



**Protecting Canadian homeowners and communities  
from wildfire in a changing climate**

Tuesday, March 20, 2012

Toronto Board of Trade

77 Adelaide Street West, Toronto ON

- 8:00 a.m. Registration and continental breakfast
- 8:30 a.m. Introduction & welcome (Paul Kovacs, Executive Director, ICLR)
- Problem**
- 8:45 – 9:15 Mike Flannigan, University of Alberta/Canadian Forest Service  
*Future Canadian fire regimes under a changing climate*
- Experience**
- 9:15 – 10:00 Peter Fuglem, Director, B.C. Protection Program (Retired)  
*Lessons learned from 2003 and 2011*
- 10:00 – 10:45 Karl Brondell, Assist. Vice President, Claims, State Farm, Bloomington, Illinois  
*Preparing for the unexpected: pre, during and post-wildfire event strategies*
- 10:45 – 12:00 Insurance panel  
- Bob Dorion, Vice President, Claims, Peace Hills Insurance  
- Ian McKay, Dir. Claims Prop. Appraisal Field Ops, Northbridge Insurance  
- Troy Bourassa, Director, Claims, Albert Motor Association
- 12:00 – 12:30 Lunch
- 12:30 – 1:45 Lunch *continued*  
Jamie Coutts, Fire Chief, Slave Lake, Alberta  
Mark Missal, Town Councillor, Slave Lake, Alberta; independent Air Attack Coordinator  
*May 15, 2011: Response and recovery*
- Solutions/Answers**
- 1:45 – 2:30 Adam Gossell, FireSmart Unit Leader, Government of Alberta  
Kelly O'Shea, Executive Director, Partners in Protection Association  
*Fire-resilient communities and an empowered public*
- 2:30 – 3:00 Paul Gray, Senior Program Advisor, Applied Research and Development Branch, Ministry of Natural Resources  
*Climate change adaptation strategies*
- 3:00 – 3:15 Coffee break
- 3:15 – 3:45 Kim Connors, Director, Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC)  
*National Wildfire Response Plan/Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy (CWFS)*
- 3:45 Group discussion

## Meeting synopsis/discussion points

- Wildland fire has become a subtext of many larger global issues, including climate change, atmospheric chemistry and air quality, land use change in developing countries, and the expansion of communities into the wildland/urban interface (WUI).
- There will be significantly more wildland fire threat in the future due to climate change, expanding WUI communities, forest health issues, and limited fire management/suppression and research capacity.
- As the impact of climate change itself becomes more evident and signals of a warming climate become more pronounced in the landscape/fire management area, there will be an increased need to adapt to rapidly evolving future fire regimes.
- There is a growing sense within the wildland fire management community that suppression capacity is falling behind demands, which will result in the need to supplement efficient fire suppression with proactive hazard mitigation.
- The Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy (CWFS) provides some solutions to deal with increased challenges surrounding landscape and fire management, growing interface fires, and the need for more public education and proactive hazard mitigation.
- Along with suggesting an objective of healthy and productive forest ecosystems and modern business practices, the CWFS embraces the idea of resilient communities and an empowered public.
- The CWFS recognizes that Partners in Protection's *FireSmart* initiative enhances mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery within Canadian communities at risk of being impacted by wildland fire.
- While *FireSmart* advocates that all levels of government (federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal) adapt to the growing challenges mentioned above, as a major stakeholder, Canadian insurers should also become more involved in discussions with government and others, to work together to reduce the negative impacts of wildland fire on those Canadians and communities located in the wildland/urban interface (WUI).

## Meeting objectives

- To keep the increasing wildland fire threat to Canadian communities front-of-mind as a major priority at all levels of government.
- To discuss lessons learned from the 2003 and 2011 wildfire events, focus on the preferred approach to future wildland fire management as expressed through the CWFS, and stress the need for positive action from insurers and governments in terms of future hazard mitigation, with a focus on disaster prevention rather than disaster relief.
- To explore, through discussion and followup, appropriate actions to minimize the negative impacts of wildfire on Canadian communities, resulting in a position paper by the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction on priorities for protection of people, homes and communities from wildfire.

***With support from Natural Resources Canada's Regional Adaptation Collaborative Program***



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