



2023-2024

First Nations' Emergency Services Society
and Indigenous Services Canada

*On-Reserve Cultural and Prescribed Fire
Revitalization*

Program and Application Guide

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INTRODUCTION

Who is FNESS?

The First Nations' Emergency Services Society (FNESS) is a charitable non-profit organization incorporated under the society act of British Columbia. FNESS aims to create safer First Nations communities using the four pillars of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Who is ISC?

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) works collaboratively with partners to improve access to high quality services for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Our vision is to support and empower Indigenous peoples to independently deliver services and address the socio-economic conditions in their communities.

What is Cultural and Prescribed Fire?

Cultural fire uses fire on the landscape to achieve specific cultural objectives, is holistic in nature, typically low-intensity, small scale burns that meet community objectives. It is community driven and could involve comprehensive engagement and guidance from Elders and/or Fire Knowledge Keepers.

Prescribed fire often has multiple resource management values, primarily to reduce and manage forest fuels and maintain a certain forest state and/or reduce wildfire risks. It is often applied with greater intensity, occurs during different times, and is set up differently in the planning process.

What is the On-reserve Cultural and Prescribed Fire Revitalization program?

The FNESS-ISC On-Reserve Cultural and Prescribed Fire Revitalization program was created in 2022. It supports First Nation communities' revitalization of fire by working together to; identify logical cultural or prescribed burn units, consultation in conjunction with the BC Wildfire Service to develop burn plans (if applicable), provide assistance in conducting the burns if invited, and coaching and/or mentorship on burns.

Who is Eligible to Apply?

All Bands and Treaty First Nations in BC are eligible to apply. All reserve lands are eligible for funding.

Maximum Grant Amount

\$150,000 per project.



MANDATORY APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS

Requirements

Applicants must be in good standing with all FNESS-ISC programs, meaning that all prior approved applications/projects must be completed. Applicants will not be considered if they have outstanding projects.

Process

STEP 1: Contact FNESS at CulturalFire@fness.bc.ca to let them know you are interested in applying for FNESS-ISC funding. You will then be assigned a cultural and prescribed fire specialist to help answer any questions and support you in preparing your application.

STEP 2: Complete [the application](#) and have it signed by an authorized Band signatory as per the Band Council Resolution.

STEP 3: Complete the supporting documentation:

1. Map of the project area showing the extent of the proposed burn in .KML or .KMZ format. If required, a FNESS Cultural and Prescribed Fire Specialist can help you in creating this map.
2. First Nation Band Council Resolution (BCR), indicating: a) support for the application, b) a willingness to provide overall grant management, and c) identifying a designated Band representative with signing authority for the project, if awarded. A new BCR may be required if the project is over 1 year.
3. If applicable, a Fuel Management Prescription may be required. This will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and is dependent on the complexity and category of the burn.
4. If applicable, a Burn Plan may be required. This will also be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and is dependent on the complexity and category of the burn.

STEP 4: Once all the above steps have been completed, applications must be saved as either a PDF or Microsoft Word document and submitted electronically to CulturalFire@fness.bc.ca

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Applications may be submitted at any time throughout the program year until funding is exhausted.

Evaluation Considerations

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:



- Adherence to the Mandatory Application Requirements and Process
- Are the proposed activities approved?
- Has the application clearly outlined estimated costs for the proposed project/activities and is within the maximum amount? Cost effectiveness will be a factor in the application review process.

Notice of Funding Decision

Generally, it takes approximately 60 calendar days from the application submission date to receive notice of decision. This will vary depending on the volume of applications. All applicants will receive written notice of funding decisions via email, which will include the terms and conditions of the grant.

Notice of Revisions

In some cases, revisions may be required to an application, or an application may be approved in principle only. This would require the applicant to complete the requested revisions within 30 calendar days from the date of written notice. Revisions that are not completed within 30 calendar days may be declined.

Note: Significant changes to either the scope or intent of an approved project may require a new submission.

APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

Post-grant Approval Meeting/Quarterly Meetings

Once the application is approved, all applicants must attend a post-grant approval meeting with a FNESS Cultural and Prescribed Fire Specialist to map out the next steps. Support from your Cultural and Prescribed Fire Specialist is also available. Additional regular quarterly meetings may also be scheduled to ensure activities are on track.

Annual Project Status Reports

Applicants are responsible for providing a status report on their project/activities on an annual basis (once per year). Status reports can be emailed to CulturalFire@fness.bc.ca. Note: any changes to the project scope must first be discussed with the FNESS Cultural and Prescribed Fire Specialist. Depending on the specific scope changes, the applicant may be required to submit an amended application for approval.

Financial Management

Applicants are responsible for proper fiscal management, including submission of a final report using the final reporting template, which will be provided by your Cultural and Prescribed Fire Specialist.



Grant Term

Applicants have two-years from the date of approval to complete their activities/project and submit a final report. If projects are completed, applicants may submit an additional application in the same grant year.

Transparency

To ensure transparency and accountability in the expenditure of public funds, applicants are responsible for declaring all other financial contributions which cover 'eligible costs' of a project and, depending on the total value, may decrease the value of the grant awarded under the ISC program.

Clients who are in receipt of CRI funding for similar activities as our programs must disclose the nature and geographic focus of their CRI project(s) to ensure no funding overlap between CRI & ISC/FNESS programs occurs.

FINAL REPORT PROCESS

Upon completion of the project, applicants must submit a final report to CulturalFire@fness.bc.ca using the provided template, including the required supporting documentation.

Final Report Checklist:

- A completed final report form, including signature of the authorized Band signatory.
- Financial expenditure reports. Note: FNESS-ISC reserves the right to request an audit on financial reports.
- .KML/.KMZ or shapefiles of treatment area(s).
- A summary of the completed work/activities, whether the project objectives were met.

Review of Final Reports

FNESS will perform a review of all final reports to ensure the required report elements identified above have been submitted.

PAYMENTS

Advance Payments

Advance payments of 25% of the project total will be considered and discussed / confirmed at the time of the PGA meeting.

Progress Payments



Progress payments will be considered if appropriate rationale is provided, and expenditures-to-date confirmed. Progress payments will be capped at 75% of the total approved grant amount which includes any advance payments that were previously approved.

Other Grant Contributions

Where other grant programs fund 'eligible costs' under the ISC/FNESS program, those grant amounts will be deducted from the eligible grant amount payable.

Documentation must be available to demonstrate how actual costs from other grant contributions are accounted for. For example, labor costs must include information on the number of hours worked, the hourly rate, and the eligible activity that was undertaken (e.g., 50 hours at \$18/hour for chipping).

Under no circumstances will the ISC/FNESS grant result in payment of more than 100% of the eligible project cost (or net project cost in cases where revenue is generated).

For example:

Eligible project cost of \$75,000.

Other Grant Contributions (for 'eligible costs' under this program) of \$25,000.

Net Project Revenue of \$15,000.

Maximum payable under FNESS-ISC Grant = \$35,000.

Changes to Approved Projects

Approved grants are specific to the project as identified in the application, and grant funds are not transferable to other projects. Approval from FNESS will be required for any significant variation from the approved project. To propose changes to an approved project, approved applicants are required to submit:

- Description of the new or revised activities and area (if applicable).
- Description of new or revised expenditures.
- Written rationale for changes to activities and/or expenditures.
- Please note that the applicant may be required to submit an updated, signed application form.

Final Payments

Final grant payment will not be approved until all administrative, technical, and spatial data requirements have been met.

**Payment requests must originate from the Band. Contractors and Consultants
cannot submit requests on the Band's behalf.**



APPENDIX A: LIST OF ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

This is not an exhaustive list. If there is something not listed that would revitalize your community's use of cultural and/or prescribed fire, please discuss it with your FNESS Cultural and Prescribed Fire Specialist.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:

- If applicable, Fuel Management Prescription development for the project, preferably with multiple Treatment Units. All prescriptions must be developed using the most current template and be developed and signed by a Registered Forest Professional, or other associated professionals operating within their scope of practice [Tools for fuel management](#)
- If applicable, Burn Plan development and activities for the project.
- As required, preparation and implementation costs of cultural and prescribed burns.
 - Ignition and Holding Crews
 - Vehicle rentals
 - Fireline Specialists
 - First Aid coverage and configuration, appropriate for risk class and location
 - Danger Tree Assessment and Falling
 - Spot weather forecasts
 - Custom Venting Index Forecasts
 - Etc.
- Construction and rehabilitation of control lines.
- Pre-, Post-, and Live burn fire effects monitoring.
- Required professional assessments and consultation (e.g., geotechnical, archaeological, fire ecologist, range agrologist, etc.)
- Preparation of all final report requirements.
- Fire history surveys.
- Pre- and post-fire effects monitoring surveys and plots.
- Post project planting or re-planting of native flora species, in conjunction with cultural and/or prescribed fire.
- Costs associated with maintenance of previous cultural or prescribed fire projects.
- Rental of specialized equipment i.e., plastic sphere dispenser or terra torch, aviation, drones, heavy equipment, water tenders, etc.
- Youth engagement or cultural and/or prescribed fire exposure program.
- Women or LGBTQ2S+ engagement and exposure program.
- Research initiatives i.e., food security, fire history use, etc.



- Honoraria for Elders, Fire and/or Knowledge Keepers, and subject matter experts.
- Gathering and celebration dinner, post project for the community
- Prescribed Fire Training Exchange (TREX) costs.
- Media and documentation of cultural fire traditions, stories, and activities.
- Community engagement and information sessions for the project.
- Posters, fliers, brochures, etc., to advertise and support the project.
- Post burn community dinner and ceremony to discuss lessons learned, perspectives, community feedback, etc.
- Canadian Wildfire Modelling.
- Site evaluation, including Danger Tree Assessments and Falling.
- Burn preparation activities including fire weather index monitoring activities, public notification and preparing black lines.
- Burn day activities including spot forecasts, equipment set up, transport, and traffic control.



APPENDIX B: NON-ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

NON-ELIGIBLE COSTS AND ACTIVITIES

As described above, this is not an exhaustive list, but if there is something not listed that would revitalize your community's use of cultural and prescribed fire, please discuss it with your FNESS Cultural and Prescribed Fire Specialist. However, some activities, for purposes other than Cultural and/or Prescribed Fire will not be eligible for grant funding, as there are existing FNESS programs to cover the costs. This includes:

- Funding for fuel treatment activities.
- Funding for FireSmart activities.
- Non-combustible zone for ceremonial fires.
- Emergency, Evacuation, or other community safety plans.
- Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan development.
- Fire department training or equipment.
- Wildland firefighter training and equipment purchasing.
- First aid training, equipment, and supplies.
- Structural protection equipment.
- Fire Effects Monitoring training.

Note: *If the funding you are looking for is not eligible through the Cultural & Prescribed Fire program, please contact FNESS Mitigation at mitigation@fness.bc.ca*

