

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN

INFORMATION RELEASE

December 12, 2018

Collaborative Project Helps Reduce Wildfire Risk

Ellis Landscape Level Fuel Break

The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) and the Penticton Indian Band (PIB), with support from the Wild Sheep Society of BC, are collaborating on a project that will help reduce fire behaviour potential in timber stands below the Carmi Forest Service Road (FSR).

Funding for the development of the prescriptions was provided by a grant from the Forest Enhancement Society of BC (FESBC). "FESBC is delighted to be a collaborative partner in this project," says Steve Kozuki, executive director of FESBC. "Together with the various funders, we are working with local First Nations to reduce wildfire risk while at the same time enhancing wildlife habitat, two of FESBC's purposes as a society."

Additional funding is being provided by the Wild Sheep Society of BC and the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) Ecosystem Restoration Program. Treatments will involve reducing the density of timber stands below the road so the area is less likely to support intense fire behaviour. Where felled stems cannot be removed from the site, prescribed burning will be used to reduce the surface fuel loading (flammable material on the ground). The slopes being treated are also critical Bighorn Sheep winter range. More open conditions and prescribed burning will promote an underlying layer of vegetation which is important for winter browse.

"Treatment operations are an important part of the Wildfire Risk Reduction program," says RDOS chair Karla Kozakevich. "This program is attempting to alleviate the interface wildfire risk to our communities." Operations will be carried out by crews from PIB and volunteers from the Wild Sheep Society of BC. Field work for prescription development was completed in 2017 by PIB Natural Resource Department and Davies Wildfire Management.

For further information or to receive the below photos in high resolution, please contact Erick Thompson, RDOS Communications at 250-490-4202.

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Karla Kozakevich, Chair
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen



Crew from Penticton Indian Band Natural Resource Department working on fuel management as part of Ellis Landscape level Fuel Break (location: East of Garnet Fire Interpretive Centre, Beaver Dell Road – RDOS)



Bighorn Sheep grazing east of Garnet Fire Interpretive Centre