

BCCFA-BCWS WILDFIRE RESILIENCY PROJECT

CFA NEEDS ASSESSMENT - WHAT WE HEARD

Carly Dow, BCCFA Manager of Communications & Outreach

June 12, 2024



BC Wildfire
Service



British Columbia
**Community
Forest
Association**
local people, local forests, local decisions

Background



The Wildfire Resiliency Project builds on the success, activities and partnerships established in the BCCFA Economic Recovery Initiative.



The primary phase of the project has been focused on a needs assessment of community forests



The findings in this assessment will inform the strategic priorities of the ongoing partnership between BCCFA and BCWS

Methodology



Detailed interview questions developed in collaboration with Dr. Sarah Dickson-Hoyle and Dr. Kelsey Copes-Gerbitz (UBC)



Interviews with CFA Managers/Representatives conducted via Zoom by Erik Leslie, Carly Dow and Susan Mulkey



27 CFAs were interviewed, with data from an additional 7 collected from a survey



Interview with Dave Gill, Manager of Westbank First Nation CFA

What We Heard - Funding

- **Long-term, flexible funding with minimal administrative burden is crucial**
 - Fiscal deadline funding is typically problematic for WRR work
- On average, CFAs could treat 131 ha per year for the next 3-5 years
- On average, approximately \$500,000 in funding would be required per year for each CFA to conduct their current prioritized treatments
- Maintenance and prescribed burn treatments are additional interests/needs

What We Heard – Planning & Operations

- CFAs would benefit from funding for developing wildfire management plans
 - 46% of interviewed CFAs do not currently have wildfire plans
- 82% have already been conducting WRR work
- 78% are interested in prescribed or cultural burning and 31% of CFAs have already conducted prescribed or cultural burning
- 93% are interested in climate change adaptation and 74% have already been conducting climate-related work
- 68% have shelf-ready prescriptions for immediate treatment

What We Heard - Barriers

- Capacity (personnel, equipment, training for prescribed burning)
- Funding deadlines and structure
- Administrative burdens of developing prescriptions
- Burn window/venting restrictions
- Disconnect between policy level and work on the ground
- Stocking standards
- Waste/incremental haul costs; restrictions on chipping and grinding on site
- Challenging relationships with District or BCWS

What We Heard – Relationships & Looking Ahead

- Prescribed treatments are most successful when written and implemented by the CFA, rather than at the District level
 - Keep decisions locally based
- Most CFAs have a good relationship with BCWS, but level of engagement varies
 - Communication and engagement could be improved by BCWS and policy makers
 - A handful of CFAs have had negative experiences with BCWS – gaps in communication
- 97% would like support for special programs/pilot initiatives
- 100% are interested in networking with other managers, BCWS staff and experts
- Final Report on this Needs Assessment will become available to BCCFA Membership

Future BCCFA-BCWS Partnership Considerations



A strong, long-term partnership between BCCFA and BCWS



Community forest participation in the four phases of wildfire management



Cultural burning and prescribed fire on community forests is supported and its application expanded



Innovation and wildfire planning are supported in community forests to maximize their potential for leadership in wildfire management.



Community forests have capacity to develop and implement effective climate change adaptation strategies.

THANK YOU!

cdow@bccfa.ca

The BCCFA gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Forests.



BC Wildfire
Service



British Columbia
**Community
Forest
Association**

local people, local forests, local decisions