



A YEAR OF UNIMAGINABLE CHALLENGES



**First Nations'
Emergency Services Society**

OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR VISION

Safe and Healthy First Nation Communities

OUR MISSION

FNESS serves First Nations in developing and sustaining safer and healthier communities through:

Fire training, education,
and prevention

Emergency planning, training,
response, and recovery

Forest fuel and
wildfire management

Leadership and
collaborative relationships

OUR VALUES

Courage

Strength and curiosity while determining the most beneficial actions with communities.

Passion

Acknowledging enthusiasm and initiative; rewarding success regularly.

Integrity

Consistent and accountable for all actions, assessing and adapting as needed.

Trustworthiness

Providing credible and state-of-the-art recognized services.

Respect

Inclusiveness and teamwork that allows fairness, balance and harmony in all activities; appreciative of all cultural diversities.

Honesty

Open and transparent environments in all actions.

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WE RESPONDED





WE WERE THERE

FNESS BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Anthony Moore
President
Nisga'a Village of Gitwinksihlkw



Heather McKenzie
Vice President
Williams Lake Indian Band



Michael Kelly
Secretary/Treasurer
Leq'a:mel First Nation



Sonny (Stephen) Hunt
Director
Heiltsuk First Nation



Walter Paul
Director
Tla'amin First Nation



Charlene Joe
Director
Lower Nicola Indian Band

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

**Ksgook ni dim t'ooyaskshl Sim'oogit Laxha wilt
ginamhl amaa sa tgun loom dim wil dip sayt-wandii tguna, Dim
galksi-akhlgiy gangagethkw, Sim jeek-di Sagagetkwhl hahlals –
First I would like to thank god for giving us this beautiful day.
We got through hard times, and this job was very important.**

My name is Sgahat'sa'gan (Anthony Moore) from the Nisga'a Village Gitwinksihlkw. I bring to you a message on behalf of the Board of Directors for First Nations' Emergency Services Society. During my time as President, I have worked closely with the Board of Directors and FNESS Administration to continue to cultivate an organization that is equipped and prepared to face any and all challenges ahead. As we continue to change through the COVID-19 pandemic, and begin the start of the "New Normal." FNESS has gone through an organizational restructuring through increased funding in areas such as Emergency Management and Flood Response to meet the needs of the First Nations we serve.

The Board of Directors has met extensively during the severe flooding that occurred in November 2021 to ensure that our Administration had the resources and support necessary to carry out their duties without delay. I personally spent some time in the field with the Strike Teams in

the Okanagan viewing first hand the success and adversities of the new Strike Team project and spoke with members of the communities affected by an evacuation order. It was great to see the adaptive capabilities of the crews as they worked through each of the affected communities.

We are extremely happy to announce that the 2022 FNESS Indigenous Firefighter Competition is moving forward in person and look forward to seeing all the fire department's attend and rebuild the comradery that these events bring out.

**Hasaga'y dim ni dinakwshl t'ooyaks loosim',
Gabihi hiy – I want to extend my thanks to you
all, that is all I have to say.**



**Sgahat'sa'gan,
Anthony Moore**
FNESS Board President

As we face unimaginable challenges, such as the global COVID 19 pandemic, wildland interface fires, heat domes, atmospheric rivers leading to unprecedented flooding in BC, an opioid and homelessness crisis and the discovery of unmarked graves at residential schools, FNESS has been there to answer the call to serve the First Nations of BC.

This has been a challenging time, but FNESS continued to look at program delivery options to better deliver programs. We have been able to increase our capacity in many ways, funding, staffing and technologically. Despite our inability to deliver our training services in person due to the ongoing pandemic, we have increased our web-based training programs to reach out to communities to ensure capacity increase and business continuity for the communities we serve. We have focused our increased funding on expanding our service delivery by building out our Emergency Management department. Thusly, we are now able to provide added support to BC Nations who are evacuated and need to access Emergency Support Services. We have been integrated into the provincial emergency management system leading to improvements in the turnaround time for response and recovery. Our GIS team has expanded, and this has led to incredible advances in how we apply technology to our work, such as the ever-evolving Lightship software and the application of LiDAR to our work. These tools are invaluable and have demonstrated to our partners that we strive to lead the way in applying innovation to solve problems efficiently and effectively. We created the new FNESS EOC website which provided BC First Nations with the most up to date information possible and to make the challenge of not knowing where to find vital information and resources easier. When we were

challenged by the wildfires and flooding, we opened our EOC at our Kamloops office for back-to-back large-scale events and to support our communities as they faced the impacts of these events. Our work with the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), BC and Canada to further the implementation of the Tripartite Emergency Services Agreement MOU through the Technical Emergency Management Working Group is ongoing and our partners increased investment in FNESS is a testament to that work. We have also had the opportunity to provide technical support to the FNLC as they work collaboratively with provincial and federal ministers on the Disaster Recovery and Climate Resilience Committee.

The dedication of our FNESS staff during these difficult times and many long hours away from families cannot go unmentioned. FNESS has a dedicated team of professionals who put their own comfort aside and face every challenge with energy, compassion, and commitment to the betterment in all four pillars of First Nations emergency management. It continues to be a privilege to serve

BC First Nations in my capacity as Interim Executive Director and I am looking forward to the work ahead as we all face these challenges together.

Wayne Schnitzler
FNESS Interim Executive Director



An aerial photograph of a wide, muddy river winding through a deep, rugged mountain valley. The river is light brown and flows from the bottom left towards the center right. The valley walls are steep and covered in sparse, dry-looking vegetation and patches of exposed earth. In the background, the mountain peaks are shrouded in thick white fog or low-hanging clouds. The overall tone is somber and majestic.

We faced and
will continue to face
these challenges
TOGETHER

CORPORATE SERVICES

Department

The FNESS Corporate Services department has been established to include the key functions for the organization. These functions include Finance, Procurement, Human Resources, Information Technology and Policy.



Financial

Financial activities are the initiatives and transactions that FNESS undertake to seek the requirements of the organization, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and accounting best practices. Finance activities involve the inflow or outflow of money. Examples include core and project funding, donations and employee benefits.

Procurement

Procurement is the act of obtaining goods or services, this is a newly introduced position within FNESS. Procurement which is now associated with businesses aspects of FNESS as the need to solicit services or purchase goods on a larger scale than what we have previously done in the past. The procurement process includes the overall critical steps leading up to their final purchasing decision. With the addition of the Procurement Coordinator role with the organization, the benefits are clearly defined in process and assignments which benefits all aspects of the FNESS organization.

Human Resources

Human Resources describes both the people who work for FNESS and the department responsible for managing all matters related to employees, who collectively represent the most valuable resources in FNESS. The term human resources was first coined in the 1960s when the value of labour relations began to garner attention and when notions such as motivation, organizational behaviour, and selection assessments began to take shape in all types of work settings.

Human resource management term describes the talent management and development of employees in our organization. Corporate Services oversees all things related to managing the FNESS human capital.

Human resource management is focused on several major areas, including:

- recruiting and staffing
- compensation and benefits with the Executive Director
- training and learning
- employee relations
- organization development

Information Technology

Information technology (IT) is the use of computers to create, process, store, retrieve, and exchange all kinds of electronic data and information. At FNESS, IT work is typically completed from an IT provider to support all hardware, software, and peripheral equipment. Corporate Services has established an IT inventory renewal plan to ensure that the organization keeps up with industrial practices and requirements.

Policy Analysts

Policy Analysts work on both broad and specialized issues for FNESS. The role is new to FNESS, however individuals assigned intend to research complex problems and recommend solutions to FNESS management as well as other organizations.

Collecting and compiling information: Policy analysts gather information, including statistical data to help explore issues and explain the solutions they propose. Often, this data can identify hidden problems and highlight the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of proposed policies. Analysts gather data by conducting surveys, cost-benefit analyses and focus groups.

Analyzing effects and recommending policies: Identifying current or impending problems, and then create and evaluate solutions. Once a problem is recognized, the analyst will attempt to determine the cause or cause(s). They might propose changes to existing regulations as a result of what their research found.

Evaluating the outcome: Policy isn't automatically considered successful simply because it achieved its intended goal. Analysts identify any unintended consequences or costs, meaning it cost more than expected, or if its benefits outweighed expenses. The goal of evaluations is to improve, expand or potentially discard a policy.

Sharing information: The Policy Analyst will complete the sharing of information with papers, briefs and fact sheets. In all cases, FNESS analysts will disperse what they've uncovered about an issue by providing facts, answers to common questions, graphs and information on relevant publications and sources.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Department

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The summer of 2021 brought record high temperatures, a heat dome and devastating wildfires to the central region of BC. First Nation communities were caught with little or no air conditioning and or cooling centres for their people.

This was also accompanied by wildfires which encompassed large sections of the Central Interior, Cariboo, Northwest and Southern BC. The Lytton First Nation (LFN) lost part of their community to wildfire; several others were evacuated as wildfires encircled their communities.

Backup generators were needed to power community water supplies to protect infrastructure and homes. Unfortunately, some fires burned up to and beyond communities before any resolution was made on the requirement between Emergency Management BC (EMBC) and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). Assistance was provided wherever possible through the FNESS Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) in Kamloops.

FNESS's Emergency Management (EM) Manager received a request from EMBC's Northwest regional office for a FNESS representative in their Provincial Regional Emergency Operation Centre (PREOC) in Terrace BC. An additional request came from EMBC's Northeast office Senior Regional Manager for a FNESS representative to attend the Northeast PREOC. Within a couple of weeks there were FNESS representatives in five of the six PREOC's in the province. During this time, we began recruiting for the FNESS – TEAMS (Temporary Emergency Assignment Management System), a group of casual employees with emergency management experience to assist First Nation communities EOC relief. We also began on-line training every Monday morning, this continued through to April 2022 and was enthusiastically received and well attended.

Strike Teams were deployed to communities threatened by wildfire to do FireSmart™ program clearing from around their houses so sprinkler protection units could be set up by the BC Wildfire Service.



We continued to monitor the needs of communities during the heat dome as communities set up cooling centres to help their most vulnerable.



The fall brought an Atmospheric River event which caused unprecedented flooding throughout the Southern Interior, Fraser Valley, Vancouver Island and outlying areas. Our First Nation communities were severely impacted, and recovery efforts are still ongoing. This was classified as a one in two-hundred-year event, meaning it statistically would only happen maybe once every two hundred years.

Emergency Support Services (ESS) were provided to the City of Abbotsford for First Nation clients. There were clear indications for First Nation ESS workers as there were gaps in these services.



Community member learning how to use a portable pump during the Atmospheric River event

Recovery plans were developed with communities however the lack of recovery managers makes it difficult for them to really move forward at a meaningful pace. Strike Teams were deployed to Vancouver Island to assist in getting water, wet drywall, and insulation out of basements. Dehumidifiers were then placed to speed up the drying process.

FNESS' EM Manager was asked to participate in the LFN Recovery meetings located in Chilliwack, their evacuees began to move to Camp Hope just east of Chawathal along highway 7, west of Hope, BC. Support was offered to the LFN EOC however they did not engage with FNESS. The Nlaka'pamux communities in the Nicola Valley were evacuated to Merritt and were evacuated a second time as the City of Merritt flooded and issued an evacuation order. Our First Nation people were sent to Kamloops, Kelowna and Chilliwack. Those that went to Kamloops arrived late at night and had to sleep in their cars to await supports from the city's ESS program only to be diverted to Kelowna with some being sent to Chilliwack. This event, and others in the past, subjected some of our people to racism at the reception center which identified a genuine need for First Nation led ESS programs.

A connection was established with non-governmental organizations (NGO's). One NGO that engaged with us, the World Central Kitchen (WCK), provide meals in response to humanitarian, climate, and community crises. When disaster strikes, WCK's Chef Relief Team mobilizes to the frontlines with the urgency of now to start cooking and provide meals to people in need. They partner with organizations on the ground and activate a network of food trucks and emergency kitchens. WCK provides freshly made, nutritious meals to survivors of disasters quickly and effectively. They also provide fresh groceries to communities in need following a disaster.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

FNESS' EM Manager worked with a representative of WCK in establishing relationships in all five Nicola Valley bands which led to two deliveries of fresh produce, fruit and dried goods when the closest source (Merritt) was not available. Inquiries were made with other agencies in relation to Lytton and Nicomen, who were without groceries and access to their community respectfully. There were processes in place for those communities for ongoing food deliveries therefore no need for WCK assistance.

FNESS worked with the EMBC Northeast office on a three-day on-line training program involving the Tsilhqot'in National Government communities in February 2022. The FNESS EM Manager facilitated the training via Zoom in the Northeast PREOC.

Beginning April 2022, under restructuring, the EM Manager became the Recovery and ESS Manager. This is a new department within FNESS and the team is still being built; however, there has been a lot of work initiated and documented.

The Recovery and ESS Team will manage the FNESS-TEAMS program for response support as well as ESS. The team will field training requests for in community training in EM/EOC Basics and now more recently ESS training in person or via Zoom on-line.



Yukon First Nations Wildfire team members distributing fresh produce to Nicola Valley communities

Our team continues to build on our knowledge and skills in both ESS support and community recovery. Our team participates in ongoing recovery calls and the development of recovery plans as requested. We work with communities to address gaps or shortfalls in their recovery efforts and collaborate with other EM partners to find solutions.

FNESS Strike Team delivering hay to Shackan Indian Band after the Atmospheric River event





FIRE SERVICES

Department



FIRE SERVICES

The Fire Services (FS) department is proud to provide fire prevention programs, education and firefighter training to First Nation communities throughout British Columbia. We offer training for various parts of the community including youth engagement, fire departments, Chief and Council, community members, band staff and school programs.

This year the department has increased fire department outreach and support, developed three new programs for in-person training and facilitated community support through Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), the Office of the Fire Commissioner and Emergency Management BC (EMBC). In partnership with ISC, the FS department provides community-based fire service guidance, support, and assistance to BC First Nation communities.

We use the 3-tiered approach (illustrated below) to deliver fire services support and effective programming. The 3-tiered framework is outlined in A Practical Guide to Fire Protection (ISC). The FS department continues to use this framework in addition to the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) to meet the FNESS mandate of assisting BC First Nations in developing and sustaining safer and healthier communities.

Tier 1 **Home Fire** **Protection**

Addresses fire safety activities that have the greatest potential for preventing fires and saving lives. For example, providing educational and awareness tips and tools, installation of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, household fire safety and escape plans, fire extinguishers, et cetera.

Tier 2 **Community Fire** **Protection**

Focuses on enhancing fire safety education and awareness in communities, including the negotiation of an MTSA (if possible) for fire protection services. This tier emphasizes community activities such as public education and community fire prevention and maintenance programs that require a greater degree of community organization and support in order to be effective.

Tier 3 **Fire** **Departments**

The capacity of community Fire Departments' is further enhanced when sustainable Tier 1 & 2 prevention activities have been established. This tier highlights several factors such as capacity, recruitment and ongoing operations and maintenance to ensure the long-term sustainability of a fire department.



Seabird Island's Fire Department being taught the Driver Pump Operator Course

Driver Pump Operator

The Driver Pump Operator Program equips firefighters on how to check, maneuver, drive and operate their fire department engine through classroom instruction, demonstrations, and hands-on training. This program was developed in early 2021 with training beginning in May of 2021. FNESS's Fire Safety Instructors were able to deliver four training sessions to First Nation Fire Departments. Program content is based on current best practices as well as the practical driver operator requirements listed in Chapter 4 of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1002 Standard for a Driver Operator.

Topics covered during this four-day program include:

- preventative maintenance
- fire department communications
- apparatus maneuvering through a variety of challenging exercises on a pylon course, including, forward and reverse serpentine, alley docks, confined space turnaround, and diminishing clearance lanes
- driver operator responsibilities
- safe driving in the community
- emergency response procedures
- pump theory and pump operator trouble shooting procedures
- nozzle pumping pressures, volumes, friction loss, etc.
- pumping from booster tank and hydrant
- supplying sprinkler and standpipe systems
- water supply capabilities

FIRE SERVICES

Community First Aid

The Community First Aid program was developed by the Fire Services department in early 2021. With training coordination beginning in the summer of 2021, our Fire Safety Officers were able to deliver 13 First Aid courses to First Nation communities across British Columbia. The intent of this program is to train community members in basic first aid, CPR Level C for adult, child, and infant, and the use of an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED). This course is equivalent to the WorkSafe BC Level 1 course and Canadian Red Cross certification is valid for three years. This program is not exclusive to fire departments or emergency management personnel. Any community member (aged 17+) can participate. The program is a two-day hands-on training course with scenarios, facilitated by FNESS instructors. Content addressing the opioid/fentanyl epidemic will be included in the program. After successful completion, communities will receive a Level 2 first aid kit and an in-service AED.



*Community First Aid Training in
Stz'uminus First Nation*

Fire Prevention Week Poster Contest

FNESS is proud to announce the winners of our Fire Prevention Week (FPW) 2021 Poster Contest. FNESS worked in partnership with the Office of the Fire Commissioner, the Fire Prevention Officers' Association of BC and the BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund. FNESS greatly appreciates the effort made by the schools, their teachers, and their students to participate in this annual fire safety learning event. This year's FPW theme was "Learn the Sounds of Fire Safety!" Schools used this theme to encourage their students to learn practical fire safety information. Posters created by students were entered into two contests:

- 1. FPW Contest for all BC schools:** Judging was held in November 2021. All entries from BC First Nation schools were sent to FNESS. Schools with winning entries have been directly contacted by the BC Burn Fund.
- 2. FNESS FPW Poster Contest:** FNESS selected the winning posters from BC First Nation schools in December 2021. Prize packages have been mailed directly to the schools of the winning students.



FNESS FPW POSTER CONTEST WINNERS:

K – Grade 3

- 1st place: Teia W., *Splatsin First Nation*
- 2nd place: Dashon L., *Adams Lake Indian Band*
- 3rd place: Maverick C., *Splatsin First Nation*

Grade 4 – 6

- 1st place: Shenayah C., *Takla Nation*
- 2nd place: Tylan T., *Adams Lake Indian Band*
- 3rd place: Alex C., *Adams Lake Indian Band*

Grade 7 – 12

- 1st place: Kimmimela L., *Takla Nation*
- 2nd place: Devondre W., *Takla Nation*
- 3rd place: Jada S., *Takla Nation*



Leadership and Governance Workshop

The purpose of the Leadership and Governance workshop is to educate and increase capacity of the Chief, Band Council and other leadership regarding community fire prevention, as well as capacity building within their community. This year, due to COVID-19 travel and gathering restrictions, BC's Wildfire season, and the Atmospheric River event, our Fire Safety Officers were limited in capacity to deliver, however, we completed a governance workshop to Gitxaala Nation in May of 2021.

The workshop focuses on the following topics:

- community adoption of fire and building codes
- engagement with neighboring communities (municipal service agreement options for community fire protection)
- occupational health and safety processes
- incident reporting and investigations
- review of various funding opportunities
- advisory services for community specific questions and inquiries

Fire Safety Assessments

Fire Safety Assessments (FSA) for First Nation communities are conducted by FNESS on behalf of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). In early 2021, we began conducting assessments with Tobacco Plains First Nation and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. The purpose of an FSA is to assess the overall level of fire safety of a community and to provide options to enhance the level of fire protection. FNESS works with key community members to gather information to support direction regarding overall fire protection.

Key areas of the assessments include findings within the following categories:

- general description of the community
- goal for community fire and life safety assessment
- building effective/sustainable fire protection plans
- general description of the fire protection systems/ notification or dispatch system in the community
- water supply
- preventative fire safety planning
- fire suppression

Fire Officer Safety and Capacity Building

This year, FNESS provided Team Leader training to Lower Nicola Indian Band. This two-day course teaches fire officers how to safely monitor subordinates while focusing on safety. It is also a safety regulation of WorkSafe BC for fire departments. The course focuses on topics such as leadership, strategies, and tactics, risk management, documentation, operational guidelines, accountability, and incident action plans.

School Fire Safety Education

Every year FNESS delivers the in-school Fire Safety Education program. This year, FNESS was invited to community schools at Splat'sin First Nation, Adams Lake Indian Band, Penticton Indian Band and Okanagan Indian Band, where we were able to provide socially distanced and age-appropriate fire safety education to the students. Fire safety topics included preventing burns, lighters and matches, cooking safety, smoke alarms, reality of a house fire, home escape planning, and fire service career information. FNESS aims to deliver engaging presentations to the students, giving them the opportunity to practice fire safety skills, ask questions, and tell their own personal fire safety stories.

FNESS promotes fire safety education by:

- delivering fire safety presentations
- providing resource material for classroom learning
- providing Fire Prevention Week school kits
- encouraging participation in the Fire Prevention Week poster/video contest
- working with fire departments to promote fire safety

FIRE SERVICES

2021 Fness Indigenous Firefighter Competition

The FNESS 2021 Indigenous Firefighter competition was held as a virtual event. The event was open to all First Nations' fire departments in BC. Training was offered through the 2021 BC Fire Training Officers Association (BCFTOA) Online Conference. Training and registration were coordinated and funded directly through FNESS. Five fire departments participated in training: Gitwinksilhkw Fire Department, Tla'amin Fire Department, Heiltsuk Fire Department, Takla Lake Fire Department, and Old Massett Fire Department.

The competition was a virtual event. Due to the timing of the competition and the early fire season, only two of the registered teams were available to participate in the competition. Teams were required to follow the rules and requirements as outlined in the Firefighter Competition Book. The virtual event required teams to record their evolutions and submit to FNESS for scoring. Teams had two weeks to complete their evolution submissions (May 21 to June 4, 2021). Competition submissions were scored by the FNESS judging committee evaluations using the same criteria as would occur during a face-to-face competition. The winners were announced July 6, 2021.

- Participating teams: Gitwinksilhkw Fire Department (1st place) and Tla'amin Fire Department (2nd place)



FIRE EXTINGUISHER RECALL REMINDER

FNESS is continuing to inform communities of the Kidde Fire Extinguisher Recall issued in 2017. We are actively attempting to replace all recalled units (models: E5, M5C and BC5GD). **Recalled units are replaced at no charge to the community.**

For more information about the replacement program, or to see if your community has outstanding recalls to replace, contact the Fire Services department at fireservices@fness.bc.ca.

Smoke Alarms and Fire Extinguisher

The Smoke/Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarm and Fire Extinguisher Initiative has been operating for over nine years! FNESS is proud to provide essential fire safety equipment at no cost to First Nation communities. FNESS works in partnership with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to provide smoke/CO alarms (10-year battery) and B-C fire extinguishers for homes on BC reserves. Fire safety equipment such as smoke alarms and fire extinguishers reduce the risks of house fires and house fire-related deaths.

Thank you to all the communities who have worked with the Fire Services department this year to ensure their homes have working fire safety equipment:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Little Shuswap Lake Indian Band | • Cooks Ferry Indian Band |
| • Shuswap Indian Band | • Blueberry River First Nation |
| • Squamish Nation | • Saik'uz First Nation |
| • Tseshaht First Nation | • Lower Similkameen Indian Band |
| • Nuxalk Nation | • Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation |
| • Osoyoos Indian Band | • Nazko First Nation |
| • Tsal'alh First Nation | • Tahltan Nation |
| • Musqueam First Nation | • Xaxli'p First Nation |
| • Leq'a:mel First Nation | • Akisqnuq First Nation |
| • Skidegate Band Council | • Gitwangak Indian Band |
| • Wei Wai Kum First Nations | • Tl'etinqox Government |
| | • Chawathil First Nation |



Fire Services Communications, Advisory and Outreach

The Fire Services department aims to communicate regularly with all communities within the province through various communications, resources, and outreach. Including:

- Updates, resources and safety tips are posted on social media (e.g. YouTube, Facebook, Twitter) and the FNESS website.
- Distribution of the annual report, annual calendar and quarterly newsletter.
- A comprehensive fire department email list.
- Fire Services has been working with the National Indigenous Fire Safety Council in a supporting role to develop the following programs in British Columbia (BC):
 - Housing Fire Safety Assessments
 - Wood Burning Stove Safety
- Fire Services staff are members of the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM's) Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Evaluation Committee in both 2021 and 2022. Participation in the committee includes application scoring, application review, community support and decision recommendations.
- Development of training and promotional videos for FNESS.

Exterior Operations Firefighter Training

The Exterior Operations Firefighter Training program was provided to three different communities this year. Congratulations and thank you to Gitxaala Nation, Simpcw First Nation and Tla'amin First Nation for participating. We appreciate the efforts made by these communities to work safely and effectively with FNESS. The program provides firefighters with the basic knowledge and practical skills to safely attack a structure fire and extinguish the fire while protecting exposure. The course is based on the British Columbia (BC) Structure Firefighter Competency and Training Playbook and is designed with safety as the number one priority. The course, through FNESS, is recognized through the BC Fire Training Officers Association and the Fire Commissioner of BC.



Exterior Operations Training video series being filmed in Chase, BC

In October of 2021, Fire Services introduced a new training program called Fire Extinguisher Training. This program allows participants to learn how to effectively use a portable fire extinguisher, identify different classes of fire, determine proper maintenance and inspection procedures for portable fire extinguishers, and demonstrate how to properly use one using a fire extinguisher simulator in case of an emergency. In March of 2022, FNESS held a training session at Kwikwetlem First Nation to 20 community members who successfully learned how to use a fire extinguisher safely.

FIRE SERVICES

First Nations Fire Department Networking and Mentorship Program

The First Nations Fire Department Networking and Mentorship program was created to support fire officers and fire chiefs with the administration and operation of their department. This program covers a range of fire department topics including human resources, fire services standards, equipment management, managing fire department budget, report development, understanding funding of fire services, training program scheduling, tracking of training, operational guidelines and after-action incident reporting. FNESS connects with communities through the FNESS Fire and Life Safety Public Education program, bi-annual surveys and support at fire department practice nights. The purpose of the FNESS Fire and Life Safety Public Education program is to educate communities about regional and seasonal fire and life safety risks. Each month, FNESS distributes a Fire and Life Safety Public Education message approved by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and FNESS. The messaging is distributed by email to our First Nation Fire Department email list. We encourage fire departments to share this information with their communities and use the fact sheets to promote safer communities. Bi-annual surveys are used to determine which services and programs are most needed for the First Nation fire departments and communities.

Public Education Monthly Topics:

August:
Summer Safety

September:
Candles, Matches,
and Lighters Safety

October:
Halloween Safety

November:
Making a Home Fire
Escape Plan

December:
Holiday Safety

January:
Indoor Heating

February:
Smoke Alarms

March:
Fire Extinguishers,
Spring Cleaning Safety

Assembly of First Nations – First Nations Fire Protection Strategy Plan

In November 2021, FNESS was awarded a proposal from the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), to help develop a strategy that will benefit the direction of fire protection for all First Nations communities across Canada. This includes the delivery of comprehensive recommendations, the introduction of two new pillars, as well as outlined priorities and specific goals targeted in a five-year time frame. Our Fire Services department had coordinated and facilitated engagements with First Nations' elected officials, community fire departments and Elders in every province and territory with three surveys to help shape the new Fire Protection Plan. Our team held weekly meetings internally, in conjunction to bi-weekly meetings with the AFN. FNESS successfully reviewed, analyzed and consolidated all data and information from the working group meetings, engagements, and questionnaires and created the Joint First Nations Fire Protection Strategy (2022 – 2027).

Youth Engagement Initiative and Gathering Our Voices Conference

Gathering Our Voices has now been cancelled until 2023. Youth Fire Safety Camps have been on hold until travel restrictions are lifted and communities re-open within covid-19 guidelines.



For additional information about any of our programs or training, please visit our website or email the Fire Services department at fireservices@fness.bc.ca



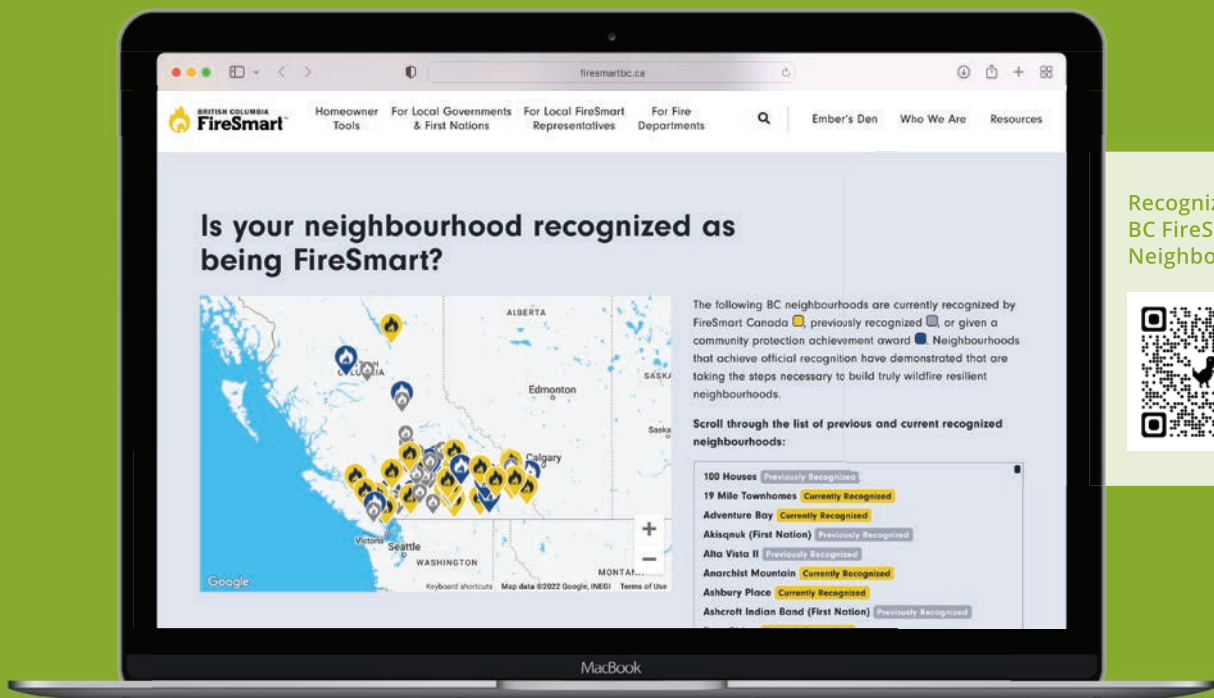
FOREST FUEL MANAGEMENT

Department



FOREST FUEL MANAGEMENT

The Forest Fuel Management department works with First Nation communities, along with provincial and federal governments, and other agencies, to assist with wildfire prevention activities. Many BC First Nations are impacted by the threat and risk of loss to community structures and assets because of wildfires. Forest Fuel Management supports access to funding to communities through planning, education and implementation of wildfire threat reduction activities.



Recognized
BC FireSmart
Neighbourhoods



FireSmart Canada Neighbourhood Recognition Program

This program is designed to encourage local, self-organized groups of neighbours to implement solutions for wildfire safety by engaging and supporting homeowners, community leaders, and others in shared efforts to protect people and property from wildfire.



Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) Program

The FireSmart™ Community Funding and Supports program provides funding to local governments and First Nations in BC to increase community resiliency by undertaking community based FireSmart planning and activities that reduce the community's risk from wildfire.

During 2021-2022, FNESS assisted First Nation communities in BC with CRI program applications and developing regional partnerships to support intergovernmental relations and networking within and between communities on wildfire risk reduction:

- Provided communications support for CRI program release notifications, application solicitation and awareness.
- Supported with CRI application intake, application review, technical review, management – includes review and recommendation of submitted First Nations CRI applications.
- Provided CRI application follow-up with First Nation communities (approved and not approved) based on recommendations. For approved First Nation applicants, FNESS assisted communities in CRI project implementation and monitoring, included providing guidance on wise practices, principles, and objectives for successfully completing wildfire prevention plans. For First Nation applicants that were not approved, FNESS provided feedback and recommendations for future CRI applications.
- Supported the development of regional FireSmart Committees to increase interagency cooperation across governments and with other strategic partners. Current program support by FNESS is in the Coastal Fire Centre and Southeast Fire Centre where First Nation communities are now engaging in a regional committee to promote CRI awareness and submissions.



FireSmart workshop in T'it'q'et

- Provided CRI program capacity building for First Nation communities in BC through oversight and troubleshooting, support, coordination, mentoring and training in CWPP (aka Community Wildfire Resilience Plan – CWRP) development and related wildfire risk reduction planning. FNESS capacity building support services are intended to increase access by First Nation communities in BC to participate and be successful in obtaining CRI Program funding.
- Supported CRI program partners with engagement and planning strategies. Note: Program partners are Union of BC Municipalities, Forest Enhancement Society of BC and the BC Ministry of Forests (previously BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development) (represented by the BC Wildfire Service).
- Provided strategic linkages to First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) - ensuring FNLC interests and principles are represented in the CRI Program. Strategic linkages included, but were not limited to, providing updates on the FNESS involvement in CRI program delivery and access (e.g. status of FNESS CRI work plan implementation, progress on CRI engagement and outreach inclusion for First Nation communities in BC).

FOREST FUEL MANAGEMENT

First Nation ADAPT Program

This program is a nation-wide federal program (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada) that provides funding to First Nation communities to design a project that allows them to assess and identify future climate change impacts on their community and develop a community-based plan to respond and adapt to those impacts and risks.

First Nations Data Assembly Project (aka Structure ID Project)

FNESS has developed a project framework to identify and address gaps which currently exist within Government of BC databases with regards to Wildland Interface Risk Class Mapping. With that, FNESS has assembled the most comprehensive database in Canada to support wildfire mitigation. Entitled the “First Nations Data Assembly Project” (aka Structure ID Project), this initiative is intended to support fire and emergency management planning by creating a data management process to collect residential and critical infrastructure data in BC First Nation communities (note: access to said information requires the endorsement of the First Nations Leadership Council). Data is then used to update and increase the accuracy of the Wildfire Risk classification associated with First Nation communities in BC. This project is a collaborative effort of FNESS and the BC Wildfire Service, in consultation with Emergency Management BC and GeoBC, including local, provincial and federal government representatives.

Lightship

Lightship is an online decision support tool that aids organizations to view, collect and share information in the field and in the office. Projects, tasks and automated protocols inform staff on the status of projects and digital data allows for reporting on available information housed on the Lightship platform. To date, the following (province-wide) information is loaded into or can be accessed by Lightship: Community Wildfire Protection Plan - CWPP (e.g. threat plots, infrastructure, associated maps, fuel types, and areas of high risk, proposed treatment unit and spatial data); Provincial Strategic Threat Analysis - PSTA (e.g. threat hazard, fire intensity, fuel type, WUI Risk Class, fire density, lightning, spotting impact); access to land and resources warehouse - includes real-time updates of active and past wildfire boundaries, roads, Vegetation Resource Inventory, Bio Geoclimatic Zones, subzones and variants, slope, elevation, aspect, Google Earth Imagery, orthophotos, land parcel fabric/cadaster, water features, parks and protected areas; access to Indigenous Services Canada Open Data (federal) warehouse - for accessing, addresses, property lines, land parcels; First Nations residential and critical infrastructure existing in CWPPs; Indigenous Services Canada/ ISC – SWPI – CRI treatment boundaries; FireSmart Community Recognition Program – e.g. FireSmart Homeowner and Neighbourhood assessments and reports; ungulate winter range; old growth management areas; parks, recreation areas, ecological reserves; evacuation orders and alerts; burn severity maps; and BC Biomass Facilities (mapped BC cogeneration facilities).



Blurb about
Wildfire Message
video goes here:



2021-2022 Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) On-Reserve Operational and FireSmart Programs

These two separate program streams are managed by FNESS, and grant administration is provided by FNESS with provision of funding by ISC. These related initiatives support First Nation communities to mitigate risk from wildfire in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).

From 2015 to present, FNESS has advanced the FNESS On-Reserve Fuel Treatment Initiative. FNESS, its strategic partners, and participating First Nation communities in BC collectively work in mitigating wildland fire risks in the WUI as a means of improving community protection and safety via the implementation of community-based operational fuel treatment projects. In 2020-2021, 28-First Nation communities in BC were approved for on-reserve operational forest fuel treatments and FireSmart projects. In total, First Nation communities in BC received funding totalling \$2,262,183.41 from FNESS to advance their respective forest fuel reduction treatments, representing 802.68 hectares that were treated.

Cultural Burning Revitalization and Prescribed Fire

First Nation communities work with FNESS to identify cultural burn areas, develop prescriptions and burn plans, and/or work with the BC Wildfire Service to develop these plans to conduct the burns.

Coordinated Training Strategy

This program is being developed to create an improved and coordinated provincial strategy to identify training needs that cater to an All-Hazards Approach, in alignment with the 4 pillars of Emergency Management (Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery) so that support can be provided to our First Nation communities throughout the province. In conjunction with the strategy development, Wildland Firefighter Training is being delivered throughout the province.

FOREST FUEL MANAGEMENT

Integrated Fire Management Planning

This is a new approach to managing multiple resources on the landscape as a larger interconnected environment, leading with Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) of First Nations and backed by science. It starts at the heart of the community by focusing on the values, working outwards onto the landscape.

Building on a successful pilot project, FNESS has begun implementation of Integrated Fire Management (IFM) Planning that will support all pillars of Emergency Management. Creation of a provincial level integrated spatial data base allows for the planning and design of FireSmart initiatives that support community resiliency over the short, mid, and longer-term. IFM outputs include identification of shelf ready projects to support year-round employment opportunities, priority training needs and builds capacity to access, collect, integrate, share and analyze data.

Integrated Fire Management Planning will also support First Nations with development of collaborative landscape level and old growth planning. Furthermore, it will enable efficiencies in resource development referrals process to ensure First Nations values are considered and addressed.

Community Outreach Strike Teams

The 2021 wildfire season in BC presented many unique challenges for our First Nation communities. With that, came opportunity. The FNESS Community Outreach Strike Teams were established to provide mitigation support and be deployed to communities who are at imminent risk to wildfire. Based on FireSmart principles, these Teams implemented actions that reduced potential impacts to residential structures, as well as supported recovery initiatives for members of communities that have been impacted by wildfires.

These Strike Teams were made up of a collection of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous personnel who all have an interest in working with our Nations to better prepare their community in the event of a wildfire. The intent is for these Strike Teams to be activated for the 2022 wildfire season as well.

In 2021, the majority of the Forest Fuel Staff were deployed and dedicated to assist communities who were impacted by the wildfires and the atmospheric river event. During these events, FNESS was able to recruit members from Alberta, Yukon and various parts of British Columbia. We are very thankful for the hard work and dedication that they put into helping our Nations in-need. To this day, our staff continue to work with impacted Nations throughout the Recovery process.

FNESS Strike Team training at the Neskonlith Indian Band





FINANCIAL

Statements



FIRST NATIONS' EMERGENCY SERVICES SOCIETY OF BC

A Financial Overview for 2021/2022

REVENUE	Dollars	%
Indigenous Services Canada	\$ 7,131,871	78.26%
BC Ministry of FLNRORD*	1,000,000	10.97%
Emergency Management BC	83,520	0.92%
Vancouver Foundation	50,000	0.55%
Donation	846,402	9.29%
Interest and Miscellaneous Income	368	0.00%
Membership	1,230	0.01%
	\$ 9,113,389	100.0%
EXPENSES	Dollars	%
Fire Services	\$ 895,475	12.02%
Emergency Management	5,099,040	68.45%
Forest Fuel Management	847,108	11.37%
Administration and Governance	608,142	8.16%
	\$ 7,449,765	100.0%
Excess of revenue over expenses from operations	\$ 1,663,625	

*BC Ministry of Forest, Lands, and Natural Resources Operations and Rural Development

NOTICE TO READER

FNESS currently receives funding primarily from government sources and uses these funds according to the terms and conditions of their Agreements.

This financial presentation is unaudited and has been prepared by management for the sole purpose of this annual report. The information excludes capital amortization and deferred revenue adjustments, loss (gain) on sale of assets but includes purchases that are capital in nature.

Communities Engaged by FNESS 2021-2022

Band #	Band Name	FS	FFM	EM
684	Adams Lake Indian Band	✓	✓	✓
659	Ahousaht First Nation	✓		
604	Akisqnuq First Nation	✓		
602	?aq'am		✓	
685	Ashcroft Indian Band		✓	
547	Blueberry River First Nations	✓		
686	Bonaparte First Nation		✓	
713	Canim Lake Band		✓	
583	Chawathil First Nation	✓	✓	✓
693	Coldwater Indian Band		✓	✓
694	Cook's Ferry Indian Band	✓	✓	✓
642	Cowichan Tribes		✓	✓
502	Daylu Dena Council		✓	
504	Dease River River Nation		✓	
662	Ditidaht First Nation		✓	
548	Doig River First Nation		✓	
709	?Esdilagh First Nation		✓	
711	Esk'etemc		✓	
543	Fort Nelson First Nation		✓	
537	Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs		✓	
675	Gitga'a't First Nation		✓	
536	Gitwangak	✓		
672	Gitxaala Nation	✓		
676	Haisla Nation (Kitimaat Village Council)		✓	✓
645	Halalt First Nation		✓	✓
538	Heiltsuk Nation		✓	
552	Homalco First Nation		✓	
683	Iskut First Nation		✓	
638	Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/ Che:k'tles7et'h' First Nations		✓	✓
704	Kanaka Bar Indian Band		✓	
532	Kispiox Band Council		✓	

Band #	Band Name	FS	FFM	EM
680	Kitselas Nation		✓	
553	Klahoose First Nation	✓	✓	
610	Kwadacha Nation (Tsek'ene)		✓	
626	Kwakiutl First Nation		✓	
560	Kwikwetlem First Nation	✓		
607	Lake Babine Nation		✓	
579	Leq'a:mel First Nation	✓		
502	Liard First Nation		✓	
557	Lílwat Nation		✓	
689	Little Shuswap Lake Indian Band		✓	✓
695	Lower Nicola Indian Band	✓	✓	✓
598	Lower Similkameen Indian Band	✓	✓	
705	Lytton First Nation		✓	✓
630	Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation		✓	✓
550	Musqueam Indian Band	✓		
612	Nadleh Whut'en		✓	
614	Nak'azdli Whut'en	✓	✓	
720	Nazko First Nation	✓	✓	✓
690	Neskonlith Indian Band		✓	✓
679	Nisga'a Village of Gitwinksihlkw		✓	
699	Nooaitch Indian Band		✓	✓
556	N'Quatqua		✓	
639	Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations		✓	✓
539	Nuxalk Nation (Bella Coola Band)	✓	✓	
616	Okanagan Indian Band	✓	✓	✓
596	Osoyoos Indian Band	✓	✓	
650	Penelakut Tribe	✓	✓	✓
597	Penticton Indian Band	✓	✓	✓
633	Quatsino First Nation		✓	
615	Saik'uz First Nation	✓		✓

FS	Fire Services
FFM	Forest Fuel Management
EM	Emergency Management

Band #	Band Name	FS	FFM	EM
567	Samahquam First Nation		✓	
581	Seabird Island Band	✓		✓
591	Sekw'el'was (Cayoose Creek Indian Band)		✓	
569	Semiahmoo First Nation		✓	
698	Shackan Indian Band		✓	✓
605	Shuswap Indian Band	✓		
533	Sik-E-Dakh (Glen Vowell Band)		✓	
691	Simpcw First Nation	✓	✓	
706	Siska Indian Band		✓	
582	Skawahlook First Nation		✓	
687	Skeetchestn Indian Band		✓	
670	Skidegate Band Council	✓		
729	Skin Tyee Nation		✓	
707	Skuppah Indian Band		✓	
573	Skwah First Nation		✓	
572	Soowahlie First Nation		✓	
600	Splatsin	✓	✓	✓
708	Spuzzum First Nation		✓	✓
555	Squamish Nation	✓	✓	
641	Stz'uminus First Nation	✓	✓	✓
578	Sumas First Nation		✓	✓
682	Tahltan Band Council	✓	✓	
608	Takla Nation	✓		
501	Taku River Tlingit First Nation		✓	
593	T'it'q'et		✓	
688	Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc		✓	✓
554	Tla'amin Nation	✓	✓	
660	Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation	✓	✓	
617	Tl'azt'en Nation		✓	
712	Tl'etinqox Government	✓		
595	Tsal'alh	✓	✓	
577	Tsawwassen First Nation		✓	

Band #	Band Name	FS	FFM	EM
609	Tsay Keh Dene		✓	
665	Tseshaht First Nation	✓		
594	Ts'kw'aylaxw First Nation	✓	✓	
549	Tsleil-Waututh Nation		✓	
643	Ts'uu-baa-asatx First Nation (Cowichan First Nation)		✓	
667	Uchucklesaht Tribe		✓	
697	Upper Nicola Band		✓	✓
599	Upper Similkameen Indian Band		✓	
623	We Wai Kai First Nation (Cape Mudge Indian Band)		✓	
622	We Wai Kum First Nation (Campbell River Indian Band)	✓	✓	
601	West Bank First Nation		✓	
545	West Moberly First Nations		✓	
725	Wet'suwet'en First Nation		✓	
719	Williams Lake First Nation		✓	✓
530	Witset First Nation		✓	
702	Whispering Pines/Clinton Indian Band		✓	
592	Xaxli'p	✓	✓	
561	Xa'xtsa (Douglas First Nation)		✓	
714	Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Government		✓	✓
590	Xwísten (Bridge River Indian Band)		✓	
603	Yaq'it ?a-knuq'í 'it (Tobacco Plains Indian Band)		✓	
717	Yunesit'in Government		✓	



First Nations'
Emergency Services Society
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