep track of.

APPENDIX F:

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY CONVERSATION: QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Please note that the following transcripts were made by a voice recorder to text method. All spelling and grammar errors were included as per the integrity and transparency of the process.

Wednesday, March 13 | Room 1

CSRD Community Conversations - VIRTUAL

00:00

We're responsible for administering Emergency Support Service programs under provincial policies. Cathy Semchuk, who's here with us tonight, along with her support services team, does a wonderful job offering those supports to evacuees and people otherwise displaced from home during emergencies. They look at emergency program policies from the province and administer them wonderfully. We support evacuated areas and community members who provide information to residents regarding emergency. Guardian merged to work at providing accurate and timely information as much as we can. And there's always room for improvement. So we look forward to hearing your comments in that regard. We are responsible for providing security to evacuated areas, if we ask folks to leave their homes because there's an imminent risk to their lives, we do have a responsibility to ensure as much as we humanly possibly can, that those properties remain safe. We work with community partners to coordinate response and recovery efforts working

with our neighbours, Skwłāx te Secwepemcúłecw, Adams Lake Indian Band, other municipalities, governmental agencies, NGOs, to ensure that we recover from these emergencies as quickly as we can manage. Donations are an absolutely huge component of what we do. We all remember the floods in the Calgary area in Alberta in 2013. Many of you might have seen the stories of the massive outpouring of community spirit that happened with people donating all kinds of goods and materials, overwhelming their systems to manage it. We do need to manage donations; we have a lot of people in our communities committed to doing a lot of very good work and caring about their neighbors. They donate goods, so it's important that we manage that appropriately. We support our agricultural producers, farmers, or ranchers to ensure that they have access to the programs that the province of British Columbia offers to support them in terms of feeding their animals, moving them out of harm's way as quickly as possible, and ensuring that they remain viable to do the absolutely essential work they do in our communities. We go into recovery services where we are right now after this fire to help people rebuild their lives, homes, and properties as best they can. We provide servicing to the water systems administered in the rural areas, landfills for debris removal, and waste management. Many properties have cleaned up already, but we need to ensure that we have effective ways to manage those wastes in environmentally efficient and cost-effective ways. And emergency preparedness.

We have Tom Hansen, Cathy Semchuk, Derek Sutherland, who work to ensure that we have an effective and responsible plan to help you as individual families and individuals prepare for emergencies and to be ready just in case the next one happens. Next slide.

03:24

In order to have a good context, ensure that we don't frustrate the heck out of you. We also need to talk about the things that we don't do. We're not responsible for fighting wildfires. BC wildfire from the province of British Columbia has that responsibility. They take control of the scene, they make the recommendations and they control their staff and their activities. We don't have a role in the back. We don't do law enforcement. I do want to say if you go back to the previous slide, we talked about providing security for evacuated areas. We are responsible for ensuring that those places are safe. So when we discuss this, we need to acknowledge that the roadblocks and the evacuated areas fall under the jurisdiction of the Regional District. We did ask for that to happen because we were responsible for securing those areas. We don't tell the RCMP how to provide that security level; we simply ask them to ensure it. Similarly, for road maintenance, our role is to oversee it, not micromanage it. As a member of the Regional District, our role in the hospital district involves capital financing, but we don't interfere with how doctors and nurses deliver their crucial services. Next slide.

05:18

We do provide emergency support services to those who are eligible and determine their needs on a case by case basis. Not all cases are the same and not all cases are treated the

same. Primary services include temporary lodging, food, clothing incidentals such as toiletries. We do offer specialized services. They include emotional support health services such as first aid, pet care and transportation. In an emergency evacuees will be notified how and where to access the services during the evacuation process. Cathy Semchuk and her wonderful team of volunteers are leading this project, and Cathy is here in the room with us. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask them. She'll provide excellent answers.

06:05

We're also responsible for an emergency plan, but there's an element of personal preparedness in that. In an emergency, you may need to evacuate your home or move your animals with little or no notice. We all recognize that bad night in August when due to the fire the Squilax - Anglemont Road was impacted. So having supplies at home to shelter in place for up to 72 hours is important. You need to look at your insurance and ensure that you understand its terms and conditions. You need to be emergency-ready: have a plan, talk to your neighbors and family, have your health information and medications ready, and have a go-bag ready for the season. We're also looking at evacuation alerts; be ready to go. Part of what we need for the evacuation process that I just described takes some time. It's a necessary legal process. If the Incident Command or our fire department feels that the situation requires it, they'll knock on your door before the evacuation order is put in place and ask you to leave your homes. Then we'll come in afterwards and do the necessary paperwork. But the tactical evacuation does take place, and we work with a number of agencies.

07:29

Throughout emergency management.

07:32

We work with BC Wildfire, the Ministry of Environment Emergency Management and Climate Readiness. They collaborate with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, the Ministry of Agriculture to support farmers and ranchers. We also work with the Ministry of Environment, Interior Health, Environment and Natural Resources Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the RCMP. Again, I want to acknowledge that we're responsible for the security of evacuation and the Regional District Emergency Program Act is the norm. We collaborate with non-governmental agencies such as the Red Cross and the Mennonite Disaster Fund, who are essential team members after the fire to assist us in helping people move forward. The Canadian Pacific Railway played an important role, actively deploying fire trains and equipment in the community to ensure essential infrastructure remained safe. Our search and rescue volunteers throughout the region help us inform people in crisis situations. Telus and BC Hydro played essential roles as we transitioned out of emergency situations. I want to specifically mention BC Hydro's crucial role; this summer, we lost 400 utility poles due to fires, and BC Hydro rose to the challenge by swiftly deploying crews to restore power as quickly as possible. Thanks to their efforts, power was restored swiftly upon returning home. That concludes my presentation. I'll now turn it over to Sean.

09:51

My role is helping to oversee the 13 fire departments in the Regional District 320 firefighters that we have working for us, and CSRD fire services were there the entire fire season for structural protection and came back to put their skills to work in our own communities this year. We definitely owe them a debt of gratitude for what they've done. There's a number of them that even lost their own homes and returned to the area. They in some cases, were sleeping at the fire halls on cots and before waking up in the morning to get to work. Many of you on the call today were able to witness their dedication, whether at the command post in Scotch Creek, Lee Creek, or Celista fire hall that became a hub of the community. At the Anglemont Fire Hall, we had another command post, and the Lakeview Centre also became a community hub. Of the 320 firefighters we oversee, more than 150 of them took time away from their home departments to aid in our efforts to battle the fire on the North Shore. Firefighters from every single one of our 13 departments spent time on the North Shore, with some coming from as far away as the Nicholson Fire Department. These members stayed at the Sandy Revival Camp during their time here. Falkland, Silver Creek, Malakwa, Swansea Point, White Lake, Sorrento, Blind Bay, every single one of our fire departments had members represented there. And for the members that couldn't, or in some cases, we couldn't spare them take the time to come out and work on the North Shore. They spent the time back in their home communities making sure those communities were protected and safe and responding to calls for their residents. We have over 60 pieces of apparatus and that's fire trucks, water tenders, engines, command vehicles.

Sure, here's the revised version:

Mini pumpers burst within 30 Protection Units, big trailers with sprinklers, typically protecting about 25 homes. All four were deployed during the fire season, some at the discretion of BC Wildfire Service, and some we were able to deploy. Thanks very much.

12:40

Thanks very much.

12:41

Sean and team.

12:42

And now we are ready for the next part of our inner interaction this evening.

12:55

Great. Okay we're ready to unmute your mic and let you ask your question.

13:07

I just sent a little note to ask to unmute you. You just need to click that and you can get started. Thanks so much. It wasn't really a question as much as just a recommendation we evacuated from Magna Bay the night of the 18th Squilax - Anglemont Road to the West was closed down so we evacuated

13:30

Through Seymour Arm, which is fine. I've been up that way a number of times. But I was in the lead of about 30 vehicles, and I pulled over to the side of the road just to take a break. And so did all the other vehicles. Emergency signage, I realized, things from Crown, we lost our home. One of the questions I have, I'm a realtor as well and so quite familiar - is my region entanglement. They are no longer on a private utility for.

14:10

Water, of course, in solicitor, we're still on a private utility. We lost water two days leading up to the wildfire on the 18th because the pump had broken. One of my clients, you know, so we couldn't run the sprinkler. We couldn't do anything. If something extreme like this happens, if he has the capability and capacity to manage it. Two doors down from us is the actual fire hydrant all the fire trucks insulate the fire department filled with, but it's an unregistered fire hydrant that was not allowed to be tapped into and isn't considered on insurance purposes as a registered hydrant. So all of us live with higher premiums because of hydrants on private systems as part of our firefighting response. And we have had those private hydrants certified through the fire underwriter survey so that it can count towards the discounts on your insurance. But they need to be maintained to a certain standard. And I don't know if the operator of that utility has made that application.

15:27

The other thing to consider is that the fire department recently ensured that if you're within eight kilometers of the fire hall, only those homes within eight kilometers of the fire hall apply to that STSS accreditation. But if you are, you should be getting as good as hydrogen protected discounts. Awesome. That's great news. I have a final question, if I may. It's relating to the alertable app. Okay. We only have one person behind you. So I'll let you ask your last question. Just because we only have one person behind you. So thanks for being patient. Okay, sorry, Metal Creek Road that was on alert. This is even up until 4:30.

16:22

On the day of the wildfire, we didn't even get an order, we went straight to order, no alert straight to order at 4:30. We had actually thankfully evacuated at that point. So you know, I don't know if someone's looking at that it was way too late. We had a neighbor with a camera on their doorbell with our house on fire by 4:45.

16:42

We would never have had time to evacuate if we had not, just by chance, been in a group chat with friends that were on the fire department. So I'm just wondering why, and also wondering what works for email and for texting as well. So just for the general group knowledge, it's not just an app, although it is the most popular use of the system. We do recognize that there were some issues with Alertable in terms of their mapping and some confusion that was caused with the Alertable system. We worked very closely with Alertable during this event to clear up confusion and to ensure that the mapping shown on the app, and with our system via email or

other ways you might receive it, was clearer. The confusion came because we always alert an area that is larger than the actual area of alert or order status, because we want the larger community to be aware that something big is going on. So where the confusion came in is that there became maps of the specific evacuation alert and order areas, but there was also a map of the area that was receiving the alert. And so there was confusion as to whether people were actually part of the alert and order or not. We relied heavily on our emergency mapping dashboard, a service provided through our website, where you can type in your exact address and it will show you immediately whether you are in an alert area or an order area. We also worked with Alertable to modify that so that our mapping was much clearer and became much more prominent in showing the exact areas of the alerting area. So, that's some of the pros and cons, some of the things that happened with our Alertable system. I'll now maybe turn it over to either Derek or John to speak a little bit to the timing of those things.

19:15

Speaker was alluding to in his presentation when he talked about tactical evacuations. That area was tactically evacuated. We weren't expecting the fire to get into there, and we had to evacuate very quickly when the alert actually came out or the tones actually came out over Alertable. It was us cleaning up the orders and making them official. But we were in communication with the fire department, saying that they'd already evacuated the area. And then certainly, the word-of-mouth aspect of that was built into that system. Not ideal, we recognize that. And, you know, hindsight being 2020, we would have hoped that was evacuated a lot sooner. But it wasn't the reality. It was tactical.

So thank you very much for your questions. Thanks. I'll add a little bit to that this fall. Thank you so much. We do want to recognize that part of the review, part of looking at what happened in that area, it happened very, very quickly. We all want to ensure that we give people enough notice so that we don't have people driving out into flames and the smoke, and we recognize that happened to some folks. So we're absolutely committed to looking at our processes and ensuring that we give people enough notice to get out safely.

When we ask them to evacuate, we also recognize full well that there's a balance to be found, and looking at this and the way this fire reacted to those weather conditions, we're going to have to take a hard look at that notice to ensure that people have time to do it safely. I thank you very much for your question, and I too am sorry for the loss that you suffered. Thanks, everyone. I appreciate it. Thank you, speaker.

You're next, and then we have two people after you. I just want to remind us all at 7:25, we're here in this Zoom Room until 7:45. So we'll try and answer as many questions as we can. Thanks. And you're next. On the North Shore, Sorrento, you know, it was quite a lot. A lot of people still have PTSD to do with all of this, including myself.

21:56

You know, it was traumatizing.

21:59

And things have changed. So my question has to do with water and with Sorrento Waterworks. I know, thank God, we had the inside scoop on what was going on and billeted with her and never dropped. I'd be doing that.

22:20

There were many phone calls at six in the morning. So, regarding the waterworks connections, I know this is going to be a lot of everyone trying to adapt and change, and we're making changes as we go. But it is that connection to the Sorrento Waterworks we look after now. Derek, so there was an issue with the pump system at Sorrento. It was a perfect storm. Anything that could go wrong, did go wrong. And I think, if I can remember from my notes, but I can't recall if the pumps went down or if we drained the reservoir with the firefighting efforts, and it took because of the auxiliary pumps.

23:20

The auxiliary pumps didn't come back online to refill. Yeah, I mean, certainly this event helped us identify weaknesses in the system, and certainly that's going to be rectified going forward. So we did have lots of supportive tenders, what we call our fire department water trucks, in order to have water to fight the fire, but your drinking water, waters for your toilets, wouldn't have been there for that day. So you're muted still. It's a scary issue when you don't have water, and I can relate in that comment. Being near the lake, it's a big concern for the boat launches as well, if people are having to be evacuated later in the summer or the water is so low right now, I just wonder if anything's being thought about with boat launches. Yeah, especially that time of year,

right? Like, we start closing boat launches when we're in these kinds of conditions for the water in July, sometimes. We do have contingency plans for those sorts of things.

24:36

We do have some resources available to get those barges with those decks that don't need to launch, that sort of thing, that are already on the water. So we do have those kind of things in our back pocket waiting to go. Good to know. Thanks a lot, you guys. Thank you.

24:59

There are lots of muting and unmuting. You are next in line. Great. Thanks for coming. Yeah, so thanks for having a session here. So my seasonal place there is in solicitor just new to the church and I was talking with other folks at the church on Wednesday, I knew about Scotch Creek. I knew there was going to be very strong winds over the next few days. I knew there's one road out, I heard a possibility of dry lightning and just thought this isn't a safe place. And I'm so glad that I left early Thursday morning, because my neighbors who did not were stuck. And yeah, it was very scary. Even like for me being here back in Vancouver, because I didn't know if people were okay. And so anyway, they went up to the Seymour Arm pub, and we're well cared for, and I'm so grateful for everybody helping out. But you know, my little car a Honda Fit, there's no way I could go up the Seymour Arm Road. I've never done it in two decades, because I couldn't. And we heard Derek mention here today that they're going to be asking for more regular type grading because, you know, it's too late after the fact. It has to be done regularly and maintained so people can use it. And I know the fire moved really fast, I realized all that. I think it was 20k in 12 hours or

12k in 20 hours, whichever of those two scenarios, but it was. And I know this isn't your department, but I want to express more respect and gratitude to the people who stayed to fight the fires because they did so much. And I'm grateful for them. And I'm so sorry for all what has happened there. So thank you for having these information sessions. And we're all hopeful that there's going to be more recognition of the existing competence and ability of the residents in the area because it's a fact and, you know, it doesn't do to argue about it. When help is needed, that is extremely counterproductive in very big terms. So thank you, and I'll just stand there. So no specific question, just saying, you know, more notice would have been good. And keeping that Seymour road option available because I couldn't have done it. I would have been lost for one thing, and I would have been stuck for another thing. Yeah, so that's me. So speaker, I just have a question for you. But first, you're absolutely right. The PTSD term is sometimes used lightly, but it's very real in this case. Tracy alluded to it in her presentation that, you know, we're all forever changed after this event, and I know that I'm forever changed after this event. And I can imagine you are too. So I appreciate the emotional toll that this was, and I hope I never ever see anything like it again in my career. I guess my question to you is, what sorts of information do you use for being alerted to emergencies so that we know which ones may have failed in this case? Well she mentioned that the camera of her neighbour showed their home on fire, you know, and it was like the alert had not yet been out, right? And so I live walking distance from a vicious place, right? And Jay Simpson was driving around, and people were asking, 'Is this house still standing? Is this house still standing?'

And so basically, he had said that, you know, if you're east of the school, you're pretty much okay. Sorry, this isn't answering your question.

30:18

I was using word of mouth. I also have smartphones. I'm also in the solicitor group stuff. So when I came back home here, I was just on that Facebook thing constantly. And speaker was so helpful. You know, he was just driving around helping people. And he put his phone number there, and I called him and he didn't answer. So I just hung up. I didn't want to bother. And he actually called me back, which I thought was incredible. And I didn't want to ask him a specific house, you know, but that's when he said, you know, east of the school. And when I went back, there were embers and burnt wood and stuff in my driveway. And so I was so glad. Some years ago, I took out my driveway is over 100 feet long. And there were tall trees, the whole length of it, like, you know, 80-100 feet. And I have a little eking out, and I'm so glad that I did, because that would not have been a good thing. So I'm very fortunate. And yeah, that's what I used was word of mouth, smartphone, and the solicitor group, a lot. Once I got out of the area and back to Vancouver, I was on that constantly. Yep. Thank you, speaker. If I could make a suggestion, if you're on Facebook, speaker, if you just follow us on the Shuswap Emergency Program, then you'll get some more updates from our program throughout the year, but obviously in emergencies too. So if there's more than once a year, so we certainly are committed to the community. And I think that was one of the frustrations that people had in St. Ives, I remember there was a group of us standing on the road saying, 'Well, should we go? Should we stage? Should we stay?.'

32:32

And then we were all going to go, but people were getting turned back because by then it was too late. And the road behind us, the angle mod, it was like a freeway that night. So we ended up trying to leave. We made it to the Seymour community, which was amazing. But then the next road was closed. So we were sitting there, and we actually went back. So we were stuck there during the entire time.

32:53

But it was the lack of communication. Seymour wasn't even mentioned until maybe 10 days, two weeks into what was happening. And we're trying to gather information. We used the Alertable app. I listened to the CSRD updates on a regular basis. But I have to say, word of mouth sometimes gave more accurate information, which I think is kind of scary, actually. I was fortunate enough to be able to volunteer at the Lakeview Community Centre, so there were firefighters there, and we were able to get pretty accurate information. But I think communication was the one area for sure that needs improvement, whether it be the Alertable app that wasn't always working 100%. Because I know I'd get an alert, and the person standing beside me wouldn't get it or they'd get it an hour or two later or never get it. So the app certainly has some room for improvement. But I do think it's a good place to start because that's one of the places we were relying on for information, for sure. So one of my questions, and it may be because I'm involved in our FireSmart Committee in St. Ives, and we're just wrapped up since the fire

of the smart community. So, is there going to be an increase in the grant? Because I know in the Okanagan area, it's been up to \$1,000, I think, per property, whereas we're still at \$500. And I think more people will be interested after the events of last summer. And I'm just wondering if there could be more encouragement to give people more funds to do some of the work on their properties to make it more FireSmart? That's my primary question, I guess. Thanks, Colleen. And I know that question is probably for the other room, and they can expand upon it. But the FireSmart program falls under my department, and we owe them more money to fewer people. So that was the conversation that we had. And that's why we made that decision. But I still feel like, you know, we can give a person enough to buy a chainsaw. And, you know, that's sometimes enough for people to get rolling. I know it's not a ton of money.

35:09

But it's what we can offer, so well. And I certainly don't want to say the \$500 isn't helpful because I know we were able to get the grant, and it certainly helped cover some of our costs of the work that we did do. And that was much appreciated. I just wish more people would get involved in getting their property FireSmart. Unfortunately, it may not work in all cases, but I think it will help make our communities much safer for sure. So I don't want to steal speaker thunder from the other room. So I'll let you maybe ask her about it because we do have exciting news coming in for FireSmart and funding there. So okay, great. Thanks. You're welcome.

35:53

Hi team, we have three minutes left, and then we're going to be unceremoniously booted into another room. So I just want

to prepare you for that. Also, just a brief reminder, if you get bounced back into this room, it was likely due to people not setting up the app correctly on their phone, especially with their locations.

36:19

So I just wanted to offer the tip for everybody to just maybe take a few minutes and give your alertable app some TLC, make sure you check your settings. And I would personally recommend

36:33

So I just wanted to offer the tip for everybody to just maybe take a few minutes and give your Alertable app some TLC. Make sure you check your settings. And I would personally recommend using your location to a broader area than just your specific address. So the wider area that you are allowing the system to alert to, the more likely you are to get those alerts when you need them.

36:53

We might have room for one more question. Let's see if we can make it happen. It could happen, all right. Sweet. Again, certainly not in Seymour Arm unless you're sitting at the marina, which are a lot, but it becomes a challenge for communicating or even knowing what the heck's going on back home when something like this happens. So, excuse me, I'm wondering if there's a plan to extend broadband that way, which I know is a bigger discussion with TELUS and such, but yeah, I have a house in Seymour Arm, so I would absolutely love it if they expanded the cell service out there. Like John says, it's not in our bailiwick, but we do support it when those service providers want to expand.

37:50

It does require a commitment from the big service providers like TELUS or Rogers to put those antennas out there. There are federal grants available to them, but they still have to invest a lot of their own money. And what we find is that places like Seymour Arm are not big enough to sustain the investment, and the power challenges and CRM because off the grid are limiting the ability of those big providers to provide service. I think if you were to see power coming to Seymour Arm, you would see more expansion for infrastructure like that. Thank you. Great, okay. Now, all we can do is wait, and most of us haven't had that problem before that talked about not communicating to the CSRD. What happened at the Fed and as I like to know it, the ball, you guys are the next one on the line that you've got to catch it. That's one question is how to deal with that. The other thing is that communication is being able to differentiate between essential and non essential people within the fire area.

39:16

I'm running from one area to another area, and it was good to have the permits. There was a delay of two or three days before we could actually move freely from one area to another, in order to get our generators running or to make sure the pumps are going, getting food in each of these places. That's one of the things. The other thing is for the CSRD, is there anything in their arsenal if they expand their abilities to increase their fire ability to handle fires beyond the structural fires? We as a district should have something. One thing we didn't see on the communication part was an easy way to have wildfire. To pick up that list, so you know what, you're right. This needs improvement. And it was poorly

handled. No matter how anybody wants to say it, it was poorly handled. And I don't really have anything more to say about it because I put my head down, because what I say is not going to make any difference. That's how I feel about it. So I feel that you guys can sit there if you want to. And I'd say and feel that you did everything you could at the time. But the people that were on the ground here, they were doing everything they could at the time. And a lot of roadblocks were put in place and those kinds of things. And they left for this amount of days. And they were not allowed to do this. And we can't be more than 90 feet. People just weren't helping each other.

41:00

And I think that's where it needs to start. Thank you, speaker. First of all, I really appreciate you being here, participating, and your time is valued, and so is the time of all the people who have, for over 400 people, filled out the survey. As I mentioned in all of our in-person sessions, we had over 200 people participate. The CSRD is not undertaking this superficially. It is a human engagement where the feedback, suggestions, and questions from the community are going to be incorporated into recommendations for the CSRD.

41:57

So you can trust that your information will be captured. Please, I know everyone has been through so much, and as Tracy said at the beginning, trust really does get challenged in these situations. But know that this is not a superficial exercise. John, I don't know if you wanted to jump in or say anything?

42:31

Not at this time. I just see there's a hand up. Yeah. Great. Well, thanks. Speaker, I see your hand. I'm going to unmute you. Great. Perfect. Thank you for joining us. Okay, so my question is then, what's the number one learning from this event that can be applied to future events? What's the major thing that we would do differently as a community because we are a community in the shoe shop and thanks to speaker comments, there were some things that were not handled well, in my opinion. And I have some management experience and yeah, it's fun. And there were some great things too, but things that were not good to flush out kind of all of the information we've had over 400 surveys returned, people want to tell us their story and let us know where improvements can be made. Certainly, Premier Eby, to his credit, started that provincial task force right away. And I think getting on the same page with all of the responding agencies is fundamental to managing these emergencies effectively. And certainly, there were times when we felt disconnected from BC Wildfire, there were times when we felt disconnected from the RCMP. And I think those times were the ones when the community felt let down. So for me, getting on the same page and having good communication channels between all those agencies that we need to be communicating with is fundamental. As for the single biggest learning, we're going to have to wait until the end of this process. We're also undertaking an after-action review. So this community engagement portion is going to dovetail with the after-action review. And we're hoping to get a really comprehensive list of the things that need to be changed. We're hoping to grab onto those things that are like low-hanging fruit that we can change immediately for the upcoming season, and then put an implementation plan in for other things that take time. So

it's a complex question, and I hope I've provided a decent answer.

02:04

Thanks, Derek. Speaker, that is a tough question. And I don't think we have the number one thing right now. I can vouch for Derek and say there's been a number of fantastic suggestions and areas of feedback from the community so far. Did you have a follow-up question before we move on to Jay and then Terry?

02:32

No, that's fine. I guess my question wasn't framed as well as it could have been. But it's more about, you know, I learned a whole bunch of things from it. And there's definitely some things that I have taken from that going forward in my life in general. But as a community member, and so I was hoping to hear a little bit more about that. But it's a super complex question. It's also a very complex problem. But, you know, we're learning from it, and we're willing to share those learnings and move forward in a positive way. Then we're going to get somewhere. If we're going to clam up and pretend everything was fine, then we're going to have this problem all over again. Thanks, speaker. Thanks for doing this process. It's good.

03:18

Thanks. I'm honored to be part of it. So speaker, you are next in the queue.

03:30

Thanks. One of my biggest challenges through this was communication. The communication between

BC Wildfires and the CSRD, communication between the CSRD and myself, communication between the CSRD and the people both in the war zone and outside of the war zone. And I think that, I guess my impression is that Derek, speaker, and Tracy had talking points that they were, I'm not sure whether they were given or wrote out or whatever. But certainly, through the event, the thing that really stuck out was that people were very happy to get the truth on the ground. Find out what is happening, the good and the bad, and the ugly, all of it. And through most of the communication coming out of these wildfires, and the CSRD really wasn't talking about those things. And maybe you were trying to not paint the picture as bad as it was. But the truth is really what people want. That's how people feel comfortable if they feel that they're being given honest adult answers to the questions that they have. And I think that is really something that we have to take out of this and work significantly better to make it different next time. That's what makes people safe, makes people feel better, feel safer about what's going on. So, you know, I don't have a question there specifically. But that is the comment that I would. That's one of the big things that I'm taking out of this for sure.

05:28

Great. Thanks, speaker. Um, would anyone on their team like to respond? No, not at this time. Okay. Sounds good. Okay, speaker, you are next. And then I see Tracy. Sorry, speaker, you're good to go.

05:53

The question is, were the emergency responses great from outside the fire area? The question is, will emergency services change much by increasing assistance within the fire area?

There were people in the area who weren't getting groceries, they were getting food. They weren't receiving vouchers or gas or anything else to sustain themselves. Will there be any changes to provide emergencies within the affected area? The hall, for example, could have been a major place where people could gather for food and necessities, but it was never utilized. I sort of wonder why there was no place in Scottsdale that didn't get burnt up. And there was no Plan B for an emergency shelter for people to come for basic needs. The person who was trying to set it up basically got shut down. Is there anything in the arsenal that they're going to change this or not? Thank you.

07:06

Thanks, speaker. That sounds like an emergency support services question and also involves utilizing community resources. Is there anyone in the room on the team that can answer that one? Yeah.

07:22

The question is nuanced. Are you referring to people who were evacuated and needed resources, or are you talking about the people who stayed behind to fight the fire and also needed resources?

07:36

The ones that stayed behind?

07:38

Right. So, it's difficult, because legislation is clear that once an evacuation order is in place, everybody needs to leave. It's a very black and white piece of legislation, we recognize the fact that the circumstances aren't black and white.

So the message that the RCMP have put out is that if you stay on your own property, and you're well resourced, and you want to stay in defense, they're not going to bother with you, knowing full well that things like basic policing, road networks, health care are all may be unavailable. If you're a grown adult capable of acting on a fire situation, they essentially say more power to you. They have to be self-sufficient, and that's the key. What we're finding in the conversation with BC Wildfire is that more and more people want to be part of the solution. BC Wildfire is instituting a program to train resident fire brigades to work alongside them. We saw some of that during the fire event, very reactionary. Now, there's a less reactionary process in place to get people trained to work with BC Wildfire. The type of work those people are doing will be type three hard physical labor, digging guard, and such. But they'll be given a mechanism to be part of the solution and work within the safety systems of BC Wildfire. If they're working within the BC Wildfire system, they'll be provided for; if they're working outside of it, they're expected to be self-sufficient.

10:13

But maybe they might be going on humanitarian situations, or sort of a war.

10:25

Thank you.

10:25

That's good. Thanks, sir.

10:27

Thanks speaker and Derek. Tracy, you are next in the queue. I see or hear from the kicker, I'm going to invite you to start your video if you'd like. Totally up to you.

10:48

Understood. You won't start your video, and you're in a situation where your background isn't very good. That's okay, others can see your face.

10:55

I appreciate these conversations, and I might sound like a broken record to some other people, but just to tag off of what speaker said about the supplies coming in, many of us were self-sufficient. That wasn't the issue for many of us. We were just trying to share what we wanted with our neighbors, and we were stopped. Another thing I'd really ask, maybe this question is for John McClane and some of the other people in CSRD, is one of the issues with a lot of the people in the area, and we've talked about it before, is trust. A lot of trust has been lost by the people in the area, especially the ones that stayed behind. Many people in their positions were doing the best they could with the tools and authority they had to perform their jobs. But if we could just get some kind of acknowledgement, some sort of praise, some sort of thank you...

The people that stayed behind spent thousands and thousands of dollars out of their own pockets buying equipment to save structures, buildings, businesses – not just homes, but businesses like Shuswap Lake Provincial Campground, which could have been a total loss had people not stayed behind. They didn't just protect

their own properties or their neighbours, but provincial properties, parks, and animals. Thousands, if not hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars were saved in insurance coverages because those structures were saved. Yet, it doesn't seem like the people who stayed to help have been recognized. I can't say the same for some of the firefighters. Often, the firefighters were told how much they were appreciated, and in many situations, even fed by people in the area. But it doesn't seem like the CSRD board members will even offer a speck or whisper of acknowledgement or thank you to the people who put their lives on hold, spent all that money to do all the work for our community, and that is a big issue. Trust has been misplaced here.

14:14

Thank you, Tracy.

14:23

I understand what you're saying. Tracy, I understand. The concern that you're raising? I don't know how to answer that question. I don't know how to address the same.

14:45

It's not my place, I understand the concern, but it's not the people on this call's place to say that. As we move forward and changes happen in the system of emergency management, as communities come together and regularize and do the work that everybody wants to do, we'll be in a better position. I hear the concern, Alyson, the rest of the team hear what you're saying, Tracy? And we will, and our elected officials will consider. I know that Director Simpson has been fairly supportive. He's been an advocate on behalf of the North Shore throughout this event, and I know he is

absolutely supportive of the efforts. So, not my place, but I hear what you're saying, and I am not going to disparage the good works and efforts in the best interests of the community to happen. And I think there needs to be a better way of utilizing those resources in the future.

Wednesday, March 13 | Room 2

00:00

Why were they allowed to be treated in such an inhumane fashion, in their homes and their neighbors' homes? Why didn't the CSRD stand up for them? Why didn't the CSRD praise them?

00:16

Okay, thanks, Tracy. A whole bundle of questions there. I'm gonna ask Sean to speak to that first component, and then we'll work through it.

00:28

Thanks for your question, Tracy.

00:30

So the people who were there helping fight the wildfires.

00:37

There were a number of amazing people that were part of that group. We saw that we did what we could from the fire services, the people on the ground. We did what we could to support them, both at the solicited fire hall, if they showed up at the Scotch Creek Fire Hall or the professor at the mobile command post that we had set up. We certainly wanted to do what we could to help. The CSRD has a

responsibility when we put an evacuation order out to provide security for those people who have left their homes. Through legislation, the way that we provide that security is through the RCMP. We ask the RCMP to come out and basically do their job, which is to protect the community, to ensure that people in the evacuation order area are not stealing, and that there aren't other negative things going on. And I've shared this story a few times, or a number of stories a few times about my experience on the North Shore. I spent two weeks out there.

01:41

Right after the wildfire, and like I said, I worked with some amazing people. I can also say that I was personally attacked. I had somebody telling me they were going to shoot me. I had somebody tell me that, or that I had people come right up into our face. We had a lot of negative comments coming towards us and our firefighters. We had equipment that was being either stolen or, and in a lot of cases, just moved somewhere else where some residents thought that it was needed.

02:08

The number one thing in any emergency is always life safety, of my first responders, my firefighters who are out there, and the residents who chose to stay back. The CSRD did work to try and get the supplies to them. We implemented a permitting process to try and get things through, but we had no say over the RCMP. In certain cases, they weren't listening to our permits. We eventually got the barge in to try to bring over food supplies or whatever was needed. We were running medicine, doing what we could from an emergency management point of view. For a safe response, we need to

control the environment. I think we can all say that environment was never under control. There were dangers, nobody lost their lives, and I'm very grateful for that. But that's not saying that it couldn't have happened. I feel that a lot came into play. People choose to stay back to protect their homes. I think it's important for us to understand that we may not be able to get in there to help the people who stay back, but we will help those who leave right away. That's what Cathy does. She does an amazing job of it. Her and her team will put you up, give you food, give you clothing, should you choose to stay back.

03:36

We'd be prepared to be without assistance for 72 hours, in some cases longer, because again, knowing who stayed back, getting to them, figuring out what's what. And in our case, just you know, we had a fire to deal with as well. We did the best we could, and that I can tell you. If people felt like it, I'm sure that with the number of people that stayed behind, there are definitely going to be individuals who felt like they were left behind or weren't thought of. All I can tell you is that wasn't the case. Our number one thing was to protect the residents and do what we could to get them what they needed.

04:12

In some cases, we may have fallen short, but it sure wasn't for lack of trying.

04:17

Am I still on? Can you still hear me? We can. Okay, sorry. I just want to say, Sean, I appreciate all the efforts, and many people that I've spoken to here do appreciate the efforts that the firefighters and all the CSRD firefighters

did for us. I don't think that is the issue that people were concerned about. That issue, we are grateful for. We worked as a team, and we've heard from many of the people that were on the ground, the appreciation towards each other, and the camaraderie, and the love, and the protection that we showed to each other. But that wasn't the issue.

05:00

The issue was the people that stayed here. All the services that came on the barge Anglemont did not get to the people in Scotch Creek unless they were smuggled. All the medication, food, and guests that got brought to Anglemont didn't get to the people in Scotch Creek unless they were smuggled. And the people that were here didn't need the help that you, not you personally, but we were helping each other. We were being stopped from helping each other.

05:29

We were being stopped from sharing gas and supplies. We didn't need the help from the CSRD. We figured it out on our own. But we were being hindered from helping each other, and that is a huge point of dissension for people here. It's huge that we were there for each other. And it felt like the people were being torn apart and pushed away from just trying to support. You were saying about saving properties and supporting and being there for people to help them. But we didn't need that at that time. After the fire, we were helping each other. We were sharing supplies, transporting gas back and forth to each other. We were gathering food from our gardens and passing it to each other. We found ways to get supplies. We didn't need the help. The problem was we were being stopped from getting the help. The enforcement was just over the top despite the belts and all

that, and I know that you said that you didn't have control over the way that police handled it.

06:39

But I feel like in general, the CSRD could have supported the citizens a little bit better in that manner, as well as asked the police to back off a bit or allow some of the supplies to come in or that kind of thing. And I am speaking, I know, on behalf of many people who have asked me to speak out on their behalf about this. Okay, thank you, Tracy.

07:04

And I think a follow-up with that, if that's okay. Sure. And then we'll move on. Speaker, we've got another question. Thank you, Tracy.

07:15

Like the lady mentioned, we don't tell the RCMP how to do their job. But I can tell you we were talking with the RCMP, and we were trying, you know, we didn't, there was never a time when we asked them to come down hard on people. In fact, quite the opposite. You know, it's, we understand that the RCMP is a hammer and every problem is a nail. However, it's an imperfect system, it's the best that we had. And just again to keep in mind, the fire services are CSRD. That is part of our response, what the fire departments were out there and did and to help the residents, anyone showing up and asking for assistance. We did what we could. And again, I was only in Scotch Creek and Celista. So I'm not speaking about Anglemont here. I personally drove parks around, pumps around, things like that for local residents. And I know firefighters did it too. Did we do enough? Again, we'll leave it to you to decide. But I can tell you we did

what we could and certainly know that there was room for improvement. So thanks, Tracy.

08:16

Thank you, Sean, for that very honest and candid response. Terry, over to you.

08:26

Can you unmute yourself speaker?

08:33

There you go. Thank you so much.

08:38

Can you hear me? Yes.

08:41

Okay, thank you. My name is speaker, and I look after three of the largest private water systems out this neck of the woods. And once the fire hit, it was the quickest maneuver of trying to get generators and power back to get the water systems going again.

09:06

Moving from one water system to another system.

09:10

We ended up hitting roadblocks on Sunday because we didn't have permits.

09:18

But then I'd like to thank the CSRD for getting those temporary permits on Monday, I believe. Thanks to Ken for

weighing in and Sean for helping us out there. And we were able to eventually get ourselves moving fuel from one roadblock to another roadblock, getting the pumps back in operation because most of these, you know, like Sean and all the fire departments, they need water. So we were able to get that going as best we could.

09:59

And again, I'd like to thank speaker and Sean for helping get those permits out there and getting it done. It was a big job.

10:09

The question is, moving forward, with all the problems we've encountered, especially regarding first responders for medical emergencies.

10:24

Now, come on, we cannot start getting first responders for firefighting. You know, we have enough. This is the first indication that we've actually seen where there's people within our area willing to fight the fire, because there's a war.

10:42

And we've come to a crossroads. It's not just our area, but other municipalities as well, to be able to get the courses that you had at the later end, to become more first responders in firefighting, to be able to get out there and be classified as essential service and be able to stay and help out our neighbors.

11:07

Because our firefighters are limited in what they can fight fire with. In terms of what I gathered, you can

only go 100 - 300 feet from your truck to fight a fire. And you can't go beyond that area, even to help out to get the fire out.

11:31

That's one thing. I think it's fixable. And the other thing is the communication problem. To me, from outside the box, it's the first time that we've had a communication drop by the provincial government, which is our forest fire.

11:50

Yesterday was one it's gotten was in speaker where they got caught.

11:56

Nobody told us that they were leaving. And so everything landed on Sean's lap.

12:04

And I'm sorry to see, you know, he got he was in the limelight.

12:09

And that's the other thing, part of the communication problem is that we need to improve on the communication part, not outside, but within the area. And what happens when that does happen again, I mean, this is not the first time that has happened, but it may not be the last time and I could see that. If it happens again, with the amount of fires happening, BC Wildfire or the firefighters are going to be strained again.

12:42

And it's gonna be up to the municipalities to pick up. We've got the people. It seems like if BC Wildfire has to bring in

people from Mexico or anywhere else to fight for their labor shortage, we have it. We just got to get paper and people some training. And we're good to go. Okay, and thanks very much.

13:11

Yeah, I'm gonna get Sean to speak to the fire training piece, and he might have some comments there too. And just on the communications piece, that's definitely something that the CSRD is aware of, and that you could also flag when you get shifted into the group that includes Tracy and Derek, and John, and then in your second move. Yeah, Derek, thanks again for your question. And then, you know, again, like Jenny was saying, you know, I appreciate what you're saying, you know, speaker, I did kind of jump into that communications role a little bit in some way. It was a necessary evil. It's certainly not my favorite thing to talk to media, read stuff, or respond to emails. But certainly, you know, Tracy is definitely a good one to answer your communications question. But specifically about the local firefighters and the locals that, you know, and the idea of having a local first responder group, my understanding is BC Wildfire is looking at whether they're providing this 100 training. I'm not entirely sure of the logistics of this program. What I can say as far as the Regional District is concerned is that capacity-wise, it would be very difficult, if not, at this point in time, impossible for us to manage that kind of system.

14:27

As I mentioned, I'm overseeing 13 fire halls and 320 firefighters. When you think about the fire department the size of Calgary, how many full-timers do they have for how many firefighters they have, you know, like so just

to put in a little context of what we do here, regional fire in my regional training calendar this summer, I have from the beginning end of February to the middle of June, every single weekend, and we can have training. And I have a waiting list for my live fire courses. I have 49 asking for 16 spots. So that's just to give you an idea of capacity. We do very well on the structure.

15:00

On the firefighting side of it, I do not have the capacity to bring in a system of management of local resources like that. We will work with the province should they put a system like this together. We'd be very happy to do our part, whatever that part is, whether it's identifying instructors or anything. I could provide instructors from within if they went in and got their training the trainer courses and things like that. And we're certainly interested in supporting how we can, given our current capacity and our mandate is structure fires. We are going to make sure we do that mandate well, but where we can help with well.

15:40

Thanks. Yeah, go back into your question, speaker. Yeah. And thank you, Terry, for the gracious compliments of Sean and the team. It sounds like you played a very important role as well in the water piece. So thank you for that as well. Over to you, speaker would you like to speak up for There you go?

16:04

Hello.

16:07

I can turn my camera on, I think? Sure. Either, or is fine.

16:14

So I just wanted to start by acknowledging that the event was fairly challenging, to put it lightly, for anybody to manage, including all the way to the BC Wildfire Service and all the agencies that were challenged with trying to manage that. And it became very apparent to me quite early on that it wasn't going to go well; the capacity just wasn't there. And there's no blame there. For me, it's just a function of the size and scope of what was going on on freaky Friday, and then the speed and ferocity of that fire, which is, you know, something I've seen lots of fires, and then nothing like that, by far. So I think, you know, that's the context from which I come from. I have a fair amount of experience with land management while firefighting. I was also a CSDR for a while.

17:07

I get that it's challenging, but I wouldn't say it was, you know, super well run after the fact. Terry brought up a lot of components around communication.

17:21

You know, the trust issues and the divisiveness that came with some of the commentary from management folks, I would call those management failures: a failure to appreciate what was really going on on the ground, and a failure to appreciate the feelings and situations that people were in and the stress that they were under. And the language that was used was problematic. And that probably sounds a bit fluffy, but it's real. And it does impact how people behave afterward when they start to hear things like that. And I think we all need to learn from that. And we need to be focused on bringing people together and looking for solutions that people can wrap their head around. And actions

that people can take collectively. And I know that all of those things are really difficult.

18:11

And there's not a lot of simple answers there. But we live in an extremely high hazard zone, like that's all there is to it. Our growth rates for forest productivity are quite high. And yet we also live in that zone where drought conditions can persist and become very extreme.

18:28

On occasion, the modeling really supports that the provincial modeling supports high moisture deficit periods, as well as increased rainfall and other times of the year. So high growth, followed by high moisture deficit on an increasing frequency going forward into 2015 and beyond. So I would suspect that we're going to encounter this scenario again, and in some first time, the province obviously, but we are in a particularly vulnerable zone from my perspective as a forester.

18:56

So enough of that sort of background for me, but a couple of questions. One has been more simple.

19:05

As a forester, it's a recommendation for me that we should really be looking at our evacuation routes and cleaning those up. And I'm not saying we need to clear-cut around, and I absolutely do not advocate for that. But, you know, the view should be very, very fire-smart around all of the emergency evacuation routes because those videos of people driving through fire just scare the heck out of me. You're better off going to the beach; like, you're one flat tire away from dying. I

hate those videos. I've seen them once in California, California and BC, and it's just a really scary thing. And that can be mitigated quite easily by some very serious fire-smarting around those routes. So I wonder if there's some fodder around that. And I know that there are some jurisdictional issues with that, but I would hate to see jurisdictional issues get in the way of good actions.

My second one is around task management for SP in fire departments. There were a lot of great things I saw happen, and there were some things that really made me question what was going on in terms of people fighting fires, you know, 50-60 feet away from houses and local fire departments saying, "Well, we can't go that far out into the bush." So, you know, it's like you're going to wait until it gets to the house in four hours. Like, that's crazy. And so the locals are there, pushing it back and putting out the fire and doing what needs to be done. But, and then, you know, you drive out, and there's some local fire departments or others eating pizza in the truck. So it was a particularly painful one because no one had had a pizza here for quite a while.

20:45

But, you know, it was quite frustrating that they have all the equipment, all the trucks, all the proper stuff, all this awesome stuff. And the locals are out there with leaking hoses and shady pumps trying to fight a fire. The fire is not that far away from the house. So I just like to know if there's any thoughts around those two pieces. And the second one, I guess I could simplify that by saying, is there some consideration for updating the task management for local fire departments and SPUI teams? Thanks.

21:17

Thanks, Jay and Sophie. I don't know if you want to quickly speak to that. I know this is not the first time, Jay, that we've heard about the evacuation routes. And I think that is something that CSRD has certainly taken on board. Tom or Sofia, I don't know if you have any comments on that.

21:35

Or just acknowledging that. That is something that has come up, noting we also have four minutes, and we've got speaker with a question. So Sean, do you want me to give a quick response? And then hopefully, we can let speaker have his moment? Quickly, I'll speak on the evacuation routes too. And we're looking at where we know that they're an issue. We're looking at them, we're going to do what we can. There might be some jurisdictional issues, but signage is another thing we've been looking at. So that is something that we are cognizant of, as far as the task management.

22:05

Lucky man, you know, I certainly understand what you're talking about regarding the 50-60 feet away from home. So, 30 meters around the house is certainly where we focus our energy. We are structured firefighters; we are not wildland firefighters. We don't tend to go into the wildland. We have training to deal with wildland-urban interface fires. We do fuel remediations. And we were having to figure it out on the fly. At the very beginning, I came down, and we had members that were going right into about 50 feet into the black, where there was a little smoke, and that's a dangerous situation. So, when you're dealing with the number of firefighters that we had, and trying to give order to this, we are focusing on the houses. We're going to go house by house, and anything in

those zones, we're going to aggressively hit. We were in communication with BC wildfire and their task forces, which are made up of structured firefighters. They have the exact same mandate because we're structured firefighters. It's BC wildfire personnel with the wildland gear that go out into the bush. And when you ask about whether we're looking at changing that, no, we're not looking at going into wildland firefighting with our structured firefighters. We certainly want them to be trained in urban interface firefighting and escape, hazard avoidance escape. But our work is in that zone around the house, in the wildland-urban interface. And we're going to continue to do that. We're going to keep training on it, and we're going to try again, and this year, I brought in as many courses as I could for our regional training, and we'll continue to do that.

23:38

So, fair enough, but the areas that we were going to talk about are clearly the wildland-urban interface, as far as I'm concerned. They're on private property, and 50 feet from my house, it's not that far. And they might have been dealing with 150 firefighters; sometimes there can be communication breakdowns, and that did happen. I did experience that. So yeah, it may have been a misunderstanding, but if it is in that zone, we are good to attack it.

24:12

Okay, thanks very much for the answer. As long as I understand, like, that was one of the issues that created a lot of trust issues, was, you know, seeing that stuff not in action when the locals are kind of forced to do it themselves. Thanks, speaker. We're gonna, Tom, if you want to speak to that, or should we let Jason? I'll make it

really quick. What he's talking about is preparedness. And remember, emergency management and response is all a society approach. So the time to do this stuff isn't when the heat of the moment is. People should be working on this way in advance. But I like your comments. I totally take those. Anything you do to improve evacuation routes but also personal responsibility to reduce wildfire risk to their home and property long before a fire ever gets near. That's the key.

24:54

Thanks and speaker, quick last word if we can hear from you.

25:00

The situation we were in was incredibly stressful, really new to the majority of the people that had to respond to it. I do thank the firefighters and the North Shore squad. Sean and your team did an incredible job, Kathy and your team did an incredible job. She put thousands of people through the ESS and managed to get everybody fed and housed in challenging circumstances. I was in the ESS office and just saw the people working hard. So, you know, we just have to move forward from this, learn the lessons that this has taught us. Unfortunately, there aren't very many of them.

25:43

Your comments, speaker, are greatly appreciated. I'm sure Sean will take them back and reflect on them. All the comments that have come out over the last week at these meetings will be valuable for the CSRD to reflect on and make positive changes in the future.

26:06

Thank you all so much for your questions and participation. If there are any follow-ups we didn't address, please email

Tracy Hughes, and we'll attend to those. Let's work together to make things better. Here we go, moving forward.

26:50

No, that's nice to see you and I and these are all new names. So everything else has gone really well. Okay, have fun. Thank you.

27:00

Hi everyone, I'm speaker. Thank you for joining us tonight. We appreciate you taking the time out of your Wednesday evening. Let's kick things off by having our panelists introduce themselves and provide a brief overview of their roles. We'll start with Tom.

27:28

Hi, everyone. I'm speaker. Thank you all for joining us tonight. I oversee the emergency program coordination efforts, focusing on education and promotion of emergency preparedness. Training our staff and volunteers is a key aspect of my role, along with managing grant applications for various programs. During emergencies, I provide support to the Emergency Operations Centre, assisting with coordination and oversight. It's important to note that in most cases, first responders handle events without our support, but we step in when situations become larger or more complex. Now, I'll leave more time for questions.

28:25

Thank you, Tom, and Sophie.

28:31

Hello, everyone. I'm speaker. As a wildfire mitigation specialist with the CSRD, I collaborate with the FireSmart BC team and approximately 20 local fire departments across our region. Our primary focus is on providing individual home assessments to identify wildfire hazards around properties. We offer onsite visits and detailed reports as part of this service. Additionally, we work closely with neighborhoods, and I'm pleased to see some familiar names among our community champions.

29:02

Glad to be here tonight. Our role involves assisting communities in mitigating hazards not only on individual properties but also within the broader community.

29:15

Yes, we have a community chipper program that helps with communities organizing firesmart cleanup weekends. We bring in bins and chippers to assist with vegetation removal. Additionally, we have a program tied to the provincial Minister of Agriculture program supporting farmers and ranchers in similar work, focusing on their perspective and infrastructure. That's mainly the first month.

29:48

Thank you, Sophie and Sean.

29:54

Hi everyone, I'm John Cooper. I oversee 13 fire departments with over 320 firefighters, responsible for structure protection. We operate under one set of standard operating guidelines, training programs, and policies. This uniformity

ensures a better unified response when our teams come together on the North Shore. During the fire, we implemented area commands, and I spent time coordinating and commanding operations. We had over 150 firefighters out there, all doing an amazing job. If you have any questions about structured firefighting or the differences between BC wildfire and unstructured firefighting, I'm here to help. With 17 years of experience in structured firefighting, I've never encountered anything like what we saw on the 18th, and I hope I never do again. But I know the reality is different. So feel free to ask any questions.

30:58

Thanks, Sean. And over to Kathy.

31:03

Thank you, Jenny. And I apologize for calling you Alyson less okay.

31:09

They got it wrong, but anyway, I'm Cathy Semchuk, one of the EPCs. As Tom mentioned, we have two emergency program coordinators. Part of my role involves overseeing the Emergency Support Services volunteers, totaling over 70 community members. They undergo continuous year-round training to ensure readiness for any reception center activation. When needed, they prepare everything, liaise with suppliers, and handle various tasks in anticipation of evacuations. Last year, we opened a reception center in August, operational until October, with volunteers contributing over 3400 hours. Their dedication is remarkable; many sacrificed their entire summer for their communities. They provide essential services to evacuees and

are always there when needed, offering plenty of hugs. I'm delighted to be here today to answer questions about emergency support services. If you've visited us at a seminar or our host communities in Vernon or Kamloops, feel free to ask. Thank you, Kathy. Now, please feel free to raise your hand or ask a question in the chat. We already have one question for Kathy in the chat: "How do I find out about the reception centres and where were they during the summer?"

33:41

So the reception centre opened early when Adams Lake was evacuated. So we had residents in Dorian Bay and Woolford estates that were evacuated prior to August 18 to the fire getting larger and affecting than our shoe shops. So we had a reception centre that was opened at the Quaaout Lodge as the fire you know started to diminish. Adams Lake was put back on alert people went back we even set up a reception centre in Salmon Arm because you know throughout this summer we opened five different locations five different reception centres. We started at Quaaout Lodge, then returned to Salmon Arm when the situation intensified, evacuating Adams Lake once more. Later, we traveled back to Quaaout Lodge to reopen there. Unfortunately, we had to return to Salmon Arm to open up again. We remained open in Salmon Arm until the end of September, then relocated to the Fairfield location at the beginning of September.

35:00

To find out where to go during an evacuation, Tracy Hughes has been communicating through various platforms provided by the CSRD. Information was disseminated on the website as well. Typically, evacuation orders detail the designated reception center locations. Search and rescue teams also

provide information when delivering evacuation notices door-to-door. On August 18, due to the situation in Salmon Arm, Roots and Blues had occupied all hotels, we advised people needing accommodation to head to Kamloops, which had more available rooms, while those staying with family and friends could come to Semlin. I hope that covers everything. Feel free to message me if you have further questions.

36:20

If there's no one with their hand raised, I'll address the question in the chat. It seems there's one there for Sophie.

36:32

Do you do the fire smarter? Does the person have to do the work themselves? And how does that work with the rebate?

36:42

So the idea is that we are here as educators we support people give them direction and priorities are work to be done. We do not currently have a team to come and do the work. But we encourage people to work together with neighbors to the best they can.

37:00

That's the main idea is that we support people to do the work on their own property. We do have, as I say programs where we can help and assist in the removal of vegetation. That's definitely one of the aspects that we can be of help. Okay, that's great. And we have a whole lineup of hands. So we'll start with you, speaker. Feel free to unmute or turn on your camera or stay off or you can send me or question by chat.

37:28

Again.

37:30

I'll take my video off because it really buggers up the internet.

37:35

My questions are on the ESS. So when we were evacuated, we went immediately to Salmon Arm. As you mentioned, the hotels were full, and we had two dogs. Finding accommodation with two large dogs was incredibly challenging, especially with our son and our plans for the blues festival.

37:53

We had pre-registered for ESS services at least a week in advance, but upon arrival, it felt like we hadn't done anything. We were distraught, unable to articulate properly as we had lost our home and were overcome with emotion. Despite our preregistration, it seemed like we had to start the process from scratch. With everything full, we had to head to Kamloops. After checking in there, we were told no funds were available and advised to register in Kamloops. So, we packed up our entire family once again and made our way there, only to be told we should have gone to Semlin. We explained we had just come from there, as directed, but the frustration and emotions were building. It was a challenging situation, to say the least.

38:55

We checked into a hotel, bearing all the expenses ourselves. It was a challenging time, especially as it was my son's birthday that day, adding to our distress. With evacuations

still ongoing and uncertainty about the fire's direction, we felt anxious. Eventually, we decided to return to the Lower Mainland, where our family roots lay, though we're full-time residents in the area affected by the fire. However, when we reached out to ESS for financial support, we were told we had to be physically present to receive it, which only added to our frustration. In future evacuation scenarios, I hope there's consideration for setting up e-transfers during pre-registration, as waiting for funds during such a difficult time was incredibly stressful. It took seven days after losing our home before we received any financial assistance, and insurance doesn't provide immediate relief either, adding to the nightmare we were already facing.

40:01

Thank you for sharing your perspective. It's indeed valuable, and I completely understand the need for immediate support during such challenging times. Having e-transfers set up for immediate assistance during pre-registration could be incredibly helpful, considering the diverse situations people find themselves in during evacuations.

40:14

Thank you, speaker, for sharing your experience. I'll pass it over to Kathy for a response. And speaker, I'm truly sorry to hear about your difficult experience, especially during such a challenging time. It's unfortunate that some situations didn't work out as they should have. That night, we were dealing with Roots and Blues, and unfortunately, we didn't have any hotel rooms available. We were struggling to find accommodations for people because of the lack of availability. You're absolutely right.

41:00

It was a very difficult night for for evacuees. And it was very difficult for volunteers as well, because they wanted to help. But they just didn't have the means or the suppliers to be able to do it. So I want to guarantee to you that you're not going on herd, we have taken that forward, the self registration point has been made by a number of different people. And I agree with you, So if you see that you self-register, you think you're registered. But unfortunately, basically what that's doing is setting up a profile for you. We've gone back to the province and let them know that it's not working, it's not a good message to say you're registered when you're not. You have to go through the whole process again regarding transfer and remote services. They're working on fine-tuning remote access so that you can go to the lower mainland, and we can reach you remotely to provide those services through the transfer. We're definitely fine-tuning that, and you're absolutely correct in saying it needs improvement. I wholeheartedly agree with you.

42:20

Thank you, Kathy. On to speaker, please. Yes, my name is speaker.

42:31

Thank you for this opportunity. So my question, I think, is for Sophie. She has mentioned the ability to help in gathering up green waste and perhaps trees that you've had taken down, etc. So I understand that I would need to, most likely, pay the contractor to do the work. But then does Sophie and her group arrange some bins to come in where all these branches and roots go into? Is that how it looks, like due to the estate route? Yes, that's entirely the case. So if

you manage to organize time for your contractor to come, we can try to match it or at least be very close to the time that your contractor comes. We can arrange to have bins dropped off. The idea of the bins varies, but we try to encourage people to have a couple of residents work together. I don't know if your intention is just to work on your property. We normally bring bins so that we basically have. There are quite big bins, so usually, it takes a few homes to clear all the vegetation.

43:44

And then we're able to leave bins even for a whole weekend if it's needed.

43:51

Thank you, Sophie. Speaker, I do see your hand up. We did get a question in the chat. And then I'm going to go ahead with a thought. This is from speaker: Looking forward, does the CSRD see a role for local contractors and loggers (with all their heavy equipment and local knowledge) to have approval to help fight wildfires in rural areas? Now, I think I'm going to defer to Tom/Shawn. I know that the wildfire piece is beyond your scope, but I'm hoping we can give a little bit of a response there. You know, and I can take this from the beginning and Tom maybe.

44:30

If there's anything you need to chime in on at the end, if I'm either messing that up or if there's anything I missed about the CSRD. Again, we just yesterday wouldn't have the capacity to manage those kinds of resources and for local logging contractors. We do have lists that we use for danger tree assessors, we try to get as much information about that. I think what you're looking for though, is the wildland

firefighting component of it, and for the wildland fire, that is... The wildfire fighting component debate, you're probably the IBC wildfire, I believe has a system that you can pre-register. And basically, I'm not entirely sure what the process is. Tom may have some further information for you. But that system does exist, and it is with BC wildfire. So Tom, is there anything you can add? Yeah, you're correct, Sean. Every spring, and actually before the spring, you can register with the local fire zone and center. And they've been doing that for decades. The challenge comes with, I think what happens is a lot of contractors, I know this for a fact, because I've been there where they don't register. And then they want to jump in at the last minute when things are blowing up. And that's more difficult because like I said, it's not the CSRD that does that, it's the BC wildfire service. And when they're stretched like they were this season, you can imagine they don't have a lot of resources to deal with then trying to do the various processes that they have to follow legally to sign people up, to get all the information of the equipment, the operators, the insurance, all the things that they're legally required to do to have them under their force and pay them properly. But you know, what this question has caught before, it's a pretty common one, and we have written it down, we're going to give that feedback continually back to the wildfire service. And I think it's fair to say that they're looking at all things right now, and how to improve resource availability. So but you know, hopefully, they'll come up with an improvement to a system, where if they do have this extraordinary need for additional contractors, they can find a way to sign them up, if not before because that's the best thing, then they're quicker to use. But if not, then hopefully, they'll find a system that could do it during the moment, but that is the challenge.

46:45

Thank you so much, Tom. That was really helpful.

46:49

And then I think there's just a comment in there, Kathy, from speaker, that we can address maybe in a minute, but let's hear speaker question. Go ahead, please. Sure, why, it actually isn't a question. It does have to do with sort of the previous conversation about the bins. So St. Ives is a far smaller community. We've hosted three cleanup days, our fourth one was canceled because it was right when everyone was locked into the fire. But we are scheduling another one. But certainly, I would encourage people to get together and do it because the bins are huge. I think our next one, we're getting four bins. But it takes a lot of material to fill those bins. So I can see where you wouldn't do that for a single thing. But certainly, we've done our blocks, we've done certain areas within the community that are sort of public lands, we've done those kinds of things. And then we try to assist neighbors in doing their cleanup prior to and then people will pick it off and put it in the bins for them. So, I really encourage people to work together because those bins are huge and a single person I don't think could possibly fill them in. So it's just a comment. Thank you, speaker. That's helpful. Tom, I think you might have something to say on that as well. Yeah, I'll just add very quickly, it's not in place yet. And we're still waiting for our new grant application approval. But we are looking at potentially being able to offer curbside pickup if there's a way we can fit that into the program. And again, like Sophie said, if there are multiple people in a neighborhood that makes it efficient and cost-effective that way. So, you know, stay tuned, we may have something else to offer. Okay, thank you, Steve, I saw you had

put your hand up at you've put it down. If you do have a question, please do put that hand up and then in the chat there.

48:56

There are a couple of questions and comments from speaker. Kathy, I don't know if you can see those, if you could speak to that at all. So questions around timing for payment for billets, I'm assuming through ESS, but I'm so I'm reading that speaker pre-registered but then had to wait for funds for food as well. Again, the province is working on that pre-registration. It's not really pre-registration. It's not what it says. Basically, all you're doing is setting up a profile. You still need to come into the reception center to be able to get any referrals or any transfers of funds. But we are working on a remote system so that we can connect with you remotely. And then also, you said your abilities are waiting to be paid. This is now over six months. I have heard that there are some people that are still outstanding the money. I would love to have speaker connect with me directly. When I look into it, the payment usually gets made within the next two or three days. So please get a hold of me and speaker. Am I able to give up my phone number on the shore and it's also listed on the CSRD website.

50:05

So speaker, you can pop it in the chat, Kathy, if you'd like. Yeah, I'm gonna pop it in the chat. Please call me. I would love to get your billet to send me the forms that they sent. As soon as you get them sent to me, I forward them on, and I usually can get a payment to that builder within a week or so. So I follow up as soon as somebody tells me they haven't been paid. And I agree some of these payments have been made, you know, as quickly as they should be. But I

always follow up whenever I hear that you haven't been paid. So I will put my number, and please, speaker, get a hold of me.

50:46

Thank you, Kathy, that's really helpful to get that resolved quickly. I don't see any hands up. I do have a question in the chat, and it is something that we've become quite familiar with, about evacuation routes and signage.

51:03

Maybe Tom, do you want to kick that off, and Sean can jump in as well? I think this one is specifically about Seymour Arm. What was the question? Oh, it came to me directly, just regarding if there can be more progress made on different evacuation routes to Seymour Arm. Okay, yeah, so I guess, and naturally, I guess that is part of our preparedness. We have been working to update evacuation plans. There's obviously only so many routes in that area, as most of you know or not. Have you been there? Well, and we have those identified as alternate routes. I guess the challenge is that we don't own our own equipment, and we don't maintain those as forest service roads past a certain point. And so we have to work with the Ministry of the province to actually do any upgrade work on them. We have been lobbying for that. There are numerous spots, not just in the Northeast, but all around our area in the CSRD.

March 14 - Room 1

CSRD COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS - VIRTUAL

00:02

Just give everyone a couple minutes to join us.

00:17

Alright everyone, just a quick heads up, we're currently recording this part of the session. Here's how things will work tonight: You'll see us at the bottom of your screen on Zoom, and there's an option called 'raise hand'. When I invite questions, simply click on 'raise hand' to queue up. Speaker, you'll kick things off when the opportunity arises. I'll unmute you and you can choose to turn on your video, though that's completely optional. Let's dive in. And a friendly reminder, let's make sure to give everyone a chance to participate since we had a lot of engagement yesterday. Thanks for your cooperation. Speaker, you're up first. I'll unmute you and invite you to turn on your video.

01:51

Apologies, you were still muted. There you go. It's not speaker, it's her husband. Alright, I couldn't get the link, so I've got a whole list of questions, but I guess we're gonna go in order. Let's start with your first one. Then we'll see if there are others who have questions. The biggest thing I have is, you know, we talked a lot about trust, and trust is a two-way thing. I've had some very disturbing experiences

with this whole thing in trying to get food from one side of the lake to the other. Went through the proper channels, got proper permits, still got shut down. Had to hire a barge. At the same time, that barge was hired by the CSRD. They sent a photographer down there to take pictures of all this food that myself, my wife, and others volunteered in Kamloops. Got this all organized and then sent it to the North Shore. The photographer for the CSRD only got pictures of me loading the barge with the barge operator. They were amazing people. And I hear John McLean talking, and there's not one reference to all the locals on the North Shore that pitched in to help the fire departments, help get food over there, help put out fires, help people. I drove to Seminar one time to pick up a prescription for one of the farm owners that was stranded to save the life of a goat. And I had to smuggle that prescription by boat across the lake to this farm owner. So I think the CSRD needs to take some responsibility and acknowledge the work that was done by the locals. That is going to be a big step in fixing that trust. And I'll leave it there. Okay, looking for questions.

04:09

Do you have one for the team? When is the CSRD going to acknowledge the locals? John McClane just gave a big speech, and he didn't acknowledge any of the work that the locals did. The fire departments did an amazing job. How is the CSRD going to fix that trust issue? Thank you for that question.

04:34

I'll pass it over to the team. That's a big one. Thanks, Alyson.

04:44

We understand this is a recurring issue in all our discussions with the community. We face a challenge with the mandatory evacuation order. Our processes dictate its enforcement to ensure safety. However, we also recognize the need to acknowledge the efforts of the community. We must refrain from implying that any actions were acceptable. It's crucial to acknowledge what people were doing. Thank you for hosting these sessions. I believe a lot has come out of them. Many people didn't feel comfortable speaking up due to lack of trust and other reasons. Hopefully, we can move forward from here.

00:32

And I stand corrected. You are absolutely right. My statement was too general because there were indeed people in Anglemont and Seymour Arm, communities not under evacuation orders, who wholeheartedly supported their neighbors, firefighters, and everyone else. You're absolutely correct, and I appreciate the clarification. Thank you, sir.

01:15

Thank you, and I'm looking to the group now I don't see any hands raised at the moment

01:34

We have quite a bit of time together. Oh, great. Oh, I have two awesome ones. Okay. I'm gonna go back to our first speaker and then to speaker.

01:53

And sir, I apologize. I did not get your name.

01:58

My name is speaker. Sorry.

02:00

No problem.

02:01

Yeah, I've got a couple of questions here. So, regarding the Fire Smart program, my understanding is that unless you're a permanent resident, you don't qualify for the rebate. And that's an issue because there are many people on the North Shore and the South Shore who aren't permanent residents. They have no voice in government matters. They're essentially at the mercy of the CSRD and local governments. I'll leave it at that. If you could address that for me, please.

02:43

Thanks, speaker.

02:47

This would be better suited for our FireSmart representative, and I would encourage you to pose this question again, particularly in the next session with Len Youden. He has been our FireSmart coordinator for a long time, overseeing all the administration. However, I'm not entirely sure if this is a provincial program or if it's specifically administered by the CSRD. So, once again, if you wouldn't mind asking Len, I'm sure he'll have a response for you. Apologies for not being able to provide more information on that.

03:18

Thanks, speaker. Yeah, hang on to that one for the next room. Um, Kathy, over to you.

03:35

Sorry. Can you hear me? Yes. And sorry, your name?

03:39

It's actually speaker. I'm on my wife's computer. Hi, speaker.

03:44

I have to admit I'm double dipping here. I went to one of the open houses at solace stop and I got to talk to a lot of people and there were a couple of comments that I got that. That made me think about, it had to go back.

00:00

I can't emphasize enough how abhorrent it was. We often fall into this cycle of saying, "You should have left, you could have rebuilt," but people will always fight and put their personal well-being at risk to defend what they hold dear, like their homes, community, and businesses. Some businesses in the North Shore area are multi-generational, adding to the stakes. We need to find a way to navigate around these challenges. Regarding the Kmart comment about bringing in the police, suggesting it was to teach locals a lesson, I don't believe it, and neither do most people. The locals, particularly in Scotch Creek, saved numerous structures. For instance, the fire approached North American Log Crafters, and the entire place was at risk. Pictures show the fire within meters of the marina's storage yard. If those boats had caught fire, it would have been catastrophic. There was a significant fire near Unexpressed Point Road, opposite the

park and Caravans WestEd. I'm certain the local fire department was involved, but so were the locals, ensuring the fire didn't spread across the road into the park. We can also discuss Zinck Road and Hellion Road. My point here is that we need to learn from these experiences as they will repeat. We can't keep having the same cycle of fires, people refusing to leave, local governments getting angry, and ending up with a massive lack of trust. We need to address all of that.

02:15

Thank you, speaker. And first of all, you're not double dipping. Everyone was invited to every session. And we really appreciate that you have taken time out to be at multiple sessions. I do want to remind everyone that although everyone's experience was different and valid and valued, we need to be careful not to make judgment calls on the people who are in the room today. Please try and keep your questions and statements. To fact I know there's a lot of emotion in the room but I'd like to make that point.

03:01

Speaker, I didn't mean to suggest that you were minimizing the efforts of the local fire department. I've spoken to Sean myself, and I understand the immense gratitude we all have for everyone who fought the fire. They're all heroes in their own right, and I truly appreciate the difficult job they have. But what I'm getting at is that we need to move away from this cycle. Rebuilding in areas like NBC can be incredibly challenging, especially considering environmental regulations. People in the North Shore area are already facing uncertainties about whether they can rebuild their homes due to environmental rules, as seen in Linton. If people have that in the back of their minds,

they'll naturally feel the need to protect their property even more. If anything I said came across as offensive, I apologize. I'm just trying to keep the conversation civil. Thank you, speaker, I really appreciate your understanding. And I believe Sean has something to add.

03:59

If we had spoken, I'm certain I would have mentioned that there were numerous amazing individuals involved. We had two or three fire departments present, along with all our fire department members who came out, collaborating with locals to do whatever we could to assist.

00:02

John, thanks so much for your comments there. Appreciate it. Yeah, my pleasure. Thanks. Thanks, both. And really, as was mentioned at the beginning, this whole process is part of rebuilding that trust. So thanks again, speaker for being with us tonight. Speaker, I see you're in the queue. So I'm going to ask to unmute you and be ready for your next question.

00:32

Now, you seem to be talking a lot. I'm sorry. It's okay. If there's others in the queue, I will let you know and I'll make sure they get a chance. This is a I guess I got a couple of three questions. To the firefighters and locals, amazing job. I have never seen a community come together like this amazing job. On that note, Carl Bishop was working to put together some volunteer wildfire fighter groups.

00:00

I'd like to know where the CSRD stands on helping with funding, training, and equipment for volunteers or some

program there. I'd also like to know why we chose to evacuate through Angle Wind via the logging road through Malakoff. I ended up leading about 50 vehicles through that road for five and a half hours. It's evident that the CSRD, given that there's only one way in and one way out, needs to put some effort into that road. At the very least, road signs should be installed so people can get out in case of an emergency. Honestly, it was the first time I'd ever done that route.

00:12

We've been working with the province to improve those roads to a better standard for travel.

00:27

As Derek's not here tonight, but speaker mentioned, we want roads that even a Toyota Tercel could navigate. We took a Camry through it. Okay, well, personally, I was one of the 50. We recognize that as a key takeaway. It's low-hanging fruit for us to address.

00:44

Starting to get reactive, but thinking about evacuations, we need that second way out. Maybe we should have equipment and materials ready to mark the posts so people can exit safely. That's what we need, John. Yeah, it's really what we agree on. Absolutely. It's a key takeaway for us to identify those evacuation roads. And as we plan, we also recognize that in the province of British Columbia right now, those forest service roads are meant to be active during logging and deactivated afterward. So part of the same discussion we're having, we'll encourage our elected officials to address what happened with the barriers I worked on in my previous life in the Caribou.

01:40

To have that conversation the province has to identify those second routes to maintain them as active, maintained roads, but we run into monetary, budgetary issues. The main takeaway that we do have is that signage would be key people getting lost in dark nights and those roads is no good. If we're gonna ask you to drive a road, we need to make sure that you have a way to be safe. Sean, did you want to add anything else on the other items or that one as well? Thank you, sir. Now, I want you covered it really well, as we've been talking about the evacuation routes and putting some signage up and we will be doing some work on that. Like John mentioned, I just wanted to touch quickly on the on the societies.

02:24

John just mentioned that there are things happening in the province. There have been questions about CSRD fire services' role in these societies. The reason why it's not something we can take on is capacity at this point. I mean, if you think of 313 fire departments and 325 firefighters, we've got two full-timers. If you think about how big that is compared to the size of Calgary or Kelowna, we're bigger than them in terms of the number of firefighters we oversee. I'm running a regional training program. Over the weekend, we had 49 registrants for 16 spaces in a life by course.

03:02

So again, we're doing what we can and trying to manage that capacity. But these programs happening through BC Wildfire, who are responsible for the wildfire, you know, wildfire face the other day, they took half an hour before an accident to come up with new, and yet it came on Facebook, and there were police and ambulances on site. And it still took over half

an hour to get on alertable. So there is far too long of a delay. I want to know what changes are being made and how many people can actually authorize putting something on the alertable. I'm very disappointed. I'm very frustrated with the alertable program. And I had put total faith into it. And pretty much almost got burnt and lost my home through this. It was a very scary trip out.

04:04

Thank you, speaker. I'm gonna pass it to Tracy. Sure, thanks, speaker, and I'm really sorry to hear about that experience for you. It must have been really scary, and something we don't want to happen with the Alertable app. There are various agencies that use the app; the CSRD is only one of those agencies. So if it comes to a traffic accident that comes through the Drive BC program through the province of British Columbia, they're the issuing agency. So when you see an alert come through, it will always show the agency that is issuing that alert so you can know where the information is coming from. So it will say on your alert, Drive BC issues these programs.

04:57

As are run by people, and so there is potentially a time delay from when somebody who is right on the scene and able to post on Facebook, within a minute of witnessing an accident, and when the information is funneled through the Drive BC program, and that Alertable goes out. So that could explain some of the time lapse, certainly for us as well. And I think John alluded to it in our presentation. It takes time for us to issue those evacuation alerts and orders. And there's a process that we have to follow before we issue that Alertable. Absolutely, that is something that we are looking at, we want to be

able to take as many steps as we can, we do things like trying to have pre-prepared messaging, so that all we have to do is quickly insert different electoral areas or different addresses into a pre-prepared template to increase the speed and ability of us to respond quickly and push that information out as fast as possible. But there's absolutely a delay in that process. And that's something we want to work, both with the Alertable technology and with our own processes to ensure that we can keep it as efficient as possible. I'm sorry, Tracy, I just find that's a politician's answer. And if that's the system that you guys are using, and it's not getting information up to date, I just said that the police ambulance were on the scene for that Drive BC. So if this is a program you've chosen, and it's not fulfilling requirements in all areas, it's not very trustworthy. I don't feel comfortable using it now after what happened. And the fact that there were people that were in the dump in Scotch Creek was saying we need to leave because there's a fire and the CSRD was saying no, you have to stay till two. Meanwhile, their own house burned down. I don't find that acceptable. The CSRD was totally relying on BC Wildfire. That's not acceptable. And I want to know what changes are being made to do that. And not go overanalyzing this. It's like there needs to be harder facts on this. I'm very frustrated with how the CSRD handled this.

07:44

I would like to respond and express that I'm sorry you're feeling this sense of disappointment. These systems are constantly being evaluated, and we only adopted Alertable in 2021. There have been some bumps in the road with the system, but by and large, what we've heard from people during these conversations is that they find it to be a valuable tool. I know we've worked with other agencies in Central

Okanagan where there's a similar fire, and they don't have that system at all. They rely completely on people checking websites, traditional media, and the knock on your door option. I would have appreciated a knock on my door after seeing what happened with Alertable. I would have welcomed it because you guys didn't put anything out and relied completely on BC Wildfire. They evacuated the area two kilometers away from me at two.

09:00

The order didn't get put till eight or nine, and if you guys think that's an acceptable time, that's not acceptable. What are you going to do to work with BC Wildfire? How is this going to change? I want to know how you're changing. It's not giving me an answer or that's so vague. So we're going to work to improve this. What are some hard facts? How are you going to work with BC Wildfire, and why don't you have a backup of the local fire departments being able to say, "Hey, if you can't get a hold of BC Wildfire, then you have to you know, listen to the local fire departments that say you need to evacuate". Speaker, I'm just going to jump in here and I want to thank you for your comments and your questions. Part of this process is will help get to some of those questions and changes that you're looking for

09:56

So the process that you've been a part of this evening, and others have been a part of through the survey, the in-person sessions, all of that data and information, is being included in the report we're generating. The purpose of that is to prepare and inform what happens next year. Thanks very much for your comments. Okay, I know I missed a bunch of what was going on, so I apologize for that. Thanks, speaker.

I'm going to pass it over to speaker. I just did want to add that we do have a commitment from this report that we will be sharing with BC Wildfire, and we are already planning meetings with BC Wildfire to discuss how we can streamline and do things better between our agencies as well. Thank you. Thanks, speaker. We're going to move on to speaker. I see a question from speaker and then speaker. And then speaker, I see your hand. I just want to make sure we answer speaker first.

11:02

So, speaker, if you're comfortable speaking, if not, I can certainly ask your question for you.

11:16

Okay, great. You're now unmuted. Okay, speaker, go ahead. Oh, hi. During the webinar, the fire escalated into a wildfire anew, and we looked at the wildfire map, which we followed on an hourly basis, probably.

11:33

You couldn't see where the fire was; it was just this massive area of fire. And we couldn't tell where the hotspots were, where the risk was actually coming from. Because we're sitting here in a really high-risk area.

11:46

We had no idea how high the risk was. So when we got the alertable that the fire had breached, actually across the lake and came through Sorento, we evacuated.

11:58

And it was not pleasant to have to do that, to feel we had to do. So I'm wondering if there's a better way, if we are called on to make our own decisions, which I'm certainly prepared to do. But I want to know where there's fires off. Is there any way that can be worked on?

12:16

I think I can speak to that, and in a certain sense. And I think what you're speaking of is the BC wildfire dashboard, which recognizes fires of note.

12:29

Yeah. Unfortunately, I don't want to be seen as passing the buck, but that is not our website. That was the BC Wildfire website. They're the agency that has that data and information. They're the ones in charge of fighting that fire, monitoring it, with fire technicians, fire behavior specialists. The CSRD does not have that information at hand, so we rely on them as our partner to provide it. I can certainly pass along your comments to BC Wildfire. Your comments are now recorded, we have them in the chat, and it's something we can pass on to them about providing more and better information on their dashboard for folks. You know, because we may be evacuated too early. But I would just say maybe it was too late. I guess had we known that the fire was at Sorrento, maybe it would have been time to go. Because I was looking at Facebook, I was looking at the website, we were trying to find if the fire had jumped to Eagle Bay. We would have evacuated immediately since we're on the side of Boston.

13:46

And you know, I really appreciate you making that conscious decision for yourself. I've talked to a number of people in the area, and our systems are hardwired to try to have us survive. So when we have that spidey sense, like that prickly feeling on the back of your neck, when the hair stands up on your arms, or you get that feeling in your stomach, that's your body telling you something is really wrong here. And I would encourage people to feel like if you feel the need, if you feel unsafe, evacuate, take some time. What's the worst that could happen? You leave the area, and then maybe you were wrong, but you come back safely, versus the other opportunity. So I just want to say thank you for listening to your gut. Sometimes we want to deny that feeling and push it down, maybe not believe that it could be correct. But actually, that's a real strong way that can keep you safe. So I appreciate that you did that and listened to your gut on this one.

Okay, thank you for that. I just would like to have better information. To me, why don't we just, you know, I was all over Facebook and I had a simple question: Was there a fire reaching Eagle Bay?

15:18

And that information wasn't on Facebook, which I know is a poor forum. I just wanted to know if there was a fire reaching Eagle Bay. Unfortunately, that information was not available to me. In emergency situations like that, the fog of war comes in really quickly, with a lot of information flooding in, both good and bad. Making sense of it can be very tricky. And we're doing the same thing in the Emergency Operations Center. There was a question about having our fire departments part of that process. They were, and we were

getting good information from our firefighters and fire chiefs, doing the best we could to interpret that with the evacuation orders and alerts. As far as the software you're talking about, we use a software called MODIS, and it helps us see hotspots, but it's not real-time. It takes time to load up, as it's based on satellite imagery. And that's the best software available right now. It's just not going to be helpful in a situation like we saw there, which was some of the most aggressive wildfire behavior this province and country has ever seen.

16:22

Thanks for your question. We're gonna move on now.

16:28

Thanks for your question. We're gonna move on now to speaker.

16:36

Thank you.

16:38

I think probably this question would be best addressed by Mr. McLean this evening. Thank you for taking questions, I really appreciate it.

16:49

With a lot of things, the solutions are always in the gaps. And when we're talking about working interagency, there's always everyone working in their own realm, and there's a silo effect that can take place. So my question revolves around what the CSRD feels is working in terms of addressing some of the issues with the provincial agencies. And do you think that there's the receptiveness of

the province for the appropriate legislative changes? I know there have been a lot of changes from the province. And my impression from Premier EV is that he's been very receptive and somewhat responsive. But I'd appreciate hearing from the local government level. Thank you.

17:43

Thank you very much for your question.

17:46

The premier AV has been very receptive to talk to you about change coming out of the events of this past summer.

17:54

You were getting very numb to saying that these fire seasons are unprecedented because we've had several unprecedented fire seasons in a row.

18:08

The task force that he empowered engaged with us and we had conversations with them to talk about issues that we've discussed here tonight and in all of our sessions. Things like folks who want to stay behind and assist, providing additional resources versus being in aid. We look forward to participating with the other partners, including BC Wildfire and the RCMP, to discuss how we can better respond and ensure that messaging from all of our agencies is clear, so there's no confusion and the public understands our roles and responsibilities. I see that the province has undertaken a very large rewrite of legislation that guides all of our activities, such as the Emergency Program Act and Emergency Management Act. This act was just brought in this year and will guide us going forward.

19:25

I just wanted to ask that question to be sure that is what our communication is going to be. Yes, so that is one of the tools we will be using. Of course, we use our website, and then we also are using Alertable. Then we go to our social media platforms, so we have Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Additionally, we send out notices to individual media outlets, letting them know as well. All local, provincial, and national media also receive email notifications.

20:10

Great, thanks for that question. I'm just encouraging people again to use the raise hand signal if you have a question for Sean, about the CSRD. Wild service. Oh, great. All I have to do is ask.

20:34

I can unmute. Yeah, you're back.

20:38

I'm sorry, I don't recall the name of the one. It's your phone, your television and your radio. If there's a child abduction in Surrey? Yes. You're reminded in your living room, I think a lady wrote, I looked around my bedroom and the child wasn't there. So I went back to sleep. Is there any traction on seeing if that could mash it all up? Because it's effective?

21:04

Yes, and actually, that system was used as a redundancy in this situation. It's called Alert Ready, and it is a federal system. It's what they call broadcast intrusive. So it's different from Alertable. Alertable, you must sign up for in order to receive alerts, but the broadcast intrusive Alert Ready

system is the one that breaks through. Whether you have a cell phone and you're in the cell network, it's going to break through your phone automatically. It also breaks through to radio stations and television stations as well.

21:45

That system, we do have access to it. However, we have to make an application to the government to use the system. We have to give them a rationale and explain the situation. They have a much higher standard for issuing those alerts than we do with our local Alertable system.

22:10

So we did use it in this case, it definitely is another tool in our toolbox. However, it does come with a bit of a set of different standards that we have to meet in order for those alerts to be issued.

22:27

I would expect that, but it's just a great system, when people were actually running for their lives under a tactical order. Your thoughts over ready could have been activated. I think that would have been a huge improvement.

22:44

Yeah, thanks very much for your feedback. But with these systems, there is a delay. When you're speaking tactically, that's actually when someone is banging on your door telling you to get out because the fire is literally at your doorstep. There still would not have been time to issue an Alert Ready broadcast intrusive in that situation for the people who are getting those knocks on their doors.

23:12

So you know, as with everything, these tools are useful, and we have to try to use them to the very best of their capabilities, abilities.

23:23

But not to go, we had over 400 responses.

23:30

So lots of information there that we're gathering from around the shoe shop area.

23:37

And next steps for us is to gather all this information, pull it all into a report that we are providing in the next month. As you can imagine, it'll take a little bit of time to pull everything together. And we will be sharing it with the Regional District in the month of April.

23:58

And I'm sure they'll be communicating about it when that occurs. Yeah, I was just going to say I can pick up, Alyson. Certainly, it's going to be made available publicly on our website. And also, we will be pushing that out through a news release as well as on our social media channels that the report is available. We do want people to have full access. We brought in Monogram Communications to act as an arm's length presence in our organization to write and produce this report because we know that we didn't want any indication in the community that this was the CSRD investigating this themselves and they were just going to put in what suited them.

24:44

So, Alyson and Jenny and her team are working very diligently. They are independent from us. We are not influencing the content of their report. And they will be presenting that report to our board of directors in April.

25:03

Thanks, Tracy. And, yeah, one final thing, I would like to just recognize the team. They've been through many sessions with us. And something that I think has been and will be very beneficial is that they've actually heard so much of the feedback from community members firsthand. They don't really need to wait for a report to come out. We've seen so much of what the community members have said just resonate. And we sit together after every session with pens in hand and notes and share in a circle after every session. What were some of the themes? What were the key takeaways, comments, questions? So I can't say enough about how dedicated this team has been to being present and listening and really taking everything in.

26:08

With that, I think we are going to be the pulling panelists.

26:16

It's 825. I think we have room for maybe one more question. But before we do that, I'd like to just say a few words in our room. We talked about next steps. And so Tracy and I are going to share with the rest of the group. What next steps are from the monogram side of things, we're going to take the data and the information and the feedback from our in person sessions, our online sessions and the over 400 survey

responses that we've received, and put that into a very comprehensive report.

27:02

The survey is open until the 17th of March, so there's still some time to fill it out and share it with friends. There's lots of opportunity there for feedback. After the survey closes, our team will be sitting with the research, pulling it together in a report that will be shared with other agencies and the public. As I mentioned in our other group, I do want to say that this team here that is in this room with us this evening really, you know, I know they're anticipating the report, but they've sat through almost every session. They've heard from hundreds of people directly. They've listened to stories, and they've taken feedback. So we know that they'll be waiting for the month of April when our project is complete. But really, I think so much of it has already made an impression.

28:13

The way that we've worked the sessions is we've been in rooms with people and then we've come together after those sessions and shared feedback with one another. So this team has been very privy to all of your feedback throughout this process.

28:32

It Tracy, did you want to jump in and just mentioned anything else with regards to next steps?

28:38

Sure. Thanks very much Alyson. I was going to say thank you to Monogram as well for doing this work for us. We've brought Monogram in because it's important that the CSRD is not actually writing this report.

March 14 - Room 2

JENNY'S TRANSCRIPT

00:00

I'm also the Emergency Support Services Director.

00:11

I've been doing that for 16 years. We started with a team of 10 volunteers in 2007. Now, we've grown to 70 volunteers. I'm proud to lead them. They're so community-minded and work tirelessly.

00:43

Last year, we operated a reception centre for over three months, taking up most of the summer for some volunteers. They worked day in, day out. We had to kick some of them out the door to get them to go back home. We relocated the reception center five times. We assisted over 150 families, contributing over 3400 hours.

01:37

Our team is very community-minded. As more events happen, more community members raise their hand to help out. We appreciate all volunteers who want to help their neighbors in times of need.

02:21

Len, maybe you can talk about your transitioning roles and areas you're able to speak to.

02:30

My name is speaker. For the last six years, I've been the firesmart coordinator for the Regional District. I work with residents to prepare their homes for wildfires. More recently, I've moved full-time to inquiry services.

03:12

Thank you, Lynn. Tom, could you tell us about your role and the areas you're here to speak about tonight?

03:23

I'm also an emergency program coordinator. I educate and promote emergency preparedness through events around the Columbus show. I deliver training for staff and volunteers and help administer programs like the fire SMART program. In response, we open our emergency operations center for larger emergencies, supporting first responders and other agencies.

04:27

That's a snapshot of what we're working with. There's more, but I'll leave time for questions.

04:35

Thank you, Tom. Please put your questions in the chat or raise your hand.

04:46

I'll ask Lynn to talk about the firesmart program and bringing bins into neighborhoods while you prepare your questions.

05:00

There's a lot of interest and community groups, so Glen, maybe you can chat about that when people get their questions lined up.

05:10

Yeah, sure.

05:12

The program is multifaceted. We work with individual residents as well as community groups to reduce risk. The highest risk vegetation and combustible items are generally within 10 meters of the home. Beyond 10 meters, an interesting stat is that no natural fuel can burn hot enough to cause spontaneous combustion of a home. So when a fire moves through the community, focusing on that 10-meter space helps mitigate radiant heat. However, up to 90% of homes damaged or destroyed by wildfire result from embers. Over the last three years in this area, embers have traveled as far as 12 kilometers, starting spot fires. These embers can land in combustible items such as cedar hedges, junipers, bark mulch, long grass, or lawn furniture on decks. That's our number one enemy in the firesmart initiative. We work with residents to reduce these hazards around their property to mitigate losses. If an ember lands on something non-combustible, there's no harm, but if it lands on something combustible, that's what starts fires. Embers are not always small; they can be as big as full tree branches or car batteries. They get thrown up into the air by the intense heat from a fire below and travel with the prevailing winds, landing throughout the community.

07:53

Thank you so much, Lynn. Just before we move on to some of the questions in the queue, can I for my own clarification and maybe some others, when you say combustible material you mean that can that can catch on fire, anything that can ignite? Okay. That could be as simple as bark mulch, or flammable hedges. Okay. And everything from kids toys, to lawn furniture, or building materials, firewood, all close around the home. Okay, thank you for clarifying. And we have a really timely question, I think coming at you and potentially to Tom as well. Is there any plans to take care of the large pile of slash? Now that is located on the property where the new angle mount fire hall is eventually going to be built? This is a huge pile of fuel for this fire season if left Great question when we were in Anglemont, but I'm going to let Len, probably Tom speak to that.

08:54

Yeah, I can't speak to that one specifically. I'm not sure if that one is on the property where the fire hall is going to be built. But certainly, on the Regional District lands, obviously, if there's where the new fire hall is going to be built. If that is on Regional District property, then yes, by all means there. The objective would be to remove that in advance of events of wildfire season. And we also have the fairly significant Wildfire Risk Reduction Initiative, which is happening above the Community Bank Oman, we know there's a significant amount of piles there. You may have noticed some burned recently. But we got an update from the province on those and the contractor has been tasked with trying to burn or dispose of as many of those piles as possible in advance of wildfire season. But they are also restricted to burning on venting days. So there's this thing called The venting index through the province.

And while it may be safe to burn, we also have to adhere to the venting index and can only burn on high venting index days. And, throughout the course of this winter, there's, you know, we could probably count on our hands that our feet, how many venting index days we actually had, and were able to burn. So it is definitely high on the priority list and getting rid of what we those are called islands of fuel in the community. And certainly removing those are definitely a priority. Okay. Tom, did you want to add anything on there? I know you've been privy to some potentially some conversations about this as well.

10:43

I think Len covered it pretty well. Any clearing will be done on that land before they build the firewall. Absolutely. Okay, great. This ties in nicely from a question from speaker, I am not sure who to ask who would be expected to fight fire on tracks of private, in parentheses, farmland outside of the structural site.

11:04

And I'm gonna defer that over to you then to start. Yeah, so that's what would be considered interface buyer. We're not allowed.

11:15

Actually, we require the authorization of a BC wildfire to fight a fire on Crown land. But an interface fire on on private farmland, especially where it would be close to homes. That is definitely something that local fire departments are able to action.

11:41

That might be allowed a little bit as well. If it clarifies things.

11:45

The BC Welfare Service will respond to large tracts of forest land if they're threatened in Crown land or other areas. But if the private homeowner is capable, they may actually turn it over and expect the private homeowner to action and extinguish the fire. But again, only if they deem them capable, have enough resources and experience to do that. Otherwise, wildcards will respond less threatening to adjacent.

12:15

Thank you, Tom. That's very, really informative. Thank you. We have a question from speaker

12:22

How come logging and silviculture are not better leverage to incorporate industry and community firesmart programs? The current mitigation seems very expensive and only small area guessing areas get treated with fuel reduction each year.

12:39

Yeah, I can, I can certainly speak to that. We know that.

12:44

One of the reasons we're in the situation we are right now is that we've become very proficient at extinguishing wildfires over the past 70 years. As a result, we now have dense forests both inside and around communities. Mitigation programs on Crown land are managed by the province. However, consider this interesting statistic: historically, 76% of the wildland urban interface in the Columbia Shuswap Regional District is on private property. When we think about these high-risk areas closest to homes, about 70 to 75% of them are owned by private property owners. Over the last five years,

I've focused on educating private property owners and those in control of these forests on private property to reduce and mitigate vegetation where possible. When it comes to Crown land, we advocate with the province for wildfire risk reduction initiatives. However, we only receive about \$2 million per year on average for the entire area, considering all the priority areas around the province, particularly in the Okanagan Shuswap.

15:00

And I'm not sure if this is what the question was sort of leading to, but on average, it takes about anywhere from seven to \$10,000 per hectare, to do treatments, so that led to a million dollars gets used up fairly quickly.

15:19

Thanks for jumping in as well. Just to add a bit to that point, I and a few others recently met in what was called a wildfire roundtable. When you're talking about leveraging logging community silviculture, there were a lot of people at that table, including logging contractors. So there is a move for more of that collaboration, cooperation with lots of different agencies, some of the ones I mentioned, including Forest Service. But that's the idea, to try not to do things in isolation but to get groups working together. So if there's opportunity for planned logging that may also benefit fuels reduction around communities, and that's being looked at so that there's no duplication of efforts but working together on those things. So that's a good point, and it's something that is being promoted. And I see there was a follow-up question to the other one I talked about, asking if they're expected to take action on fire affecting 100 acres of private land. So again, the key here is, when a wildfire gets reported to the BC Wildfire Service, they may not know immediately whether it's private

or Crown land. They'll respond because if it's threatening to escape and cause damage on private land or on Crown land, they'll respond and then try to control the fire initially from spreading and causing more damage. But like I said, it really depends on the situation. If the landowner has equipment like bulldozers, excavators, or tractors and is able to deal with the fire safely, then they may be allowed to do so. However, if the BC Wildfire Service determines that the landowner isn't capable, they'll likely take over suppression efforts to prevent further escalation.

17:25

Hopefully that makes sense. You know, the other spouse will also jump in there to Tom, that's that's also where the local fire department can, can assist as well on private property.

17:37

And if you have any more questions, I'd encourage you to explore the resources available through BC Wildfire Services online. They have contact numbers for their information officers who can provide you with extensive information about how they handle responses to wildfires, whether they occur on private or crown land. Okay, thank you, Tom. Thanks, Lynn. That was really thorough. Bob, I hope that's helpful. If not, just jump back in the chat. And now we have a question from Barbara. Barbara, would you like to unmute yourself and ask your question, or you can send it in the chat. Whatever you prefer would be just fine.

18:13

Thank you, Jenny. Can you hear me? Yes. Thank you.

18:17

Awesome. Just kind of a double sided question if I may. And thank you for the information session this evening. act very appreciated.

18:32

Go ahead, speaker.

18:35

Eight in is.

18:39

Speaker.

18:42

Barbara, I'm so sorry to interrupt we you're cutting in and out. I don't know if anyone else can hear her. But you're jumping in and out. Do you want to try again from the beginning? So we didn't catch any of that. We really want to hear your question.

18:57

Can you hear me now? Yes.

18:59

Okay, I'll try this again. Just let me know if it doesn't, I'll just enter it in the chat. Thank you. I'm just interested to know, how many NEP groups may have been activated during the fire.

19:13

Maybe Cathy or Tom may know her from different groups. And also question perhaps for Len to address it.

19:26

What the interest is in the firesmart program since the fires, and if there's been a different level of uptake, interest in the program since a cue.

19:40

Great questions, speaker. Thanks for bringing them up. I'll have Kathy address the net programs. And just a quick comment on the first part, then I'll pass it over to Lynn to answer the rest. So Cathy, over to you. And Barbara, for everyone's awareness, is one of our net coordinators, involved in our Neighborhood Emergency Program (NEP). To provide a bit of background, once individuals are personally prepared, we aim to have coordinators who want to prepare their community as well. This ensures that in the event of an emergency, communities can be coordinated and self-sufficient if agencies can't reach them. There are many invaluable tasks that an organized net group can undertake. Regarding Barbara's question, yes, there was significant collaboration with the Wolford Estates and Dorian Bay net groups.

20:53

We must remember that the fire, when it started right above Adams Lake, sat there for quite a while. The residents down below by Adams Lake in Dorian Bay and Woodford Estates were understandably very concerned. We worked closely with them to ensure effective communication back and forth. It's important to note that for those residents, the only way in and out is by ferry, so it's not just a one-way in, one-way out road, it's a ferry. Evacuating the 30 or 40 homes over there would take much longer due to this. Their concern was very valid. It was incredible to have the net coordinators

there for us to facilitate communication. They evacuated smoothly. They were initially placed back on alert and returned home, but then we had to evacuate them again. This was due to the fire creating an unsafe situation for them to stay home. As for Scotch Creek, where we only have a few net groups, it's important to note that in our shoe swap and different areas, we don't have as many net groups. So, I'm glad you brought that up because if we could increase the number of net groups in our shoe swap communities, I believe our communication, dialogue, and understanding could be significantly improved. I hope that answers your question regarding the net groups.

22:45

That's great. Thanks, Cathy. Thank you so much. And before we pass over to Len on the firesmart, I just wanted to say we have had so many people signing up. We had the in person events, we had double digits, each of the four regions, we went to have people signing up for assessments and learning about the program. So that's fantastic. And then when all that you

23:13

Sure. Thanks for the question, speaker. Here's what I'll say about the firesmart program over the last six years, every year for the last six years has been a record year for us. So the program has grown to a level each year where it exceeded what we did in the previous year. Now historically, what would happen, say around September October is the program tends to slow down a little bit. And then we spend the winter planning for the next upcoming season. As a result of the Bush Creek East and Adams Lake fire. That wasn't the case for this fall. We had our busiest fall ever, myself and I have 14 technicians around the Regional District. We were

completing our last neighborhood and home assessments for residents December 8, as the snow was coming down, so we were working hard to try to complete those last assessments and still didn't get everything completed. That was requested last fall. So we're coming into the spring here now with the snow off the ground with quite a backlog of assessment requests. So we're in the process of completing those individual home assessments. And we now have eight neighborhoods in the Regional District that are firesmart recognized neighborhoods. Last year, we had three so that's why we increased from three to eight this year. And then in chatting with the person who's now responsible or sorry, he's covering the firesmart program. As I've moved into this new position, we have interest and events planned for 24 communities coming up for the spring. So we are, we are expecting another record year for the initiative and, and are working hard to staff up and get people trained to be able to meet that demand.

25:22

Thank you so much, Len. We have a great question from speaker in the chat.

25:27

Tom, I think you're the best person to kick this off. So, I'm hearing about the concept of 72-hour sheltering in place for the first time. Are there any plans for establishing community safe zones? Specifically regarding sheltering in the Blind Bay and White Lake corridor, staying at home may not be wise, and escape could be difficult. It seems there's some reluctance to recognize this. Tom, could you address this? And perhaps Len could follow up? Yeah, I believe John mentioned the importance of being prepared

for at least 72 hours, if not longer, considering the potential duration of large-scale events. Sheltering in place or evacuating depends on the incident and wildfire conditions; evacuation is usually necessary. Safe zones, commonly used in evacuation planning, are identified large areas where people can seek refuge. We've been updating evacuation planning tools to designate safe zones, like Seymour Arm, where residents from Norwalk could evacuate to safely. These are typically noncombustible open areas, such as grassy fields away from forests, providing a safe haven during emergencies. It's all part of our planning process.

27:32

When it comes to specific areas like Blind Bay and the White Lake corner, it's challenging to advise people in advance about where to go during a wildfire. It depends on the movement of the fire and which areas are affected. People should have their own evacuation plans, including options to stay with family or friends if possible. Sheltering in place might not be suitable for wildfires, but it's an option for other hazards like spills or environmental situations. Sheltering at home is often the safest choice, as leaving your property could put you in harm's way. It's important to have open communication with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and provide feedback through programs like NAPs for better planning. Developing an app for your community can help facilitate this communication and ensure that important information reaches the EOC. Regarding funding for the FireSmart program, it's crucial to note that it's funded through provincial sources, not the Regional District tax base. The province has increased funding allowances for initiatives like ours, making it easier for us to apply and use those funds effectively. So the very first year that we did this program, I

think our budget was \$150,000. That's what we got. This is just this recent intake, we've applied for six Under \$50,000, to the same program, and in fact, 1.2 over over two years, 1.2 million. So the province says, I mean, it's important to note that the firesmart program is not funded through the Regional District taxpayer tax base. But to answer the question, the province has definitely increased the funding allowances that may have made it easier for us to apply it and it opened up more areas that we're actually allowed to use those funds for.

30:40

Thanks, Len. And our time is up in this room. We're zooming. So thank you all so much. It's been a pleasure.

30:57

Hello,

30:59

I think we're switching around here.

31:03

And, speaker, I think you might be moved into the other room in just one second. So you think you've been through this group already?

31:14

Just let them note.

31:20

Always ask great questions.

31:23

They've been really good questions.

31:26

Okay, so just starting out. Thank you all so much for spending time with us this Thursday evening. It is the sixth and final engagement session.

31:38

And I'm just going to ask our panelists tonight to just chat a little bit, just give us a couple minutes overview, talk a bit about the programs they're representing.

31:50

And let's kick it off with Len.

31:53

All right, good evening, everyone. My name is speaker. And for the last close to six years, I've been the most of our coordinator for the Regional District. So we started this program. backlog is this concept started in 2018. And the program itself started in 2019. And for the last six years or so I've helped get that program from concept to program the robust program that it is today. And over the course of the last month, I've been transitioning from the firesmart program into a full time structural part.

32:35

Thank you so much, Len and speaker, I do see your hand but I'm just gonna get Cathy and then Tom to do their intro and overview and then we'll head right over to your question. Cathy, would you like to go next please? Thanks, Jenny. And thank you everyone for joining us tonight. My name is

Cathy Semchuk. I am one of the two emergency program coordinators that is on staff from the company issues from our Regional District. Part of my position also includes the emergency support services, I am the director. And it's my pleasure to oversee an amazing group of volunteers that provide emergency support services for our communities.

33:18

When I first started in 2007, our team consisted of 10 volunteers. Now, we have over 70 volunteers, and I'm excited to welcome 10 more new volunteers next week. Our volunteers come from various areas, not just from Salmon Arm, but also from places like Sicamous and Vernon. Last year, in 2023, we operated the Responsible Fire for over three months. Our volunteers sacrificed their summer to assist communities, moving to five different reception centers in five locations. Despite the challenges, they quickly got to work, relocating within two hours when needed. We assisted over 850 families and contributed over 3400 hours. I must also mention our host communities, including Kelowna and Vernon, who helped accommodate additional volunteers. Thanks, speaker.

35:00

Speaker, thank you so much, Cathy. Over to you, Tom.

35:07

I'm also an emergency program coordinator with the Shuswap Emergency Program. My main roles involve educating and promoting emergency preparedness across the region, as well as training staff and volunteers in emergency management to support us during major events. I oversee the structure protection

unit program, trailers, and equipment, and apply for government grants to fund various activities and programs like the FireSmart program. When there are large events that require additional support beyond first responders, we open up the Emergency Operation Center, where myself and other staff fulfill various roles to assist first responders. That's a quick overview, and I'm happy to address any further questions you may have.

36:05

Thank you so much, Tom. And we have a question from speaker. Can send it over in the chat. Or you can unmute whichever is better for you.

36:16

So it's actually? Hi, speaker. Sorry.

36:21

Okay, so my understanding is that the fire smart program and rebate are only available to permanent residents because it's a provincial program.

36:40

When I look at the demographic in the North Shore. So, about 75% of the population consists of seasonal residents, and fire-smartening their homes impacts the permanent residents. How can we achieve this result? Additionally, I believe that implementing the fire smart program in your community is crucial for establishing and supporting volunteer wildfire programs. Local volunteers can help with spot fires caused by lightning strikes and contribute to prevention efforts. How can the fire smart program assist in developing these local

volunteer firefighters? Lastly, how can the CSRD support the fire smart program?

37:40

There are many elderly people who may struggle to clean up their properties and remove debris. I'm thinking of implementing a bag program where disposal bags are dropped off for them to fill up, which the CSRD or local fire departments can then collect. This would assist the aging population in making their homes fire smart.

38:12

Great questions, speaker. Let me address those. Firstly, regarding the misconception about our program and the rebate being available only to permanent residents, that's not true. Any property owner in the Regional District can have their property assessed, complete the mitigation work, and apply for the \$500 grant. Seasonal residents are often very engaged and supportive of the firesmart initiative, as they see our area as their little piece of paradise and want to protect it. Now, onto the firesmart program itself and the idea of a quick response volunteer group. While this concept has come up frequently, it's currently outside the mandate of what I do. As an educator, I work with residents to encourage them to mitigate their private property, but I can't compel them to do so.

40:00

Right, we just try to give people information and hope they make the right decisions. But as far as the quick response group for volunteers, that's something we've taken note of and will likely come out in the report from these sessions. Numerous agencies are looking into

making that work. Then, regarding the elderly or those who may not be as capable of doing firesmart work, there are two successful initiatives. First, the neighborhood recognition program, where residents recognize the importance of hazard reduction and assist each other with fuel and hazard reduction with permission. Second, the bin program, which has been successful, especially in the North Shuswap, where bins are dropped off for residents to dispose of combustible vegetation and organic waste. In the upcoming year, we're exploring options like having contractors assist with pickup, chipping, and disposal, especially in communities with a high percentage of elderly residents who may not have the capacity to remove vegetation themselves. We're open to trying other things that might work in the upcoming season.

43:27

Well, if I can just follow up the one last comment.

43:31

I think the CSRD needs to advertise these things a little bit better. I'm sure it's on the website somewhere, if you do a deep dive, but if you put the demographic and the web together, you have a problem.

43:47

You need to get that message out there in a different way for a lot of people. It's proactive. Talk to the locals, the local loggers, the people, and find out where the problem areas are, where the overgrowth is. We can communicate that back to see wildfires or BC forestry for controlled burns or cleanup. Some logging sites that I've seen are not firesmart. Even though they've cleared out their piles, there's a lot of fuel still left there. So if you're going to create firebreaks, then we

could clean those up a little bit better. Yeah, two things. Number one is just an important delineation. We only have authority to do that work on private property or regional district-owned lands.

44:46

We do our best to work closely with provincial resources in the wildfire risk reduction initiative, as well as the wildfire service, BC timber sales, to get anything like that cleaned up. But yeah, essentially around that private property is our only area where we have the ability to influence. As far as messaging goes, I'm wide open here. We've been trying this for the last six years. We attend more than half of the farmers' markets in the Northeast Shuswap, events like the Lakeview Centre, the North Shuswap Community Centre, all over Scotch Creek. I bet you I've written maybe five articles a year in the kicker. We put ads in there. We work with community associations, community groups, stratas.

45:45

I'm wide open to any ways we can reach people without paying for advertising. I'll have a technician or myself there to promote the program. But I think it's word of mouth. These kinds of meetings are absolutely brilliant. I just want to say kudos to the CSRD for doing this, getting community feedback. People who aren't tech-savvy can join these meetings and then spread the word to other demographics or their neighbors or friends. That's how this is going to spread. If you can get that word out, it'll grow like wildfire.

46:30

Yeah, good. Good analogy.

46:33

Yeah, here's what, here's what I'm all I'll even throw this out here to market.

46:38

If you got a group of 3, 4, 5 or 8, doesn't matter to me, residents, invite us out. We'll come out to do a community assessment, a neighborhood assessment. We'll discuss hazards in general and then maybe specific ones in the area. So invite us out, I'll be there. When you guys come out to the fire department, come with you. Or is it just yourself that comes along? That's mostly who my technicians are, right? Our fire department members. We rely on them to be our technicians and the people that go out to do the assessments and community engagement and outreach. I would say the fire departments, particularly in the North Shuswap have been some of my most engaged. They're outstanding. They're amazing.

47:30

Thank you, speaker, for a great discussion. Speaker made an excellent suggestion in the chat about putting up signs at the transfer station, which I think is fantastic feedback. And there's also a comment from him about rebates for expenses applicable to hiring. But Len, I'm guessing you've got all that covered. Carol, I see your question in the chat. Is that the same one you had your hand up for earlier?

48:03

The owners of the property around the sanitation ponds and Blind Bay have chosen not to implement fire-smart practices, putting those of us living adjacent to the property at risk. What can be done to encourage a commercial

owner to adopt fire-smart measures? This is an important question, and I believe Tom can address it, especially considering the distinction between private property and Crown land, where our authority is limited.

48:46

But if we think about the wildland urban interface, which is where we have homes, we call it density class 606 homes per per square kilometer, when we take a measuring stick, and we go one kilometer route from those density class six homes and into whether it be private property or Crown land, the stats suggest that 75 - 74% of the land in the wildland urban interface is private. And so while we advocate aggressively for the province to do one of our risk reduction initiatives on Crown land, the only real lever that we have on private property is his logic and good judgment. Right, we do our best to try to educate people on the risks and the hazards, but there is no mechanism for us to mandate someone to under firesmart the property and there's no penalty that we can put on a resident or property owner for not preventing burning. So it's really that, you know, challenge that we face where 76% of the land in the wildland urban interface is private. All we can do is try to educate and influence. I can't speak to that property specifically, but invite me out to the firesmart at csrd.bc.ca. Myself or one of us will come out, do an assessment, walk around, look specifically at hazards. If you are a homeowner adjacent to a high-risk property, we can help you mitigate and manage your property. While I may not be able to force a private property owner to do something, we can talk to people, educate, and try to encourage. That is one of the limitations we have in the Regional District; we don't have a very big stick

to force someone to take action even though we all agree it may be high risk.

51:09

Thanks, Len. Speaker, did that help close up your question? Great.

51:15

I have a question that came in privately through the chat. But if there's any questions of hands, please put them up. I think this is best suited for Cathy and this is Cathy, over to you. Just regards with getting ESS payments and how that works. If someone is waiting on a payment, how did they go about doing that? Or a rebate? I guess?

51:41

Okay, so I have to get a little bit more information. Because I, so is it for a billet invoice? Is that overlooked? I think so. Yeah. Okay. So if the invoice has been sent off and the province hasn't made a reimbursement to them, please get a hold of me. I will put my name in the chat. And I will.

52:09

My battery's running low. So if you lose me, that's what's happened. Okay, so I will put my email in the chat. I did help a lady from last night. Yes, I sent it off to the province today. So I could definitely send it off and find out. But what you really need to do is you need to give me a copy of the referral form and the billet form, the bill invoice that you sent off to the province. Give me an idea of when you mailed it out. If you can send me those two things, I can make sure I can check into it, and we'll find out where the payment is for that individual.

Thank you. That's great. Yeah, if you want to put your contact info in the chat, I'm sure that would be appreciated.

52:51

I don't have a question in the queue, but I was hoping to give Tom just a minute because we don't have the physical facility tonight. If you just wanted to run through a little bit of bare minimums for being prepared for evacuation, like what's in a go bag and other relevant things that people need to think about?

53:18

Yeah, so I think everyone will hear me, okay.

53:24

So there are some basics, but certainly, some things that I think a lot of people think about are medications, basic cash, credit cards, wallets, ID, insurance policy, that kind of stuff that you may need if you're evacuated and something happens to your home.

53:43

If you're considering what to include in your evacuation bag, it's essential to think about items that can be replaced when leaving an area. Some individuals may opt for certain personal items, but in the context of a large wildfire situation like this, where many homes were lost, some people reflected on their preparedness. They realized they might have chosen differently, taking more irreplaceable items if they had thought about it further. Of course, these considerations require time, which was limited in this case given the suddenness of the situation. As for basic necessities, aside from personal items, it's crucial to have food

and water supplies. Generally, you'd want to have between two and four liters of water per day, along with non-perishable food items. Emergency support services (ESS) can also provide essential supplies if you find yourself stranded. It's essential to include these items in your kits for emergencies, along with relevant information.

55:00

Do you can go onto the CSRD website, under emergency services. And we've got links that will outline all of those items and links to prepare VC. And there's also lots of pamphlets on there that I encourage you to read if you haven't already.

55:15

They have information on everything from wildfire preparedness, to home, emergency plans, preparedness kits, flooding, preparedness, and sort of landslides. They talk about businesses, agriculture. So again, I really encourage people to look through there, because there everybody has different needs.

55:35

And those are just some of the basic things. And I think what Glenn touched on regarding preparedness and firesmart is crucial. I can't stress enough, especially in wildfire situations, which pose our highest risk in the future, the importance of thinking ahead. Consider things that may occur when you're not at home, perhaps when you're on holiday. It's essential to ensure you leave your home as safe as possible and have friends and neighbors who can assist in looking after your place if you're not there to take care of last-minute tasks. Even things like being away at work during the day - having neighbours or friends who can help pick up your pets and

evacuate them is vital. There's a wealth of advice available on our website, but I encourage you to explore it because I couldn't possibly cover everything in this short session.

56:23

Yeah, that's great.

56:27

Yeah, Speaker, that's a great question. I was also curious about that. Do you turn off your water, gas, and hydro? Well, I can't give you a definitive answer on that. I can tell you what the gas companies advise. They typically recommend not shutting off your gas switch. The main reason for this is that if thousands of people turn off their gas at home, once the order is lifted, they're not legally supposed to turn it back on themselves. They need a certified gas technician to do that, which could lead to delays and additional expenses. Gas companies themselves can also shut off the gas supply at the main valve in various locations. So they generally advise against individuals shutting off their gas valves. As for electricity, it's a similar situation. Unless you're familiar with your system and understand what's dependent on it, you may not need to shut off your electrical supply. Some people are well-versed in their electrical systems and know exactly what's plugged in and what could be damaged. They may opt to shut off their main power, but it's crucial to ensure that nothing will be damaged if they do so. My advice would be to research this thoroughly and perhaps consult with a local electrician who can provide insight into your specific situation to avoid causing any undue damage.

58:08

Yeah, that's great advice. And then just that last utility, which seems like a no brainer, but presumably when you leave your house your mains have your water turned on. Always. Yeah. And I think the one topic that came up recently that I spoke to somebody about is limited water supplies. I think a lot of folks don't necessarily know where their water comes from, or how much supply there is. And I believe in numerous cases, you know, people even say you put sprinklers up for the best intentions. wetting down the area, there's times when that works, and other times where it maybe might not have been necessary that soon. And they might have used up all the water supply for the fire department by turning on all the taps

58:57

too soon, that kind of thing. So a lot of good questions. And I think those point to the importance of expanding our neighborhood emergency programs, community groups, to actually talk about those things and have neighborhood preparedness. So they truly understand those kinds of things in their own community. Because everyone is a little different, what kind of water system you have, what your capacity is, I mentioned on another call that we had the structure protection specialist for the province, help us out, do some assessments. And so we have them in a number of our communities doing preparedness, structural protection assessments, which included assessing the water delivery systems, areas where they can draw water from and winds.

59:38

And the intent is to have those plans in place beforehand, so that when an event happens, they would not have to recreate that information, and they would already know

what to do in each community. And so except they didn't get all our communities, they got some of them. And we're encouraging them and trying to lobby them to continue that kind of work, so that we have all of our CSRD communities covered with those kinds of assessment plans.

1:00:00

Yeah, that ties brilliantly into Carol's question here. FireSmart recommended putting rooftop sprinklers on our roof, which we have done. But will firefighters turn them on if needed? We can't leave them running well away or during water rationing. Len, do you have anything to say?

Yeah, this is very common stuff that we're seeing more and more of, and I can speak to my experience being out in the province as well working on other wildfires when there are homeowner rooftop sprinkler systems installed. I'll start off by talking about what actually causes structure ignition. There's direct flame contact, where fire travels from tree to tree or something else and directly contacts the home. That's one way that causes structure ignition. The second cause is radiant heat. There's a fire burning nearby, and it's hot enough to create enough radiant heat to cause spontaneous combustion of the structure. The third and most common cause is embers. Embers can travel short distances, but they can also travel tens of kilometers during significant wildfires. So when we think about homeowner or other rooftop sprinkler protection systems, even when we install them on a property, provincial or regional district systems, we do not run them 24/7.

1:01:37

We will only run those systems when they're needed. Water is a precious commodity in a wildfire event, and leaving them on and running generally can cause structural damage to a home if it gets saturated. Water leaks in either through the roof or the ground and causes further damage. Historically, how we've treated homeowners' systems is essentially no different than how we treat provincial ones. We flush them a couple of times a day just to ensure the system is functioning when not needed.

1:02:17

Because depending on where we're pulling water from, whether it's ponds, creeks, or lake water, it doesn't take much to plug sprinklers. So we do our best to flash those, run them, and ensure they're effective when needed. If a homeowner has a rooftop system, we'll flash it and run it. If there's a point where we could potentially face structure ignition, we'll flash it and pull back, which is very common as the front approaches.

1:02:58

It's either a private event prep and go or anchor and hold. So you stay for as long as you possibly can, flash your systems, back off, let the system pass, and then immediately go back in and take action.

1:03:12

Small spot fires structure fires, but hope that while you're gone, and the systems or fronts, generally pack you know can pass through fairly quickly that the rooftop sprinklers and infrastructure protection systems do their job.

1:03:30

Thanks, Len. That's really, really informative. Carol that does that help?

1:03:36

Great. Okay, super. Speaker, you've got your hand up, and they will find we're probably gonna get shifted in like three to five minutes and zooming back into the main area. So speaker, we'd love to Oh, I'm sorry. It's speaker.

1:03:51

I'm sorry, speaker. Just one thought listening to all this, regarding the Fire SMART program. I think we should also include block programs. During the wildfire, I learned that all my neighbors were gone. Some were on trips, others were in different parts of the world. I ran around turning on roof and ground sprinklers, and when I left, they took over and took care of my house. It's important to encourage all residents to get to know their neighbors and build a block watch Firewatch program.

1:04:41

Get to know your neighbors so and what systems you have in place. So when something like this happens, they can execute on that they can get those sprinklers out there. They can do all this stuff if you're not there. And I think that's something that fire smart programs should incorporate into that when they go into a community

1:05:00

Bringing all the neighbors together and getting them to know each other is important because some people won't introduce themselves. That ties nicely into the

program as well, where we share contact information. Another thing we do well is work with communities to address overlooked hazards. For example, people often overlook the combustibility of deck furniture, which can pose a significant risk during wildfires. Even after preparing their homes, some leave potentially hazardous items on their decks. Removing deck furniture can greatly reduce the risk of structure ignition. I'm willing to spend as much time as needed with the community, discussing these important topics.

1:06:39

I appreciate it. Bringing out these groups together, I think you need to get these groups together. I think that really helped, like street after street, block after block.

1:06:50

Yep. Thank you. And this was obviously an informative, informative session, and I see Carol's comment down there as well. Speaker anyone else on the call, here firesmart@csrd.bc.ca. So whether it's one property, a neighborhood, a couple of communities.

1:07:17

All it takes is one person, right? One person in the community to take that interest and champion it. A lot of times, that champion is the key to promoting resilience throughout the rest of the community. It's about the community in general and all the volunteers. Lastly, I want to give a shoutout to all the volunteers from the CSRD. I've met so many amazing people.

1:07:43

Yes, me Cathy.

1:07:48

Welcome back, Cathy. Thank you so much. And that's a great question again, Carol. We had a bit of conversation about the fire wardens, a program from the past. But let's keep chatting as long as we can because this is such important information. Yeah, Tom probably has good information on that. But it's a provincial program. I think everyone sees the value in a fire warden program, but certainly, block watch and other initiatives rely on informed citizens. Today, I'll chat with communities where there's misinformation or misunderstanding about what firesmart actually is and what hazards exist. For every person who learns about a hazard they didn't know previously, it makes our job easier and focuses more on community resilience.

1:08:56

I'll put it out there that anyone interested in that kind of thing can contact Cathy about emergency preparedness programs. We'll help you set up if you can find interested people. We really need to be driven by the community. If you can identify a neighborhood interested, we can support you in putting things together, including mapping your area and providing templates to build programs to connect people. This helps both of us with communication improvements and support during future events. It's great if you can continue to help us grow these neighborhood programs. Another thing to watch out for is our vulnerable population, especially seniors living alone. Neighborhood programs ensure they have neighbors looking after them during emergencies like we saw last year. Thanks, Cathy. And I think we're about to end the session. Thank you all so much for a fantastic conversation. Recording stopped?

1:10:59

Okay, well, I think we have everyone back. I can only see their faces right now of the participating panelists.

1:11:10

It's 8:25.

1:11:18

But before we do that, I'd like to just say a few words in our room. We talked about next steps. And so Tracy and I are going to share with the rest of the group what next steps are. From the monogram side of things, we're going to take the data, the information, and the feedback from our in-person sessions, our online sessions, and the over 400 survey responses that we've received, and put that into a very comprehensive report.

1:11:56

The survey is open until the 17th. of March. So there still is some time to fill it out, share it with friends. There's lots of opportunity there for feedback. After the survey closes, our team will be sitting with the research, pulling it together, and a report that will be shared with other agencies and the public. As I mentioned in our other group,

1:12:30

I do want to say that this team here is in this room with us this evening.

1:12:38

Really, I know, they're anticipating the report, but they've sat through almost every session, they've heard from hundreds of people directly. They've listened to stories, and they've taken feedback.

1:12:53

So we know that, you know, they'll be waiting for the month of April when our project is complete. But really, I think so much of it has already made an impression.

1:13:07

The sessions have involved being in rooms with people, followed by coming together afterward to share feedback. This team has been very privy to all of your feedback throughout this process.

1:13:26

Tracy, did you want to jump in and mention anything else about next steps? Sir, thanks very much, Alyson. I also want to express gratitude to Monogram for their work. We brought Monogram in because it's important that the CSRD isn't writing this report or investigating itself. This was primarily a listening exercise for the community. We want people to understand that this report is a true representation of what was heard, whether critical of the CSRD or not. Moving forward, the report will be presented to the board at the April meeting and then published on our website. We'll issue a news release and share it on social media so that everyone can access it.

1:14:23

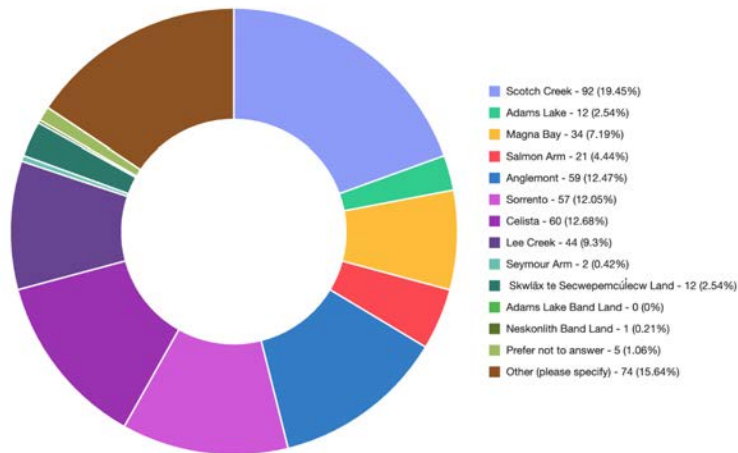
But absolutely, I think to speak to Alyson point, the learning has started already for us and this has been a very helpful exercise for all of us on the team. It's already creating thoughts and percolating ideas for what we can do what changes we can make in the short term and where we may need to look towards in the long term. So again, thank you very much.

APPENDIX G: SURVEY RESULTS

Submissions Started	With at least one response	Submission Completes	Completion Rate	Total Data Points Collected
523	473	366	69.98%	7,581

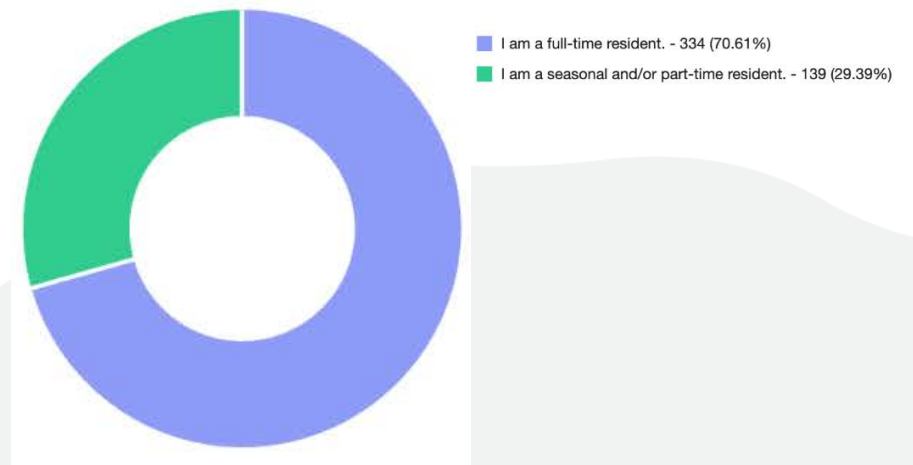
Q1. Where do you live or own property?

473 of 473 participants responded



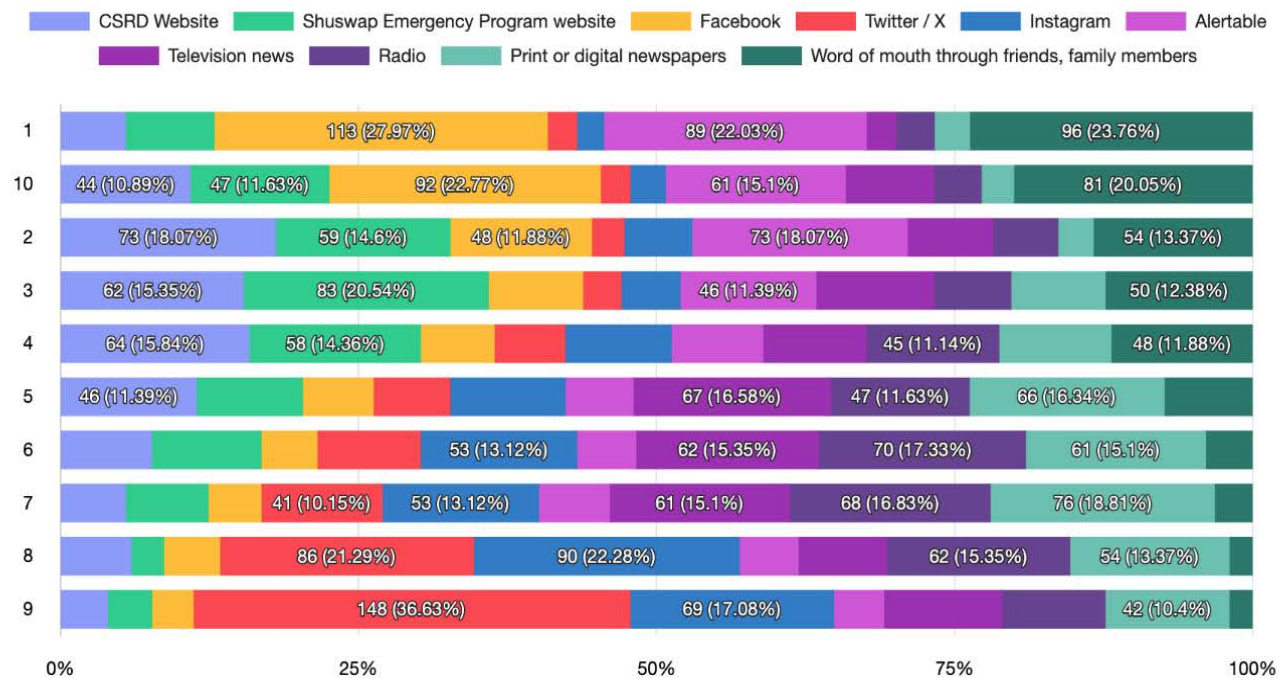
Q2. How would you describe yourself?

473 of 473 participants responded



3. Rank the source of information you used most frequently during the wildfire.
(1 is most frequently used, 10 is the least frequently used)

404 of 473 participants responded



Q4. Are there any other ways of communicating that we should have used?

179 of 473 participants responded

Responses

- 1 Not scare mongering
- 2 Phone
- 3 More news coverage
- 4 Yes - text messages - in person
- 5 Home checks
- 6 accurate information at local areas in each community- Ross Creek Store, Anglemont Marina, Lake View Rec Centre
- 7 Alertable tagged to your property address: 1234 Squilax Anglemont Rd, Celista, V0E1M6
- 8 No
- 9 In the beginning very little was said
- 10 Don't think so
- 11 No
- 12 Informed person on the phone. Local Rep does not show up for anything, just hides on any issues.
- 13 A service that forwarding information 24/7, not presenting on the website "we are close and will return tomorrow at 7:30AM
- 14 email
- 15 SMS messaging
- 16 Voyant as it is next to Csrld
- 17 No
- 18 No
- 19 Yes door to door! Back in 2003 when we were put on evacuation alert people knocked on the door & gave you a paper with information on how to prepare for evacuation. Not all people use cell phones, computers etc
- 20 BC Wildfire Service website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status>
- 21 Just improve the response time and open up the group on Alertable so that those without Alertable could also get the messages! Many slipped through the cracks here.
- 22 The ways are all there, the timeliness of the information wasn't.
- 23 Review "Alert" application. It failed to alert residents in a timely fashion.
- 24 Somehow more communication and input from residents
- 25 No
- 26 Information meetings
- 27 🚒 Alert Sirens
- 28 Bc wildfire
- 29 No
- 30 Thru bulletin boards in communities that still had access to them.
- 31 Mostly cell phone as there was no internet
- 32 the methods of communication were fine - sometimes it was delayed
- 33 mass texts
- 34 No
- 35 There was no clear communication
- 36 Text message
- 37 No
- 38 Castanet told the truth
- 39 Cellphone
- 40 Local contact centres with up to date info

- 41 Our number one was the firefighters on our property that told us we should leave even though there was no evacuation notice!
- 42 Text Message
- 43 emergency service local telephone chain
- 44 Signs on the highway direction people to ESS
- 45 No
- 46 Information center at community hall or firehall
- 47 More frequent press releases/interviews on radio or TV for those without online access. More accurate information through alertable.
- 48 Through local authorities
- 49 Local gatherings
- 50 The doesn't work to rank, I am unable to move in rank
- 51 Use of people to notify residents of the evacuation notice.
- 52 being able to go to command centre without being threatened that we have to leave
- 53 The media reports were completely inaccurate! They shouldn't be used.
- 54 I felt informed prior to the fire and after. My only concern was the evacuation order came late. The fire was very close when we received the provincial alert.
- 55 A dedicated AM or FM frequency specific to CSRD information would prove beneficial.
- 56 BCWS website
- 57 Door to door flyers or community signage indicating muster points and shelters (like the Lakeview Community Centre).
- 58 Send Authority door to door. L
- 59 Radio
- 60 You could have directly talked to the people of the North Shore who stayed behind and fought the fire instead of

- throwing them under the bus. Then you would have known exactly what was going on.
- 61 Absolutely CSRD should have used TV and Radio more effectively
- 62 We used the NASA - FIRMS map
- 63 none we just need a single source of correct up to date info that can still operate after the power goes out
- 64 Loud speakers on trucks through neighbourhoods, a community alarm system like the old air raid sirens.
- 65 Printed bulletins in popular locations
- 66 How do I get a keyboard to do the ranking? Shuswap Emergency Program, Alertable, Facebook, TV news and Castanet Kamloops were my sources; and NASA fire site.
- 67 Through the volunteer fire department and/or local businesses as we all talk to each other
- 68 No
- 69 Online Community Forums/chat pages
- 70 Not Sure.
- 71 Direct Communication
- 72 Way more clear communication on every platform
- 73 Bc Wildfire service map
- 74 No
- 75 Less outlets of information, a more centralized source of information would be better.
- 76 The cell Emergency Alert System
- 77 Emergency alerts app
- 78 CBC radio is my main source of information, ideally CBC could have interrupted programing to provide more fire coverage like they did in 2003.
- 79 Alertable was a good idea except it lagged - it advised we were on evacuation order 6 days after we were evacuated.

- 80** Locals, they are the expert residents who have lived in the area all their lives.
- 81** Police should have been going door to door, prior to the back burn. You couldn't believe anything on Facebook, as a lot was untrue.
- 82** I did use the NASA hot spot/fire satellite coverage to get a feel for where the fire was
- 83** You should have not relied totally and personally on Jay Simpson on facebook. Should have used radio more.
- 84** We got the evacuation notice by word of mouth, By then it was too late. We Stayed.
- 85** Not just post and walk away, but be prepared to receive questions back, and ready to answer quickly
- 86** The NEP program calls for people to go door to door. This would have been an appropriate time for door to door checks given the duration of the incident.
- 87** We should have had more one on one communication.
- 88** Specific groups set up and organized on Facebook. Some organized by CSRD members.
- 89** Having people with information at key places such as gas stations etc. to help evacuees
- 90** Facebook got to me fastest, aside from my family's first hand knowledge
- 91** Talk to the locals
- 92** Loud speaker prior to evacuation
- 93** by the time we knew anything our home was burnt. so anything would have been better
- 94** Media focused on West Kelowna fire. Very limited information for Bush Creek. Skwllax band provided limited updates as the voyent alert app didn't work.
- 95** Reader boards
- 96** Provincial Wildfire website
- 97** Yes you should have set stations in key locations for people to go and ask in person, too many seniors here who wanted updates and real clarification.
- 98** Everyone has a phone. Alertable could have been used much better than it was.
- 99** Should have something like amber alert
- 100** Better
- 101** Physical meetings
- 102** Bc wildfire
- 103** BC Wildfire site was relied upon
- 104** My primary source of information was BC Wildfire Maps - where are the fires!
- 105** No but the ones used should have been used more timely.
- 106** Alertable was the best method but it became overwhelmed on the 18th and it was poor. On the 18th information was poor and it was frightening as we had no idea how close the fire really was to us or where it was after then.
- 107** Quick timely updates specific to different areas vs vague out of date self congratulatory zoom broadcasts
- 108** NASA, BCWildfire site find key people in each community to get the word out
- 109** Salmon Arm radio station
- 110** Alertable did not work. We both had it on our phones but we both got different alerts. We did often go to BC Wildfire map information but you did not include that as a choice
- 111** #3 csrd i was unable to select above
- 112** This question makes me think you never had to protect and save your home!
- 113** nil

- 114** texting leadership in each community ? Having a contact person at each hall?
- 115** Phone, CB radio, satellite coms
- 116** Yes, with the locals who stayed behind. They saved much of the north Shuswap
- 117** Speaking with community leaders
- 118** SMS messaging
- 119** Yes text or phone calls community visits
- 120** I think a National Disaster Relief Ministry needs to be created, in-turn Public Information Communications would improve.
- 121** Speakers that go on a regular truck for emergency alerts instead of wasting fire trucks to alert people
- 122** cell phone messages
- 123** Communities should have sirens or something for imminent emergencies where lives are on the line, many don't carry a phone
- 124** Signage in the town of Scotch creek about the possibilities of Alerts or progress
- 125** Phone out program. Text out program : sign up participation for those that would like this service.
- 126** Notices in essential services- grocery and gas stations
- 127** Facebook Account
- 128** sending someone around with a loud speaker or siren on a vehicle, we have neighbours who don't have a cell phone and don't use media and don't have apps
- 129** Bc wildfire service
- 130** Evacuation orders needs to be issued faster someone should have been at the site of the back burner and made the call
- 131** an alert ordering people out was issued once it was too late.

- 132** CSRD Facebook - not the community gossip groups. Jay Simpson's blog / information was boots on the ground current information and he was representing his constituents admirably. Exactly the representation I want from government in similar circumstances. .
- 133** Information was available in many formats. I am unable to change the order in the tabs?
- 134** Emergency air horn
- 135** CSRD couldve started thier own Facebook page regarding informing residence of the state of fire.
- 136** Encourage social media posts by respected partners, such as BC Hydro.
- 137** No
- 138** The information presented on the radio was horrific. Patrick Rylie was awful. He only presented the one-sided view of the North Shuswap residents and it was his opinion. The local Salmon Arm radio should have been one of the first and best way to get TRUTHFUL and ACCURATE information out to the public. I was disgusted with Patrick's on-air behaviour and stopped listening to the radio.
- 139** Via text. Not everyone has data or access to wifi.
- 140** Voyant alert, provincial emergency alert service
- 141** The website was terrible to navigate- just fix it
- 142** Facebook
- 143** I feel you utilized all avenues
- 144** The question about part time vs full tme is part of the problem. We are not full time but we are here all the time as many people are. And our homes are not cheap like the old time cottages. They are the same value as primary home. So the more emotion. I believe these fires were ignored or treated differently because of the part time resident status. This is a root cause

that needs to be addressed when assessing fires. There isn't even a place to put other on the form. It should be how many days are you at this residence and what's the value. And how close to nearest towns or something. As you would find we have the proximity and population to hit a higher level of risk.

- 145** Any would have been great but the lack of information was extremely I can't even come up with an appropriate word.
- 146** Community meetings for residents there. SOCIAL MEDIA
- 147** No, you guys did fine.
- 148** No, communication was great with the public. As always, intermunicipal/interagency communication could improve.
- 149** No
- 150** Email, phone call, text messages
- 151** Townhall Meetings/Focus Groups
- 152** Direct email messages to property owners
- 153** No
- 154** No
- 155** A single unified regional district website that aligned with adjacent districts like NORD and TNRD
- 156** I think you covered them all
- 157** No
- 158** Loudspeaker
- 159** Town hall meeting in early stages of fire
- 160** Fire fighters and broadcast alert.
- 161** Instagram, Facebook and locals were our main source of contact for keeping us up to date on the status of the fire
- 162** None comes to mind
- 163** We never got any communication in Magna Bay

Q5. What are your suggestions for how we could communicate more effectively with you?

252 of 473 participants responded

Responses

- 1** Create a Facebook page just for the fire and don't let the public post to it. Also tell us everything you know good and bad. Don't sugarcoat and don't withhold information even if it makes CSRD look bad. It's better to be honest and try your hardest to make things right.
- 2** Alertable failed miserably was too delayed in giving evacuation orders Would of been nice for the CSRD to attend one of the townhall meetings that were held
- 3** Listen to YOUR people! You work for us, supposed to be in our best interests.
- 4** Possibly phone or text
- 5** Reporters on scene, so E kind of system that showed early on what houses/structures were effected
- 6** see above
- 7** More information as to what areas to evacuate to. East or west? There was more support for people that went east then west.
- 8** Have all communications relevent and timely
- 9** I think there was a lot of misinformation and the only factual information was from people on the ground-fighting fires, assisting with food or organizing of efforts. There was no clear direction often. We checked the CSRD website, listened to the updates which were helpful but we could have done better. It is also very important to remember we had no power and it was very difficult to access this information. The alertable app was very useful when power was available.

- 10 mobile phone alert (the ranking system above does not work!!)
- 11 Alertable to address not area
- 12 Mayor of Chase said nothing
- 13 More updates and plans of what is happening
- 14 Large information bulletin boards placed in specific areas
- 15 Up to date Emergency information easily accessible on SEP website and alert able - the information regarding alerts and evacuations happened Too Slowly. For example we heard about the evacuation alert for Lee Creek via information from a Vancouver source first (early morning of Wed/ August 16) Considering it is the one way out for us in Celista this was essential news for preparing to leave.
- 16 Post to CsrD Facebook page
- 17 More timely communication if possible.
- 18 The delays in information getting to the people that needed it needs to be improved. The information needs to be communicated efficiently, more time was spent thanking people involved instead of stating facts about what was happening.
- 19 Meet the public face to face do not hide in your offices and behind phone systems. Get out in the public and face them.
- 20 Anticipate these events: The fire at Adams Lake had been burning since early June. I watched the plume of smoke all summer. It is a travesty that this fire was enabled to grow and not extinguished early.
- 21 Would have been nice if the Alert systems worked together better - alertable, Voyent and Emergency systems... Would have also been nice if Chief Tomma had used the alert system at 12pm when he closed the Band office to alert the residents on Little Shuswap Lake about

the change in the fire from what he knew from BC Wildfire services. Instead we had an alert at 710pm - 4 hours after we had a knock on our door to evacuate now (3pm)

- 22 ask for peoples email so alerts and updates arrive faster.
- 23 If the CSRD is to be a major source of communication and not close the web site days end and say " we are not available our office will be open at 7:30AM. Either the CSRD is to be a major source of information then been that refer the residents of the shuswap that please refer to another information source.
- 24 You need to start by establishing the CSRD as a trusted source of information. I don't have an answer/suggestion for you on how to go about this... but as a resident of the area for the past 10 years, the CSRD has only presented itself in a negative tone to a majority of full-time residents of the North Shuswap.
- 25 The Alertable did not work for giving valid and timely information It would be great if all of bc had a coordinated system
- 26 Everyday updates 2 x daily
- 27 Without power or limited cell phone service limits any communication. No tv, no radio. When generator running tv was all about Kelowna, our friends and family in Calgary had no idea what was happening here. Regular timing of updates via radio or tv so scheduling could occur with gen sets to get updates. Local disaster broadcasts.
- 28 Areas that were under alert and or evacuate areas were not similar on sites such as csrD,Shuswap,Alertable sometimes were confusing
- 29 More up to date, by the time alterable activated it was already old news

- 30 1) the source above doesn't differentiate between facebook groups - CSRD or community groups or other? Creating a relationship with authorized community groups who would simply amplify the official messages would have been useful. The rant and rage FB groups were a nightmare and full of misinformation. A better more formal relationship with sources closest to the communities is recommended. 2) The Area F Director communications should have been monitor and vetted. So inappropriate.
- 31 The csrd website was often not up to date or crashing. A stronger social media presence, especially to dispell misinformation.
- 32 None
- 33 You need people in the community NOT Salmon Arm! They were useless!
- 34 Provide the number of resources available to fight the fires
- 35 Too much overlapping and outdated information makes things even more confusing. There needs to be a commitment to keep the public updated (informed)24 hrs a day. Updates every 30 min throughout the day would prevent misinformation from spreading. Make the information sites more user friendly, the CSRD website was anything but user friendly. You need to consider the range of people and abilities using these sites and the state of mind they may be in.
- 36 Would have been nice to get an Alertable to evacuate
- 37 Alertable is a good option but useless if alerts aren't sent out in time. I could see fire raging towards scotch creek long before the first evacuation order was in place. The alert for scotch Creek also came in too late as there were

still hundreds of tourists in the community when the situation was worsened from the back burn. Same goes for the meadow creek fires - fire was within people's yards in meadow creek hours before an evacuation order was received. The app quickly became useless when the back burn was lit and word of mouth/using your eyes became the only useful and reliable source of information.

- 38 More effort needs to be done to communicate with residents prior to the fire season to inform and include residents on what to expect should a fire threaten their area...how to keep informed, how to evacuate, how people can help, how to fire smart, prepare their residences etc. I also found some of the information confusing and untimely.
- 39 Be honest and don't lie to the media
- 40 Facebook groups worked well
- 41 Don't let the BC government lie about the incredible work the residents that stayed behind did to save our communities.
- 42 Real time updates - we had no idea that the fire had come up the lake 20KM until I looked across at Magna Bay and saw trees candling!
- 43 Increase frequency especially as the emergency is progressing. Magna Bay went from all good to Evac Order with nothing in between despite fire activity suggesting we should've been on Alert.
- 44 Have more volunteers in our specific area coming door to door with accurate information The wildfire volunteers who did come to Lee Creek two days before could not answer our questions

- 45 Install sirens throughout North Shuswap. What good is “Alert System” if cellular and/or landlines fail to broadcast warning?
- 46 I believe they was too much stuff printed that really most people don’t need to read or care about. There needs to be two reports that go out one quick the state’s quick fax with out the other stuff people put in to make there jobs look important.
- 47 There was a lot of panic about Blind Bay (near me) being evacuated, but it turns out it was just an alert. Make it much more clear on Alterable the difference evacuation notices versus alerts, and have the maps of areas being notified be the primary focus (versus a wider area name, which was how the alerts initially appear).
- 48 I have no concerns with the level of communication that occurred, in fact I was impressed with the frequency, level of detail and multiple ways in which I could pursue or receive information. There probably could have been more pro-active information provided earlier on what to expect should certain extreme scenarios occur. An example would be FAQs or “What to expect” around the back burning that occurred. This may have reduced some of confusion, panic and mis-information that occurred as a result. The biggest issue we had to contend with was the massive amount of misinformation that occurred on Facebook and elsewhere, generally unchallenged. We (like everyone else) were constantly forced to verify things.
- 49 During the Notch hill fire 12 years ago weekly information meetings were held with BCWF and the CSRD. This time everything seemed top secret and very little information was presented. One other thing any form of information over the internet is not getting to everyone where a in person meeting is all about getting answers especially if the CSRD and WFBC are both present.
- 50 Have a government official on site 24/7 with current up to date information
- 51 Telling the truth, open transparency, from the start.
- 52 Text alerts, emails. Alertable. For those that do not have wifi plans to support them thru a disaster need more in depth communications.
- 53 Better updates . The weekend of the most terrifying time for everyone most government alerts went silent?
- 54 You should have dedicated some resources to discussing the misinformation head on . You should have publicized arrests as well to demonstrate consequences for stealing vital equipment.
- 55 CSRD OR WILD FIRE BC SHOULD COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY TO OUR COMMUNITY PRESIDENT OR SECRETARY
- 56 Let the media in to the area to report accurately
- 57 More immediate information;
- 58 Be honest, give us all the information. We're not children.
- 59 Na
- 60 Our voyent app was very unreliable. Terrible communication period. Went on evac alert and hour before I evacuated. Got an evac order long after the fire had already gone through my community. No one to help elders or disabled. Someone could have died. An absolute failure of every kind for emergency measures.
- 61 Open line of communication between residents and government. Truthful answers and up to date information, returning calls promptly with answers.. no more generic answers treating people like we don't know anything about what is happening! Some of us

know more that the ones in charge about fighting forest fires!

- 62 Well in my experience in Incident Command, I will say the evacuation alert and order were way behind. It saddens me that this was not managed better. I knew when to leave based on my experience, but had we waited for the order we would have been stuck going the other way which would have been difficult.
- 63 News channels on tv were a pathetic source of information. Best up to date info was castanet! EVACUATION NOTICES BEFORE ITS TOO LATE!!!
- 64 The same way you alert people when a child gets abducted. Instant messaging with an alarm. This should automatically inform anyone within the cellular coverage area of an impending emergency.
- 65 More local info on tv, local paper website, local fire departments. Local contact centres with current information.
- 66 Was adequate as long as people had social media. But the response for the wildfire was abysmal and horrible. Totally terrible
- 67 Give reliable information that can be trusted via all modes available.
- 68 Not sure, probably social media
- 69 Get a better means of getting the alerts out. We found that signing up for Alertable was confusing and inconsistent.
- 70 Getting accurate information to the news outlets would have been helpful. They had very outdated or even incorrect information at times.
- 71 SMS direct messaging
- 72 Clear boundary definitions, everyone on same page,

- 73 Provide detailed updates on crews, equipment and strategies. Admit when you are under resourced and ask for help. Coordinate local resources. That whole event was a colossal management failure once the firestorm was over in the following weeks.
- 74 None
- 75 There seemed to be no one taking the lead and little disaster response trained people from CSRD. Communication was not great and not accurate.
- 76 Frequent radio updates
- 77 To have the CSRD website and information come out faster than Alertable app
- 78
- 79 The updates seemed to come quite slowly. When the fire crossed to the South Shuswap there was a whole period of time overnight with no updates at all as the people in the SS could see the fire coming. The websites were crashing due to the high usage and Facebook groups became the only way to get updated information.
- 80 Give information sooner
- 81 I liked the video conferences but in person would be better
- 82 Updates poor. Not timely enough. No consistent time or method for updates. Kelowna was on top of providing info. Daily presentations for updates
- 83 People found out about the evacuation dangerously too late. A second method, beyond the Alertable app, in the future would be helpful. Especially for those who may not have immediate access to technology. The live updates from CSRD and BCWS were very useful. People need to feel like they are being accurately informed in a situation they have no control over. I felt that this was one way that was achieved.

- 84** How about immediate and transparent communication. Perhaps a notification sent out at the beginning and repeated throughout any kind of emergency that information is available on.... Perhaps even using CBC as a way of communicating ongoing reports. Both the website and Alertable were not completely accurate.
- 85** The evacuation notice came much too late. The power was out of all of the north arm and not everyone has a cell phone or cell service. Previous years there were people who went door to door to ensure residents were informed about an evacuation alert. Timely communication from the CSRD quite frankly BC wildfire and the CSRD are lucky no one died. The complete lack of timely communication put many people at risk. Once evacuated we heard nothing from the CSRD. We had to get information from local residents in Seymour city where we were evacuated to. There is no cell service or internet up there so we were left to rely heavily on the community.
- 86** A local Northshore representative team. That we can communicate with to receive credible info and direction. The locals are key to repairing the incredible broken system currently in place. The evacuation order that issued in scotch creek was completely unacceptable. Too late!
- 87** posted notices have a registry that the authorities could use for people that stayed and were looking after property's and putting out the fires and let us do that
- 88** Facebook posts and Alertable were sufficient.
- 89** Accuracy and transparency are needed. Yet what the media is posting on TV, radio and newspapers before it is released. They caused more panic and problems than needed.
- 90** A wildfire detection system may have been beneficial, though likely not realistic for Adams/North Shuswap geography. Predator Ridge and city of Vernon have invested. Many people rely on real time alerts from apps on phones. Perhaps CSRD could invest in an emergency management app with realtime updates applicable to residents. Information could build on what BC Wild Fire Service offers with more specific region based information, including emergency management plans, flood, slide, etc information/warnings.
- 91** My perspective was different than those towards Sorrento. I was looking to help more and I think there needs to be more planning for that before the summer season. I loved the daily updates on your Facebook page
- 92** A lot of the time the alertables were unclear or wrong. I even sent a message via email to the SEP people suggesting the communication needed to be clear and concise. I really wondered who was writing the information as it appeared they did not understand the areas they were dealing with. In a disaster, clear and concise information is required. It is very important to make sure the title of the alert is clear, as a lot of people only looked at the title and went from there. I also thought the CSRD missed a great opportunity to mention the various fire departments from all over BC who came to help. This information is provided regularly in the larger centres, but I didn't see one press release identifying any of the fire departments in the area, other than those within the CSRD. We need to acknowledge all who come to help. I also heard, but don't know if it is true, there is confusion over who actually issues the evacuation orders/alerts. Some I saw where BCWS, some were CSRD.

- 93 More accurate and current updates on fire growth and alert notices. As alerts came in too late for many local residents
- 94 Up to date “as it happens” text or emails More timely alerts / evacuation orders
- 95 We live in a dead zone, so we could not use Facebook, Twitter, or, Instagram. Alertable would not work on most of our devices. Radio was not covering the fire's progress; television mostly covered Kelowna. We used the BC Wildfire Service map; it's not even in your list. Therefore, the rankings above are not accurate b/c there is no place to say we didn't use a particular source of information at all. To communicate more effectively, we need an alert system similar to Amber Alerts that warns users--whether they have a cell phone data plan or not--and we need a solution that warns residents even when power and cell service go down (as the did on August 18).
- 96 As a NEP volunteer I did not receive a single communication from the CSRD NEP. No one asked that I contact the neighbours on my list and no message was given to communicate. There was no emergency shelter or muster station identified and no system of checking that people in the neighbourhood were able to evacuate. Anglemont was never placed under evacuation, and yet we were cut off from the outside world. We should have had direction from the NEP to ensure our residents stayed informed and were safe. I have since decided not to volunteer for this program as it seems to have no leadership.
- 97 It was very confusing what sources had the most up to date information regarding evacuation alerts vs orders and fire maps. The information in the alert app, provincial websites, csrd websites were different at times. I couldn't tell what the current evacuation zones were.
- 98 Frequent updates on Alertable. More timely evacuation order. We left Scotch Creek Zinck Road 24h before the evacuation order as 5 cm amber was falling and the forecast for strong winds indicated an imminent disaster
- 99 Earlier evacuation order.
- 100 The alertables were critical the night of the fire, not so much after. It is down on the list because your criteria was most frequently.
- 101 The Alertable app didn't work for us when we evacuated to ST. IVES. The only way we knew what was going on was that we were receiving text messages from people in Vancouver telling us what was going on. They were receiving the alertable messages. This is a total failure of an emergency alert system. That was very dangerous and should be looked into. If not for our friends, neighbours and our internal communication network, there could have been a more disastrous outcome involving human life. Secondly the order came out when there was no prior alert. By the time the order came out, there was no exit for people east of the school. The only direction we could go is towards Seymore arm. There was a total lack of facilities for people. We were lucky and stayed at a friend's place in St. Ives. Another friend from Celista had to sleep in her car in the parking lot at the Anglemont Lakeview seniors centre with her dog and cat from Aug 18 to Sep 6. The CSRD barged over supplies, but no cots or bedding for the people to sleep on.
- 102 As the closest government agency to the situation you should be able to broadcast Alerts thru print and TV news media and interrupt programming

as needed. Also, don't be reliant upon other government agencies to dictate protocol and instead, have your own eyes and ears at the site of the event to better make decisions that will save lives. Eliminate buck-passing. It was our expectation that you were looking out for our safety and I'm afraid that trust has been lost now.

- 103** we just need a single source of correct up to date info that can still operate after the power goes out
- 104** I signed up for the alert system and no alert came.
- 105** Being more honest and open about what was going on. We were told by employees of the fire hall that we would be ok where our property was located. Our house came through ok but the bush around us is burnt. We got off lucky but fire all around us
- 106** More frequent updates would have been helpful, even if there was nothing new to report. Knowing the most recent information received was up to date to the best of your ability would have been nice.
- 107** There was a lack (early on for sure) of pure updated information- the focus seemed more on shaming people as opposed to providing actual information- this wasn't helpful and just left us wondering what was truly going on. It also left us sceptical when actual information was being released whether or not it was actually true.
- 108** Have CSRD/SEP live updates at set times, so I know when to be some place where I can pay attention. When situations are changing fast, maybe there should be 9 pm update. It's a long time to wait between 3 or 4 pm and 11 am next day when you think that may be happening. For example, I watched the "backburn" fire from my home and even though I had read a notice saying "flames may be visible to residents" earlier (7pm)

at 10 pm this did not look ok to me. The next "update" was on Alertable just after 11 pm, things were not ok.

- 109** Have the most correct and up to date info on your website and alertable. There was way too much misinformation and a long lag time.
- 110** Faster Alertable updates Ongoing regular updates
- 111** Put current and TIMELY information on your website and mark each entry with the date and time. Update it constantly.
- 112** The media focused on the fire in Kelowna and hardly any updates/info during the fire.
- 113** Have a data base of email addresses and telephone numbers of all full time and summer residents, with information on whether they are capable of fighting the fires
- 114** Unknown
- 115** The back fire could have been more advertised so that residents were aware.
- 116** Use Tax Roll Data Base and send emails to home owners. You have all of our details.
- 117** Do way better. Be behind the communities and not full against them like you were. Way more support to all the companies that lost so much. Just do better all around. It was unbelievable how brutal the csrd was at handling everything. Even now it's sti ll horrible with all the permits and letters you send.
- 118** Clearer maps and descriptions of areas effected when put on Evacuation Order.
- 119** I watched the fires on the BC Wildfire Service map daily to see how big the fires had grown, where they spread and in what direction they were going. This was very informative. I also watched the weather forecast to see if there was any rain or wind coming.



- 120** Faster updates, and more truthful updates
- 121** Instant text alert
- 122** Do not rely on BC wildfire to inform the CSRD ask locals in the area with the experience and knowledge of the area what's really going on and what are the risks. Communicate that knowledge and those risks to the residents and media.
- 123** Stay to factual information and have the various responders give direct information about their respective progress. Stay away from taking media time to tell citizens how hard everyone is working or vilifying people who do not act as desired by outsiders.
- 124** Live zoom for over an hour with no interaction when people had no power or wifi was thoughtless. Those could have been an email. Little future focused info just lots of excuses on things that went wrong.
- 125** CSRD should be able to post current updates for each area of North Shuswap. I felt there was such lack of communication leaving residents in the dark and therefore had to relay others in the community for information.
- 126** Have a look at the Australian model for emergency alerts through cell network. It works excellent. Fire conditions (location, direction etc) evac recommendations, stay and fight, etc are all relayed real time through their system. IT WORKS. There are too many media platforms out there. Go to the data source - the cell towers!
- 127** I don't know. I relied on the AlertAble notifications, but if I had waited for the App to tell me to leave I would have had to leave through Seymore Arm in my small car. A neighbour's son was the one who told us we needed to leave because the fire was at the Scotch Creek bridge and we were right to trust him.
- 128** Maybe an opt-in for regular mass text updates
- 129** Regular and timely radio broadcasts.
- 130** There was no proper communication prior to the back burn. Residents should have been aware, and maybe we could have prevented you from moving forward with it. So anything would have been better than what you did.
- 131**
- 132** Develop a program for volunteer firefighters and a communication system with them. Let people fight their own fires without impeding their access to supplies or making them criminals
- 133** you might have tried the social media sites. however, they where not correct and up to date. I monitored the Bush Creek Fire from my yard and got a better picture than any media
- 134** In our case, more frequent and continuous communications, there were too many lengthy gaps in the info being provided. Also use less bureaucratic language and just down to earth explanation of the facts, and what is going on. Saw many questions back to Shuswap Emergency Program on Facebook from obviously very concerned citizens who were seeking more clarity. From what I could tell, not very many of those questions were being answered. Communications in todays world is almost instantaneous, I would suggest if the CSRD is going to post on Facebook and other Social Mediums, that the EOC staff that particular Social Medium for quick and timely response back to a question. It would dramatically lessen the amount of misinformation that gets created. If a question is not answered by the emergency authority, that person goes looking for an answer elsewhere, most likely other public, and often times inaccurate or false.

- 135** More frequent updates with more meaningful information. The google listing for the SEP didn't have a phone number listed, the number was hard to find on csrd website. I seem to remember calling the number and the hours were very limited. When I did speak to someone they promised to call back but didn't. I was a member of the Anglemont fire dept at the time and received possibly one or two meaningful briefings although I was working in that capacity Aug 17-25.
- 136** We were the ones that lived the first part of the fires. We had to call for a meeting to see what was happening and not happening.
- 137** More transparency. Quicker updates. Utilize locals living in particular areas who can give real time updates. The communication was very poor from our government agencies
- 138** Be more clear in the alert diagrams. Many thought the entirety of Blind Bay was being evacuated causing mass panic and stress.
- 139** I'm not sure how you could have communicated better.
- 140** Thru any of the above don't remember seeing anything from the CSRD keeping us informed. Jay Simpson kept us informed as well as he was able
- 141** There was no communication at all, if a neighbor had not told me about alert able one hour before we where evacuated and I did not have a cell phone I would never have known. I expected door to door notification or loud speaker like they do in Northern Ontario. Not everyone is hooked up to technology.
- 142** see above
- 143** Just be quicker. Alerts and orders were given way too late.
- 144** Day of fire - August 18th. I heard band members were told to leave the area at noon. As part of the VFD, I was the one going door to door telling leaseholders to leave. I started at 2.30 pm. Why the delay? By 4 pm, I was told to stop even though I hadn't gone to every home. I ignored the order to ensure everyone knew but most residents had no idea the fire was coming and had no time to pack a go bag. Why did Chief Tomma and Fire Chief Paul Gamble wait so long? Useless leaders. Skwlax band leadership NEVER once mentioned leaseholders to the media. Band leadership never checked to see if leaseholders were all accounted for even though 31 homes were fully destroyed. The evacuation order was never received through voyent alert. The reserve didn't show on the BC wildfire map it was on order until 48 hours later. And to this day the general public doesn't have any idea of the devastation because Chief Tomma refused to mention leaseholders, even though he, as a government, is responsible for us. As reserves don't fall under a regional district, communications basically were NIL. My suggestion - use the amber alert system for evacuation orders. It works.
- 145** Considering no one knew what was going on, hard to say...
- 146** More up to date info every few hours- not days.
- 147** Once you design an emergency plan will be good to have determined stations, satellite offices closer to the disasters where people can get information in person if need it. Open phone line will be also good to have with some maybe volunteer responders that can also update people.
- 148** Action depends on communication, which was not timely. BCWS and CSRD did not make a

joint effort to communicate to protect people and let them make good decisions. There were many signs that evacuations could have happened up to 48 hours earlier in a much more controlled manner.

149 Should have had boats ready to help evacuate

150 More frequent updates

151 We were never alerted to evacuate! We only left because the wind and smoke was so bad that we were scared and left out of concern for our wellbeing

152 There was so much miss information due to the slow progress of up to date info. My parents are elderly and they live on little Shuswap. When they were told to evacuate we only had minutes to get them out. There was no warnings in place for anyone on the little Shuswap lake road. Luckily no one lost their lives but it could have happened. I think that there should have Been more warning that the fire was moving towards little Shuswap from Adam's lake at a high rate of speed!

153 Meetings

154 Amber alert

155 Actually communicating with locals who stayed instead of treating us like criminals

156 Single online source updated hourly.

157 I want to know where the fire conditions are so that I can make my own decisions. We need credible 24 hour sources of information.

158 Our CSRD representative did not make herself available at ALL. Useless!

159 The CSRD communication after evacuation was quite effective. My issue is with the lack of accurate information prior to evacuation orders and the delay in getting the evacuation order for our area. I am also

disappointed with the messaging that vilified residents who remained behind to protect their property.

160 There never seemed to be coherent communication between all levels of government/institutions involved. None of it seemed up to date, and obviously bc wildfire didn't really know what was going on because they were nowhere to be seen, so it didn't seem like anyone really knew, especially to those of us who were actually on the ground fighting fires and driving around the area.

161 I didn't think to use the CSRD website, but now I will check more frequently.

162 No one knew what to do on that Friday night. We were seeing people evacuating steadily by our place and when we tried to leave twice through Celista we were turned back. (rightly so) However, we were frightened and four neighbours tried to leave at 9:30 pm as we didn't want to be awakened in the middle of night being asked to leave. So we left on a convoy via Seymour Arm. We arrived and were met at the bridge near the townsite and asked to register at the pub. None of us knew where the pub was. We were then lost and eventually we were separated and lost. It was a trying time. Signage would have helped direct us to the pub, and know which direction to head. Our plans were to stay in our cars over night and then drive out in the morning. Eventually after midnight we were all reunited at the pub, but we were stressed to the max, for those of us lost on those long lonely gravel roads. We registered, were put up by the kind kind people at Seymour Arm, and the next morning we were fed by emergency services where we got information that certain places hadn't burnt down that we were told had, such as the grocery store in SC, the Hub, the School in Celista etc. We were also told

that we couldn't evacuate as planned down that terrible forestry road, as they were closing it due to installation of culverts. We were welcome to stay or we could go home. We went home.

- 163** Use all sources to direct people to a common location for the information. Any time someone else has to decipher your report and put it in their system information gets changed or missed.
- 164** Learn from how other areas communicated
- 165** Text messages, messenger
- 166** As above
- 167** Tell the truth Be honest about what was working and what wasn't BCWFS Forrest was telling us not to worry, we would see fire and smoke but it was all under control We had no clue we were in the risk we were....did you know?
- 168** Promote the BC Wildfire app, the Lightning app, and an app for wind direction and speed
- 169** more text messages
- 170** Face the people you called a nonsense and treated like criminals and second hand citizens in a hall or area meeting... remember, you represent us, the people, earn your keep!
- 171** Faster notification. Official sites were too slow in getting information out to the people. Friends and Facebook had the most up to date information and the most accurate information on what was family. We had to have family member monitor facebook, and keep us up to date on what was happening, while we were loading our belongings into the vehicle to evacuate.
- 172** Having peoples contact numbers and emails? I felt I had lots of info but other seniors who are not online did not have good info or insight.

- 173** Actually communicate when it's happening not pass it through a paperwork process. In an emergency 1 or 2 people should be the lead communications who send out messages and respond to other groups 'head person'. Your communication was a joke at the time
- 174** You absolutely have to be more current with the information. Most of the time, your updates were 12 to 24 hours behind events as they were actually occurring. You also need to be sure about the information that you are receiving, so you don't make gross over reactions to events such as the supposed theft of fire fighting equipment, which was apparently not actually the case. Bringing in large no.s of outside police forces was a stupid thing to do, and pretty much unnecessary.
- 175** In Person
- 176** Form local committees from all of the communities: Scotch creek hall Celista hall St David's Church Anglemont Community hall All of these groups were active throughout.
- 177** Initially, the only info was from residents themselves with good intentions but incorrect info. In 2003 the fire dept. covered the area with their loud speakers and current accurate information, seemed to work well,
- 178** The kicker news
- 179** A new government agency that actually does its job would be great.
- 180** The push notifications from the Alertable app came way too late. The alerts and orders took way too long to be established. Example, I lived in Celista and the morning of August 18 we weren't even on an Alert order. How could this be? Only a very small portion of Meadow Creek Road, just north of us, was on an Alert. The density of Celista is within Meadow Creek

Properties, where the bulk of the homes were lost. At 4:30pm the Order finally came down for the entirety of Celista to evacuate, yet we never received an Alert. Makes no sense. By 4:45pm my house was on fire and caught on camera via a neighbours doorbell camera. Thank God we made the decision to leave at 1:30pm on August 18th. I also had printed off the "Steps to take on an Evacuation Alert or Order". I'm not sure on the exact name of this document on the CSRD website. I did every single step on the document. What I wish it also had on it was to go around your house with all the drawers and cupboards open, and take a video of everything. This would have been invaluable advice for those of us who did lose everything for insurance purposes. When you're in a state of panic, planning ahead helps. We had thankfully packed our 3 days of clothes in a grab bag a few days leading up to the fire, but that was it. We weren't thinking to go around and film things in those final moments. We lost absolutely everything else in the wildfire.

- 181** You didn't communicate!!! This disaster could if been prevented
- 182** As above.
- 183** As I said
- 184** cell phone updates every few hours
- 185**
- 186** post information at local stores and fire departments and campground
- 187** The
- 188** Perhaps holding annual early summer meetings to have more conversations with locals in areas where fire is a threat. Discussion of resources avail locally and ways to collaborate.

189 Do not overly rely on protocols that are proving to be ineffective in the moment. There needs to be a greater ability to pivot into a different method if one of your platforms goes down when you need it. It would also be more effective to listen to residents and to not overly rely on the dialogue coming from BCWS. It is clear, to this day, that they will not admit to the depth of their mistake in lighting the backburn above Scotch Creek, or the damage it caused. Given this, it would have been far more effective, and safer, to use alternative methods to determine the need for an evacuation order. In this day and age, a lack of communicate is a choice.

190 WhatsApp

191 Facebook Account Should have been early communication about fire evacuation route / procedures on land and water months and even a year prior to fire seasonthrough CSRD website, hall meetings

192 establish a permanent emergency radio frequency that can be activated in an emergency. This can be used for verbal sharing of current updates and information. Accessible when power is out, to those who are not connected to technology. Radio never dies it just keeps on going. boundaries are an issue with using Alertable. when fire is so large and covering many jurisdictions its an important piece of information. the emergency dashboard has all the features but loading was slow and too cumbersome to use. this would be an ideal tool if it would load easier. Sometimes it just stalled and didnt load at all. when connectivity is sketchy it is simply not a tool to use. emailed notices from csrd was the most easily accessed and shared info. having pdf files of notices on the csrd website enables easy sharing.

- 193** Our neighbours did not know people had evacuated until the last minute (they are not reclusive, just don't use media) PLUS we are in a dead zone for cellular and often have extremely poor service. We cannot assume that people on the north shore have full access to these forms of communication. I was on a provincial committee for the scotch creek health unit and our biggest discussion was the difficulty with communication and transportation for those on the north shore, many of them elderly.
- 194** We had 2 hours to evacuate. No alerts from anywhere until it was too late. We were told by word of mouth.
- 195** Initially Alertable app was not explained to people how to enter the location they wanted to be alerted on. I happened to phone the emergency center prior to evacuation when we got the alert and the fire chief mentioned how to put in the location as just "scotch creek" wouldn't work.
- 196** The Alertable App needs to be properly tested. My mother and I were told to evacuate 2 times, only to be told that it is a glitch in the app and we were 200m outside of the evacuation zone when getting to an evacuation center. It is damaging psychologically to make people evacuate every thing you own in fear, only to be told by CSRD staff that we don't qualify for any support but look on the brightside "You get to sleep in your own bed" when the fire was less than 2km away.
- 197** CSRD updates were very good.
- 198** When fires are approaching are communities someone needs to be on site 24/7
- 199** - more transparent / honest - more frequent - more clear and decisive about strategies - far less critical of and making Locals out to be criminals, and acknowledging

the overwhelming benefit of locals who stayed. Spooner's group, Bischoff's group, Jay Simpson and so many others were working tirelessly in the interests of residents. It was less apparent what the CSRD, BCWS and RCMP were doing. A public acknowledgement and a Thank You to these people for what they accomplished should have been louder than the criticism and is still not done. They are heroes. The lack of recognition for their work in the community is driving a wedge deeper and fostering a bigger desire to get out from under the CSRD as it seems the CSRD's arrogance and unwillingness to work with locals is clear. At one of the press conferences, Tracy from The Kicker asked CSRD representative (MacLean I think but maybe Sutherland) who was making decisions and giving direction to the RCMP about blockades etc. CSRD said it was BCWS. She then asked BCWS who was making the decisions & giving direction and he said CSRD. RCMP spokesperson at a different time and place said they were following orders but didn't or wouldn't say from whom. What a gong show. Who made the decision to not allow emergency supplies in from South Shuswap residents. Why was there not even an Evacuation Alert for east of Magna Bay Ross Creek bridge and Anglemont when the Evacuation Order went as far east as Ross Creek? An oversight of huge significance. For reference, we lived through the 1987 Edmonton Tornado which was devastating to east Edmonton and Sherwood Park area. Much more concise information was given to the public at that time. Lessons learned.

- 200** boots on the ground. as the firehall burnt and even as it just came over the hill by the bottle depot perhaps the firehall people instead of standing

around in the parking lot at the grocery store could have assisted in stopping the spread of fire instead of watching. an order out of scotch creek was issued way to late as we left by 1:30 and drove through flames the order came 2 hours later?

- 201** Better timing for evac order.
- 202** Regular updates are always appreciated, not just on evacuation alerts/orders which are most important but also on progress of fire, firefighting efforts, any needs from the community, etc.
- 203** Could have started a CSRD INFO WEBSITE.
- 204** Not sure if this is possible, but Facebook posted old information routinely; would it be possible for you to delete no longer relevant information.
- 205** Timely info on the fire locations and directional spread, fire protection measures in play and ready for areas surrounding the fire that could quickly be impacted including across the lake. Status of evacuation of routes.
- 206** The Alertable app was very poor. Honestly, the communication channels between the BCWS and the CSRD need to be fixed. My understanding is that there was a huge breakdown there, which caused a delay in the alert going out which miraculously did not result in any deaths. Just do better. As well, when our partial to full loss was reported to us had we not had people who had stayed behind that had accurate information for us, we would've been thinking we had lost everything. This information could have been given to us in a more specific way after going through all that trauma it was very disheartening to receive a message like that from the CSRD that did not really give us a clear picture of what had happened on our property. Perhaps just having one communication channel that was reliable

such as your website. Maybe a live feed or something to that effect. We got our most reliable information from people who stayed behind including Jay Simpson, but it wasn't anything official. Fix the communication breakdown between BCWS and CSRD. Don't cover up things and be honest.

- 207** Use Alertable by address not area F
- 208** The Alert App was not working. Honest and timely communication.
- 209** I think communication through the community groups could have been used more effectively. It's like you need one contact for each community and then they can provide real-time info through the community halls - even going old-school like posting information at the hall. The Alertable app was disappointing too. On the Saturday when we were getting ready in case of an evacuation alert in Eagle Bay the Alertable app went off saying Area C was on Evacuation Order. It set off literal panic in our neighbourhood. No one knew what was going on. Where was the fire? Did it jump the lake? Were we blocked off? My only source of up to date information was texting Emma Rendell, the wife of the Eagle Bay Fire Department's fire chief and she was the one who said it was a mistake. I also relied on other members of the Eagle Bay fire department for accurate and reliable information. You didn't mention the youtube updates in the list above. This was an excellent way of obtaining excellent information every day.
- 210** Issue an evacuation order BEFORE all the bridges are impassible. Word of mouth was faster than the CSRD.
- 211** Texting
- 212** Included fire layers for fires burning outside of the regional district boundaries on the arc GIS map

links posted on your website, posted to social sooner and more frequently, kept the evacuation centres open longer/later/during the initial evacuation

213 Facebook

214 N/A

215 More frequent updates. The night of the fire evacuation alerts were not timely at all

216 Not use the little shuswap band warning system as it was 15 minutes too late. Alertable should be the main form of communication.

217 Scheduled live updates streamed to multiple sources

218 The daily town halls were good.

219 Ensure what you are reporting is vetted and correct

220 The fire had reached my home before any order to evacuate came we were told to run by people driving down the road. There were so many opportunities to put accurate information out . But once you or BCWF blocked the community from accurately seeing where the fire was we were all blind folded and no one was at the wheel. This has been a long standing practice of the BCWF and city's during wild fire season. With a reform to BCWF you have very little influence on information get out to the public.

221 More active on social media with organized coordination with local fire departments and community pages (organized sharing)

222 Ensure alerts are timely (alert timing in Celista put residents in danger because it was too late). Provide information as available. Many residents and property owners now distrust csrd because of information gatekeeping, tone of messages (lots of defensiveness provoking language was used in official

communications), and perceived lack of assistance and / or concern for residents lives and property.

223 One of the things that alerted me that we were in serious trouble was hearing the sirens from fire trucks roaring up and down the road. That and friends calling made me go outside and look at the fire coming down right at us. This was long before the alertable was used. By the time it was issued, it was too late for many.

224 Tell information that is balanced and not biased. I didn't listen to what you were saying because you lacked credibility with many people.

225 Maybe be quicker up to date with the alertables.

226 I even went into CSRD office and they acted like nothing was happening and refused any idea of help. Unbelievable! Treated like nothing was going on and felt like I couldn't even go into the building.

227 The communication piece was fine

228 The Alertable App often provided conflicting or confusing information

229 Information was relevant and timely. If anything, sometimes less is more. The unfortunate thing about social media is that information is often misinterpreted or or false to begin with. You guys did good in light of this.

230 No suggestions

231 Ensuring that the Alertable app works properly and is updating in real time. A lot of us were not on evacuation alert when we got an order to leave immediately.

232 Quicker communication with affected residents, waiting a week to find out your house burnt down is way too long

233 In a timely manner!!!! Everything was communicated too late or not at all!

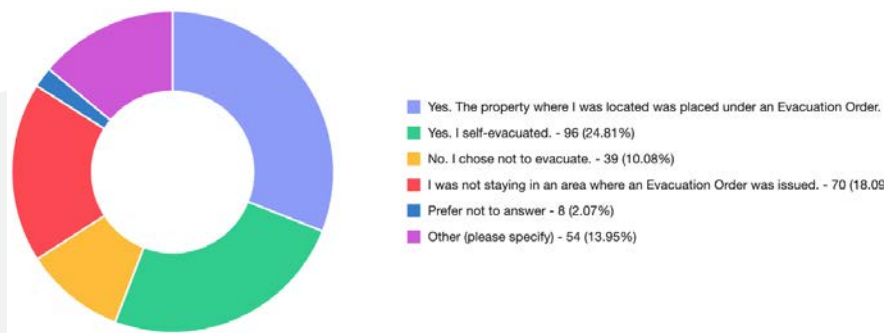
- 234** Individually dividing participants, in the CSRD 'meetings' that were held in person, was an effective way of hearing people and yet, not listening. Recommendation: Focus Groups and/or hosting a Townhall meetings with a moderator to guide the discussion.
- 235** Use street locations of the fire activity. Be quicker with information.
- 236** More frequent updates; ensuring the info on the website is up to date;
- 237** It's not the how to communicate but the fact the alerts were too late.
- 238** I felt like once the communication started it was good. My issue was more I felt like in the case of the day the fire bloomed that the alerts or orders were simply too slow. Locals were posting the fire making its way down hours before alertable and officials started to even tell people to move which did cause some people to become trapped. It is why Sorrento pretty much left as the fire moved down but officially our area was not put on order till the next day. I felt orders were too slow. I know that fire was an extreme case but when orders are too slow people get stuck/unnecessary risk of scaring young kids who do not understand. I was proactive and my children never had to see the flames on the mountain behind my house but after that backburn no one in the area was not trusting bc wildfirer because they were in so much heat I felt they keep saying everything is under control when things were not so some unnecessary risk was happening on when to get people to move or not.
- 239** Live updates via facebook/instagram so no secondary app is needed. Honesty and working with community members on the ground.
- 240** The lack of power/internet/wifi in Seymour arm made communication difficult unless in person. On the first day of road closures no accurate info and we drove a long way to be turned around.
- 241** All the sights worked they just didn't update information
- 242** See above
- 243** I felt some of the information came later than it should have
- 244** Ensure information is accurate. Shorten the time to get info from front line to Alertable. Create a Facebook page dedicated to the specific fire.
- 245** Be up to date and honest about what is happening. Have people go door to door or arrange a community emergency meeting.
- 246** Information booths/stops would help make the gossip is factual. Have the fire chiefs provide public Liason officers.
- 247** Make sure when evacuation alerts are sent, people get them. I never did get the evacuation alert when the fires took off
- 248** Evacuation order came too late. Escape routes and meeting places not outlined in time to escape fire.
- 249** Everyone that is high up and making the decisions should All be on the same page and share all the same info. I lived behind the scotch creek firehall and had NO firefighters came to my house to evacuate me after they trapped us there. I tried to get info from firefighters and they all said different info. They should of alerted us on the emergency broadcast text like the amber alerts!
- 250** We feel the government failed us as they abandoned us in the most crucial time of our lives. We defied orders and stayed to fight fires in our community. Spot fires surrounded us and we fought to keep them

from spreading. Whatever resources we had, we used. We love this area and wanted to protect it. We did not see any help from any level of govt until day 4. WE fought to keep the fires at bay, and the govt decided that they tried to force us out. It was the scariest time of our lives, but our back up plan was to go to the boat. We feel CSRD and prov govt should have had more current info on their website. The multi-level bureaucracy delayed any quick response in sending help.

- 251** A Fire Dashboard like the provincial COVID dashboard that acts a hub for text, video updates, and mapping/
252 Could have at least put as on alert ! It was just us and Neighbors advising each other what was going on ! Heard nothing from any authorities until after the fact we had to run for our lives . We were left to burn ! No words !!

Q6. Did you evacuate during the wildfire?

387 of 473 participants responded



Other (please specify) responses

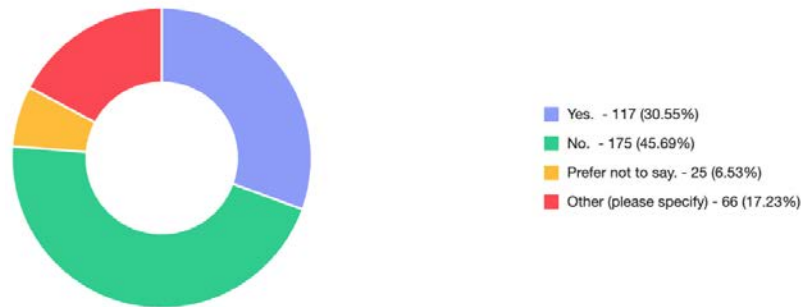
- 1** my husband and i evacuated by way of seymour arm to malakwa. the next morning my husband returned to our community to help our neighbors and protect our home.
- 2** anglemont was not no evacuation
- 3** chose to self evacuate evening of august 18th ahead of alert being briefly issued for my location. stayed away for several days camped at family's home in revelstoke
- 4** evacuated and then came back because bcwf and csrd abandoned the community
- 5** i am a firefighter for skwlax fire dept. my home was under evacuation order but i stayed
- 6** i am a member of the sc/lc vfd so i did evacuate but returned the next morning
- 7** i did, based on the local info i had received at the time. i would not have, had i known the real situation.
- 8** i did evacuate , but only because my wife doesnt tow a trailer.should have been here helping my boss save my boss , and neighbours save homes and businesses ! very hard for me to leave! especially when our government deserted and fled a mess that they created!!!!
- 9** i evacuated 3 hours prior to the order being given. i saw wildfire flames at the top of the hill above my lakeshore home
- 10** i evacuated all livestock and neighbours livestock for 48 hrs starting thurs then came back to fight fires
- 11** i evacuated, and then returned, shortly after.
- 12** i evacuated as my place was on fire. there was no alert an the order did not come until an hour after i left
- 13** i evacuated then went back and saved lee creek with everyone else. cause everyone left.

- 14 i lived in anglemont and was hired by the csrd to do danger tree assessment and remediation for the fire service.
- 15 in blindbay where we live we were not evacuated but left for a few days as the smoke was bad and was very stressful ,not as stressful as the north shore or sorrento but stressful 1
- 16 initially evacuated family on the 18th then returned to fight spot fires
- 17 i self evacuated with my kids, my husband staye
- 18 i stayed as long as we could before leaving
- 19 i was already away visiting before alerts were issued
- 20 left as soon as fire was on property, did not receive an orde until area was on fire.
- 21 left before evacuation because firefighters on our property told us they would get the hell out because they new the day before
- 22 left for work 2 days before csrd exasperated the emergency with a failed and irresponsible back burn.
- 23 left on the evening of the 18th and came back in the next day
- 24 my area was evacuated so i went to the evacuation centre. learned from local knowledge what was going on and returned home after determining the risk for me was low at that time and having developed a source of accurate local information to keep me informed of the risk.
- 25 my household and several in this area premeptively evacuated.
- 26 my husband stayed as part of the vfd. i evacuated. he stayed in our home (it survived) with no power, running water, a/c, etc for 17 straight days. the vfd received zero support from the band for food,etc.
- 27 no, but we were on evacuation alert
- 28 no i chose to not evacuate as i had a safe way to escape via my boat in the lake . i am semi- waterfront.
- 29 no, i'm a member of the skwlax fire i worked the fire in our area for 10 days straight
- 30 no, i stayed and helped my community. actually evacuated some of your volunteer firefighters on my boat because you left them stranded in scotch creek
- 31 left before evacuation because firefighters on our property told us they would get the hell out because they new the day before
- 32 left for work 2 days before csrd exasperated the emergency with a failed and irresponsible back burn.
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- 37 no, but we were on evacuation alert
- 38 no i chose to not evacuate as i had a safe way to escape via my boat in the lake . i am semi- waterfront.
- 39 no, i'm a member of the skwlax fire i worked the fire in our area for 10 days straight

- 40 no, i stayed and helped my community. actually evacuated some of your volunteer firefighters on my boat because you left them stranded in scotch creek
- 41 we had heard the backburn was labeled as a success and chose to take our children and pets to kamloops. we left with the intention of returning home and were unable to return a few hours later. 1
- 42 we intended to evacuate the area - but at roughly 4:30pm we lost power and had not been put on alert or order so we packed our final stuff to leave, when we were met by celista fire dept and advised our usual way out was no longer accessible. thus we were forced to move further up the lake instead. the order for our home location did not come until approx. 8:30pm
- 43 we left to get away from smoke we did not have any idea we were in danger until we drove through the fire storm
- 44 we self evacuated. our area was never under alert. we cleaned up installed sprinklers and left.
- 45 we wanted evacuate, but were unable to as we were trapped in anglemont behind the evacuation zones. we considered the fsr road through seymour arm, but were unfamiliar with it and didn't want to leave our large motor home behind with rumours of looting and uncertainty around the wildfire.
- 46 we were already out of the area and chose not to return as planned on the day the alert was issued.
- 47 we were going to stay as we were not under an alert. at 8:24 on aug 18, we got a message through the alertable app that said if you were in magna bay to leave now. we did leave through seymour arm, but returned the next day (via boat) as we still were not under an order.
- 48 we were just beyond the alert area but received conflicting alertable notices showing our property in red with no real details in the body of the message.
- 49 we were not on alert and the fire raged towards us . we self evacuated but returned to check, as we were not in an area where an evac order was issued . we were left to our own devices and fight the fire from burning us down. wildfire services fled .
- 50 we were told to evacuate 2 times, by alertable app and then got to evacuation center and told we were 200m outside of evacuation zone.
- 51 we where in anglemont and where look a pound as criminals even though we where not evacuated or deemed to be evacuated and where not allowed to leave to jobs or anything else we needed to do and cut off from getting anything we needed
- 52 yes and no. my wife evacuated i stayed.
- 53 yes at the time but came back to assist as our area was under "alert"
- 54 yes i did evacuate when the order was given and fire was in town, knowing what i know now i would have stayed
- 55 after power was lost, we evacuated due to having seniors depending on us.
- 56 yes, the property where i was located was placed under an evacuation alert however the main access in and out from magna bay had surrounding areas on evacuation order

Q7. Do you think you would make a different choice about evacuating if there is another fire in coming years?

383 of 473 participants responded



Other (please specify) responses

- 1 absolutely not!! you have proven incompetent so i will absolutely stay behind to save my property.
- 2 as mentioned previously, i have lost trust in the government agencies tasked with my protection and see the seeming abandonment experienced the day after, i now think i am the better person to judge about my safety moving forward.
- 3 depending, our location was not close but close enough. we are self sufficient other than fuel . most don't have a gas station in there backyard. access to that was limited due to police blockade at the ross creek bridge. which was less than half a kilometer from our home. we remained on our own property. as well when we were on order anglemont wasn't even on alert till later.
- 4 depends entirely on the situation

- 5 depends on circumstance such as alternate evacuation routes, etc.
- 6 depends on multiple factors !!
- 7 depends on the circumstances
- 8 depends on the circumstances. bc wildfire service failed to provide honest information about the advancing fire then abandoned the north shuswap completely for days when our need was the greatest. unless i see real change on the part of bcwf and the csrd, i might choose to stay with other locals to protect our community.
- 9 depends on the circumstances such as alternate evacuation routes, etc.
- 10 depends on the conditions and circumstances. it was apparent to me there were far too few firefighters and those that were here were inexperienced and lacking in leadership.
- 11 depends on the proximity of the fire to my home.
- 12 depends on the situation
- 13 depends on the situation. we were on the edge of the order zone but chose to leave due a spot fire igniting close behind our house, and we have young kids.
- 14 difficulty to say - all information needs to be considered in any given situation
- 15 evacuation from a fire is based solely on the ability to remain safe, and an option to evacuate. if there is no way to remain safe or a possibility of evacuation is being threatened, it would be foolhardy to stay. that said, i will battle forest fires, its not my first one, and given the climate situation and geographic position of where i live, i dont think fires are done with us.
- 16 evacuation was situational. my family was out of town so i left to stay with a friend rather than be alone

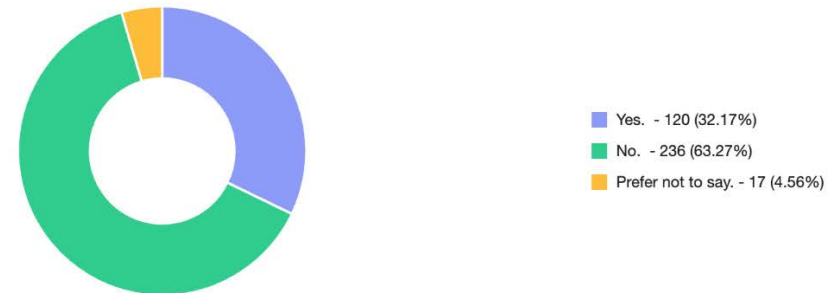
- 17 every circumstance is unique.
- 18 had i known i would have been blocked out of my home even though we weren't actually on alert or evacuated, i would have stayed. i never did understand how you could prevent people coming back to their homes when they weren't even on alert.
- 19 hard to say. the lesson we learned was we can not trust the authorities we need to trust our gut
- 20 how can anyone be expected to answer such a stupid questionthere are many types of fires and situations at the time to be considered . i would stay and fight to protect our and neighbors houses as long as safe , we have the know how and equipment! we are not stupid
- 21 i am a structural fire fighter and will be part of your response system in a short period of time.
- 22 if i needed to evacuate, i would.
- 23 if i was trained to fight fires i would stay
- 24 if nothing changes with fire suppression i might stay and try to save my property
- 25 if the fire was not directly in my location, i would stay behind to help the locals fight the fire. we did not get adequate support to fight the fire from bc wildfire service. very thankful that local people stayed behind to fight the fires to save homes, businesses, schools, farms, forests.
- 26 if there was a fire near my home, i think civilian help is a big thing trying to fight forrest fire, especially if civilians have heavy equipment
- 27 if the wildfire service ever learns that small fires are easy to put out, big ones not likely, then we shouldn't have to evacuate. we knew that as high school grads on fire suppression crews 68 years ago.
- 28 i had no choice. it came right through my community
- 29 i have decided to move and leave this area before the next fire season. i have no faith in our multiple levels of governing bodies to protect us or our homes. climate change shows our inability to quickly adapt.
- 30 i'll stay and fight again if it happens.
- 31 i'm not sure as it would depend on multiple things.
- 32 in a rural area like this communication has to be way more organized, consistent and specific in an emergency
- 33 in future fire seasons i hope to be more prepared for a potential evacuation, though of course hoping it wouldn't be necessary.
- 34 it all depends on what the response from the services will be. we had firefighters on the scene, working fire hydrants and hoses on the roof of our house and our house was well looked after. if there is no service then we will stay and fight the fire.
- 35 it depends. if it is a rank 6 fire storm (like last year) and it's coming your way, of coarse i would evacuate again. once the main fire is out and just spot fires left, the landowners should be allowed to fight the fires with all and any means they have. access to fuel and water should not be blocked as thre aren't enough wildland fire fighters to extinguish all the fires. the landowners who stayed behind worked very well coordinating their efforts with the wildfire teams and the local structure firefighting teams. i think that the way this fire fighting effort was handled with the locals and the bc wildfire teams should be a precedence working model for future area wildfires.
- 36 it depends on all of the factors and advisories.
- 37 it depends on the situation. i might decide to stay next time.
- 38 it really depends on the situation

- 39 it will always depend on the specific situation. generally yes, we will comply with evacuation orders, but weren't able to during the last fire.
- 40 i was not there at time of evacuation.
- 41 i was on the edge of the evacuation order area. we were packed an ready to go, but would not have evacuated if we thought we had a chance of saving our home with our gear.
- 42 i will absolutely stay regardless of treats of fines i could have saved more of my property
- 43 i will not leave next time. i will be equipped and prepared to fight. i put too much faith in the provincial and local governments. bad choice. my property survived for one reason only. my neighbours who did stay behind to fight. for the people who lost everything, the fire was not the worst of it. it is the government bureaucracy as they try to rebuild.
- 44 i would evac if required do to health reasons
- 45 i would evacuate earlier. i did not receive an alert/ evacuation notice till it was too late. my husband was caught on the wrong side of fire he could not make it out because he was waiting for evacuation notice which we recieved much too late.
- 46 i would evacuate if an order was issued
- 47 i would evacuate if there was an evacuation order.
- 48 i would evacuate. my age and lack of skills would not make me able to stay and actively help on site. however, people who can assist should be identified early on in the fire season.
- 49 i would evacuate my spouse said they would stay
- 50 i would like to have the ability to choose without being treated like a criminal.
- 51 i would not leave again for any amount of time but will preplan for any future emergency
- 52 i wouldn't leave ever again. i will not take direction from bcwf or csrd because i know they do not have my best interests at hand
- 53 i would stay. i left to get animals and my mom out and couldn't get back in to be with my dad. not leaving next time
- 54 i would still evacuate but wait longer to do so and take more of our possessions with us.
- 55 knowing that there was almost no protection for our properties in the creeping fire stage i would be very afraid to leave my house and not be able to come back next time. i only have a house today because of my neighbours who stayed behind and were on top of the creeping fires.
- 56 maybe - i hope the australian model of training citizen wildfire fighters is genuinely embraced and adopted - i would consider staying if i felt i could help the community. we have easy access to boat egress.
- 57 more timely information needs to be easily available.
- 58 n/a
- 59 not sure
- 60 not sure.
- 61 possibly
- 62 possibly, depends on the situation
- 63 put a sprinkler on roof of house ourself.
- 64 question is speculative. if the only descriptor is another fire coming ?? there is where you need more communication to provide the facts to make an informed decision.

- 65 surrounding forest is now burnt - so another fire is highly unlikely
- 66 we are members of emergency services so we would stay regardless of an evacuation order. having experienced a wildfire in the community i now know that structures can be protected rather than abandoned.
- 67 we had gone to our full time home about 2 days earlier than the alert to look after chores there with plans to return on the day the alert was issued but decided not to return before the order was issued. if we had been there we would likely have stayed up to the order to do more to secure our property.
- 68 we will leave for sure, not waiting for slow response.
- 69 who knows but i hope that the government will let people help fight fires especially locals who literally know more then the government workers
- 70 would
- 71 would stay and help my neighbour's and peers save their homes and businesses.
- 72 yes. absolutely i would stay and protect my community.
- 73 yes, as i don't have faith in csrd for first getting an order out on time and 2 no faith in having my home protected by authorities.
- 74 you tell people to evacuate, block roads, turn off power and water and then do not send in fire fighting resources ????? if you are not sending in boots on the ground and equipment we will stay behind to protect our farm and leave when we feel it is unsafe.

Q8. Did you receive Emergency Support Services after being evacuated from the wildfires?

373 of 473 participants responded



Q9. How satisfied were you with the Emergency Support Services you received as a result of being evacuated from the Bush Creek East Wildfire?

114 of 473 participants responded



Q10. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experience with Emergency Support Services?

71 of 473 participants responded

- 1 The residents of Seymour Arm were generous and went well beyond to open their homes, community, and resources.
- 2 The app was mostly useless and I had to go to the firehall to activate it.
- 3 Emergency support were amazing!
- 4 The people working at the EES sites need to compensated for efforts done to help those in need. Need more options for those who choose to leave the immediate area to be able to access EES.
- 5 Volunteers were fantastic But very unhappy with keeping people notified about the fire
- 6 Kamloops crew excellent
- 7 The people with ESS were amazing both in Kamloops & Salmon Arm. In person & on the phone, compassionate, caring & helpful.
- 8 We went to Vernon bc. And they were the most prepared city. They had practiced. When I heard from family and friends who went to Kamloops or Kelowna. Not good service. Please go to Vernon to get training for next evacuation. Cities should be trained.
- 9 It took a long time to get supports, and was very unclear. My mom is not tech savvy and without support for us would not of known where to go.
- 10 Initially self evacuated to Seymour Arm. No signs posted showing emergency egress to and from Seymour Arm. Emergency egress thru to Malaqwa was impassable for

regular vehicles. no warning to that incredible community that 100's of evacuees were arriving en masse. Seymour Arm has extremely limited wifi. Tried to stay informed of situation via contacting MLA, Director for Area F. Was absolutely horrifyingly inadequate. Eventually advised could evacuate via RCMP escort if we travelled to Ross Creek immediately. Upon arriving at Ross Creek were advised there was no escort. Advised there was a dangerous situation preventing us from evacuating to TCH via RCMP escort. Advised we would have to return to Seymour Arm or sleep in our cars in Ross Creek/Magna Bay store parking lot. I did not accept what we were being told because CSRD emergency contact said she did not know what the danger was. And a very reliable emergency responder that had authorization to travel in and out of evacuation zone stated there was no known dangerous issue. I attended RcMP road block. There was an official RCMP escort awaiting us. They knew nothing of a dangerous situation preventing us from being escorted to #1 HWY. 5 vehicles were safely escorted to HWY 1 we went to MacPark evac centre as instructed. What a gong show. No rooms available. The thought of staying in multiple bed area with 2 traumatized cats was unthinkable. When I said I was going to head to family in Cariboo I was told I would be removed from Kamloops evacuation service list. And advised to register in Williams Lake. I could not find services in WL, tried to register with ESS and Red Cross (on line). Heard nothing, no return phone calls, no return e-mails. What a gong show.

11 Inconvenient location, having to show up in person every 5 days. Lots of money spent in gas travelling to and from evac center.

- 12 They were kind and very helpful throughout this disaster.
- 13 The support services were very good! But do not confuse that fact with the fact that there were many failures by you and others prior to , during and after the completely preventable firestorm!
- 14 There were so many wonderful people and so very appreciative for the help from the people who donated there time. Disappointed with who ever made the decisions on families in rooms though. Not us but seen many families forced to be in room with one bed and pull out couch for more than 5 people.
- 15 I was fortunate that my insurance covered most of my evacuation costs, but when I did need the ESS, the pet friendly rooms were not very nice and the food allowance was quite low in comparisoin to the national joint council rates.
- 16 We were well taken care of. It was great considering all that was going on
- 17 Seymour City and their resident were fantastic. They really pulled together as a community to support those of us evacuated there. My dissatisfied rating is not directed at the residents, rather it is at all levels of governments who were completely absent.
- 18 Volunteers were great. An easier way to assist may be to provide a set sum to the evacuee like Alberta did. Rather than provide hotels and restaurant meals to some and smaller amount to billeting. It might encourage more use of economical resources.
- 19 Update daily food allowance to today's costs
- 20 Evacuated in our motor home and spent the night of August 18th in Seymour Arm. A very dedicated and compassionate group of volunteers encountered there.
- 21 I suggest a bit more training for those helping at the centre.
- 22 The Order to Evacuate must be made earlier than it was. We left prior to the Order being established but the wildfire was already east of the Scotch Creek bridge.
- 23 volunteers were great, under staffed, took days to finally get benefits and having to drive back to Kamloops each time, tried to set up e-transfer of whatever it was called just was a frustrating waste of time, had to pay out of pocket for items and meals due to their long delays
- 24 Our property is the first one bordering the Scotch Creek boundary towards Celista. The SC area was under alert long before Celista was upgraded and then it was evacuate...I realize that fire moved fast but such little notice was given. An absolute miracle lives weren't lost! And everything we owned was incinerated.
- 25 The volunteers at the registration centre were great; helpful, patient, and even though the waiting times were long the volunteers/staff dealt with me as an individual and to my level of computer/phone app use. Those people worked hard for long hours and I am grateful for them. This was my first experience with a fire evacuation and ESS. When Scotch Creek went on to Alert status, ESS set up at the community hall for people to register. I went to the hall, I thought registering meant get your name on the list so that CSRD knows that you are in the area, so that it can be checked later to see if you got out (I.e. missing persons). But no, registering meant putting an app on my phone, but for what? I don't use my phone for forms or official stuff; I use my lap top, and I couldn't register on my lap top. It wasn't explained why or how it would be helpful to me to have the app, so I didn't register. Too bad for me! It became obvious

why I should have got the app a few days later. Much better to get an e-transfer for food allowance than a voucher for the same restaurant for 7 days! It would have been much easier for me to use my lap top and register online; like I do with Canada Revenue Agency. And about the ESS app— for some unknown reason there was a problem getting me registered/signed on. The ESS techs were working on this, I think I had to register 3 times. I don't know why, but something wasn't connecting right in the cosmos of identification registrations.

- 26 The camp we stayed in Rayleigh was great except for one thing - as the climate boiled, they did NO RECYCLING!!!! This broke my heart and I instigated my own mini recycle depot while I was there. Why not shift the camp to the community after the fires were under control/burnt out?
- 27 You made people travel and wait for hours on end to get help. It was a giant unorganized mess with zero accountability
- 28 Pre registering online did not really speed up the process of registering in person. Thankful for food stipend. We stayed at family billets and it took over six months for them to be paid the stipend they were to receive. I think that amount should be increased. I think the many volunteers for Emergency Services should be paid an honorarium of some sort for their many hours of dedication to help. I wonder if ESS Volunteers get any training in counselling during these types of crisis. I think all Area Directors whose areas are put on Order or Alert should receive an Emergency Stipend for the many hours of community service over and above their regular duties and expectations.

- 29 We were provided with housing, food, while evacuated and it was very good .
- 30 They were great the first two days then they questioned everything in a time of distress and was trying to get a better room for my family which the hotel had but wouldn't let us use
- 31 No
- 32 They were very organized and caring. I felt they did a terrific job.
- 33 My husband and I evacuated to an air bnb in larch hills with my elderly (86) father, 2 cats and 2 dogs. I would have liked the emergency services to cover at least part of that expense. Emergency services are too restrictive when it comes to accommodation support for complex family's. I did receive grocery vouchers and I am very satisfied with that support.
- 34 The volunteers were so helpful and the money for groceries was more than generous - it made going through such a stressful time so much easier. Can't thank the ESS people enough.
- 35 Very impressed with the level of training, commitment and empathy of these volunteers.
- 36 The people were great
- 37 I found all were very caring when at hotels, we were well taken care of.
- 38 Very disorganized. No one knew what to do. I ended up waiting 3 weeks for services I desperately needed because they couldn't locate my file.
- 39 We received some supplies in Seymour arm. I was very disappointed when we "registered" with the first responders there only to discover that we did NOT actually register as an evacuee and therefore

received no financial aid until I realized I wasn't actually registered. They would not back pay.

- 40 They were all very supportive and helpful. Couldn't be helped in Salmon Arm but they told us where to go in Vernon. Only used help for a couple days
- 41 It was absolute chaos and no one knew what they could or couldn't do
- 42 Very helpful, friendly, compassionate
- 43 The older male security guard at the Macdonald island ess was very problematic. He body checked me once as i was entering the building and treated me disrespectfully even when I told him that he was violating my personal space. Would his face right in mine etc
- 44 My life my choice You do not own me
- 45 They were very helpful and kind. I only question the duration of the evacuations. In 2009, I was on order for 2 weeks, and it wasn't anywhere near the dire situation of 2023. I had already evacuated once, and the 2nd time, fleeing for my life, the order got lifted within a few days. That was extremely stressful.
- 46 I didn't realize to use this until I returned to Kamloops then informed by a friend
- 47 We took care of ourselves because that is what we think people should do if they can. The reason we went to ESS is because the media told us we should. When we got there we were taken in like refugees. We told them we didn't need anything but they told us we did and they were going to supply it.
- 48 liked the emergency alerts on my cel phone
- 49 the people were very supportive and helpful, during the stressful time.
- 50 I feel that my local emergency coordinators were poorly supported. We evacuated to the hall as we were told

and we registered and enjoyed some food and snacks that materialized somehow. But at that point it seemed to me that the information flow stopped and there was no more good advice to be had. We were told to evacuate to Seymour which I thought was not a good idea since there are no facilities and communication is poor there. I decided I was better off to go home and cross the lake in a boat if necessary. At least at home I had food, water, shelter, communication, and an escape route.

- 51 more information sooner
- 52 We found things to be unorganized. The process or signing up online a couple days prior to the wildfire seemed like it would be a good idea and accelerate things SHOULD we end up being evacuated, so I signed us up. When the time came to physically evacuate and then go to Salmon Arm to "sign in", we never left with any financial aid. We had our two dogs, our son and two adults, and no family to go to locally. Most of our family was in the Lower Mainland. So we decided to head that way when Sorrento went on Order and Blind Bay was on alert. We were told to go to McArthur Island to register and they would be able to get us some funding, but were told it would take up to 3 days to get to us and that they wouldn't e-transfer us. That didn't work for us as we had to go. I couldn't help but cry from being overwhelmed. We had just found out we lost our home. We weren't getting the support we needed. I guess my tears and anguish convinced someone to accelerate our case and make sure the funds would be e-transferred and they were that same day. Another disappoint was that the funding stopped the second we got a short term rental instead of billeting. The reasoning for cutting

us off per ESS was because our insurance would be kicking in. Little did ESS know that insurance has up to 90 days to make any kind of payout. We were stuck paying for a short term rental AND our mortgage at the same time for almost two months, with zero income coming in. This was beyond stressful. It would have been very helpful to have ESS continue the support for the short term rental until they had proof that insurance had in fact kicked in. We struggled immensely to make ends meet after the fire. We felt abandoned and what made matters worse was hearing on the news the tens of thousands of dollars ESS had received in donations. Where was this money going?

- 53 It was somewhat disorganized and people were all treated differently, in my opinion.
- 54 Lost my information had to go back in
- 55 Emergency Support Services should have been located in the areas where people were mainly affected, obviously only when the area was deemed safe, or at least closer. It seems services were located in areas that were convenient for the workers/ volunteers, not the people directly affected by the fires. We had to drive long distances to obtain services when we were already stressed.
- 56 The protocols in place for receiving ESS are outdated and often relied on us physically going to the location to receive them, and could not be changed, even when we had to relocate and move to a different city in the middle of our evacuation. Greater flexibility is needed, especially given that the people that are displaced, are not going to be the most organized.

- 57 The volunteers were amazing! They were well-trained, empathetic, friendly and helpful. So thankful for these incredible volunteers!
- 58 We evacuated to a bed and breakfast in blind bay. We found out later that they were not on the approved list of facilities.
- 59 The volunteers were great. Information on camping at nearby locations was lacking.
- 60 the volunteer services by ESS were very much appreciated both for support and kindness
- 61 My experience with ESS was very positive. Starting with our initial phone call, visits to the Kamloops ESS location and follow ups as needed over the next number of weeks. At all times the staff and volunteers made an amazing effort to provide supports to each individual and family. As the weeks progressed the efforts seen never decreased even though the staff and volunteers must have been exhausted themselves.
- 62 The staff were very supportive and understanding. It was a very traumatic situation for me. I was in a haze for days, not able to make decisions, and they took control and gently ushered me yo where i needed to be. Thankyou staff of ESS you are all amazing.
- 63 Not many options for seniors and pets. Keep families close together. Get a better filing system - SO many clerical errors were made by ESS because of antiquated carbon copies, inefficient paper shuffling, and untrained staff.
- 64 They were friendly and helpful in kamloops and salmon arm.
- 65 They were disorganized and it took hr on the phone due to leaving the area to far .

- 66 More information shared about where to check in. Ability to sign in online before arriving
- 67 I will say that I was very impressed. Had no idea we would be treated the way we were. It was a surprise I guess because no one ever told us we could have support. The only way I was made aware (and spoke to others who felt the same) was because I went in to register myself and family as being safe. It was only then that I was made aware of my options.
- 68 Although we have self evacuated, due to no power, anxiety of child and adults, we have received very late support. Also after we have returned a financial support would have been very helpful. One of the adult couldn't work and lost 2 weeks income, the other adult is self employed and lost income too.
- 69 Emergency support services was excellent in my opinion.
- 70 They were all awesome!!!
- 71 The volunteer's were great support. The way the ESS handled living arrangements should of been handled better. Being told the government is only providing you with X days eg. renew for 10days and then your cut off and you need to find a place to live. Made me feel like they just wanted me to go away and be someone elses problem. Was terrifying to someone who was a total loss resident. And when you went to the centre you sat for 3hrs trying to get info that would help. I had dissabilities and had been boated out. I had no transportation and was in terrible pain. I had asked if a taxi voucher was possible so I could go get food and medical supplies. I was told there was no help to replace medical needs or transportation. But in the end was offered bus pass which I could not walk to bus stop or

climb steps up into bus. Some things were good but lots was bad.

Q11. What were some of the difficult choices you had to make during the fire situation and how did you proceed?

292 of 473 participants responded

- 1 Had I known what I know now I would of came home sooner and helped my neighbours and family that stayed behind
- 2 I had to stay away and let my house burn
- 3 We left because we knew that the road out was likely to be blocked and didn't want to get trapped in the area. In hindsight I would have stayed longer but with limited exit routes I choose not to put my family at risk.
- 4 Whether we would have to leave everything we have worked all our life for. Someone had to be here since there were no BCWS
- 5 Coming back in after fire hit to save our community when BCWF and CSRD disappeared and pulled all their resources.
- 6 We went to Seymour Arm on the 18-20 of August, but then felt we needed to leave because their resources were depleting. We travelled through back roads to Cranbrook where we stayed with family. We felt there was no news coverage and we had no idea what was going on.
- 7 Difficult choice leaving home getting to bridge surrounded by fires! Alert seemed to late!

- 8 Weather to leave or stay and fight. Should we disregard the overbearing police presence. They were of no positive help.
- 9 The evacuation order was issued too late! We were warned about the approaching fire by a family member and thus left in time, unlike many who had to leave via Seymour Arm or by boat. The BC Wildfire Service managers should be criminally charged for announcing their backburn was a success, when they knew it was not and then avoided issuing an evacuation order, thus putting people's lives at risk. The CSRD was told the fire was near, but also avoided issuing an evacuation order. The staff responsible for this mess should be fired.
- 10 to leave was a difficult decision as we were not under an order or alert however we witnessed the fires in a very dangerous location causing the potential of limiting options to evacuate, told everyone we knew about this, at least 7 families who chose to leave immediately. Then within one hour were advised there was a safety concern and to evacuate which we had already done. Many difficult decisions were made leaving behind belongings, food, items not covered under insurance, did our best to extra fire proof our home, brought all fuel sources with us, assisted others in doing the same. Set up sprinklers and wet down property
- 11 When burning debris was dropping on my property from the Meadow Creek Rd fire on August 15/16 I elected to evacuate without formal notice. During my packing a friend in Search and Rescue at Horseshoe Bay reached out to me with a copy of our evacuation alert that had been sent to Area F. He knew my property and was logged into All Of B.C. so received it. I am signed into Aletable by my property addresses which works fine in

Whistler. I set sprinklers up and left. Telling all my neighbours we were on alert. None of them knew! My full time neighbours stayed as we had a \$300k fire suppression system in our strata, they had heavy fire fighting equipment with lake water, a 100,000 gallon cache, live fire hydrant, fire hoses and spigots throughout, and double backup generators. I supported them by feeding them from food left in my house and garden,. I loaded with our MLA and various news services to turn the tide of blame from the locals who saved Celista to BCWS whose poor judgement and lack of truthful communication caused the damage to our communities.

- 12 Ensuring seniors are ok
- 13 To leave my home and neighbours
- 14 We had to flee after working in scotch creek having absolutely no idea where the fire was in Celista or Magna bay as there was zero reliable communication from bcwf or card. We came back Monday August 21, and stayed despite the order, feeling we could help save our house and help the local volunteers staying fed and housed.
- 15 Deciding to stay. Felt comfortable in my ability to protect myself and my property. Was very obvious that no one else was looking after my property
- 16 What to take, when to leave. We left before the storm
- 17 Information prior to flames within the community was vague were told things were all good until they weren't had trouble getting elderly neighbors to believe They needed to evac because there wasn't an order until it was too late and we were then scrambling to help get people out and almost ended up stranded ourselves
- 18 We left realizing we may never see our place again. Watching things unfold from afar and saddened

by the lack of respect directed by govt. for the locals who were well equipped and knowledgeable to stay and help save structures. It was difficult once the power was out knowing the watering systems we had in place would not continue to work - propane was an issue to keep the pumps working. Relying on neighbours to help us - and we are so thankful they did by doing neighbourhood patrols day and night for spot fires.

- 19 Getting my family out and leaving neighbours behind that I could not get back to help.
- 20 Evacuate animals and stock up water to wet down buildings, chopped down large trees near the house and other buildings, spent weeks stocking water in pools on property, set up three mobile fire fighting water rigs and teamed with neighbours to prepare for on coming fires and to put out spot fires that appeared on satellite map. We did not see any firefighting crews effectively putting out spot fires in our area but we did see unpaid and concerned neighbours driving around at their own cost putting out spot fires and helping each other get ready. We did see absolute incompetence with road blocks at only bulk water station road, stopping the delivery of water, food, to those protecting their homes.
- 21 Lack of time to prepare for the worst, we went from not being on alert to an evacuation order due to mismanagement of the fire.
- 22 what to take and what to leave. Security concerns of evacuated home
- 23 we had to leave everything behind - not knowing we would lose everything since we were not on evacuation order/or alert. I would leave batteries behind and pack items that were irreplaceable having now learned the hard way.

24 We live in Blind Bay and for an hour the community was put on Evacuation and then reversed. It was very confusing for us and other people that we spoke to regarding which areas were being evacuated and which one were not.

- 25 To not engage in civil dis-obedience once it was obvious that BCWF Service and CSRD had no clue on how to address a wildfire in a largely populated rural-urban area.
- 26 To leave a pet behind which died No time to get out family heirlooms Have not been able to proceed
- 27 I could not come back as I left the 17th of August for the day. Then I couldn't return until the barge
- 28 We left our property for 12 hours on that Friday, going to friends in Magna Bay, by car. They were not on alert or evac at that time. We returned to our house at approximately 9 a.m on Saturday and then stayed. We provided security to our neighbor's property and ran their generator to protect the contents of their fridges and freezers. We also emptied several fridges of perishable foods.
- 29 whether to stay or leave
- 30 When to leave When the back burn was lit it had been quite windy the smoke became too much to handle(I've had heart issues)and large as in 12" long pieces of burnt embers were landing in our yard We set up a sprinkler on the roof just in case and left for a couple days worrying that there could be a mass evac and that traffic would be extremely congested /sorrento highway one was closed and the threat of number one highway East by Tappen was being threatened
- 31 We were not on order, but could see flames from our house and knew the SC Bridge was closed.

We decided to take the backroads with our neighbours as a group. We came back through the backroads 2 days later as our place was still not even on alert. I regretted returning and wanted to leave with my kids but the police at the roadblock wouldn't let me and I wasn't able to drive the backroads alone with my young children in my car. It was very hard to know what to do, we wanted our family to stay together, but didn't know what to expect. The lock down by the police felt ridiculous and over the top. We were finally put on alert a few days after returning.

- 32 Whether to self evacuate from an area that was not under alert or order but, because we are in a community with one road in and out, and the possibility of the fire jumping (as it did at Skwlax). I chose not to evacuate but had a to go kit packed and ready.
- 33 The most difficult choice was when to safely leave. Had I waited for the CSRD it was too late, as it was I had to go to Seymour Arm & they did not know we were coming, it was horrible situation.
- 34 We had live embers and hot black branches flying into our forest, but we were in an area not designated for evacuation, nor preparation for such.
- 35 Leaving the area before our house burnt. We left without anyone warning us because we feared for our lives
- 36 Listening to all the acrimonious comments if neighbors and friends. Trying to keep my mouth shut.
- 37 We left when on alert!! I was not waiting for order. A one way bridge is only way out. And glad we did. The order came when fire around bridge. People scrambling to leave and people in boats. Just terrible. We had to pay for one night of hotel on our own because was only alert

not order. But we were safe and no stress. What do it again that way.

- 38 Deciding to go against the order to protect the community and homes that could be saved.
- 39 Driving my mom and pets out of the Shuswap with the possibility of not being able to get back in. Which sadly happened. Driving back roads and unknown areas to try to get meds / food to people still in the community. Police would not allow drop off zones for those that stayed it made things very difficult and at one point very dangerous.
- 40 We left the Shuswap area by vehicle because of the heavy smoke and ash that was present. We drove to Alberta.
- 41 We ran sprinklers that drained our well. We also packed up important items and moved them to different locations
- 42 Living in Anglemont / St Ives. Never sure if we were going to even be put on alert. Nothing was communicated.
- 43 I had to risk being labeled a criminal and run ins with the RCMP while I was helping my neighbors fight the fire on their property.
- 44 We wanted to have our trailer to sleep in with 2 kids and 2 dogs so we left shortly before midnight on August 18th via Eagle Bay Rd. At that point we had no idea if the fire was going to jump the lake or if we would get cut off at Blind Bay with the fire coming from Sorrento. We have the "luxury" of the forestry road up Ivy as a back up but not suitable for taking the trailer out.
- 45 When to get ready as we were never put on alert. We, along with our neighbors, got each other ready a couple days in advance of the order so we were able to evac fairly orderly; however, much was left behind

such as livestock, etc. giving no option but to have someone who stayed tend things, especially given the only exit was to Seymour Arm on FSR and to a wonderful community, that was completely overwhelmed by the 100's of arrivals.

- 46 On what to take . my husband and son left but came back and were treated like criminals they saves peoples fridges and freezers..... helped distribute food and supplies to the brave souls trying to save our community homes
- 47 Leaving my husband home while I left with my kids.
- 48 How to help prepare and help our neighbors when others were drumming up panic because they were using other social media sources of information, despite having accurate information from Alertable and such. There was a lot of misinformation. Not sure how to change that though. We didn't end up needing to evacuate, so we were not put in a terribly difficult situation, other than socially.
- 49 We were in the process of buying our home in Anglemont and were camped at the Toss Creek campground with our motorhome waiting to take possession on August 22nd, which was prevented by the fire blowup a few days earlier. Because we weren't in the initial evacuation orders, we ended up trapped in an unfamiliar place with no idea what going to happen to us or our new home. Luckily I have experience in wildfire management and had a general understanding of what was going on and likely to occur and we had a Starlink for wifi and a generator for power, so we were able to stay informed and connected. The lack of a proper secondary access road (escape route) was probably the worst to deal with.

- 50 Recognizing the danger many hours prior to official alert. Phoning neighbours and family (Evans and Garland Rd) advising them of the danger and that they needed to evacuate immediately.. they did not know how close the wildfire was nor how fast the wildfire was travelling towards them. Without my phone calls I shudder to think what would have happened to them.
- 51 The biggest was how close is the fire and do we leave or stay. How much trust can a person put in WFBC.
- 52 I had to leave after closely watching the fire grow UNCHALLENGED by firefighters above Adam's Lake for over 2 WEEKS! By the time I heard it was "all of a sudden" an emergency, I was not able to get back in time access my property, (legally).
- 53 Finding fuel to run the generator. Medications for a elderly family member in anglemont. Concerns of break ins. Wildlife. Helping those still dealing with Hotspot near their homes. Evacuating thru Seymour with elderly family members.
- 54 To leave the area with out a alert for our area. I like 100s of people did not want to be trapped on a road with only one way out.
- 55 Sent my cat two weeks before August 18 to stay with son in Vernon sol didn't have to worry about not getting back home to rescue him. Stayed at son's the night of the backburn.
- 56 It did not feel safe some days to go to the store alone with the 'White Lake Fire' sticker on the truck because of anti-fire-fighter sentiment. I would only go with others. We also considered sending kids away to the coast but ultimately did not do so.
- 57 wether we should leave even though we weren't in the evac zone.

- 58 It was not a difficult choice to stay and I would stay again. There was zero police presents in our area. We were concerned about break and enter, theft and vandals. We had generators, lots of fuel and plenty food to sustain us. Having the barge come and go was a massive relief for many as it allowed for propane and fuel to be transported to us.
- 59 The difficult decision was to stay or to go. We are on the water and had a watering system set up (pump with fire hoses). We were able to keep our property watered. We were without power but were able to borrow a generator from a neighbour which was very important.
- 60 Not knowing when to evacuate? We got our kids and animals out a few days before the fire hit to be safe but had to stay due to work. Once fire entered scotch creek i self evacuated before evacuation order was released.
- 61 Evacuate order, we evacuated.
- 62 Have my own structure protection set up... otherwise I would have stayed. My sprinklers ran from Aug 17 to Aug 26 when the Engine blew in my generator. \$10 k unit... luckily I work for spooner and him and my neighbours fought hard for 5 days straight !! If not for these people (honest hard working people) , not thieves and criminals!!, this whole beautiful north shuswap would be all gone!!! Sad!
- 63 Just trying to get all the necessities packed up because there was no time. We should have been on alert long before.
- 64 I have 40 years fire fighting experience but had my 9 year old grandson and my daughter in law with a head injury and had to get them to safety. Or I would have stayed and assisted in the efforts my neighbours put in to save homes in and around my community
- 65 We left because we knew the fir was coming and the backburn never should have been lit. A disaster in itself. Put the fires out when they start. It's that simple, monitored way to long I will say.
- 66 The hardest choice was to leave and trust you people to do what is right. Clearly our concerns were warranted as it was LOCALS that saved our home!
- 67 To stay or go. Chose to stay and protect area and provide support services for those locals who were fighting the fires to save our community.
- 68 Assess the movement of the fire, that changed radically with the attempted backburn by BCWFS, we effectively lost 15 km of forest burn time. We had to help friends evacuate cattle and other farm animals and help get them to safety, then provide housing for friends that were in the evacuation zone, send my kids to stay with friends in Salmon Arm and Seymour Arm. Then co ordinate with locals and the local fire service to effectively train locals on the spot on wildfire fighting techniques to combat spot fires. After a few days of that we were refused access into the evacuation area so we needed to change our tactics and get on board with the CSRD in a professional manner. So yeah, we were constantly making difficult choices.
- 69 The BC Wildfire Service managers should be criminally charged for announcing their backburn was a success, when they knew it was not and then avoided issuing an evacuation order, thus putting people's lives at risk. The CSRD was told the fire was near, but also avoided issuing an evacuation order. The staff responsible for this mess should be fired.
- 70 Not to return to check our property after the initial outbreak settled down. We had to rely on a

few of those terrible (sarcasm) people who stayed behind and kept us updated.

- 71 Leaving possession behind
- 72 I had to decide what to bring and how important it was and I was also extremely angry about the back burn. I to this day have PTSD because of that terrible decision
- 73 None
- 74 What to leave behind and where to go.
- 75 If we should evacuate. There was no information getting out on the fires location or direction
- 76 There are to many to list but I'd say number one was leaving day early because of husband health having to fight and make numerous phone calls to make sure we would get help with hotel for them to tell us they would cover me and my husband but not my kids and grandbabies that live on property
- 77 When to leave as information was so poor. We live next to Provincial Park and found the warden there knew more about current status than information we were getting from CSRD. We had a house full of company, so sent our kids and grandkids away on the 15th. I left on the 16th and my husband stayed until the afternoon of the 18th. He left after being warned by a neighbor that the fire was at the Scotch Creek bridge. No evacuation order or even warning that the fire was approaching was given for 1 hour and 20 mins after he crossed the bridge with fire on all four sides. Unbelievable!!!
- 78 I am a volunteer fire fighter involved in the fire, but making a choice to evacualte or not evacualte my spouse
- 79 We had to leave our home unprotected, taking what important possessions we could, with no ides on what we would come back to.

- 80 Trusting the government to put out the fire. I left because I am older but if strong and young probably.would.stay
- 81 We had a good plan and never put ourselves in serious danger but it was difficult to get information. The most difficult decisions were related to moving around to help others in the community with the threat we would be arrested, leaving even less people protecting the community.
- 82 Leaving everything behind and yet wondering if we will actually be affected. I would be more prepared during wildfire season
- 83 Whether to stay or self evacuate. What information was correct or incorrect.
- 84 I had to ensure I had a generator due to hydro being unreliable if the fire jumped south of scotch Creek to blind bay eagle bay area.
- 85 We were on evacuation alert and found it difficult to understand what we should really do. We ended up taking a lot of important things/ documents, animals and our young child off the property until it was lifed. We really did not feel safe but we stayed behind on our property waiting for the order. We even were hosting friends who were evacuate in Sorrento as well.
- 86 If I should evacuate, where I was supposed to stay with all my animals
- 87 On the Friday evening the fire was on the move so quickly, it was hard to get accurate information in order to make a decision.
- 88 We had everything packed in the vehicle and ready to go. It was difficult to know if we should stay or go when there were no updates coming.
- 89 Seperate from family. help locals fight fires

- 90 Felt like I left my property too fast. Should have stayed longer but wanted to get animals out and then could get back. Missing work to help bring supplies to people who stayed behind.
- 91 Leaving pets behind
- 92 Jump box ready every year Stayed unless we were moved into an evac order, we were on alert. Car packed Stayed because I had to work otherwise we likely would have left
- 93 How to help other people that were evacuated to are area.
- 94 We left our property two days before the fire came through as seasonal residents were asked to leave at that time. We left behind everything . All we had time to do was get the boat out of the water and leave. We were 100% sure that we had lost everything until the day after the fire when our neighbor told us that our place survived.
- 95 Trying not to be excessively angry
- 96 I was not able to help due to the order and police presence. I understand my limits and would not have stayed but I certainly could have brought supplies and necessities to people who I know needed it and were very capable and who saved properties from burning to the ground.
- 97 Waiting for the evacuation order to be place on Magna bay. We had confidence that government would make the safest choices for the people they are asked to protect. This did not happen. We choose to leave before the order was placed on becasue of the significant risk of remaining at the property while waiting for information.
- 98 We evacuated to revelstoke at 10 pm due to no hotels in salmon arm because of the roots and blues
- 99 Deciding when to leave was difficult with all the evacuation alerts released. One seemed to include my home so I left (it ended up that it did not include my home).
- 100 went to a safer place where we had access to boats if we had to leave
- 101 Self evacuating my children and grandchildren , then 10 hours later, myself and my husband(after fireproofing property best we could) . The choice was made after seeing that the BCWS was NOT credible with there info and unreliable. The back burn disaster was visable to us from our yard and we felt completely unsafe!
- 102 Wether or not to evacuate
- 103 When to leave and whether to wait until Anglemont Squilax road opened. I contacted a local volunteer fireman to ask if it were safe to stay in my area and if the road would be passable the following morning. His information was current and accurate. The fire was stopped several kms from my home and I left by Anglemont Squilax when the road was cleared of power lines and approved to drive through.
- 104 Being arrested or saving our community. inhaling dangerous smoke or my health taking risks to get out across the lake to get food and supplies and having to lie/hide from the police to get back to my home being accused of being criminals or my mental health
- 105 I chose to stay during the evacuation and protect my investment (home) during the fire. I did not have confidence in BC Wildfire Service in protecting my home based on my observations of their management of the fire from July 12 onward. I also understood that BCWFS was struggling with resource capacity so made the difficult decision to take the and stay.

I'm glad I did - my neighbours and I were ready, had an evacuation plan and made a difference without the aid of BCWFS.

- 106** Mine were different than those on evac notice. My husband had to leave my fathers memorial to get back home in case we did have to evacuate in salmon arm.
- 107** Choices made were planned in advance and were relevant to the ongoing situation so not particularly difficult.
- 108** What to bring making the decision to leave when there was no evac order
- 109** I understand that the main road was dangerous for driving and that it should have been closed for public access, however as there was no other safe route out of the North Shuswap a system of pilot cars could have been employed to help residents move safely in the days and weeks after the initial firestorm. The road from Seymour Arm to Malakwa should have been improved in the event of an emergency in the North Shuswap and again, should have proper signage and pilot vehicles to lead those who had to leave on this route. There also should be a system of allowing access to the local contractors helping to fight the fire. Water and fuel should have been supplied as needed as we are all fighting the same fight!
- 110** Due to conflicting recommendations on different websites, we didn't know whether to turn electricity on or off or whether to activate our rooftop sprinklers (which FireSmart recommended). That is, would BC Hydro shut off the power if needed, and would firefighters turn on the rooftop sprinklers? Most importantly--because communications were so poor--we didn't know exactly

where the fire was and pretty much guessed at which way to evacuate.

- 111** If i should return to help my neighbours who stayed.
- 112** Lucky to have a home in the Fraser Valley. Lack of media coverage a problem. (the Kelowna fire saturated the news).
- 113** Most difficult was accessing adequate and timely information before, during and after the fire.
- 114** Leaving everything behind was hard to do. I registered online a few days earlier which helps speed up getting set up. We did not know where to go so we went to Vernon and we registered there. We were well looked after.
- 115** Uninformed. Had faith in the system so did not pack.
- 116** Do we stay after we were put on Order? Can we now leave our community when those tasked with putting out the wildfire have left? Thank god for our local Fire departments standing their ground. If we leave , what can we hope to come back to? Who will help with all the rebuild that will need to be done? We have nowhere else to go. We were told when we registered with ESS that their really was not accommodation in Salmon Arm due to Roots & Blues and Kamloops was 75% capacity prior to the event too.
- 117** We had already left the area due to the smoke
- 118** Knowing there was little to no fire support, we would have cleared a log of belongings in the weeks before.
- 119** Where to go to stay with pets, lucky to find a place in Lumby 3 hours away
- 120** As someone in a non-evacuated area, it was difficult to know how much to tell my young children about what was going on. We also had to make preparations to evacuate older relatives from assisted living

facilities in case of an evacuation order there, which complicated decisions on where to go.

- 121** We have property and family in Seymour arm, we went there due to the age of some family members in my household at that time. Also had family that live in Seymour that had come out the day the fires broke loose. Helped them navigate the gorge road to get back to Seymour.
- 122** Being in Anglemont our difficult decision was whether or not to self evacuate. We felt left to decide on our own and with only one true exit from our side of the lake we felt direction was lacking for communities east of Celista throughout the entire fire event.
- 123** We prepared our property and had an evacuation plan. We were in the thick of the fire. We had pumps on our docks, watered all the properties we could. My husband was going to stay and leave by boat and I was to meet him on the other side with the boat trailer but that route was blocked. He feared for my safety and our pets so our most difficult choice was to leave when the fire rained down on us and the only route out was the forest service road through to Malakwa. We never received the notice to evacuate but it was so hot and unforgiving that we felt we had no choice. Our regret was that we left thinking we could get back in when it was safe. We wanted to go back to help our neighbours fight but we're not allowed.
- 124** To stay on my property as directed or help neighbours with food/fire
- 125** Not difficult decisions, but things I am unsure about when I left my house— should I turn closed the valve on the propane tank to my home, should I shut electrical power to my house? It never occurred to me to while on

Alert status to empty my fridge and freezer. I didn't have to make a lot of choices about personal items because I already had a list of first priority items, and then other things if there was room in the car. When to leave my home? There is no Evacuation Order yet but I can see fire on the hillside, a crew is rolling out big hose lines down the road . . . Drugged the cats, gathered the dogs and left Scotch Creek 1:35 pm.

- 126** What to pack
- 127** Biggest one was whether to evacuate at all. Did leave after setting up sprinklers on the roof. I felt I was too old to stay and be useful. After one day, I chose to return to Scotch Creek by boat from Sorrento to check sprinklers and empty fridge and deep freeze. Returned to Sorrento by boat. A couple hours later police started patrolling the lake.
- 128** The first difficult choice was whether to leave or not. The second difficult choice was whether to return or not to help fight the spot fires that were everywhere.
- 129** Choosing what to pack if we needed to evacuate. Our vehicles remained packed until late August.
- 130** How to deal with vulnerable people in our community - those who do not have access to Alertable/Voyent Alert or the internet and do not drive/have no supports to evacuate
- 131** Leave or not
- 132** What to take with me. How much time to put into fire-safing my trailer all on my own as a 59 yr old was really hard. I also really wanted to go back and fight or help feed the people who stayed to fight. My friends and neighbors on the North Shuswap who were staying needed food and gas and medical supplies, boots, tarps, jerry cans etc. Since I couldn't return, I spent

about 400 \$ and sent groceries on the third day after evacuation from Chase. I also sent 450 \$ to put towards gas for those same local heroes who saved ssssssooooo many houses. This was not an easy decision as I am low income semi retired, but I LOVE the Shuswap and have lived here 50 years. Another difficult decision was whether or not to leave my pump run sprinklers running on the roof, because when I left, the hoses and sprinklers installed on the roof by the firefighters were not functioning.

133 In Anglemont there was no immediate threat. I stayed so I could help with the locals firefighting but were told not to come into area as there was a road block. So stayed at house in case something changed.

134 The decision to start moving possessions off property after talking to forestry workers and realizing the insanity of the negligent back burn idea was indeed a go. The decision to leave after speaking with structure protection team even though there was no evac order. The local forces had more information than the ridiculous information the government agencies had. The forestry workers as well as the structure protection team we spoke too said this fire was doomed to rip right through residential areas and that it was completely insanity what had been done. They told us to leave ASAP if you don't have enough supplies to stay. We drove through flames on the way out over the bridge, still no evac order what a joke! Watched everything burn from the sorrento boat launch and the mayhem that followed. On the scanner I could clearly hear BCWS crew screaming at each other as their camp burnt, some very interesting things said as far as decisions being made. One crew member clearly said they were told 4 HOURS ago

(at 1000) that they had lost control of the backburn and said they should have pulled everyone out then. He then asked his buddy, why the fuck were they not evacuating the communities then? Hmmm things that really instal confidence in our government right!? My Evac alert came through on my phone after the fire had compromised the road by the bridge. Good thing we're not so stupid as to have ever relied on that system.

135 1) Risk of fines or "deportation" every time I left my house to feed the crews. Did it anyways. 2) Where to put the garbage since there was no refuse transfer station available. Put it on the roof of our shop because there was no birds around anyways.

136 Whether to evacuate or not, next time i would not leave, I would have a water escape route and I would stay and help

137 I had to decide if i did stay what would the repercussion be? Was I willing to deal with those consequences? What was my plan of escape if needed? Do I have enough food? At the end of the day I decided it was worth it to stay and deal with whatever happened in regards to escaping the fire or having to deal with rcmp etc. I had more than enough food, water and experience to stay.

138 Stay and fight the fire or leave

139 Going back to save Lee creek after everyone left. To help the locals. My house would be gone and all of Lee creek. I was safe and we did amazing work.

140 What to take with us.

141 We evacuated early because we could see the fire coming and the firefighters had setup the hydrants and hoses early. And we knew there was only one access to the North Shuswap and this might

make it extremely difficult to leave if there was a traffic jam or the wooden bridges went down.

142 Finding a place for my animals to go in case of an evacuation order

143 My background is a logging contractor and wildfire manager with more than 35 years of experience in the Shuswap and Adams watershed. Difficult choices. For weeks prior to the fire storm of mid August I tried to convince locals that our community of the North Shuswap was going to be majorly affected by the Adams complex fire. E mails with Jay Simpson pleading him to advance warn residents of the upcoming danger. Conversations with key community members like Craig Spooner and Jim Cooperman asking them to prepare. Trying to make my community understand the coming danger. Removed from my property all reasonable valuables including my wife. Store or remove all flammable materials from around property install water pump and hose lay around my property and my immediate neighbours property. Stock up on 6 weeks of none perishable provisions including potable water and fuel. Prepare mentally for the destruction 35 years of experience told me was coming.

144 When to leave. The evacuation order came after the fire hall was on fire and the Scotch Creek bridge was on fire when we crossed. We left within minutes of the order.

145 Would have put sprinklers on if we knew the system csrd installed would be ripped out hours after we returned home. Information was inaccurate and we were so lucky our neighbors saved our place.

146 Having to leave was very difficult especially with the closed road. We needed to return after a few days to clean out freezer and fridge and was very difficult for us

to drive the gravel road to Seymour Arm. It was only by luck that we found out that the main out was open under schedule for our return to evacuation location.

147 We were only in an alert area and already housing evacuees from the McDougal creek fire so where to go, and logistics if things changed was our main concern

148 When to leave. I didn't know that ESS would put people up in a motel and my parents, my sister and I (with our dogs) had nowhere to go. I stayed at my house watering the roofs and the yard as long as I could and left when word of mouth told my neighbours and I that the fire was at the bridge. Being evacuated meant that my kids stayed with their Dad for those three weeks, that was difficult, although I was able to see them often.

149 Skimikin area was evacuated and we complied with the order. A few days into the evacuation we observed Fedex delivery on our property delivering packages. We have security cameras. They put a large cardboard package up against the door of our shop after we had spent time removing all flammables from around our buildings. We then started investigating through social media and discovered many people had not complied with the order to leave our valley. I said "screw that" I'm not leaving my place to get looted by the thief bush camps that are out here and so I returned home to guard my life's work. The road block was a joke.

150 What to take and what to leave behind

151 No one came to put sprinklers on our property so we rigged up our own system on the roofs of our buildings, although we worried about water damage. Leaving our property was one of the most gut-wrenching moment of our lives. We didn't know if we should or shouldn't lock the doors.

- 152** Leaving our home. We left voluntarily early. My wife was deathly afraid, even crying. And by the way, we were evacuated for a month and was refused compensation. Not a penny.
- 153** To stay or to leave. I decided on my own to leave as I could see the fire coming down the hills behind Ross Creek Store, and there was no alert for my community to leave, just panicked people. I had to go Seymour Arm route, and had I not prepared myself the week prior by taking pictures of my route out, I would feel very lost, as nothing is marked to go the Vavenby way.
- 154** I had to euthanize my two large breed older dogs. Also had to evacuate again because the first home I went to ended up needing to be prepared to leave at a moment to notice.
- 155** What to take with us and what to leave behind.
- 156** On Friday, August 18th, after the fire had crossed the river and was burning towards Sorrento, we made the decision to self evacuate, as we live on a dead end road, and the only way out is to travel closer to the fire. We had our travel trailer all loaded as we had a planned trip to Christina Lake for a week starting August 19th. We evacuated to Salmon Arm. On Saturday morning, an alert came in at about 4 am. We left our trailer in Salmon Arm, and returned home to move our cars and boats into Salmon Arm. It was difficult to leave knowing you might not come back to a home, but the smoke was so thick in the Shuswap we wanted to get out of the area.
- 157** Whether to stay or go. Whether to come back and fight. Whether to risk bringing/sending supplies to neighbours.
- 158** I had no difficulties, I had sprinklers on the roof and yard. The only choice I had was if needed to evacuate to the lake shore. Thankfully by staying I was able to extinguish

several spot fires, that if I had not attended our neighbour hood would have gone up in smoke.

- 159** When the fire was encroaching upon Sorrento, the most difficult aspect was attempting to learn from the authorities what were the accurate facts about the situation, and attempting to decide upon an appropriate course of action. Some of our neighbours packed up their bags, and left their house right away. Came back a day or two later when the actual situation became known. Others put up a sprinkler on the roof and left. Absolutely no need for that. Another neighbour finally went and turned off the water supply to the sprinkler. Our best source of information was another neighbour who had a friend on a fire department who provided the best factual information. How did we proceed? Packed a To Go bag, pack all essentials to take, kept them ready, and kept sifting continuously through the much conflicting public information, and very little official SEP information to ensure our decision to remain was still the correct one.
- 160** Whether we stayed or not
- 161** Deciding if we should stay. I wish more would have been done at the beginning to put the fires out on Adams east and bush creek. We know the winds around here can change quickly
- 162** Every decision was difficult. It was extremely difficult to see how locals who chose to stay and fight were treated. Without them, the damage out here would have been much worse.
- 163** When to self evacuate
- 164** The locals worked together to save the area ! No outside help for approx 5 days 🙌

- 165** Where to evacuate to was a hard choice for me. Ultimately I went to Seymour Arm to our family Cabin to help care for my elderly grandmother. Being isolated from the world up there was extremely hard. I didn't think we would be up there that long and needed diapers for my kids and my grandparents needed medications. We were lucky we had some friends go the back way to bring us supplies. My car wouldn't have made it out great. That road was not a great option to escape. Perhaps backroads should be better maintained for a town like ours that realistically has one way in and out.
- 166** Leaving my house and only equity to a municipality and bc fire people who didn't give a dam and did nothing to protect it. Why where there not fire sprinklers on every house in town, why where no preparation done by those in charge. Why are there still no hydrant or fire pumps in place NOW. There are just meeting and survey like this that get nothing done
- 167** nothing we could have done after you set the fire
- 168** After fighting the fire for 17 straight days my husband tried to get ESS but was declined except for 2 days worth. We spent thousands of dollars on a generator but paid out of our own pocket. Irony when other fire departments were housed in hotels, with a food allowance.
- 169** How to get supplies over to family on the north shore.
- 170** Separation of family, and leaving.
- 171** Told to leave and left.
- 172** Elected NOT to enter the area (as originally planned) given the advance notice of potential wild fire expansion.
- 173** I had to help people in a situation that felt was improvised. I was put on the spot without any leadership.
- 174** To leave my home while my spouse was out rescuing people. I did not know what to take, it was heartbreaking. My neighbors were also leaving too. We were worried about looting. We were worried about being cut off by highway closures. And lack of communication was evident. Each family made personal decisions based on what intel they could gather.
- 175** We received an email to prepare to evacuate and then 5 minutes later people were banging on our door saying we had to leave now. Didn't have time to hook up boat and just grabbed a few valuables
- 176** Deciding when to leave. I started evacuating my important belongings two days before the fire reached scotch creek
- 177** We left because we were scared and had no information about what to do
- 178** What to take, we only had minutes to leave z!!! There was no warning or anything for the residents of little Shuswap. Very poor communication and information channels
- 179** Leaving home no security
- 180** The road blocks where above the CSRD duties This isn't communist china
- 181** To stay and fight the fire after the back burn was lit and bcws left us to burn.
- 182** Evacuating and then wanting to provide aid and/or return to help but prevented by law and logistics.
- 183** We took everything we could in our truck and boat. We left out 5th wheel.

- 184** Stayed at home constantly (24/7 for 6 weeks) - the entire duration of the Bush Creek Wildfire as we were not confident that we would be allowed to return to evacuate animals if the fire rapidly spread - which ultimately it did.
- 185** We left at night and came back during the day. We spoke to the people at the road blocks at Blind Bay and Hwy one.
- 186** The first time, I had to evacuate when the fire was still on the North Shore, as I had lost power. The 2nd time, I had no notice - left with 5 min to spare - so maybe I would have stayed away. It's very hard to leave a 2nd time, and you end up making poor decisions.
- 187** I attempted to evacuate by driving through Scotch Creek only to discover the road was blocked. My husband, who planned to remain to protect our home decided to drive out through Seymour Arm with me. He chose to return the next morning after talking to neighbors about the lack of resources available to respond to the numerous spot fires in our area. He remained on our property for the duration of the evacuation order. I stayed in Salmon Arm. During these 3 weeks I made several return trips by boat to deliver food, fuel and critical parts for our strata's engineered fire suppression system. It was difficult for me to "break the rules" but it was very apparent that due to the magnitude of the fire and the lack of resources that those who stayed behind were on their own.
- 188** Whether to wait for bc wildfire (and see my neighbors houses burn) or to go out and put out the fires myself.
- 189** I had my cat at home and choice not to have someone get him
- 190** We had to decide to leave as we feared we'd be asked to leave in the middle of the night. We were stressed on

where exactly the fire was and how fast it was moving towards us. We were all fearful. We are all seniors. Information wasn't there for us and the news talked more about the fires in Kelowna, ignoring ours practically most of the time. We didn't know where the pub was located in Seymour Arm where we evacuated to. Were lost in the middle of the night on those lonely gravel roads. Signage would have helped us. Emergency services were excellent. They gave correct information and fed us. We volunteered at Lakeview Centre where we could be helpful and comfort those displaced. We were without power for 18 days. Helped each other. Had to depend on each other. We were never on alert yet we were trapped as the road out was closed and the other option out was terrible. There is NO CELL PHONE SERVICE in Seymour arm. That would have been helpful. NO POWER. IF we had electric cars we would have been screwed to leave. This needs to be addressed. We were terribly stressed during this time.

- 191** When to pack Whether to leave our property even tho we weren't under evacuation alert How to get out if needed (only one way in and one way out - dead end road)
- 192** N/A
- 193** Glad we stayed to protect our home and our neighbors.
- 194** Sending my children and grandchildren away to a safer area
- 195** We had 2 cats with us and were told hotels in the region wouldn't accept cats. The day we evacuated Adam's Lake (first time), we felt very conflicted because our eyes were telling us things were bad, but the official communication was the alert was lifted and there was no danger.

- 196** To keep my business open for essential services more advanced notice more action taken to owners of derelict properties wel
- 197** We had to ask for help from our neighbours because they were there and we were not. They saved our fridge and freezers and kept our roof wet. We owe them a ton. We helped friends who lost everything. They were so traumatized and it was all very upsetting. We encouraged them to leave but they lived in Celista and were not on Order so waited. When they finally left, still before they were ordered, they could not get out and they could not go back. They left by boat with all the items they wanted to bring left at the Boat Launch in their truck. We are still trying to comfort friends from Celista who lost everything.
- 198** We just followed orders
- 199** to evacuate before ordered leaving during alert, moved to chase then evacuated from chase during alert there to lower mainland knowing smoke would be bad for awhile
- 200** No difficult choices No support by CSRD or BC wildfire = protecting my house and home! Fight for what's yours = saving house and home Your policies and lack of support are a disgrace!
- 201** Leaving our home, and not knowing if it would be there when we returned. Deciding on what was important to take with us Making sure our animals were with us, was very important Finding a place to stay while we were evacuated. Once we returned home, it was still a concern for many weeks, if they fire would flare up, and still threaten our home.
- 202** What were the most important items to take home to our principal residence? We filled up the back of the car with those items and went home 2 days before the fire came through knowing that a wind storm was approaching the area.
- 203** To keep my business open or closed. What to do with family and friends and staff. What to do with spoiled food. How to deal with the stress of it.
- 204** Getting rid of food from fridge and freezer, pet care,
- 205** What to take, what to leave behind.
- 206** Operating illegally. Operated illegally as it was the right thing to do, if we hadn't the fire would have continues through to magna Bay as it stopped on our ranch because we were here to fight the fire.
- 207** Most of the choices concerned simply trying to maintain myself and my property, while having to sneak around, sometimes under cover of darkness, to avoid being arrested.
- 208** I decided to leave work a few days early to come home and look after my place. I then missed a 2 week shift of work since I could not come and go freely so decided to stay home.
- 209** do I stay and help? I did or do I go???
- 210** Leaving was hard to do.
- 211** Leaving everything you had worked for all your life behind, in order to provide employment for the wildfire service empire. Our local fire depts. and residents who fought the fire are the ones we can count on.
- 212** Difficulty in making a decision based on the surrounding areas on Order and because we were on Alert status only needed to consider this before the road closed through the only main access area.
- 213** To stay and fight or to possibly lose everything. After watching the failed backburn race up our mountain that evening I knew I made the right decision in the following days as we were on our own.

I was always thinking that I would hear some air support but we didn't for days.

214 Because we were not on an Alert, and because there was ZERO communication of where the fire was exactly behind Meadow Creek and Leopald, we had no idea how close the fire had come the morning of. It was by chance that I went to Scotch Creek at 12:20pm to pick up an inhaler because I was struggling to breathe. I noticed on the hillside that the fire had come into town, and that it was definitely going to make it's way to Celista where we lived. I called my partner and told him to get the dogs in the vehicle and pack our bags and that we were going to be leaving. That the fire had overtaken the region and that it was beyond what BC Wildfire Services was able to handle, and more than what our firefighters could deal with too. So we left everything. All of our belongings. All of our keepsakes. All of our family heirlooms, everything. If communication had been better, more precise, more truthful of what was going on, we would have made different decisions. We would of packed the items that you can't replace like my great grandfather's cribbage board, or my late grandmother's watches that were passed down to me, or my husband's keepsakes from his mother who died of cancer while I was pregnant with our son. These are the irreplaceable items that we could have easily packed if anyone would have told us that the fire was going to hit Celista. Even on the day we left we had hope that we would be going home. Little did we know we wouldn't be.

215 To leave what to bring it was a complete mess

216 Not to come & help out.

217 Not to be able to buy necessities freely out of fear to hit a spike belt set up by RCMP

218 We weren't given an evacuation alert , we were told your on your own east of Magna Bay. When to leave and what was are escape route , Seymour and then what as not sure of the road conditions beyond Seymour. What were the conditions west of Magna Bay and Celista.

219 The difficult choice I made was to wait and listen to CSRD on when to evacuate. I will make my choices next time and not wait to hear from CSRD.

220 Guessing if we were in danger was a hard thing . We found out about the evacuation notice in lee creek and scotch creek the morning we left to shop in Kamloops on the 16 of August when we arrived and heard someone talking about it. We returned that afternoon and stayed till we felt unsafe the afternoon of Aug 17 and left with still no alert in Celista

221 Leaving my property with animals

222 To evacuate when there was not alert or order for Anglemont. As the fire was moving very quickly I had to make the choice of go quickly as the Squilax Angelmont road was still open, or wait and possibly use the forestry road. As I could not ascertain the condition of the forestry road I chose to evacuate rather than get trapped.

223 do I risk crossing a road block to go and get fire pumps, hoses, tanks, supplies, etc to prevent my property and belongings from burning to ash and not be able to get back?

224 Leaving my property unprotected

225 We just evacuated at the first alert

226

227 When to evacuate as NO order was given even though we could see how close the fire was from our home?

We decided before the order which was only shortly before the bridge was closed. Far too late.

- 228** difficult choices -- belongings to leave and what belongings to take, where to go, whether to leave even though we never received an evacuation alert in Celista We decided to leave and take our travel trailer on Aug. 17th (day before the fire) even though no evacuation alert or order. To us, the fire/smoke situation did not look good. Difficult to find a campground anywhere.
- 229** What belongings to take with us from our home, how to access any help and where to find communication. Alertable had a problem and that was our only means of updates and communication. We have NO newspapers (not that that would help very much) and the radio had nothing. Very frustrating.
- 230** To leave or stay in Anglemont. We decided to leave.
- 231** Whether to stay or go
- 232** Having to leave without notice. My disabled mother lives with us, so it was very difficult. If we had somewhere safe for her we would have stayed to help fight the fire as there was no help from any government entity up here for over a week. The fire came within half a kilometer of our home.
- 233** When to evacuate. We had prepared just prior to the alert. The fire was coming but we were waiting for an evacuation order. We decided to leave as the situation didn't look good, but we were confused as to why we didn't get the order.
- 234** The best way to protect our property and how best to ensure our most valuable possessions were safe I.e. boat, Seadoo and sentimental items.

235 There was not enough information on the day the fire crossed the lake and much information was confusing (understandable, but very unfortunate).

236 Climb up on my roof to get sprinkler on I'm afraid of heights

237 I was at work in Kamloops so didn't get a chance to get anything. my husband left by 130 with the clothes on his back and there was still no order out yet the fire was coming over the hill into Scotch Creek. He only found out as a friend of a friend told our friend who sent a photo of the fire coming over the hill. 30 minutes later our other daughter managed to come from Celista to tell her dad that the fire was coming to the house and accross the street. He would not have made it out otherwise.

238 Stay or go. Pressure to leave and threats made were unconscionable. We stayed to protect our property and help people.

239 Going for gas for generators and pumps and risking getting escorted out of the North Shuswap. I came back to the North Shore on Saturday morning Aug. 19 early with permission from the RCMP. Our reservoir was depleted and fire burning everywhere. No power to refill it. I brought in pumps for people in our Strata who came back earlier than I was able. They were packing water in 5 gal buckets. Those pumps saved countless structures and millions in damage to homes. Other people came with their own fire fighting equipment from all over the province to help. Convincing people at check points their need to carry on. We had 21 people on site on and off for 2 weeks during evacuation. Not one person on-site would have done anything different. When required we disguised ourselves as emergency workers

and drove freely around the area. Funny what an \$80 flashing light on top of your truck and a hard hat will allow you to do.

240 Finding places to stay while evacuated. Leaving thinking the fire would be put out and we would return to our home. We left and came back to nothing but ashes and debris.

241 My partners family has lived in the North Shuswap for 30+ years. Many fire alerts have been issued in their years but no evacuations needed. There was no way for us or so many others to understand the extent or significant danger the fire would inflict. We left on the Thursday thinking we'd be back on the weekend. Our biggest pain point; which is absolutely nothing, was we lost our fridge and freezer to thawing when the electricity went down. Our home along with our neighbors stand unaffected.

242 Thankfully I was not in an area that had to evacuate this year, but we have in the past. Choosing what to take, how to secure the property, and when to leave are all very difficult choices. Choosing whether to risk going to work or leaving the house in case things change quickly and you may not be able to get back in time to get pets, etc can be very stressful, and trips outside the home were limited during the fire.

243 The route out of Anglemont was daunting for seniors.

244 Knowing when to leave, not knowing what was going on around us, not knowing where the fire was or how close it was to us. Waiting for evacuation notice that never came. I decided to leave anyways without evac notice. My area magna bay was getting thick with smoke. When I was driving out I realized I should have left earlier as I was driving through celista fire was on both sides of the

road. When I got to Scotch creek I realized my husband was no longer behind me. He could not make it through. He had to find his own way out. He joined a convoy of 7 trucks around to seymor arm to the upper northern, Adams lake, to Barrier then to kamloops. Some were familiar with this back roads route from fishing and hunting this area.

245 To self evacuated a seasonal home we've been in for well over 50 years. This after days living in thick toxic smoke and seeing active fire spread across the lake, knowing we had ONE road evacuation route and countless residents and peak time Summer tourists in the area, even though we were not immediately in harms way things could change fast and there would be a parade of vehicles attempting to leave (as happened Friday night August 18 on the South Side).

246 Remaining outside the evacuated area while watching the fire destroy our homes and business was extremely difficult, especially with the lack of firefighting support. Secondly staying away from the area after witnessing the lack of respect shown to our local heroes, those who stayed and those who tried to send in supplies, was one of the hardest things I have ever had to do. I choose to send funding and support to those who showed compassion to others during this time, rather than worry about following the "rules"

247 Choosing to trust that in leaving our property there would be someone (BCWS) fighting to save our home. We actually legitimately believed that would happen. Had we known differently we would not have left. After learning from friends who did stay we chose to go back during the order. This was not a choice made lightly, but one we do not regret. By going back out we

were able to put out spot fires in and around our property and likely save what we had left as well as some neighbouring homes. At no time did we feel unsafe and at no time were we in the way of firefighters as there was NO ONE there. At one point I actually spoke with a fire fighting crew that had been driving by to alert them to the issues around our property. Had I not they didn't even realize our home was there and had spot fires around it. They also had to follow protocol and stay off the blackened areas so ignored some of the spot fires. Choosing to leave again was also a difficult decision - hearing rumours of boats being seized caused us to panic and leave when there was more we could have done to save forested areas and what not had we ignored the fear tactics and remained at our property. The whole situation was such a mess and we have lost trust in the CSRD to do the right thing and allow people with skills and knowledge to protect their livelihoods and what they have worked their whole lives to achieve. Common sense did not seem to play a factor here. It's time to revamp the whole system, but change is always a struggle and bureaucracy often gets in the way.

- 248** Whether to get involved to support our neighbours and get the truth out: no BCWS support, police and spike belts etc
- 249** I have animals, so I had to leave. The smoke was so heavy and the backburn was scheduled for the following day. I couldn't risk my animals and left.
- 250** We bought a travel trailer in June so we made the decision to pack it up and self-evacuate to Vernon for the week the fire was the worst. Fortunately we could travel back to Eagle Bay almost every day to check on things as there wasn't even an evacuation alert in our area. We

were very very very lucky. The hardest choice was to pack up and take antiques with us. We decided to leave everything behind except our boat and small sentimental items. We had the luxury of time and we were in control of our own decisions. We also have excellent insurance coverage.

- 251** Leaving before an actual evacuation order was issued because we only had ONE WAY OUT and we're basically abandoned by CSRD and BCWD . My community was right below the "successful backburn" in Lee Creek. Fire protection units ignored the houses closest to the fire and most of them burnt down. Would have been all if a few brave community members hadn't stayed behind to fight.
- 252** Decided not to evacuate with our truck and boat, just our car. In the future I would take more of our possessions.
- 253** Whether to stay and support my spouse who was a front line emergency worker or evacuate to protect my own health from all of the smoke.
- 254** Preparing to evacuate.
- 255** When to leave our property
- 256**
- 257** Being in Anglemont we made the difficult choice to self evacuate. When the only viable exit route evacuated we chose to leave vs being sheltered in place with our young children. We also had to choose to leave the Shuswap due to no occupancy and forego using emergency services as there was no option to receive support outside of Salmon Arm or Kamloops and we had landed with family in the central Okanagan.
- 258** To stay or go during the second evacuation Aug 17. Our side of adams wasn't as much in danger but we needed the ferry. I truly believe had our

residents not stayed the first time we would have lost homes. The government needs to figure out how to use residents. They had an escape plan and skills.

259 How to get food and supplies to my husband who stayed to fight the fire. I had get items taken to him "under cover"... in other words, breaking the law. How do I tell my grandchildren not to break the law when I myself had to break the law?

260 After seeing the large amount of smoke coming over the mountain over our home we decided it was time to start loading my pigs and elderly mother we then had people pulling over and telling us to run. I text next door who had 2 kids get kids and run. We loaded 4 pigs and left knowing our home was lost we started off to Eagle Bay where my sister lives we set it up prior in case we needed it for the pigs. We were half way there so 30 min later when the order came in. When we arrived at my sister's house 60 min after leaving our home our neighbour sent us pictures from his door bell cam of our property in a glow before there house burnt then ours. When in Eagle Bay we had 8x8 inch chunks of ash falling we could see the glow across the lake of the fire moving towards Anglmont. We made the decision to leave there in the morning and go to 70 mile house.

261 To stay or go. What to bring.

262 Because I have two boys with medical concerns, we had previously decided and planned to leave if anywhere between Celista and the TCH was put on evacuation alert as we didn't want to be stuck. We had done this because we trusted that CSRD and BC Wildfire would act to protect our communities. It is now patently obvious that the destruction in our community was actually caused by the decision to light the backburn. Refusal to support or

allow support for locals who stayed behind when the people who were supposed to help had left has led me to get the appropriate wildfire certification. Next time, I will evacuate my children and stay behind to protect my property (with emergency water evacuation measures in place). Never trusting the government again in a disaster situation. It's apparently more important to cover government officials asses than protect and assist our communities.

263 We left on Thursday night because the wind was shifting down the hill (as it always does) and it looked like the fire was creeping down and we might be evacuated in the middle of the night. On Friday morning, BC Wildfire and the CSRD told us the backburn was successful so we trusted that and returned home. When it became obvious at around noon, that Scotch Creek was in serious trouble, we left. We went to St. Ives where a nephew has a cabin, stopping on the way to warn people in Celista. We watched Facebook posts of people trying to leave the North Shuswap at 1:00 pm through the flames and waited for the order which didn't come until 2:15. Watching on Facebook and hearing from friends who remained, we waited at the east end of St. Ives with a large group of people trying to decide if we should try to drive to Seymour or hitch a ride on a boat and get dropped off at Wild Rose Bay. We are senior citizens and have trouble driving in the dark so it soon became obvious to us that we could not drive to Seymour in the dark. By then the wind was calm and a boat owner went out toward Magna Bay and came back and told us the fire had stopped at Celista and we would be okay for the night. Many in the group had already headed to Seymour. We watched Facebook videos of

Scotch Creek and could see flames where our home is so we were sure it was gone but then a friend sent a picture the next morning of it still standing. When we eventually returned home, we can see why our five homes on that block were saved, someone who stayed behind put fires out at either end. Then, of course, we were trapped there for the next three weeks with no power, no access to any ESS, and not a lot of food or information except from CSRD information videos and friends who remained.

- 264** Guessing whether the town was going to burn down. Inhaling toxic smoke and wondering what price I will pay later for breathing it.
- 265** We were only on alert but needed to leave because of the smoke and ash affecting our 86 year old mother.
- 266** If I should leave or not. Would I be allowed back occasionally to check on animals.
- 267** We had to plan an evacuation in case we were asked to. So in preparation had to pack and secure what we could take with us.
- 268** Whether to stay or leave given the circumstances of safety and not being able to (understandably) come and go freely.
- 269** Fend for ourselves, bc wild fire service was no where to be found
- 270** Deciding to evacuate 2 hours after hearing from Emergency Services that all was fine. Emergency Services went from "all fine" to evacuation order in a matter of 5 hours.
- 271** What to leave behind Whether to stay and do something
- 272** Shall we leave or shall we stay. We have decided to leave. Thanks God we have a small boat and we're very lucky to land on the opposite site of the lake to meet helpful people with dogs and rabbit. Because when we wanted

to leave from St. Ives it was no way out on the regular road and there are no information about the other way out.

- 273** What to save based on irreplaceable and storage space. Should we evacuate before order.
- 274** How I could help more (i.e help those who stayed behind) without getting arrested. Essentially, being responsible (in the philosophical sense) and not just having responsibility (again, in the philosophical sense).
- 275** Ways to support those who stayed behind and helped to protect our property.
- 276** Had to consider how to evacuate horses if needed
- 277** I received the alert the road (squilax-anglemont) was being closed but we were not under evacuation order and decided to self evacuated and thank god we did as our property was consumed by the fire just a little after.
- 278** We live on a farm and have horses and cattle. Knowing when to evacuate early if need be is the key! We need time to move animals out of area.
- 279** For me it was just trying to navigate my children's emotions they were very scared. Then being uprooted with a family of 4 and a dog we made it work but the situation was not ideal. We moved a ton of our equipment away to a neighbors because our home is surrounded by giant cedar trees.
- 280** Having to leave our property a few days before knowing there was a lack of help from govt officials leaving it up to our neighbours to fight for the community.
- 281**
- 282** I left before being evacuated from my property both times. August 3rd evacuation came when the road on the way out was already on fire. And not one firefighter was there

- 283** We left early when we saw the probability of the fire progressing and the inevitability of the only road out closing.
- 284** We determined that if fire alerted in Sorrento (we live in Blind Bay) we would go. We had 5 cats to move so didn't want to leave at last minute. We had already loaded some important valuables in to a secure concrete building several weeks before and doing 90 minutes of packing and preparing the night before we left, we still took another 90 minutes to get the cats and ourselves into the car and out the driveway. At that point Hwy 1 was closed west of Sorrento and we routed through Silver Creek to Falkland to Kamloops and finally to Langley
- 285** Having to move animals and elderly with little notice. Making arrangements for transport.
- 286** Planning an escape route later to discover it was not drivable (my car would be damaged and there's no signs) and then blocked from re entry to non evacuated places.
- 287** What I should take or leave Where to go. When to return.
- 288** Weren't sure when we had to evacuate. We're still on alert when fire started coming through.
- 289** I had to separate my dogs and find a place for my older son. I had to figure out how to have a roof over my head. I went from my home of 17 years to a camping trailer. I had no where to put it and panicked since ESS was not going to help anymore. I put it in a campground and have no hot water tank or water. And need a fridge but have a roof over my head. The rent is too high so do not know what I will do next.
- 290** We decided to stay to protect our beautiful home and property of 15 years. We knew the govt did not have the manpower and resources (which we knew they didn't as

this fire proceeded too quickly) to save our community. We defied orders and stayed even though we were told by police and other govt officials to leave. We used the resources we had (which we feel saved our community just east of Celista) and if we didn't stay we wouldn't have our home. The govt failed us and we are fortunate that we have a home, where most people don't. For three weeks we had no power and had to ration our food, propane and fuel (generators, etc). The govt would not allow us any access to the necessities because they wanted us OUT. We felt betrayed and frustrated because the govt didn't care about the people saving the community. Only the people who were capable and had the supplies to protect their properties stayed because no one else would be there to save it. The govt officials don't live in our area so they didn't care what burned because it didn't affect them personally. Watching embers and ash rain down on our property was scary. We all took turns day and night to do perimeter checks. I hope the govt can take the info collected in the survey and use it for future reference. Hope this is a once in a lifetime experience. The last week of the three we were sharing food amongst our community members. Luckily my mom taught me to have a freezer full of food and a pantry.

- 291** Leaving our place and trusting fire crews to do the best job they could to preserve our property and trusting that we would have no break-ins during the power outages which made remote monitoring of property impossible.
- 292** Leaving our long time residence to burn knowing that bc wildfire had left us to burn, after they set the back burn and it totally went wrong in everyone's eyes. All the years of working in

my life are in my property, I. Now retired and cannot replace it. It was traumatic and still is now, as suffering from the post stress of it all.... For no reason if they had just put the fire out when it started! Simple and done!

Q12. What do you wish you knew about emergency preparation and planning before the Bush Creek East Wildfire?

255 of 473 participants responded

- 1 What emergency preparation? Communication was severely lacking. Had I known I would have been out of my home for 3 weeks I would have packed differently.
- 2 That it exists.
- 3 Don't trust the government, BCWF or CSRD to protect your family, friends or homes. The RCMP are NOT brought in to help but to harass citizens.
- 4 Exit options. I knew there was a route through Seymour Arm but had no idea whether it was useable or safe for travel. Would have been nice to know if it was an option or not.
- 5 That the BCWS would leave and let it burn. That we would be locked up in our own community.
- 6 I wish we knew how many residents stayed behind to save our houses. It is because of our local community that many more houses did not burn. I wish I knew how little support and presence there would be from the province.
- 7 Received adequate information to prepare, but again alert very late and inadequate information as to where to go.
- 8 That there was some. No coordination at all. No one seemed to be in charge of the whole show.
- 9 I made more effort to read.
- 10 That my neighbours were going to be treated like criminals for staying and doing a better job at fighting the fires and supporting each other.
- 11 Very well aware of what we needed to do.
- 12 That BCWF is not staying when the shit hits the fan to help fight a fire, so now I know we are on our own in a similar situation.
- 13 Level of commitment to stay and fight the fire by officials.
- 14 We were aware and in fact are more prepared than most but the plan could have used some improvements and more timely guidance.
- 15 We were ready! We had fire smarted our property, had sprinklers on every roof and along property lines, began the building of our change and suppression system years ago. Those who stayed all had trucks or boats on the dock for exit. Someone walked all 11 properties each hour for 24 hours a day to prevent spot fires. I wish they knew that the CSRD would use Area F on Alertable. I wish I had realized how incompetent BCWS is, but really I was told of their plan to light a backburn in Fridays high wind without finishing their fire breaks in Scotch Creek while shopping on Aug 15. That's why I left early.
- 16 Just how fast fire can move. The differences of opinions. People can be really horrible. Yet some so heroic!
- 17 Communities should have had fire breaks built prior to the fire. It was obvious that this needed to be done but was not. Also why the back road to Malakwa not maintained to be passable when it is the only escape route. Why when shit hit the fan were vacationers not stopped from entering we were trying to

evacuate and campers were being towed in wtf? Why did BCWF say the backburn was a success and to expect to see flames from Scotch creek the morning of the 18th. People thought things were good and still buying boat snacks at the grocery store at noon on the 18th while flames were entering the community. Why was there no fire fighting the day of the 18th in scotch creek the response was poor in my opinion.

- 18 That without a good source of propane (CSRD & those in control did not allow into Celista for weeks) water pumps we have in place to provide watering around and on our place are worthless. There is no secondary route out of Celista that would work for an electric vehicle. Need an SUV for emergencies. Hoping the route out via Seymour Arm will be better maintained with signage for those who must use it.
- 19 I spent 36 years in the professional fire service and was personally prepared.
- 20 That the province of BC ends in the lower mainland and that the rest of us just need to fend for ourselves.
- 21 That the areas under evacuation order have their power and water shut off and that you can not go in or out when evacuation order goes in place and that the only people that actually show up are RCMP and Road Access Blockades but NO FIRE FIGHTERS OR EQUIPMENT OR AERIAL FIRE FIGHTING CAPABILITY FOR WEEKS WHILE EVERYTHING BURNS. Local fire departments ONLY address structural fires and will not even turn on their hoses until the "wild land fire" touches the structure - how insane. That experience local private interests with better equipment and better knowledge of the area will not be used and will be told to stand down, while the BC Wildland Forest Fire Fighting waits for FOREIGN CREWS

MANY WHO ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH OUR AREA FLY INTO CANADA - WHAT ABOUT USING LOCAL RESOURCES THAT ARE WILLING AND ABLE ???

- 22 building own fire guard
- 23 pack more than you need for 1-2 days. Pack all irreplaceable items. Go with the intent that you will lose everything
- 24 No we had all our items ready to go if we had to evaluate.
- 25 Had I known how un-prepared BCWF Service and CSRD were for the Bush Creek East Wildfire, I would have invested a more building protection capability (i.e. 2000 gallon water storage tank, industrial external building sprinklers.
- 26 Better communication was definitely needed. Clear directions on who to take direction from such as RCMP, BCWLS, OR CSRD
- 27 That I would not follow voyant I would rely on family friends and Facebook (sadly)
- 28 I wish I had known that we would be plunged into a police state with RCMP checkpoints not allowing for supplies to be obtained such as diesel/gas for generators. And not allowing passage back to homes unaffected to care for animals etc. Spikebelts, armed tactical squads, being used to harass citizens with legitimate reasons to be moving around area. Instead of providing security and checking identification and aiding in safety of citizens. Being treated like criminals for making a knowledgeable decision to stay rather than evacuate with a safe way to leave if necessary, via the lake. Patrolling the lake to prevent movement of supplies was not a valid use of resources, patrolling the lake to prevent looting etc is a much better

use of resources. The fire department came to the gate to alert us to evac , and that we should go soon if we were going. Our bags were packed a week before as the fire was out of control and very little was being done by BCWS to stop it. We wish we knew that someone was basing fighting this fire on computer models and not listening to people in the area who knew about the terrain, the wind, the trees. We wish we knew that the people who were supposed to protect us with preparedness and planning were flying by the seat of their pants. I wish that we had known how on our own we really were . By staying we were witness to the total incompetence and complete disregard for those who chose to stay. We have the right to make a choice to stay that in no way hindered fire fighting measures.

- 29 I had a go bag packed, I think seasonal residents were far less prepared
- 30 Volunteer with emergency services/disaster response.
- 31 We had prepped a couple years before and fairly knowledgeable
- 32 I wish that we had the Evacuation Plan provided to us from the Shuswap Emergency Management program. We still don't have it.
- 33 There was not much time between the alerts and orders to plan, it was very high stress and there was a ton of misinformation going around. I wish we had a better idea of what to expect when we returned. We thought the emergency program would support us as we registered but they didn't do anything. It was very expensive to keep our generator running for 3 weeks while not being able to work and still having to pay our usual bills.
- 34 That we were going to be betrayed by bc wild fire

- 35 I wish I had known about the disastrous backburn, I wish I had known when to leave.
- 36 I wish I knew that no one was going to let us know to evacuate
- 37 I was prepared. Not ready for the emotional toll
- 38 That when it comes down to an emergency the CSRD can not be relied upon in any way other than the Celista Fire Department. From what I saw, there were no other resources deployed on the ground and any that were present didn't help.
- 39 I was prepared back packed. Left on alert. Did not wait for some person to decide when order should be and risk lives.
- 40 That they would bring in outside cops who are harsh and have no emotional ties to the community. Be ready to stay because you can't leave your property
- 41 More information regarding
- 42 I wish I knew what the community plan was for a fire in our area. I would take a volunteer wild fire course and help our local fire fighters. We could prepare more. There are lots of willing community members that can't dedicate all their time to fire fighting but would volunteer if we have another season like last.
- 43 That the RCMP and BC government would make fighting the fire harder and block the roads while we tried to help our neighbors and transport supplies to where they were needed.
- 44 How to get real time updates
- 45 Nothing. All we wanted was to be alerted officially and prevent the added stress of not knowing up until evac order point.

- 46 That you need the local people who know the area to be making some of the decisions regarding our communities
- 47 Available resources. Instead of having to search and find it on my own.
- 48 We were well informed and prepared, however it was clear that the general public was not particularly aware of what should go into emergency kits, nor how to act in an orderly way to work with everyone in the situation.
- 49 There really needs to be more exploration and discussion around opportunities for locals to not only be better informed, but to have opportunities to be involved in various ways (training and other conditions as needed). There's a lot of mid-level formed armchair quarterbacking occurring locally that could be reduced. This goes hand in hand with explaining the regulatory requirements and associated drivers for them that a lot of locals don't understand or disagree with, both related to wildfire activities and also the recovery stage of rebuilding or renovating. It's a dogs breakfast in most of the North Shuswap from a planning and development perspective with a lot of legacy issues to resolve with problem properties and residents.
- 50 I wish the CSRD had implemented interface wildfire mitigation work (clearing of hazardous under brush, etc around key communities). Had provided residents with opportunities to attend wildfire planning sessions, promoted information to seasonal residents on what to do (muster areas, evacuation routes, maps, etc)
- 51 We were ready because having been involved in the Notch hill fire.
- 52 That when CSRD says a fire is "being monitored" and "not a threat" that they were actually just full of it.
- 53 Being prepared prior, medications, fuel. Fire smart your property which we did. Updated info daily on fires in surrounding areas.
- 54 More information on what happens post-evac
- 55 We know it is very tough at times to predict weather but we feel that the information that we received on the south side was about wind shift and feel that the wildfire services had the same info and should have acted differently. I think the upcoming year will be much better having have learned from the past year..
- 56
- 57 We plan for emergencies as we have been on the north shore for over 40 years. We have been asked to leave in the past when the fires came to close. The single biggest challenge is finding out the evacuation route. ONLY one road in and out of ST IVES. We have a boat moored on a buoy ready to go.
- 58 We were relatively prepared as we are actively involved in the Fire Smart program. We have done a lot of things to make our property more safe. Now that we have been through this I understand the need to pack in preparation. It is funny what I took when we left for the short time frame. I reorganized things when we returned and was better prepared.
- 59 There was very few emergency measures or planning. If I had known this, I would have done things to mitigate that in my community.
- 60 I watched it from the day it started! Was handled terribly from day one... this is all a joke! 5 drunk guys from the bar could have climbed up with piss cans and shovels and put that camp fire sized Wild fire out in no time!! How we used to do it out here before government took control!👊

- 61 I am well educated on emergency preparedness!
- 62 I knew a lot as I'm a retired Health and Safety professional with Incident Command experience in Slave Lake and Fort McMurray fires.
- 63 That we can not count on government! But we know now!
- 64 N/A
- 65 How badly prepared and organized BCWFS was going to be, the management of the original fire, and unnecessary creation of another fire caused serious tactical problems.
- 66 Structure protection, moisture domes. CSRD needs to work with locals instead of against them. Such a disappointment the CSRD was through all of this. CSRD showed zero compassion and put up countless road blocks for locals just trying to survive.
- 67 Things like empty your fridge and freezer before you leave
- 68 It took a few days for this techno dunce to learn about the alert app and how to use it. There seemed to be an attitude by the people who set it up that everyone is equally competent and in touch with multiple media.
- 69 What exactly the plane and BCWFS were doing.
- 70 USE OUR VOICES.... Lobby the CSRD and Provincial Govt to deal with the very small fire burning on the side of Adams Lake for weeks before the fire became out of control. I will never be complacent again.... If the authorities don't want to deal with a fire in the early stages, then local contractors should have the right to deal with it. We trusted you to deal with the fire before it became a problem and you failed us.
- 71 we were fortunate to be well planned for emergencies
- 72 No, we do this every year.....but this time no one fought the fire until they let it go too far
- 73 How incompetent, understaffed and under resourced the system is. The CSRD should not be expected to run an incident of this size and it became glaringly obvious they couldn't handle it. Instead of admitting they were in over their heads and asking for help they tried to blame the locals doing the lions share of the work. CSRD created division and mistrust when they should have been bringing people together with supportive and meaningful actions focused on mitigating the incident.
- 74 The fire came into Scotch Creek pretty quick and there is only 2 ways out by road. Better info previous day would have gave residents of the North Shuswap a better understanding of the possibilities.
- 75 Everything! Had no idea what to do in a disaster and found information in first five days difficult to get. Don't understand why BC Wildfire waits so long to put out fires.
- 76 Absolutely
- 77 Timelines for issuing alerts for orders and alerts
- 78 I was aware of all the places to go to search for updates but they were quite ineffective.
- 79 Nil
- 80 What water suppression equipment to have on a large property. We did good but will do much better next year. Won't leave so quick next time
- 81 More prep time
- 82 Day to day updates. Challenges, plans
- 83 Why they lite the back burn when they knew the winds were coming in
- 84 I dont think any other information would have changed our individual situation. I think a warning that the fire had the potential to take out properties along the north shore sooner than it was given would

- have helped people make better informed decisions about what they wanted to do (ie. remove valuables etc from their properties and/or evacuate earlier).
- 85** That more people had common sense and that every community resident going forward (or backwards) actually knows where exit routes are. Specifically the east exits from the North Shuswap should immediately be graded for any number of different types of vehicles. Without a doubt proper signage as opposed to handwritten cardboard signage be replaced with weather resistant signage
- 86** They the order would not be called until way too late and that the exit would be compromised well before people were able to leave.
- 87** CSRD and BCWS are not equipped to provide information and make safe decisions for residents in a timely fashion. There would be no government representatives assisting those who were evacuated and the responsibility would be placed on local residents.
- 88** I wish I knew how hard it would become to help your family and friends that were trying to save thier houses
- 89** if anyone actually did any planning
- 90** I wish I had made more of a firm decision in my mind for when I would leave instead of deciding in the moment.
- 91** that BCWS would completely abandon us and we'd be on our own
- 92** I didn't even know there was an emergency plan or service until I'd been out for a week. A friend from Anglemont told me as she knew I had evacuated due to no power. I wasn't on official alert even. I was as not on alert but Eva
- 93** I'm very well versed in emergency management so this is an assumption based statement/question.
- 94** N/a
- 95** I wish I had watched "A High and Awful Price. Lessons Learned From the Camp Fire". Extremely informative. <https://youtu.be/bo0yBOCvuwU?si=jrcxoWcLbVbM-pwM>
- 96** Why the fire wasn't put out when it started
- 97** Anything about what the commuity, local fire department, and utilities companies are doing and how we can work together: How these organizations work. What they do if they end up fighting a fire in my backyard. What they expect from residents.
- 98** Alternate routes out of the North Shuswap. Community spaces designated as shelters. Muster stations for evacuation by water. All these must be known and communicated to the public on a regular and on-going basis. ,
- 99** What support csrd would do to support people in the evacuation area. Seemed like people were allowed to stay and help, get passes for entering with supplies and then suddenly police locked everything down.
- 100** Local initiative with fire fighting cababilities and how to develop a partnership with the local firedepartment
- 101** We were prepared for a forest fire as we have been through 2 of them before
- 102** How each area was going to be evacuated so we could leave earlier. How fast a wildfire can move.
- 103** Back up water source. The reservoir was pumped dry so home owners could not protect their home
- 104** I wish I knew I that the agencies tasked with my safety before or during and the after is still to be determined. We have always done our own preparation for our selves and our home and I am very let down that my government agencies were NOT prepared. In 2003 the whole of the North Shuswap was placed

on Alert because of our one-way-in and one-way-out access over wooden bridges. Following that event, Emergency Services did a study to see what improvement would benefit the community. Thus far, 20 years later the only improvement made was to replace the wooden bridge over Adams River with a 2-lane concrete. So what? Is that considered Job Done? What more came of that study? And now we are going to do another study at a cost that could instead be going to some real action.

- 105** what planning? heard that they were going to sound the siren at the fire halls, that never happened and some almost didn't make it out,
- 106** I wish we had known that there was no structure support, or ground crews to save homes.
- 107** That fire crews would not be fighting fires or watching properties as we were advised before evacuation. We could have set up sprinklers or better fire guards
- 108** Guidelines for the most important things to have ready for immediate evacuation, circumstances that would increase the chances of it, and clearer ideas of potential evacuation destinations.
- 109** I will in future plan to be as self sufficient as possible incase my neighborhood is in danger of fire. I have no plans to leave due to what happened and lack of what should have happened.
- 110** Info on how to best prepare your home for a possible evacuation. I empty fridge of perishables etc. mitigate potential losses
- 111** If we knew we could not get back to help we would not have left. Period...we were prepared and planned but the fire was so aggressive.

112 Everything! We were not ready. No person/organization was ready.

113 Been thru evacuation in 2009

114 About the purpose & services of ESS. I didn't know that they (whoever "they" are) could roll out hose, draw water from the lake and put a dome of spray over part of the town. Was this in a plan? Are there plans for this type of fire response that I can see?

115

116 I wish that I had been better prepared with a generator, a fire fighting pump and sprinklers on the roof. I wish that I had stayed to help out.

117 I heard about the "controlled" Backburn on Thursday. We had already made plans to leave due to the fact I knew we would lose power. But when I was driving to Revelstoke and heard the BCWS you tube update saying they were going ahead with a backburn WHILE KNOWING A WINDSTORM WAS COMING I got scared shitless. I have spent my life as a surveyor in the mountains. And have taught wildfire suppression, and knew myself how bad of an idea that was. Fucking idiots caused this. I have seen footage of the backburn ignition. The pilot and crew should be held accountable as much as BCWS management. This never should have happened

118 Making a list of items to pack. Fireproofing the yard. Putting proper sprinkler systems on all buildings.

119 FireSmart principles, how BCWS deals with fires-many people think that BCWS will attack fires right away and put them out as soon as possible however that is not what happened in the Bush Creek East fire situation

120 plastic sheeting drape for structures. I only heard of this from the firefighters who came door

to door pre evacuation. Knowing that we would be put up after evacuating would have been helpful to know sooner - before evacuating! I packed camping gear and food when I left my place, which luckily I didn't have to use.

- 121** Well really had a big surprise when fire took off and got all the way to Celista before it stopped. Found out next day that this had happened from freinds.
- 122** NEVER trust the government agencies (BCWS) to be transparent and make the appropriate decisions. Be more prepared with supplies and equipment to stay behind and help fight and support locals putting out spot fires.
- 123** I wish I knew that the work could be left completely unto the locals , I would have chosen to stay and help
- 124** I wish I knew that none of the government funded firefighters have atv's, quads or side by sides. If I had known that, I would've have kept mine at my house and used it to help them. Instead I had ours sent to Turtle Valley for "safe keeping".
- 125** That all supplies would be stopped from entering the area via boat.
- 126** Everything that should have been posted that wasn't. I wish I would have know the card was going to fail miserably so I could helped more people.
- 127** What to take with us, the importance of having a family meeting place and plan, what to do at home before leaving it.
- 128** I read the information on planning for evacuation but the thing is one does not know in advance how bad it will be and how long one will be gone.
- 129** Putting sprinklers on the roof

130 That they wait to evcaute you until the fire is on your door

131 Again 35 years of previous experience told me what to expect. I could not believe that the CSRD was not informing residents of the coming danger. It was obvious for weeks that the road power and Community would be severely affected yet right up until the day of the fire storm the CSRD was not giving any advance warning recommendations. I have a email chain with our CSRD elected official Jay Simpson, in those emails I pleaded with Jay to give advance warning for residence with livestock or elderly to prepare and evacuate. His response to me in writing was no the CSRD's information is timely accurate and effective. The CSRD relied way too heavily on BC wildfire information and didn't take input from locals or other professional resources like industry leaders i.e. Interfor or Canoe Forest products.

132 That a controlled burn would be lit within 5 km of a community Before the evacuation order was issued.

133 That we would be on our own.

134 Nothing comes to mind

135 I would have like to have been aware that ESS provided people with shelters and where to go - it is odd now to think that I didn't know this, considering we have devastating fires most summers now, but I didn't. I wish I had known how little fire protection we would get.

136 More about FireSmart - we have since implemented the suggestions the FireSmart representative made to us a couple of days before the evacuation order. We were on alert for long enough that we had time to make lists and get packed up. It was nevertheless surreal when it actually happened.

137 Some sort of a plan from CSRD

- 138** How poorly prepared the province and CSRD actually was so I could personally be better prepared to stay and help.
- 139** Wish I knew not to rely on bcws and emergency program for when to evacuate...they dropped the ball and put many lives in danger.
- 140** We had been through the Notch Hill fire in 2009, so we have most of our stuff organized and ready to go. In this instance, we had the benefit of time, so were probably more organized. If we had short notice, we would probably forget a few things, but in general we know what we want to take and where it is. We also have a plan of what my wife will do versus what I will do.
- 141** If there was something to know about (outside of ESS support) I would like to know. At this time, I believe there was very little planning outside of ESS.
- 142** I've read the handbook on being fire smart. Some of the suggestions I had undertaken prior to the wild fire.
- 143** Personally, we are well aware of emergency preparedness.
- 144** That there might not be an evacuation order for Celista-westwards until it was too late. How lightly the BC wildfire service that decided to light that fire values our lives and homes. How incredibly ineffective all the emergency preparedness would feel in the face of being cut off from help available across the lake. How to get out via going east on SA Rd.
- 145** I wish I knew that the approach the BCWS took to firefighting was one of reaction instead of a preemptive response. These fires are getting worse. If they aren't dealt with and put out immediately, instead of monitoring until they are out of control, we are all in very big trouble as a province.
- 146** .I wish more would have been done at the beginning to put the fires out on Adams east and bush creek. We know the winds around here can change quickly
- 147** Escape routes
- 148** How no help came until 5 days after the back burn !
- 149** The alterable app? Jay Simpson on Facebook is what gave me the best information on what to do. I appreciate him
- 150** It's not me it's you guys that should know. What I know is there was no plan, and no one was prepared
- 151** very little faith in any government preteto help by talking.
- 152** How little help everyone who stayed would have.
- 153** I wish I knew the fire hydrants are just for decoration, and that no one was actually paying attention to send out accurate info on alerts or orders
- 154** Do what you are told to do!
- 155** Alternative access routes to/from the area. Plans for provisions (food/fuel, ect..) for people stuck beyond the road closures. Better understanding/appreciation for impacts of loss of power for extended periods
- 156** We need it to know who was in charge, where was the plan, there was none. Locations to drop help as an example for regular people. For emergency people, where was the near gas tank. Etc. Basic emergency planning.
- 157** I wish I had understood that we are not protected from fire. BCWS are the first to leave when it gets dangerous. They don't care if forests or structures burn. Local firefighters are the true heroes. Forestry & economy will always take precedent over people.
- 158** What to do with dangerous items ie. propane tanks, gas Are you supposed to unplug appliances etc. didn't know how to protect our boats, RV's . Take away or keep in the water? If you are

onsite and the main contact person is not there, how can they get the emergency information or evacuation order? Some kind of loud horn, siren etc.

159 Alternative escape routes

160 I wish we had more info re resources as to any help we could get while being evacuated

161 If you didn't cut the water from 12 pm to 4pm on the second day of the fire that would have been better Like seriously WTF

162 That no help would be given to locals who stayed to fight, that we would be threatened and treated like crimes by police under YOUR direction

163 Volunteer fire department decision making and resourcing in MagnaBay where water is largely well supplied. How can we help prepare in advance. We do have a fire smart property but can always be better.

164 How to best keep track of relevant information - the biggest issue (and one that was never resolved) - How would we be advised of a fire condition near our location? Facebook was absolutely the only source of this information and is in no way reliable. Evacuation routes - Safe zones for sheltering in place - to my knowledge none of these things has been addressed.

165 We were planning and ready to go if need be.

166 Nothing - like I said prior, I was prepared the first time. I think trusting your own eyes, and your instincts is the best plan.

167 I wish I had known that we'd genuinely be left out to dry, with no help in sight, and then that we'd actually be harassed by law enforcement for leaving our homes to get fuel for generators and pumps.

168 This was the first time that I have personally been impacted by a wild fire emergency so there was much

that I didn't know. Most surprising was the arrogant attitude that BCWFS had towards community residents. I had assumed that there would have been more cooperative response since BCWFS resources were not available for the first days of the fire fight.

169 To check the CSRD site more frequently

170 Our property was FireSmarted. We just needed more accurate information when there was non forthcoming. It was terrifying.

171 N/A

172

173 I wish I knew the BCWFS does not know everything (or maybe anything!) We trusted them to protect our community and I see they can't

174 Think I knew what I needed to know in a really bad scenario

175 that evacuation would last weeks as i prepared for days not weeks

176 How useless the Regional Districts, Politicians and Polices really are. Many of us had a pretty good idea that it was bad, but didn't quite think the incompetence was that bad.

177 The actual plan and who would communicate it.

178 More contact with Lakeview and the local firefighters. How hard it would be to get propane. That my insurance wasn't good enough as I am still waiting on the adjuster.

179 We had our important papers etc, packed for a few weeks before, and travel bags ready to go, since the fire was active and close. Would have been nice to know that we were expected to east to evacuate, rather than the normal way out. Lack of information on the main day of the fire, and the next couple of days, increased the stress of not knowing what

was happening. It was a difficult time for our family and friends, as they did not know what was happening, and communication at Seymour Arm was very spotty, for us to let them know we were okay

- 180** I used to work for ag can doing livestock evacuations until 2022 and quit because of them lighting a backburn with me gathering cattle on that range. I knew they would F it up and I knew communication would be lacking. As soon as they actually lit that backburn I was evacuating livestock and have a text message at 10:02 pm that night saying the burn (from a waaaay higher authority) had gone sideways and they were leaving for the night. I knew then I would be hauling all night as there was nothing to stop a 14 km ignition with those winds. I wish I knew why the F thing haven't changed and why someone with proper training in 'real life' isn't in charge.
- 181** I think I was well prepared for an emergency. My vehicle and boat were fully fueled, I had an additional 90 litres of fuel for the generator, propane, gas and electric water pumps, hoses, and tanks. I also had food that did not require refrigeration. I had been through an evacuation before and knew what I needed.
- 182** my rights as home owner to stay and protect my home?
- 183** That the CSRD would not listen to the locals.
- 184** Nothing, this was always a possibility it was simply a very fast timeline of it happening.
- 185** Nothing
- 186** To take photos and videos of all your belongings in case you need to show them to the insurance company. This should be added to the checklist of what to do. I wish I knew how many loopholes insurance has to get out of paying people when a claim has been made. Pretty much

every person I have spoken to has said how under-insured they are. How ICBC only covers up to \$1500 for items not attached to a vehicle like winter tires, roof cargo racks, bike racks... Unless you have extra coverage you don't get paid out on these things. House insurance doesn't cover stuff that can be covered by a third party like ICBC. So instead, we just lose all our money for the items no one will cover. It would be nice if ESS covered the cost of all the things insurance doesn't cover.

- 187** That it would be so political.
- 188** Where to go if evacuated and what were the services provided.
- 189** Bc wildfire service went ahead and did a backburn in a windstorm how do you prepare for that, when it went so badly
- 190** I wish I had up to date information on forestry road that goes to Seymour and then Malakwa.
- 191**
- 192** We were never put on Alert in Magna Bay
- 193** Take your heirlooms. Those are so much more precious than you give them credit for and when they're gone, they can never be replaced.
- 194** I wish I knew a head of time that they were going to do the so called "controlled burn"
- 195** Emergency evacuation route by land through Seymour Arm and evacuation plan by watershould have been in place months, years ago Also, what is the plan for trying to evacuate all the campers in the provincial park and visiting tourists on the North shore? And what is the plan when there is only a one-lane wooden bridge to leave the North shore out of Scotch Creek?
- 196** I am fully aware for emergency preparation and how to proceed. It was difficult in this location

as there is only one way in and out of the north shore. We considered going east to get out but that road is poorly maintained. Perhaps that is a consideration of the future, ie improving access to the north shore and the eastern road. The fact that the original fire on Adams was allowed to burn unchecked most of the summer was absurd and ill conceived. Looking at a map, the spread of the original fire could have burned the bridge and western access to the north shore at any time in the summer cutting off the community . (which it wound up doing anyway..) and should have been extinguished much sooner, rather than watching it.

- 197** How an evacuation would occur. What was the procedure to follow. How would the single wood bridge be protected. Boat access vs road?
- 198** Having never been involved in such a catastrophic event it would be nice to understand which groups are responsible for which types of response. For example, BCWS, local firefighters and CSRD.
- 199** Being made aware of all possible evacuation routes. By the time we left Hwy 1 eastbound was the only option . . . What if the fire had closed that exit? What are backroad options?
- 200** I had no idea about the plan back burn in a wind storm until it was too late
- 201** I don't think there was as much planning as watching. so I think zero about it and it never should have been let go for this long. The 2 fires coming together right where the fire camp workers were explains the whole picture. Well done.
- 202** There may be preparations in place but they were slow to be implemented. Orders and alerts were issued after

the road was impassable. When the fire jumped to the south side we heard it from citizens, not Alertable.

- 203** That a planned ignition was imminent while winds were predicted. To take photos of all possessions. To not trust BCWS. To not expect to ever return to my home.
- 204** We had packed our "go" bags, and tried to FireSmart our property as best as possible. I wish I knew more about the logistics - what factors go in to calling an Evacuation alert or order for a particular area (the criteria I guess).
- 205** I did not take emergency preparation seriously before this fire. Unfortunately next time an alert is called we will be prepared in how we transport our needed items in event of the worst happening.
- 206** In all honesty, the ultra negative reaction of governing bodies to people staying behind or coming back with or without permission to help save properties from incineration. The seeming lack of interest of BC Wildfire part to put out the fires ignited on July 12 after several lightening strikes. It must be easier and less costly to contain and "PUT OUT" a small fire than the raging inferno which developed due to inaction. The decision to light a back burn with a 4 hr window of opportunity was the worst example of BAD decision making one could imagine. The day it was announced anyone who lived in the area knew how dangerous a move this would become. Emergency Preparation and planning should not include risk taking of that nature. The people on the ground knew it was a bad idea why didn't the "EXPERTS". No one on the ground knew who was in charge to be honest. Those that stayed or came back should be commended for their actions. They never left their post when their shift was over because the task at hand was still in front of them. Fire doesn't

go to bed at night. It continues to burn. Emergency preparation and planning must be flexible enough to react to all situations. Volunteers are key factors in any good organizational plan.

207 Evacuation routes. How to prep home upon evacuating related to turning off water, gas etc We've been "fire smarting" our place since 2021

208 When Larry Morgan was the NS Director, he held an evacuation forum on where and how to evacuate which was very helpful. I wish there would have been a site for up to date info about the fire situation and somewhere to get accurate info while waiting for the alert and evac notice.

209 I was prepared

210 A complete plan of action that respectfully included the locals and knowledge keepers from the area.

211 We wish we knew that it would be such a disorganized mess. Why do we not still utilize fire Marshall's as in the past? Why do neighbourhoods and the community not have emergency plans and processes in place that are communicated properly with residents in the area? We had carried out fire smart practices on our property, however if the neighbouring properties have not in this type of a situation it really does not matter. The community needs a key person to lead this planning and preparation, so everyone is on the same page working together to prepare for such an emergency.

212 I was prepared.

213 I consider myself to be quite astute with respect to emergency preparation and planning because I work in the emergency management field. However, knowing about it and actually being faced with the possibility of evacuating and losing everything was completely

different. When the Alertable app went off and indicated we were under evacuation order was the scariest moment of my life. Finding out that it was a mistake triggered intense feelings of anger and frustration. Now I know that when you're faced with something unmanageable like a forest fire, the emotional waves and ups and downs were unexpected and unpredictable.

214 That we had ESS available and could get hotel rooms.

215 I would have liked to know the rationale behind setting the planned aerial ignition as this seems to be what caused most of the damage. I wish I had known that the fire service folks would be leaving rather than staying to fight the fire. I wish I had known that I could have stayed rather than leaving.

216 That the area has multiple overlapping boundaries between municipalities and regional districts who appear not to talk to or communicate a unified message during a wide spread emergency.

217 I emailed the CSRD 3 weeks before Aug 17 to ask what the evacuation plan was give. One way in/out in a wooden bridge, was told the likelihood of evacuation is extremely remote given position of the fire and that if it was necessary there are back roads. TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE ANSWER. Clearly there was no proper plan, the CSRD did not evacuate us properly or timely and there were no road directions or instructions. We were essentially abandoned.

218 More information on the progression of the fire.

219 How ill prepared the csrd was to deal with this situation.

220 There should not have been a backburn... had nothing to do with being prepared. How can you move everything you value out of the way of a fire that is raging toward your home.

- 221** Fire
- 222** We had fire proofed properties but water was key and it goes off fast. Would have had more sprinklers. We used our fire pump to keep property green. That we can't rely on the government. They don't have the resources or don't use what they have optimally.
- 223** That we are alone in this so do not count on BC Wildfire to spend their 1 billion dollar (?) budget on the rural communities of BC.
- 224**
- 225** What would be done to protect our home (security and fire). A plan
- 226** That the government wouldn't actually help or act to prevent our communities' destruction. That the government won't take responsibility for actions that led directly to the destruction of properties and communities. That we are on our own when it comes to evacuating in a timely manner; evac orders issued too late are worthless. That I will need to maintain the necessary certifications and equipment to protect property and li
- 227** Obviously when you think your home has burned, you start thinking of the family heirlooms that can't be replaced. We did have enough clothes for a week and food for a few days but would try to take more.
- 228** Why they don't out fires out before they become out of control monsters. This whole event was a disaster of human planning and response
- 229** We were prepared. From across the lake we watched the backburn spread quickly in the wind and knew this was going to be bad.
- 230** I think there should be one specific location on social media, where constant updated information was available.
- 231** What and where any resources we would need could be secured.
- 232** I am a structural firefighter and have experience in wildland as well. I wish more public education was done prior to these events as a whole, however; unfortunately unless people are directly impacted to begin with, buy in is often seldom. "Won't happen to me so I don't need to pay attention to the information or mitigate through fire smarting property, etc."
- 233** Fire Smart house construction and yard hazards (location of woodpile)
- 234** No
- 235** Unfortunately there was no information at all about situation for people who were locked up in non evacuated areas. It was the worst thing that I knew that we can't go home also our community was not on alert.
- 236** Empty and turn off refrigerator and freezer.
- 237** Nothing; I already understood what had to be prepared due to having a understanding of how much a Neoliberal government would intentionally not prepare people and, due to the first reason, would not be prepared for the wildlife.
- 238** More detail about alternate evacuation routes once the bridge was closed.
- 239** Resources available for help
- 240** That no agencies would be on top of issuing evacuation orders or he held accountable for any wrong doing.
- 241** How to stay on property and fight the fire ourselves as the priority was not places like ours so it just burned to the ground.

- 242** Better communication to areas that have limited communication and road access.
- 243** I feel like I did everything I could
- 244** We were shocked and dismayed that the fire was not dealt with early and not given the opportunity to grow out of control. The treatment of people living in the area was appalling. The restriction of supplies into the area left the residents in our area shut off even though they were not under evacuation order. We could not get in even by boat to look after the little things at our place like cleaning out our fridge. The level of police state was definitely overdone, especially considering that it was the locals that saved the area. The amount of time that it took to get the barge up and running was simply too long.
- 245** We as a family were prepared
- 246** Come fire season I often am packed to leave all the time. However I am judging the situation by myself as right now I can not trust the orders will come in on time without totally traumatizing my young children. The communication after the first fire bloom was much better though.
- 247** We had several sources to draw from previous years of fires in the region. Always following the news and checking BCFire website to make sure nothing was moving any closer to home. I had a list on my phone that I had saved labeled "In Case of Fire". Plus we have places we had already decided on where we could go. With Bush Creek fire we were more prepared as we felt this one would impact us for sure so took earlier steps for preparation.
- 248** Don't rely on officials to keep you updated.
- 249** The plans were in place for 3days not a month. Gas and food will be restricted by the government. Mental health damage is permanent. Fire Chiefs can flee.
- 250** What to keep on hand to possible fight the fire if it wasn't to aggressive
- 251** Escape route through Seymour Arm. Local road through Scotch Creek was closed all of a sudden when we were travelling through.
- 252** I wish I had everything packed up and ready to go. if they would of told us a few days ahead of time that they were purposely starting a man made fire on a certain night in a wind storm. All of us would of been gone. And I wish the firemen would of givin me the proper info when asked about fire conditions on the morning of August 18th. I was told they had everything under control and no need to evacuate until they knock on your door. They never came to knock on my door when we were evacuated before or after being trapped there.
- 253** Our small community did not know a plan existed prior to the wildfire. The best info we received was through Sharon at BeTeased through Instagram and I think Facebook. If it wasn't for her we wouldn't have had the up-to-date info of the fire. She should be commended for her brave actions and wanting to keep the community informed as the govt failed. We felt the govt wanted us to not know and fear us into leaving. Sharon's actions saved many properties and what did she get for her actions - banned from helping the community and providing food for the front line workers. Shame on the govt (of all levels). I hope the govt will allow people to rebuild their homes. We need a vibrant community again and need the people to come back to the North Shore.

- 254** Isn't anything additional I need to know about preparedness.
- 255** I guess I wish I knew they had no plan.... Let BC Wildfire "MONITOR IT"..... to get bigger and out of control, Just put the fire out the day it starts!!!! None of this would have happened if they did that !There is NO REASON not to put the fire outoh other than government budgets and making jobs for peoplemmmmm!!

Q13. How could the CSRD have better prepared you for this emergency? How can we improve for any upcoming emergencies?

288 of 473 participants responded

- 1** Communication! We have been asking for 20 years what the plan was and to me they flew by the seat of their pants. The North Fork logging road was not marked and if you didn't know where you were going you were lost.
- 2** Have an actual updated website, the news on website was days behind
- 3** Let the locals do their thing and keep the RCMP out or at least not threatening locals.
- 4** CSRD did a terrible job with timeliness of evacuation orders. Many people were forced to drive through fire and others were trapped when the road closed. Many others slept in their cars somewhere east of St Ives. This should never have happened. Everyone knew about the wind that was coming and the potential for the fire to get out of control
- 5** We are now better prepared knowing what happened the first time Include the locals to help.
- 6** There needs to be help from fire fighters that know what they are doing and resources provided for locals who seemed to be the only ones who knew what they were doing.
- 7** Respond to peoples needs.
- 8** Have a designated and agreed on hierarchy run the show.
- 9** Training locals to help
- 10** Get your act together! Do not rely on BC Wildfire Service and trust your own staff and residents. Improve communication with local fire departments. Support local residents who remain behind and fight fires to save their homes and properties and their neighbours. Advocate for allowing local residents to stay and fight fires.
- 11** Work with people who know the area and are capable of getting things done when it needs to get done
- 12** Better communication
- 13** current relevant information with easy access in each local community. Not everything was super cut and dry from everyone, some people had different circumstances than others and they needed guidance or assistance. More planned emergency exit plans (using Seymour, Arm or across lake option) When residents do not have factual information and guidance they panic and no longer trust the people making decisions...this did happen unfortunately
- 14** The single lane bridge needs another lane. Better access in and out!
- 15** Teach everyone how to use Alertable in their area Fire smart programs (which our fire chief has promoted for years. He was the one who inspired us to build our system.

- 16 Better communication with the community before the 18th we were told all was good until it wasn't and barely made it out of there.
- 17 Better notification, quicker communication. If any strata on the area has emergency pumps for hydrant water supply during emergencies in the community, they should not have to maintain these privately for community emergency use. There should be a funding agreement in place to assist with costly maintenance.
- 18 When fires are active in your region you need to have someone available 24/7. It seemed as though the CSRD was all on vacation at the same time and didn't care about the people that are in your jurisdiction.
- 19 Put the damn fires out when they start! I have grown up on Shuswap Lake for over 50 years and never have I seen a lazier effort to extinguish wildfires than last summer. I understand that resources are slim, but wildfires will only get worse from here: we need to extinguish immediately where possible. CSRD needs to enable better resource allocation or commit to better local fire fighting equipment and personnel.
- 20 A two lane bridge out of Scotch Creek - hopefully soon. Bridge at Talana Bay? A better maintained emergency road out on the east side with signage. Faster communication and more proactive approach to early evacuation alerts on the North Shuswap. Working with Wildfire service and provincial forestry services building trust again through community inclusion.
- 21 keeping people updated more currently
- 22 better check lists better advance warnings better emergency systems coordination of alerts
- 23 Read the 2000 plus name petition to start, a few times, to understand that THE TRUST HAS BEEN BROKEN NOT

JUST IN 2023 BUT PRIOR YEARS IN ADJACENT AREAS THAT WERE TREATED THE SAME WAY WITH THE SAME DEFICIENT PLAY BOOK. Get California and Australian Experts in to rewrite your plan book because it does not work.

- 24 If the CSRD wishes to to be the major source of information then please make it know!
- 25 Embrace the recommendations made to the Minister of Forestry by Jim Cooperman et al.
- 26 COMMUNICATION!!!
- 27 Listen to locals (especially the volunteer fire department) to issue alerts and orders Use local knowledge, experience, people, and equipment to help fight fires. Do not treat them like criminals
- 28 had simulations
- 29 Clarify the confusion regarding local volunteer firefighters, work out a clear plan for using local human resources to fight the fire.
- 30 We drive regularly between Blind Bay and Seymour arm the north shore was a tinderbox of dry materials (vegetation) better forestry management of the area would help in the Dasnier Bay Area where we have our second home is extremely forested I'm not sure what would help up there but the alternative exit out of Seymour arm the north fork should be maintained better for emergency exit as many of people from the north shore such as Anglemont, Magna bay, St Ives etc were required to exit north in this direction also
- 31 Proactively work with community groups to have clear roles and responsibilities. We are learning from the Anglemont Community Association about their experience having to provide help for 6 (approx?) days prior to the CSRD being able to action help.

- 32** The CSRD needs to have supplies on hand that can be easily accessed and sent to affected areas, pumps, hoses, axes, helmets, safety vests, etc. all in a mobile disaster truck that can be sent anywhere it's needed. Nominal cost firefighting training held every spring throughout area coordinating with local volunteer fire departments. Although unable to physically fight fires due to physical limits we could aid in filling water trucks, water cubes, shuttling supplies, etc. The CSRD needs to better take advantage of the people in the area and using designated disaster halls as meeting places for volunteers to gather and be assigned tasks. Shutting down roads only for safety reasons such as trees down or power lines down. Getting utilities into areas ASAP, again could be faster with volunteer help.
- 33** CsrD should not shut down like it did on August 17
- 34** Issued alerts MUCH earlier. Work with the community to assist BCWF and make use of the resources and people that were ready and willing to help. Better financial support during the emergency. Better website with more frequent updates.
- 35** You need to be in the area where the fire is not sitting in an office in Salmon Arm, you were absolutely clueless!! For those who had to escape to Seymour Arm many did not know the route or what to expect when they arrived. The North Fork road out for many was impassable. CSRD was useless!
- 36** Do everything possible to keep highways open
- 37** Start by NOT cutting off food and water and fuel supplies to those who had to remain and fight the fire. Police could have done a better job or sorting criminals from honest citizen assisting.
- 38** I guess the first thing that comes to mind is why are you gathering information and input 2 months before the next fire season, this work should have started 4-5 months ago. You are already less prepared than you should or could have been if this exercise was started sooner.
- 39** Making an alternative evaluation route available and marked. Warning us more that 1/2 hour before our house burnt. We were prepared but there was no direction as to when and how to leave
- 40** Obviously the message to leave came ridiculously late. Will never trust again that officials will let us know in time.
- 41** Getting the Alertable app dialled in will be key for upcoming fire season. This year was unacceptably delayed. Getting that response time quicker and placing alerts much sooner could save lives of vulnerable people like the elderly and disabled who may have a harder time evacuating. Encourage tourists to leave the area sooner to allow locals to move throughout alert zones more safely. Working with the locals instead of trying to pressure and scare them out is necessary. If not, it will be essential that CSRD Takes action in emergencies on site themselves. Let's all work together instead of bullying community members through times that are hard on everyone already. Another item is the permitting system for entering fire zones - this proved to be difficult and very slow. If aware that an emergency is possible, consider having consultants on call to answer calls, respond to questions etc. to make up for staff shortages.
- 42** Fast order!!
- 43** Communication, understanding we are locals and our whole lives are about this place.

Our families have been there for years, we aren't leaving because we will have no support if we lose it. Which is what happened to so many people. People are homeless they have lost everything. I work in social services and I had to decide between possibly getting arrested to get my dad meds. I know what the system is like finding affordable housing is not easy and that's what the events that took place during the fire have lead to.

44

45 More wildfire information and training

46 Took a while for NEP in St Ives to be able to get any information, but once she did was able to communicate and respond very quickly. Should activate this program (NEP) sooner

47 Support the communities efforts to protect itself from the fire. Condemn the BC government and RCMP when they block supplies from getting to residents that are fighting the fire on the ground. They couldn't send us firefighters or water bombers but could send RCMP boats from the coast to block supplies getting to residents. What an awful misuse of money and resources during a crisis.

48 Better real time communication

49 Deputize, train, assign, organize, locals with the skills to respond. Many of them were contracted anyway, so why not formalize it and recruit/train others in advance.

50 More communication better guidance in understanding weather conditions more Air help
Realize that we are just as important as Kelowna

51 Work to harness the helpful energy of the communities beforehand by offering \$100 training to any member of the public, and to link them to the community fire halls to have as a back up wildland fire / structure protection

support team. I know of several neighbors involved in working in unsanctioned fire suppression, who felt they had not choice because they were not members of the fire hall or BCWS (nor did they want to sign up), but felt driven to help. A lot of people were trying to be helpful in not very helpful ways, but with some training, could be looped into fire suppression efforts (esp. patrols for spot fires, etc) which would free up fire fighters to help elsewhere. It would also help increase community solidarity in the fire fight, which was a major problem with lots of dissent and misinformation fueling animosity to fire fighters.

52 Better communication and consultation with the public.

53 See previous answer

54 Implement an interface wildfire plan similar to Logan Lake and/or Williams Lake/CRD joint interface wildfire protection plan.

55 You can ACTION every fire with aircraft and other suprsion BEFORE they get out of control, and not DOWNPLAY the threat, doing NOTHING!

56 Too short of notice to evacuate. Treating those that stayed back with respect offer assistance if needed. Better ways to evacuate those if needed. Sending many to Seymour was good but over whelming for many . They did a wonderful job though. Better communication all around. Many older individuals do not have cell phones or computers .

57 They could have made sure the Wildfire Service put out both the east and west Adams fires when they were small!!

58 Better communication. A fire doesn't shut down over a weekend

- 59 Push fire-smart on more properties. More information about dangers to non-firefighters trying to intervene in fire scenes. More accountability for people who disrupt fire response.
- 60 being totally honest about the situation.
- 61 Communication as well as a detailed plan for each community. If there was a fire on either side of St Ives we would lose our ability to drive out. That would mean everyone has to leave by boat. Not everyone in our community has a boat. There are several senior people that would require help just to get to the lake.
- 62 CSRD should advocate for BCWS to actively fight fires from the onset, not work in a reactive manner when "monitoring" fails.
- 63 Evacuation orders in time would be best.
- 64 More responsive and immediate communication would be better. The alertable app was sometimes unreliable. By this I mean we did not all get the same messages at the same time. There were occasions that some people didn't even get the messages despite being signed up for alerts. St Ives was not in the evacuation or alert zone. However our impact was the same as communities in the alert zone. There should have been better communication with our community as a number of people were still in the community. I did get a lot of the information when volunteering at the Lakeview Community Centre in Anglemont. I also wonder if the grants for the Fire Smart Program could be increased. We have done a lot at our property but maybe if the grants were higher more community properties would get involved.
- 65 Fire Smart every where.
- 66 The evacuation order needed to be in place way sooner than it was.
- 67 Communication....period. I tried checking websites, they would get down due to high usage. Not updated regularly. CSRD shit the bed and they know it.
- 68 By not allowing BCwildfire to Light that Backburn, and then take refusing to take responsibility for burning out the North Shuswap!
- 69 CSRD is in control right... figure it out? BC wildfire is a joke and everyone knows there is more to this than you people are letting on! Now we get fined and arrested when we stay and protect what we've build and slaved to pay for ??? Such a joke!
- 70 Sound the alarm sooner people, this could have been devastating, lucky we never lost a soul.
- 71 Stay out and let us handle it! Where is our road rescue unit that Jay has been begging for for 3 years? I hear you are against an ambulance bay in our new fire hall?!
- 72 More honesty in their reporting of the situation. More local support. Use more local input on local situation. Sitting in an office in salmon arm with no boots on the ground locally was not very helpful.
- 73 In general, I thought the CSRD managed very well with a few exceptions. The egress through Seymore Arm should have been clearly marked by proper signage all the way to the highway. I also think the CSRD would be wise to offer the S100 course at local halls each year for free to anyone that wishes to attend, these people could then be placed on a list for immediate deployment, the list could also mention special relevant skills and equipment.
- 74 Get your act together! Do not rely on BC Wildfire Service and trust your own staff and residents. Improve communication with local fire departments.

Support local residents who remain behind and fight fires to save their homes and properties and their neighbours. Advocate for allowing local residents to stay and fight fires.

- 75 More frequent information on local radio and TV and the use of electronic sign boards.
- 76 Tell the BC wildfire service to put the fires out when they are lightning strikes and very small. This was completely avoidable and totally disastrous and all the animals and the bush burned and it could have been avoided. I am very angry
- 77 Work with the residents rather than berate them for their efforts
- 78 More precise news.
- 79 Evacuate people sooner who need and will go . Have a proper plan and actually implement it before it's a panick life threatening situation. Having everyone on alert is great for people to have time to get ready (if able of course) but what good is the alert if the follow through from csrd , bcwf, and government and alertable doesn't work!
- 80 Give the people some credit! You treated us like we could never make a decision on our own. Listen to the recommendations of locals who know the area much better than the CSRD or the BCWS. I found the daily updates to be almost condescending. I was appalled at how locals who stayed to battle, after being abandoned, were treated. It was very disturbing. I thought I would always be one to follow alerts and orders, but after the way the North Shuswap fire was handled, I probably won't. We will be forever in debt to the brave locals who stayed and saved our home from being one of the

casualties. We have no trust or respect for the CSRD or BCWS in how they would handle things in the future.

- 81 more updates prior to the alert/evacuation notice. There was not enough warning for many communities about the status of the alerts/evacuations. If there was threat to the only road out (back roads are not always viable for everyone) there needed to be more communication, instead of evacuation mere hours before the raod was not passable, stranding many people. Of course makinfg use of local knowledge and talent is a must, especially if already trained.
- 82 Timely information and evacuation alerts.....we had a buddy wake up in his burning home on a dirt road.....no one told him
- 83 An evacuation alert would have been more helpful instead of going right to an order. This would have gave surrounding residents time to prepare
- 84 Increased efforts around the firesmart program (tough one I know). Get to know the experts, professionals and community leaders who can assist. If the CSRD wants to lead they are going to have to be leaders. True leaders do the work up front and build the team. When things go sideways the team knows what to do, who to call and what supports exist. Climate change is going to test us for the rest of our lives. We need to work together to get through these incidents. The CSRD is huge, we have a lot of vulnerable forest. The CSRD should be advocating to the MOF for large scale commercial fuel reduction projects including partial cuts and patch cuts around communities. We must reduce fuel continuity at the stand and landscape levels.
- 85 Leadership who are trained in disaster response (this was clearly not there the first five days

and it was shocking to see the disorganization ie search and rescue boat sitting on a trailer at Shuswap marina while people were stranded, first responders like BC Hydro having to get permits to go into affected areas etc). A lot of chaos and disorganization.

- 86 Better updates, more information, faster action
- 87 We needed front line information to be given out before the Alertable app and local facebook groups
- 88 We packed our essential items the Friday the fire was on the move so quickly. We made our best guess based on information on Alertable etc. there was always a lot of discussion about what action to take if you weren't in an immediate action area,
- 89 Communication must be improved.
- 90 Use resources to extinguish fire rather than let them burn.
- 91 Tough question everything happened so fast. More common sense, people who are willing to stay behind are no joke. Tough, Experienced individuals that know the area are very valuable in times like these. My property would not be here if my brother didn't stay behind. The south side would not be the same. Need a better system on bringing supplies to people who stayed behind. Don't starve out people that are trying to help. Just ridiculous. What happened to help the Neighbor?
- 92 More up to date communication. Too much guessing, caused people to be anxious Transparency in the reality of the situation Presentations by our fire depts Alertable notices were confusing at times
- 93 Get on the small fires faster! Just because the fire starts in a provincial park they still need to fight the fire before it makes it to forestry lands

- 94 The live updates were really helpful from CSRD and BCWS. Those info sessions could start before the crisis/day of the fire to help keep people informed of the "current situation" as it evolved.
- 95 The CSRD didn't prepare me or anyone I know for this emergency. Transparency and it is up to the CSRD to actually communicate with the other agencies and give proper and accurate information The CSRD or any other agency did not put the communities east of Magna Bay on Alert. Then they left those communities with zero information, zero access to basic necessities for almost 2 weeks The barge was finally utilized. If it wasn't for the residents things would have been a lot different. I've been part of disaster relief for earthquakes, fires, floods and I have never seen people left to their own defences for this long of a period. Within 24-48 hours is when disaster relief arrives There was zero foresight on how this was going to transpire, no preparation which makes no sense as everyone on the North Shuswap knew. Not advocating for the residents was complete disregard for the people who pay your salaries
- 96 The order should be called so everyone can safely evacuate. Those who are qualified should be allowed to take a certified course to remain in the area and work their property or assist their neighbor without being jailed.
- 97 Timely decision and communication. Ensure the relationship between governments are strong so timely communication and decision making is occurring and is not siloed. Have a plan. The disorganization lead to greater chaos during the wildfire.
- 98 Need more residents with wildfire fighting skills and need more resources to help. This is a

blue collar region a lot of residents know how to operate equipment and are not afraid to get involved

- 99** Let locals ie: firefighters loggers and people with a brain run the show not the idiots that were here
- 100** Proper evacuation alerts! Not after it is too late to get out of the area on a one way in and out road!
- 101** Set up an ap for the community. This can be done easily. People can register on the ap, say where they are, what tools they have, what training they have, their very last minute evacuation plan if needed (ex out by boat), training they have to help. plus any other information to help locate people and how they can help if they choose to stay.
- 102** Advocate for better fire control from BC Wildfire Service. The Alert app should be more current and detailed.
- 103** I have my S100 ticket from many years ago, but it would be beneficial if CSRD invested in and/or coordinated a community based wildfire response program. Also, including natural disasters. We know our region is now at high risk of flood, slides, and other new disaster complexities. There are very competent residence in the region who will step up during emergencies, why not better prepare them and leverage residents as a resource during emergencies.
- 104** I am not certain. I do know that bc forestry /fire needs to be more pre emptive than reactive. They need to follow more practices like that of AB fire and the fire crews in the states.
- 105** I live in a FireSmart community (which I coordinate). Any improvement in communication would prove beneficial.
- 106** Communication with individuals that are immediately effected in a timely manner

107 This community has been woefully inactive with emergency preparedness actions and communications. Here's how to improve:

1. Months ahead of wildfire season, hold a series (a series) of well publicized, emergency planning sessions in rural communities--and get residents involved to the extent that they are able. Rather than guessing about what to do, residents need to hear directly from wildfire fighters, utilities supervisors, emergency responders, RCMP, and other boots-on-the-ground personnel. Discussions might include what to expect from officials during an emergency, descriptions of how responders work, identification of community members with skills and experience relevant to emergency situations (and people willing to learn), emergency preparation for rural communities, risks and protections unique to those communities, utilities procedures (turn off? leave on?), alternate evacuation routes, safety considerations when hauling extra fuel, and other details that tend to be incorrectly reported on various media platforms. Planning sessions need to be held early and often. March is getting a bit late.
2. Accommodate the needs of vulnerable people. It's important to realize that some people have mobility issues, some cannot see, some cannot hear, some are recovering from surgeries, some have cognitive or mental health challenges, and some are just too young to respond in an emergency. They need extra time to evacuate, and the alert system must accommodate that need by sending out Alerts and Orders sooner. NOTE: The system may require a feature where vulnerable people can register for earlier alerts.
3. Recognize that cell service may go down

during an emergency and that some people do not have cell phones at all. When our cell service and power went down on August 18, our community was left with no official means of finding out where the fire was or which way to evacuate. Similarly, people who live in cell service dead zones (there are many in the Shuswap) or who do not have cell phones with data plans could not get information.

4. Provide a reliable alert system--with backup. In our family, we have Alertable.ca downloaded to six (6) devices, but we are NOT confident that it's working properly because of the following deficiencies:

- We received Alerts 6 - 10 hours AFTER the fire ignited near Sorrento; this was way too late
- When Alerts arrived, there was no sound on the computers or iPad
- We had no cell phone or internet service during the power outage
- Alertable.ca advises that one of our cell phones is not compatible with their app--which means we have to buy a new cell phone. This is an unreasonable expense that shouldn't be needed to access a public safety system; Amber Alerts come through on our phone; Emergency Alerts should come through, too.
- There is no way for users to test the Alertable system to ensure it's working on their devices. In my view, the Alertable system is dangerously inadequate and needs to be rethought. British Columbia requires multiple streams of alerts that are reliable during an emergency. They may include:
 - A reliable and widely compatible cell phone alert system similar to the Amber Alert system
 - Cell towers with emergency generators that keep

towers working (as Nova Scotia used during post-tropical storm Lee)

- Television emergency alerts with detailed information about local conditions
- Radio emergency alerts and/or a dedicated emergency radio station with detailed information about local conditions (canned music programs on local radio stations do not cut it during an emergency)
- Low tech backup, such as emergency sirens in each community, to let people know that an Alert or Order has been issued That is, if the power goes out and cell service goes down, what's the backup? Yes, residents will receive a knock on the door (we hope) if there is an Order, but that's awfully late and creates panic and traffic congestion. it also doesn't take into account vulnerable residents who may need more time to evacuate. In summary, we need proactive planning that involves the community, alert systems that work in all kinds of conditions, alert systems that reach a range of people (not just those wealthy enough to have cell phones and data plans), and low tech backup. Currently, there is far too much reliance on unreliable cell phone systems.

108 The people from Anglemont did not get help from Emergency Services right away, even though the decision to self-evacuate was a wise one, there was no support for them outside of the community. There should be a clear process for people to follow before, during and after the emergency and this process (here is where you can go if you stay, here is how you can leave safely and here is where you go for support after you leave) in signage, posters, handouts and social and other media. Even the info on the CSRD Emergency

Services webpage was not relevant to the people of Anglemont. Residents should never have been put in the position of having to drive a treacherous, unmarked road in the dark without assistance.

- 109** 1 source of up to date information. Clear evacuation routes. Faster decisions of evacuation. It was shocking that the fire was in town when evacuation ordered and that people north of the zone were not allowed to get support or supplies.
- 110** Ensure local units fighting fires are supported in every way possible at all times
- 111** The CSRD representatives that stayed behind to help got us the most information and in a timely manner but I understand that he did not have the support of the rest of the CSRD. More community support from CSRD and less politics.
- 112** Ensure all necessary information is provided to the public with clear direction. Evacuate earlier!
- 113** Earlier warning. Emergency supplies and food delivered instead of denied to residence in the north shu
- 114** In my opinion, the CSRD was totally unprepared for this event. The evacuation notice was issued two hours after the fire came down the hill into the north west corner of Scotch Creek. Way too late. My neighbour drove through flames. I was told by a CSRD team that came to Scotch Creek in either September or October that it takes two hours to get an evacuation order in place. Way too much bureaucracy. It was people on social media that put out the call for boats to evacuate people. The people of the North Shuswap who make their living off the land are amazing, resourceful people who are well equipped to fight fires. If not for them, things would have been much, much worse. The Marina and Provincial Park

would be gone. How the CSRD treated these people was simply criminal. How can the CSRD improve for the future. First, the CSRD needs to work with these people. If they do not, then they will have learned nothing from this tragedy. Secondly, the higher ups that threw the locals under the bus need to be gone. There is a deep level of anger, resentment and lack of trust in the in the community to the CSRD and BCWS that I doubt will ever go away. Getting rids of the morons that created this mess might help with the healing process. Also, getting building permits out the door so people can rebuild their lives. No reason that it cannot be done. The CSRD is meant to make the lives of the people they represent, better. It is not to make them worse. It is not to build personal empires and egos.

- 115** Make a better access in and out of our area. There should be more than one way in and one way out. The trip to evacuate through syemore arm takes 6 hours and you need a lot of fuel and a 4 wheel drive as well basic survival skills for that trip. People were getting lost and vehicles were breaking down trying to use this exit route because the road was in such poor shape and little or no signage. We shouldn't have wooden single lane wagon bridges as the main exit as they could easily burn down. Everyone who lives here should have the opportunity to learn basic training in wild fires and what to expect. CDRD should improve how the notifications technology works and improve the quality of the updates. Thank goodness for NASA which helped identify Hotspots.
- 116** Have CSRD members/employees who reside in the area to know the hurdles faced in the North Shuswap. Review the study from 20 years ago to see what was determined at that time and look for incomplete

actions. BE PRESENT! Stop putting all support and services in Salmon Arm for your convenience. Placing the Resiliency Centre In Salmon Arm was useless to us when it would take anyone an hour just to go from Celista to Hwy 1 with all the stoppages from Hydro, Telus and others. Then still a 45 min drive to Salmon Arm. Then repeat for the venture home. I am so disappointed that CSRD has not come to the North Shuswap in a public manner and instead sends Consultants. Do you REALLY want to know how you can do better? Then talk to us like we matter to you.

- 117** Better warning system, one shop for good up to date information, no buck passing, allow staff to make decisions without having to take it the line - costly delays
- 118** Put your evac alerts on quicker. Ensure an escape route (s). Build a fireproof bridge...
- 119** Honest and open communication. Ask residents to take fire courses & stay if they choose to. Ask residents & use their knowledge of area & weather patterns. Use equipment instead of man power to make fire guards. Make sure alertable & website more up to date. We made the decision to leave before we got the alert to evacuate. We were on the bridge, fire was down to the road when we got the official alert. I had friends call me, who lived in Alberta, who told me Scotch Creek was on fire.
- 120** Publishing the guidelines mentioned in the previous question, and providing support systems for assisted living facilities to evacuate without putting the onus on relatives to have a plan.
- 121** The improvement falls on how fires are fought in our province by the government

- 122** Directions and evacuation plans via the logging roads needed to be improved
- 123** More communication and notifications on how to be prepared
- 124** Stop blocking people from helping. Allow people to sign a liability waiver to stay.
- 125** We had absolutely no support, no notice, no help, we were all alone with our neighbours fighting this. No firefighter was anywhere...
- 126** Encourage more fire smart properties. Fly over zombie areas, flag the smoked and send crews in to put out. Hit the fires hard n put out even if small. Hit hard hit it wet.
- 127**
- 128** I think when an area goes on to Alert that the campers provincial campground should be required to leave. Sorry that this wrecks your holiday but this a whole bunch on people and vehicles hauling trailers that can be cleared from the area in an orderly manner.
- 129** You guys were absolutely awful at handling the situation on the ground. Blocking people from St Ives and North the way you did through the entire process was unacceptable and inhumane. Your organization is an absolute joke when coordinating the North Shore recovery effort.
- 130** Better upkeep/fireproofing on Squilax-Anglemont Rd. Especially crown land and vacant lots. Maintaining the barge access at St Ives that was made to have food and supplies brought to Anglemont Community Centre.
- 131** Ensure people know that wildfire response is done by various levels of organizations/governments - that the CSRD or TNRD or Village of Chase or whomever the local authority is does not fight the fires and gets

information from the BCWS as to the extent of the fires, and the threat they pose to communities

- 132** More time to evacuate!!! When I drove out, there were flames on the side of the hill at Adam's River Bridge which was pretty terrifying, specially knowing that many hadn't left yet.
- 133** I understand the Kelowna fire had precedence but maybe not do a back fire when they know winds are going to gust upwards of 50 km/hr
- 134** Hmmmm, well the obvious one would be putting out the evacuation order before the community is actually on fire. That way those who stay have made their choice, but at least it gives more people a chance to escape that aren't prepared and causes less panic. It was horrible talking to the people coming across in boats that had to be turned around at the bridge because they had no time. I have pictures of fire in scotch creek approx 1200, one evac alert on allertable came out on my phone at 1440 trapping many on the east side of the bridge. Not that relying on phones should ever be considered a smart thing to do. However many people do and some people could have been killed if the situation had any more variables. We were already in sorrento by that point thanks to using our eyeballs and seeing the fire right behind us. Also noticed the ranchers hauling cattle out once the rumour of the insane backburn was confirmed. Ranchers and generational farmers obviously have more common sense than the government. On a positive note, maybe more education accessible to locals on fire training and courses so that we can all stay back the next time the government decides to make another negligent decision and blames climate change. Maybe community fire fighting gear or a plan like Logan Lake

has instead of giving all our money to the Ukraine and woke causes? I don't know, is there even a point of thinking the government wants to do better?

- 135** Have a plan including locals that have tools, knowledge and skills
- 136** 1) Change the policies for evacuation orders so that Rural and Urban evacuation orders are treated different. 2) Inform the public when an upcoming summer has 'Higher than Normal Risk of Forest Fire' due to lack of precipitation over the winter months.
- 137** Actually dealing with the fire when it first started and not allowing it to grow. Allow us to stay behind and defend our properties and neighbourhood
- 138** The CSRD couldn't have done anything but the Province should have mobilized more volunteer help. The Bush Creek Fire should have been dealt with before it grew so big.
- 139** Better people who care on council that can make important decision. A safe place for north shore locals to go instead of hours away. Proper evacuation plans and exits.
- 140** First strike is so important now with drought, dead forests and climate change. The fires should have been water bombed asap after the lightening strikes and only the locals seemed to know how close the fire was to our communities and how fast it could travel and burn.
- 141** Don't lie about having a successful controlled burn
- 142** Actually evacuated us properly and not wait until the fire was on our door step
- 143** CSRD could do nothing to help me prepare for this emergency my 35 years of experience had prepared me. The CSRD could have saved mass panic and loss of property had they taken the bold step of

advance warning residents and tourists alike of the approaching danger. Thousands of people trying to flee last minute is the absolute worst case scenario. 1 road in and out that is in the fire path and no advance planning for the evacuation shameful!!!!!! There was weeks to prepare and no action was taken.

144 By taking the learnings from this event and creating procedures and guidelines for communicating with citizens. Creating a data collection method for each aspect of disaster scenarios.

145 So many things.

146 Advance notice

147 This: nothing. Upcoming: Simple real time communication. Press conferences are a waste of resources, inefficient, and is old information in the end. The time and effort organizing, gathering people, gathering information, etc. are pure waste of resources. If you need your faces in the media prop your phone up, record a video and post to social media platforms then email it to the dinosaur media outlets. Same effect, less waste.

148 The CSRD could purchase supplies like water tanks and hoses and make them available to private citizens who already have the infrastructure (ie/trucks, generators) and know-how to use them in an emergency (this is what we saw happened and it worked). The CSRD could help supply fuel or compensate citizens after the fact who stay behind used their own supplies to protect properties. Some fire training for ordinary people would be useful, but in general, able-bodied people who work with this type of equipment already knew what to do and did it - support should NOT be predicated on having previously taken training.

149 You need to deal with squatters living rough out in the bush. Their camps burn down frequently. They're dying from drug overdoses. CSRD could collaborate with forestry (BCTS, Canoe, Interfor...etc) and do more deactivation and recontouring of the resource roads so there's less opportunity for the abuse and fire hazard that is taking place.

150 The very worst moment was when the firefighter camp was evacuated and, rather than relocating anywhere close at hand, they retreated to Kamloops. North Shuswap was left quite unprotected - it was at that point we felt sure we would lose our home and community. And then all the hostilities began with the brave and capable locals who stayed behind being vilified. So learning from 2023 and having a better plan B would be appreciated.

151 Inform us a great deal sooner. Don't hesitate a minute.

152 CSRD did nothing, this was extremely poorly handled and you all should be embarrassed for yourselves. The CSRD should be dissolved and let the community take care of themselves, as the volunteer firefighters and community is what saved everything that was. But this probably isn't the answer you are looking for, so absolutely anything would be better than you did. Communication is key, and the one guy that lives in our community was helpful after the fire, driving around and updating people, so direct communication and involvement with the home owners prior to the unnecessary and totally ridiculous back burn. Door to door for the elderly, they don't have social media.

153 CSRD, if they have any say in the people and resources in their area, need to make a stand and have fires

put out IMMEDIATELY. This "monitoring" in drought conditions is asinine.

154 Celista burning before an evacuation order being issued is the most glaring example of improvement required. The CSRD promised several years ago to formalize an evacuation route for the N. Shuswap but it never materialized. Even with the fire burning for weeks before all the devastation, nothing was done. The road out through Seymore Arm and on to Craigellachie should have been graded in advance with a dust control program in place. Clear signage at intersections for locals and tourists find their way out. Again, it was locals with local knowledge who stepped up to fill the gap and quite possibly prevent fatalities. Supporting local contractors, loggers, etc with fuel and the necessities of life while they stand alone to fight fires and spot fires is clearly a requirement.

155 Clear communication is key. As mentioned, we live on a dead end street. We find the evacuation alerts and orders tend to follow geographically convenient lines, which generally is fine. However, for our road, some consideration needs to be given to the fact we only have one way out. If the only way out is through an evacuation order area, I would argue that our street needs to be on evacuation order as well. I was surprised the CSRD did not declare a state of local emergency, for at least the North Shuswap. Although I don't know all the details, I thought the intent was to allow resources to be assigned and coordinated at the local level. A local state of emergency may also have helped with communications. A local state of emergency should have enabled a system for getting supplies and equipment to the North Shuswap. If a local state of emergency would not, or

could not provide for the flow of supplies and equipment, then I believe a system needs to be implemented for future disasters. I also was appalled at how people were being treated that stayed behind to help fight the fires or even to allow the flow of goods and services to the affected areas. This is one area where I thought the issuance of a local state of emergency would have helped. The whole notion that the BC Wildfire Service are the only people who can fight a fire is unrealistic in today's environment where fires are getting larger and many more of them. I thought early on, BCWS did a good job of actioning fires in our area. However, by mid July, when the action really picked up, they didn't have enough resources. There needs to be a much more co-ordinated approach with those who can fight fire at the local level. When you fight a war, you take resources from where ever you can get them. We are fighting a war against fire in our communities and we need all hands on deck. We also need to continue with the FireSmart program to help defuel our communities. In our rural residential communities, such as Blind Bay and Sorrento, we should investigate, and be using, roof sprinkler systems used in Logan Lake which saved their community a few years ago.

156 Have diesel powered pumps set up so people could access water supplies. (Possible a cistern or access through dry hydrants at Bristol Road or other beaches) Need a system to allow people access to protect their own properties without creating liability for governments (sign a waiver? training program?) Allow firefighting equipment, food and fuel supplies to get in. Get SVSAR involved in supporting supply chains. Keep the

police state mentality from taking over, learn how to support people who have so much to lose.

- 157** Residents should be encouraged to have firesmart, insurance companies should help by giving reduced premiums for firesmart.
- 158** Do not pull the fire Department from their protection area. There was absolutely no reason on earth the fire hall and community could not have been protected. I say this because after 5PM I was out stomping out spot fires with a water bucket and a broom.
- 159** Begin communicating early, keep it constant, bring in staff to answer Social Media questions, and do not leave life threatening evacuation decisions too long
- 160** Use 911 addresses for all communications and alerts and orders. I should not have to know what electoral area I live in
- 161** The instructions for Anglemont and eastward residents to be prepared to shelter in place for four days were clear. More information and meaningful information should have been prepared for release on day three.
- 162** See previous response.
- 163** Listen to the locals
- 164** Put new fires out RIGHT AWAY, instead of monitoring them
- 165** I understand that the fire moved fast but the alerts put in place were unclear and it was confusing about where the fire was and what areas were in danger. This highly increased stress both about our own property and where we could find safety.
- 166** Talk to the locals ! Work together for people's safety ! Got our evacuation alert approx 20 min AFTER our third building was on fire !!! Keep informed !!

- 167** Maybe...NOT LOCK EVERYTHING OUT? I am DEEPLY untrusting of CSRD now. They sent in MORE police to stop resources coming in? I am just outraged at the way the CSRD handled things. I am appalled. I cannot properly voice my anger at what happened.
- 168** put the fires out before they destroy everything. dont do a backburn in wind storm. let people that know the land save it while you sit in meetings deciding how to proceed.
- 169** Get hydrant and a fire hall built now. Put in fire pumps in the lake to be used in any emergency. Better communication with less reliance on technology
- 170** Just be quicker with evacuation alerts and orders. I found it very stressful driving with flames on both sides of the road trying to evacuate even before the order was placed.
- 171** Small bands do not have the capacity to handle emergency situations when the staff also has to flee. Communications need to be centralized and the provincial/federal (bands are under federal jurisdiction) divide needs to be eliminated.
- 172** Allow the people staying to use un-manned fire equipment to fight fires on their property. Supplying equipment and some kind of funding for the people using their own money and equipment to fight fires in their properties.
- 173** Actually have skilled fire fighters who will actually fight the fire instead of wait for instruction and have safety meetings. I was as prepared as I could be. CSRD is not responsible for my preparedness.
- 174** More radio announcements, reader boards on both sides of Sorrento. Let people know ahead of time what could possibly happen

- 175** More advanced planing and communications.
- 176** Having a proper plane by sectors, geographic areas.
- 177** Communication was NOT clear or timely! Alertable is a great tool, but information was not relayed fast enough. (Too much red tape) Improve by knowing that fires will be larger, hotter and more frequent moving forward. Leaving “small” fires to burn like the Adams Lake fire WILL grow to a large burn at some point. Highway access for escape routes are imperative.
- 178** Not be in denial of how close the fire is, the evac order was issued too late
- 179** Let us know sooner to leave before we had to go through live fires to get out
- 180** You need to communicate better with the locals in the area.
- 181** Radio channel
- 182** Maybe not set the place on fire next time The backburn is the reason all those trees are gone The government agencies are to blame for all those mountain bald spots
- 183** -Mayb alerted people of the botched back burn before it was too late -Help out or get out of the way.
- 184** Have more education by both CSRD and also local fire department. Have FD walk out properties and make suggestions that are easier for them. Have block captains to facilitate information to residents and part time residents.
- 185** 24/7 staffing - real time information about fire location - immediacy and transparency of reporting. There has been a complete loss of confidence in the CSRD its procedures and reporting. There is no robust NEP in place - this would be critical in providing real time local information. Use reasonable and consistent criteria for issuing evacuation alerts - improve the delivery of these.

Find a way to to use the federal 'alert' program which is able to call all cell phones within a selected area - as we get when a child is abducted in Surrey. The idea that a representative will come to your house (in time) to tell you to evacuate has proven to be absurd. The message of 'run for your lives' could easily and immediately be broadcast by telephone.

- 186** Try putting the fire out when it starts! Small fires are cheaper and easier to put out.
- 187** Maybe a better link to the addresses that are in a dire situation - the fire was 2 minutes from my home, and I had no order, no knock on the door, nothing, even though sprinklers had been set up on my roof and yard, and the situation was known. It was my neighbour who came banging on my door at 11 pm. When I got home a few days later, there was an evacuation order sitting on my table. A little late! This is unacceptable.
- 188** Providing fuel and food rather than preventing it from getting to us.....
- 189** Not sure as I was away prior to alerts
- 190** CRSD could take the lead in developing community partnerships by offering training such as S100 courses and by becoming more collaborative with local residents. Find out the capabilities of the locals and enlist their volunteer support for early response to emergencies.
- 191** We need to have cell phone service for an evacuation route. We need power for them. The one road out needs to be improved so that there is a better route out. That logging road to Seymour Arm and beyond is not a proper road to be on to evacuate out of. This needs to be addressed. This could happen again. We can do better for everyone. IT was positive that we had a barge come to give us a break to get supplies

in St. Ives. That was so positive. We needed supplies but it all took a week to get it all organized. We need to do better for our communities at the end. We felt forgotten. We were trapped and forgotten. Not a good feeling to handle mentally. We felt we were left on our own to cope. We did but where were you for the first 7 days. We were happy when our meds were boated in to Anglemont. That is very positive. This was a great service. I used it twice. We used the barge as well. It was NEEDED. We need to activate these type of services sooner. We Volunteered and helped one another. We set up generators but our only gas service station was the most expensive one on the North Shore. We were grateful for it but it was expensive to keep our fridges/freezers going. No compensation for us.

192 My home is very fire smart. My personal opinion is people do not think about emergencies until it is to late. A friend in the Sorrento area was a former wild land fire fighter. He had people asking him what to do when fire was approaching. If you don't know what to do that is not the time to be asking. Preparedness is ongoing, keep offering the courses to educate.

193 We were starved for information throughout this ordeal, with the most reliable info coming thru neighbours who had contact with the mill and directly to Emergency Services. The first press conference after the first Adam's Lake evac was especially frustrating as Forrest spent a long time explaining why the model was wrong, while we were all waiting with bated breath the hear whether our properties survived the night. Such poor communication!

194 Have emergency routes out of the area properly marked routes and advertise as such

195 Maybe they don't know anything either?? We need accurate, timely information and trusted professionals I wrote an essay before starting this survey so I was prepared. Now I get to the end and do not see anywhere I can enter the information I have written. I will see if I can cut and paste here but my suggestion is you leave room for people to tell you like it is/was. I will not attend one of your seminars, I can not handle any more negative talk. Dear CSRD Here you are asking to hear from me and once again here I am answering your request but each time I do this I really wonder why. Time and again I have felt unheard. Why do I keep doing this? Our experience with Wildfire 2023 See above...I am an engaged citizen. I tend to give government the benefit of the doubt. I try to believe people are just people doing their job. In the past I, personally, have not had a reason to think the BC Wildfire Service is doing us a disservice. We have had very close experience with the Alert system and it worked. We were put on Alert and saw firsthand the actions both on the land and in the air to fight the fire in the valley above our community. We also watched as a previous fire threatened some cabins that were water access and off grid but BCWFS was there with all their crew and equipment including structure protection and all was saved. I thought we were safe. This year was different. Lots need to change before I can get any confidence back. We were well aware of the fires at Adams lake in mid July. We thought BCWFS would work hard to protect us. It is unbelievable that by mid August these fires, in an area of many large beautiful homes and people, were still so out of control and yet the residents were not even on Alert. We were never put on Alert and yet our only driveable exit route

was threatened and finally closed completely. Both of us did as asked and had the Alertable app on our phones. In our case we left around 4 pm on Friday August 18 not because we were notified we were at risk but because we decided to get away from the smoke for a few days with friends. We had no idea we would drive out and not be allowed back for 3 weeks. We had no idea we would drive through a very dangerous fire storm between Celista and Lee Creek. We thought BC Wildfire Service with the CSRD had our backs! Our confidence in government has been scared forever. We will never be able to trust you again. The lack of trust for government was made worst by CSRD Communication during the event. The police action against residents who were helping when no one else was around was terrible. We have been encouraged to 'fire smart' our homes but when we see our home is at risk of fire and there is no one but ourselves to protect it we assume we must stay or lose everything. These are very brave people and they did what they had to and thankfully were able to do. We were safe in Vernon but our friends and neighbours were trapped. They made the very best of no power or internet and we tried to keep them informed through gathering information from news reports and talking to them on cell phones. The CSRD media briefings were completely out of touch with what was happening. It is not in my nature to point fingers but you asked....I felt like smashing my TV whenever Tracy Hughes spoke. She was so condescending I really found it unbelievable that no one pulled her from that desk. You all must have been out of touch. No information would have been better than someone who sat in her comfy chair, told you how hard they were working and

how much they understand. Do you remember when she told people why they could not come back was because they might let their children play in the ash and hurt themselves. WOW I could go on about how the news media focused on West Kelowna and little mention was made of Shuswap. Bush Creek East does not cut it. Police spike belts, disgusting! Blocking supplies, so dangerous! What was happening? What went well? The first thing that helped us was our local volunteer fire department who we encountered on the road as we left on that Friday afternoon. They appeared to have things under control and waved us through when we saw fire burning on either side of the road in Celista. That still felt like things would be okay – our dedicated volunteers had our backs. The next thing was the stories we heard about neighbours trying to evacuate out through Seymour Arm. The route was unsuccessful but the people of Seymour really stepped up and made sure everyone had a bed and necessities. They even had breakfast brought in the next morning from Tim Hortons in Sicamous. The silver lining or lemonade from the lemons was how Lakeview Centre rallied and brought people together to help anyone who needed it. Our neighbours who accepted that they were stranded here emptied our freezers and took the food to Lakeview. The volunteers were very creative about meal prep and food storage with auxiliary power. Good for them. Do you see the theme. It was people helping people. Our neighbours kept our roof wet just in case. Our neighbours used our portable generators to help others who did not have auxiliary power and could not leave. Our neighbours helped unload the barge when supplies were brought in. The barge was an

Emergency measure that worked but it did cause some significant change/damage to the riparian area adjacent to the creek in St.Ives. I hope this can be repaired and a more suitable plan for emergencies be created.

- 196** Work with small rural neighborhoods to understand what resources they have and what they are capable of doing until BCWF is on scene
- 197** i was already prepared. widen all bridges along squilax anglemont road for traffic flow moving out quickly in future
- 198** We, the people, are more than capable to prepare and fight fires..... Your part to improve this is to support us, the people, in an emergency. You blocked roads, blocked emergency supplies, blocked food and water, blocked essentials from getting to where they were most needed! Your policies and bureaucracies hindered people from getting aid and supplies and manpower to areas! You used our tax money to make life difficult during a difficult time. A disgrace. Having to fight policies and bureaucracy, while fighting a fire caused by human incompetence was exhausting and frustrating. None of you lined up to help! Stay out of our way! Support, don't hinder!
- 199** Faster notification on what was happening. We evacuated prior to the official notice, because we could hear the roar of the fire, close by. We were not put on alert, but due to family monitoring facebook for us, we knew we were at risk, and left. The official notification from CSRD came way to late. The CSRD did not provide timely updated information, and it was lacking details when it was provided. To vague. People needed to be informed on what was happening.

200 Better communication and organization between all levels of government, wildfire service and the RCMP.

- 201** The CSRD needs to pressure the Ministry's to put fire out ahead of time. The CSRD should have contact information for people in different areas, business owners and clubs or non profits groups, ATV groups. CSRD should also know the area well. Where towns are situated on the laek
- 202** Improve road from St. Ives to Seymore Arm and especially from there to Malakwa. We basically had only 1 way out due to the poor shape of the roads. That 1 way out was even sketchy due to the old, in need of updating, bridge.
- 203** Well our order was 2 hours after our ranch was on fire. If we had listened we would have lost all of our buildings and died. Never light backburns in the heat of summer. Have proper ranchers, farmers and loggers from the area advise and agree on these things. If I can't run a buncher to log in the heat of the summer napom bombs should be heavily unacceptable. And don't say this is coming from an uneducated local. It's clear no one knows enough about who the locals are or where they come from and what experience they may have.
- 204** Obviously, you need to work up a plan to incorporate capable and willing local people to control these fires. Most of the people who stayed behind to fight the fire are more capable, and have (it goes without saying), more of a vested interest in controlling the fire and saving structures than do the so-called professionals, who were for the most part kids with a summer job.
- 205** I think the local services such as volunteer fire fighters, first responders, and the emergency services people needed more support to do what

they needed to do. Communication is also needed but I wanted to know what was happening 1 km away not 20km. I got all kinds of alerts but most of them were of little importance to me. In order to stay behind I was supposed to stay on my property, therefore I couldn't drive down the road or go out on the water legally to see if the fire was coming over the hill and if I was in danger. This put me at much higher risk.

- 206** better movement of people out of the area, better movement of supplies and help into the effected area, permits and local people helping to save the area.
- 207** Kept in touch with all the local groups I mentioned
- 208** I can appreciate that the police need to control looting and looky loos, but I their response restricting residents trying to help each other was extreme.
- 209** Signage going to malakwa.
- 210** I've already noted my suggestions. Quicker decisions on putting communities on Alert and or Order. More transparent communication on the control or lack of control of the fire, and showing us exactly where it is. Earlier efforts on putting fires out before they get so big. I realize this is not just the CSRD that has authority for all of these items, but the CSRD worked hand in hand with BC Wildfire Services, firefighters and other organizations. SMS alerts like when a child is abducted should have come across all of our devices as soon as that fire had breached the back burn. Aerial footage of exactly where that fire was should have been taken and shared with all of us via every possible means, social media (Facebook, Instagram, X, etc), on TV, on the local news outlets, and pushed via SMS and push notifications via the Alertable app. Make it easy for people to get funds after they have lost everything. Do EFT right away. Don't force people to

have to pick up a cheque.

We had to leave to where our family was in the Lower Mainland and couldn't be coming to pick up a cheque. Once we had a list of lost homes to the fire, I think there should have been priority given to us on essentials as opposed to those who were just displaced but had a home to go back to. We got more frustrated by hearing others were put up in hotels and given the maximum support and they hadn't even lost their home. There wasn't enough consistency on how things were handled and it just added to the heartache of what we were going through.

- 211** You should of evacuated everyone and had fire supports and brigades in all of the communities this was preventable.
- 212** Have a qualified list of local contractors/persons willing to assist in the event of an emergency. Provide additional training if needed, learn their skillsets & assets. Work in conjunction with those invested. Politics aside.
- 213** Let us know escape routes and make sure the roads a graded and passable for all types of vehicles. Mapped out properly and easy to follow.
- 214** We were not notified the thruth about the fire heading in our direction and that we should have been evacuated sooner.
- 215** We need info boards around the north shuswap at gas stations fire departments local stores.
- 216**
- 217** Have a detailed easy to read map of the forestry road on the CSRD website so it can be downloaded and printed. Make sure that the forestry road has signs to mark it. I realize this would require liaising with Forestry.
- 218** Any government agency should not penalize

- 219** warn all residents and surrounding properties of ALL back burns done by the BCWF. Make it a public notice that goes out on the radio just like when a amber alert goes out for a missing child
- 220** As I said before, and I will repeat now, do not rely on BCWS. They have proven that they are unreliable when it comes to admitting the full depth of their error in judgement. It is only due to the capabilities of your citizens that no one died during this event. Find a way to directly communicate with them and more importantly, don't shut them out when they try to communicate with you.
- 221** We should have an evacuation plan that everyone knows about.
- 222** Evacuation Alert/Order issued by CSRD for Celista was way too late, as properties were already fire damaged Fire Evacuation emergency plans for land and water in place, signage and improvement of road leading to Seymour arm Better communication with North Shore residents, businesses, tourists Supporting local residents to fight fires
- 223** improve community level capacities. the community sits in wait for improved capacities of many kinds. This will decrease the knowledge gap and improve community level respect and support for government in these tough situations. Similar to this. If it is in the realm of the community to act in emergencies that can be in concert with external agencies and everyone working in the same direction then support for this can only benefit all involved . Improved ability to communicate during emergency is key. Emphasis on how communication happens when power and internet is down. This cannot be overstated. Use of alternate forms of two way

communication such as hand held radios, portable ham radio, satellight phones. Include a local emergency radio station activated during special circumstances. this can include use for extreme climate related weather information such as extreme storms, drought. Can this be utilized with provincial agencies.

And thanks for asking

- 224** Get a more reliable communication tool, or at least figure out what went wrong with Alertable for future.
- 225** Unfortunately nothing CSRD could have done to help us as we are TNRD. It's too bad we got no help from them until we were evacuated for a week. More communication between the regional districts would have been good. We are a small community that felt completely neglected and forgotten during the wildfire last year. Sincerely hope it doesn't happen again.
- 226** Communicate everything. Watch social media rumours and put out the fires they create... for example "the bridge has burnt down". Maybe have 1/2 barrels for purchase at low cost that you can encourage everyone to have at the end of their driveways filled with water to out out any ditch fires that may start. Tap into the wealth of knowledge and information from the local people... don't treat them like vigilantes. Ours and our neighbors properties were saved by our neighbors (skilled and knowledgeable people). Encourage people to Firesmart homes. Assist with Removal of trees.
- 227** Test the alertable app to make sure it is effective in telling people whether or not to evacuate. Were told after evacuating by CSRD staff at evacuation center, not to use the app and go to the shuswap emergency site.... what? What is the point of the app then?

- 228** I feel CSRD communicated quite well given that they were put into fight mode very quickly as a result of the backburn. I would appreciate knowing what the process is to deal with such an emergency before we are all in the thick of it. Also, what will CSRD be doing to ensure there is a set process in place to deal with events like this past summers wildfire and what rights do homeowners have to protect their property.
- 229** Just keeping the preparedness information available frequently . . . Reminding what should be taken with you if you evacuate.
- 230** Evacuation orders out faster Get a s-100 program out now so we can help bill 31 cost taxpayers more money Put a shovel in the RCMP instead of handcuffs
- 231** Do better. speak to and work with people / locals that know the areas and terrains. Everywhere is different. Locals work long and hard and know what they are doing . The wildfire teams and government have meetings in the morning and then get to work once they are good and ready.
- 232** Much more concerned how CSRD can better prepare themselves for an emergency. We will look after ourselves. It is much easier to make wise decisions if given proper information about current state and what is expected, from those who have access to it. We appreciate the good intentions of all groups (including CSRD, RCMP, BCWS etc) that did what they thought was best. The transparency and honesty of some of those running the emergency plan was less than stellar. I made some comments above that need to be said even though it may not fit the question. I could not join the online meeting due to technical issues and want you to know some of our thoughts about the situation.
- 233** This is evident... more notice for evacuation orders Stop blocking grandfathered buildings from being rebuilt as they were prior to disaster. Stop bringing in police state for people who stay to protect their properties and livelihood.
- 234** Improve Evacuation route out of Anglemont (through Seymour Arm. Make route signage very clear, especially for night evacuations. Provide support for the good people in Seymour Arm who looked after their community and also served evacuees from other areas.
- 235** Overall I think the CSRD did a good job. Challenges happen, it was difficult reaching the ESS Reception Centre once they had to evacuate from their initial location, it wasn't clear where they went or what their status was.
- 236** I am human and the CSRD did a great job with providing information which I ignored for the most part.
- 237** Timely accurate info for those in harms way and in the areas that could be impacted especially related to evacuation routes.
- 238** Definitely better communication.
- 239** Fire smart Info on suppression for home owners
- 240** Colaborative Prevention is the key!!! Stop the political bull and show respect to the local communities for their knowledge and expertise to be part of planning during emergencies. Improvement comes in the areas of communication and transparency. Foremost ensure the avenues of communication remain open at all times.
- 241** See above!!
- 242** As I said above there needs to be a key leader in the community, someone who actually lives there and has a vested interest in protecting it! Reinstate fire Marshall's ... learn from other areas that

have had success in Ontario (Allan Willcocks). Listen to retired foresters and take their advice. Stop allowing people with limited experience and knowledge to lead the charge. Break down bureaucratic red tape and revamp systems that are NOT working. Open up the lines of communication and create a lateral organization rather than a top down, out of touch approach.

243 Honest, timely communication.

244 Communicate accurate information early and often. Be the trusted source. Don't rely on apps like Alertable. Use all and every method of communication and try not to rely heavily on the internet. Use local sources in the communities. Post update bulletins in the community halls, fire departments and grocery stores. Have town hall updates in community halls. Although the resources were stretched thin, try and get out with old-school in-person information as much as possible. Perhaps each volunteer fire department should have a designated communication/public information officer. There was so much mis-information, especially with what was going on in the North Shuswap, that it made it hard to know what was accurate and true. However, and I want to make sure you know that I'm very appreciative of every member of the emergency management team at the CSRD. The daily youtube updates were excellent. Thank you for all you did in an extremely difficult and challenging time.

245 Supplying areas with rooftop sprinklers or at least advising on them, as well as advice on having generators, fuel, any practices that could help save our property from the fire.

246 Issue evacuation alerts and orders in a timely manner. Work with federal and provincial agencies to ensure all

emergency responders are issued proper PPE in the future (why do RCMP and Paramedics not have access to Nomex coveralls or other wildland fire protective gear if they are being sent into areas with rapidly moving live fire to evacuate people?). Send out regular and timely updates. Send out evacuation orders via the emergency alert system at the time they are issued... Not 5 hours after the evacuation happened.

247 Have a proper evacuation written plan and share it with all residents. Have proper instructions and directions for how to drive through back roads or evacuate by boat. Don't blame the residents. Don't tell us the likelihood of the fire reaching Celista is "remote". Build a proper replacement bridge! Work with the residents on a comprehensive evacuation plan BEFORE the next fire. Have someone experienced in charge.

248 Advance notification of the fires advance.

249 More updates about the severity and what would be needed to reopen

250 BC wildfire should have been better prepared. They are the reason we were burnt out of our homes.

251 They could have stopped the fire in the first place. Both Adams Lake and Bush Creek. These fires should never have grown as they did.

252 Educate and Train local residents for free to fight fires. Provide equipment to rural communities. Rebuild fire stations to be operable within 1 year of decimation. Increase existing on call staff rather than bringing in workers from as far away as Mexico. We were told directly by BC Wildfire that they did not have any available people to come to our street in Scotch Creek. If the 20+ residents who disobeyed the evac

order had not stayed, we would have lost our entire street of 63 homes.

253 I'm not sure why this needs answering the system did not work at all . So information from someone actually on the ground would have been great . The news was a joke . I used all three apps and non were accurate or timely as I text to the TNRD .you all are going to kill somebody having an app that doesn't work is worse than no app at all . Stop blocking locals from seeking the fire we know how the valleys work and can predict our danger levels better than some at a desk .

254 Pumps on our road. Training for residents

255 For the last question: (1) take responsibility for actions (2) ensure alerts and orders are issued in a timely manner, allowing people to actually get out (3) communicate with the public. Use nondefensiveness provoking language in communications. Don't alienate locals who stayed behind to fight when their government abandoned them. (4) step up to help out, rather than spending time and money to prevent people from helping.

256 You do have a lot of information about preparedness and it is easy to find. Until it actually happens, a person can never be fully prepared although most of us here will be better prepared in the future. I'm not sure what questions are going to be on the next page so am going to mention this here. I don't know if it's the law that the CSRD has to wait for BC Wildfire to tell them what to do but if it is not, would you wait for them again? I understand there is paperwork and conversations and you had to find Chair Flynn to sign the order so 2:15 for Scotch Creek/Lee Creek is almost understandable. But I don't understand why the people of Celista weren't

warned at the same time, instead of 4:30 when their homes were already burning and they had to run for their lives to boats with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Why weren't they warned at 2:15? You said at the meetings that you did listen to your fire chiefs but then you lost communication with BC Wildfire. I'm sure the fire departments were telling you long before then that the access out of the North Shuswap was closing fast and if people were leaving, they needed to go now. BC Wildfire was evacuating their own people at the time, as it their responsibility, but we were your responsibility and should have been able to act on the information from your own people on the ground.

257 I think you need to rebuild your credibility. If people won't listen to you because they think you're all a bunch of incompetent officials then doesn't matter what you do. People will take it into their own hands.

258 Make sure that BCWF has to listen to input from knowledgeable local citizens during fires. CSRD could push for reinstating of local Fire Wardens.

259 Work with the people instead of against.

260 Primarily that preparedness is on me. Fire smarting my property and insuring I am aware of what resources are available to me should I have to evacuate or worse my home is destroyed would be important.

261 Firesmart programs, public education, etc.

262 If you know it coming, alert people with live stock first as it take hauling and finding places for animals to stay

263 Weather and wind are fickle. When the wind suddenly changes direction, the threat is immediate And we all need to be aware and prepared

- 264** Putting out the fire 2 months before it reached houses
Evacuate in a timely manner, was property was burning
before the notifications were sent out
- 265** Starting evacuation earlier. Get the chance for people to
go back if their place is not on evacuation or alert. To
have a safe way, over the water to get supplies for non
evacuated areas immediately! Also immediate signed for
the other way out or have the barge to evacuate from
the locked in areas.
- 266** So many conflicting information sources and lack of
wildfire processes knowledge.
- 267** Abandon Neoliberalism and start realizing the actual
effects their government has been contributing to
wildfires by maintaining a Neoliberal stance.
- 268** Provide detailed maps and signage along the evacuation
route. Identify and remove trees on public property that
heighten the chance of fire activity to homes and
businesses. I realize this is a very big job.
- 269** Actually put out the fires regardless where it is not let it
burn until it's to late.
- 270** Listen to the local people.
- 271**
- 272** First of all we need Forestry to change their policy and
immediately put out forest fires instead of letting them
burn for a few days then trying to tackle them. That's the
number one problem !! I think CSRD did a good job in
informing public.
- 273** I think the CSRD should help push for more help at the
very start of an emergency particularly a forest fire. If a
fire starts in a region whether it's close to a community
or remote but potentially a threat, first work with BC
wildfire service to see if they are able to get on it and if
they can't because resources are thin, assign a local crew
on it whether it's loggers or pre trained locals who know
the area. Don't wait til things get extremely out of
control.
- 274** Better maintenance of emergency access and egress
routes when the main roads are closed. Ie the north fork
/gorge logging roads
- 275** Be more present to the fire and actually know what is
going on.
- 276** We believe that you need to communicate well with the
CSRD representatives in the affected area. Decisions can't
simply be made in a vacuum going off of hearsay. Not
allowing local representatives a voice and cutting them
off from information was a poor choice in this and any
emergency.
- 277** Provide information more timely and allow people to be
trained to protect their property and support them in
doing so
- 278** Have structural protection equipment on the north
shuswap
- 279** Keep in better communication with locals.
- 280** Ensure support information gets to every person
personally. Provide internet hubs & computers so people
can fill out forms. React sooner. Provide medical care.
- 281** When we lived on the coast, emergency preparedness
was a thing we lived with every day as we lived in an area
that could flood or be victims of earthquake. So when we
moved here and our exposure was to Forest Fire, we just
applied the same principles that we had learned on the
coast. I believe a lot of preparedness needs to come from
the homeowner themselves. It is something that you
cannot wait until the event happens before you
prepare. And by that I mean applying the fire Smart
program to your property building with

materials that are less flammable. And that type of thing. We packed away valuables and other documents away several weeks before the fire came close, and when it came time to leave, we took three hours total to get out the door. I found the SEP website helpful. For future emergencies I would suggest creating a Facebook page that's dedicated to that emergency. Yes, you would have information on your website but most people that access Facebook have the feed come up instantly on their phone or tablet and it does not involve no going to a separate website to get information.

- 282** Don't ignore issues, that if handled promptly, wouldn't become big issues later.
- 283** Outline and maintain an alternate way out of the North Shuswap. Install permanent signs indicating way out through Seymour Arm or other route if available.
- 284** They should of put out a bc wide alert over cell phones of the coming evacuation earlier so people could get prepared for the worst. Especially in areas that have only 1 road in and out. The leaders should have All the same info and be together with what is happening.
- 285** Err on the side of caution and issue evacuation orders before things get so bad. The lack of timely communication from BCWS and CSRD during this fire was unacceptable.
- 286** Yes, the sporadic meetings did not provide enough up-to-date information as the fire spread so quickly. The fire changed minute-by-minute. Our family has never been this scared before. Seeing the candle flames 100+feet above the tree line over Celista and hearing the roar and crackle of the fire coming towards us will not be forgotten. The govt officials were not here to experience it so they don't understand the magnitude of the fire

until it settled and saw the devastation weeks later. Majority of the people left because they didn't have any resources to fight the fire and didn't have power or water so it was best they leave for their safety. I hope now CSRD can have a procedure to follow is this even happens again by listening to the people who lived through this devastation and who stayed a fought for their community. We are very fortunate that no one was hurt in this devastation.

- 287** Get those orders out faster so people are not trapped and properties are protected to avoid looting issues.
- 288** You have to be out hereboots on the ground ! What does the North Shuswap ever get ...not much ! We need support, help , instead we seem to get hurdles constantly from building permits and lack of community programs and help.