

# Community Wildfire Protection Element

This Element is an expansion of the Union of BC Municipalities' Strategic Wildfire Protection Program (which targets provincial crown lands around communities most at risk of fire). The Element aims to improve community safety and reduce the risk of property damage by removing dead timber and creating fire breaks in beetle impacted pine forests within municipal boundaries.

## Who is eligible?

BC municipalities (i.e. legal status is required).

## What land is eligible?

Fire threat reduction activities are eligible on forest lands meeting the following three criteria:

- within forest stands having mountain pine beetle (MPB) current or past attack or stands at risk of MPB attack
- on municipal lands or on provincial crown lands within communities (not including private land) prioritized as highest-risk by the province's fire hazard rating, and
- in areas that have demonstrated active fuel management.

## What can the funding be used for?

Activities funded under this Element may include:

- community wildfire protection planning - conducting wildfire risk assessments and developing plans and prescriptions for treatments to improve fire prevention and protection in interface areas
- operational fuel treatment – assisting communities to treat fuels and mitigate the potential impacts of wildfire as identified during the Community Wildfire Protection Plan development phase
- implementation of “FireSmart” activities around communities (i.e. removal of forest fuels and creating fire and fuel breaks and implementing fuel maintenance programs that prevent the wildfire risk from increasing again when new vegetation fills in after the initial wood and debris is removed), and
- verification of environmental compliance.

### Activities must:

- directly address human safety and property at risk as a result of the MPB-infestation

- be acceptable to a professional forester in terms of hazard management planning
- be consistent with and build on existing provincial and federal strategies for fire management, and
- comply with environmental requirements.

## **How much funding is available?**

The Community Wildfire Protection Element budget is \$1.06 million in fiscal year 2007/08 and \$1.31 million in 2008/09. Projects delivered by the province of BC will be funded consistent with the size and duration of the programs or projects. A cap of \$100,000 per project ensures widespread access for communities. The projects will be administered on a cost-sharing basis, with a community contribution of up to 25%. The community contribution can be cash or in-kind, so communities with insufficient funds are able to contribute through activities such as project administration. Project recipients may contract work to professional crews and minor capital costs for project-specific resources are eligible for up to 5% of the project funding.

## **How is the program delivered?**

This Element builds on the existing Union of BC Municipalities' Strategic Wildfire Protection Program and is delivered by Natural Resources Canada in cooperation with BC municipalities.