



Coastal Fire Centre

hot topics in Wildfire on the Coast

Wildfire news

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Coastal Fire Centre

The Coastal Fire Centre (CoFC) is one of six regional fire centres in British Columbia operated by the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations' Wildfire Management Branch.

The CoFC is responsible for wildfire response covering about 12.8 million hectares of land. Geographically, the fire centre covers all of the area west of the height of land on the Coast Mountain range from the Canada-U.S. border at Manning Provincial Park to the northern border of Tweedsmuir South Provincial Park, including the Sunshine Coast, the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands and Haida Gwaii.

The CoFC is further divided into six fire zones containing a total of 13 fire bases. The majority of the centre's workforce is seasonal. It employs

160 firefighters during a typical season, but has the capability to swell its ranks during periods of heavy demand or extreme fire activity.

Some of the factors that the CoFC must contend with:

- ◆ There are six microclimates within the Coastal Fire Centre. They contain vastly different fuel types and may experience different fire danger ratings during the summer.
- ◆ The CoFC contains 75 per cent of B.C.'s population.
- ◆ Since there is a lot of recreational activity in the Coastal Fire Centre, it faces a higher risk of person-caused fires.

For more information about the Coastal Fire Centre, visit: <http://bcwildfire.ca/AboutUs/Organization/Coastal/>

Interagency Cooperation

The Wildfire Management Branch (WMB) works hard to ensure that co-operative partnerships are built and maintained with community fire departments. For example, the Coastal Fire Centre interacts regularly with approximately 180 fire departments, necessitating cross-training and ongoing interactions during any interface fire response.

When a wildfire threatens a community, the Coastal Fire Centre will co-ordinate its actions with other agencies, working in concert with local governments, fire departments, the BC Ambulance Service, the RCMP and others. When these agencies work as group, it is known as a "unified response".

Interagency co-operation is an important part of the WMB's overall success. In the Coastal Fire Centre, the importance of creating strong partnerships is never underestimated. A great deal of time and attention is devoted to providing training opportunities and communicating with other agencies to develop innovative processes that are both efficient and cost-effective.

This Sunday (April 28), the Coastal Fire Centre will be taking part in a training simulation focusing on wildland/urban interface fires in the Campbell River area. The final training scenario will take place after two days of workshops. The culmination of the weekend will be a mock motor vehicle accident near Oyster River that causes an intense fire to move into forested land towards high voltage lines, a BC Hydro Substation, Fortis gas mainline as well as residential homes on York Road.

This "incident" will prompt a response from the Coastal Fire Centre, local fire departments, search and rescue organizations, the RCMP, local governments and other emergency personnel. BC Hydro, Fortis BC, the Campbell River Amateur Radio Society and other local partners will also take part.

"Unified response" is a complex concept that relies on all participants "to manage an incident by establishing a common set of incident objectives and strategies." Any opportunity to hone their skills prior to an actual emergency is invaluable.

See detailed weather forecast page 2

Wildfire Management Branch Strategic Plan

Any successful organization needs a plan! The *Wildfire Management Branch Strategic Plan 2012-2017* outlines the priorities of the organization. The five-year plan includes five strategic goals and 13 strategic priorities, with key actions and indicators for each priority item.

Most importantly, the mandate of the organization is to “deliver effective wildfire management and emergency response support on behalf of the government of British Columbia to protect life and values at risk and to encourage sustainable, healthy and resilient ecosystems.”

This mandate highlights the WMB’s determination to manage the lands it’s charged with protecting from “devastating” wildfire, while at the same time encouraging the careful use of controlled fires (if practicable and safe) to improve overall forest health.

The Strategic Plan’s vision is “excellence in wildfire management and response services.” The Wildfire Management Branch’s mission is to:

- ◆ provide for the safety of our workers and the public
- ◆ deliver effective, innovative and cost-efficient wildfire management services
- ◆ provide emergency response support and services
- ◆ ensure strong and collaborative relationships with our partners and clients

The ultimate goal of the Wildfire Management Branch is to find innovative ways to manage wildfire and provide emergency response to protect the public and B.C.’s forests.

http://bcwildfire.ca/Strategic_Planning/

At Coastal

Crews have returned for the 2013 fire season and are in the process of completing their fitness testing. Another area of concentration is the process of certification. Training seminars, workshops and other learning opportunities are being well attended by CoFC staff.

Dan Morrison, our weather technician, has summed up this spring as a ‘normal, slow progression into summer’. And Environment Canada is forecasting ‘above normal’ temperatures for the months April, May and June with ‘below normal’ precipitation for the same period.

The Coastal Fire Centre uses data compiled and distributed by Environment Canada. For further information go to: http://weather.gc.ca/saisons/index_e.html

Weather

Weather as of Thursday April 25, 2013

SYNOPSIS: Precipitation should continue to spread southwards Friday, likely making it at least as far south as Campbell River – Toba Inlet by sunset, while areas to the south remain generally dry with slightly cooler and more humid conditions than today.

OUTLOOK: Expect strengthening winds Saturday with the approach and passage of a dissipating cold front that is also expected to produce fairly widespread showers across all zones by the afternoon. Another cool and unsettled day likely follows Sunday followed by a drier day on Monday as high pressure attempts to rebuild over the region. Gusty winds likely continue both Sunday and Monday. Temperatures hover at least a few degrees below seasonal in most areas this weekend, potentially rebounding somewhat on Monday.

6 TO 10 DAY: A gradual warming and drying trend may continue into Tuesday and potentially Wednesday before the next Pacific frontal system brings another round of showers by Thursday. Cool and unsettled conditions likely follow for at least another day or two thereafter.

To Date in Coastal	
Fires to Date	
Person Caused	5
Lighting Caused	0
Total Number of Fires	5
Hectares burnt	4
Number of Incidents Responded to	11
Fire Danger Rating April 26, 2013	
Current Prohibitions	
None	