

What is Small Community Wildfire Readiness Support?

Small Community Wildfire Readiness Support (Program) helps small Basin and First Nations communities plan and prepare for wildfires through wildfire prevention and protection planning/assessments, training, and equipment.

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants include First Nation communities, legally incorporated society-run fire departments and brigades, and local governments representing small and remote communities (populations typically less than 2,500) in the Columbia Basin Trust region (ourtrust.org/map) (Eligible Applicants).

Eligible Applicants must apply for funding through eligible provincial and/or federal funded programs including, but not limited to the [Community Resiliency Investment - FireSmart™ Community Funding & Supports](#), the [Community Emergency Preparedness Fund, Fighting and Managing Wildfires in a Changing Climate Program](#), or [First Nations' Emergency Services Society \(FNESS\)](#). Eligible project costs must be incremental to those project activities approved by other provincial or federal funded programs.

Legally incorporated society-run fire departments and brigades must:

- be in good standing with BC Registry Services and have been incorporated for a minimum of two years;
- demonstrate established working relationships with the regional district and BC Wildfire Service, as well as registration with the Office of the Fire Commissioner as applicable; and
- maintain appropriate insurance coverage commensurate with the nature and risk of wildfire prevention and protection activities undertaken.

When is the application deadline?

November 7, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. PT / 3:00 p.m. MT.

What is the application process?

Eligible Applicants are encouraged to speak with the Trust's Wildfire Advisors to help determine project eligibility and navigate the application process. Contact wildfire@ourtrust.org or 1.800.505.8998 for more information.

What types of projects costs are eligible?

Eligible costs include the following, but are not limited to:

Accredited Training Courses:

- emergency management and support services, including incident command system training;
- First Aid;
- FireSmart™ assessments;

- structural firefighting (relevant to wildfire suppression);
- wildland urban suppression;
- leadership training related to developing shared, proactive strategies and resources for supporting mental health and resilience for fire department crews;
- FireSmart BC Wildfire Resiliency and Training Summit 2025 attendance (up to \$2,000 per person for up to four crew members); and
- other related training.

Note: If your project includes the following types of training, a certificate of insurance for your project including the Trust as an additional insured, must be submitted to the Trust before the training begins:

- structural firefighting;
- wildland urban suppression; and
- other training activities as required.

Planning/Assessments:

- community structure protection inventory;
- evacuation planning;
- fire training needs (directly related to wildfire suppression and/or wildland urban suppression);
- water availability and delivery;
- wildfire equipment inventory; and
- other related planning assessments.

Wildfire Prevention and Protection Equipment:

- adapters;
- chainsaws;
- compressors;
- equipment trailers;
- forestry cutting hand tools;
- firefighting hand tools;
- generators;
- portable berms;
- portable tanks;
- pumps;
- hose;
- nozzles;
- valves;
- sprinklers;
- water thieves;
- wildland gear;
- ladders;
- safety equipment;
- emergency communication devices used primarily for wildfire prevention and protection purposes; and
- other related equipment.

Capital purchases or improvements (no more than \$7,500) directly related to the secure storage of wildfire prevention and protection equipment:

- covered storage;
- fencing; and
- other related purchases/improvements.

What types of costs are not eligible?

Costs that are not eligible include the following, but are not limited to those that:

- are incurred prior to receiving project approval;
- take place outside the Basin or on private land;
- are the purchase of a vehicle;
- are directly pertaining to provincial, First Nations', or local governments' legally required emergency preparedness, response and recovery activities;
- are routine or ongoing operating costs (e.g. electricity; fuel; subscription fees; office set-up expenses; communications or other equipment with a primary use of structural firefighting);
- are approved through other provincial or federal programs; and
- primarily benefit the applicant itself or the members of a membership-based organization.

How much will the Trust fund?

Up to **100 per cent** of total project costs can be requested from the Trust for training, equipment and planning assessments contingent upon the costs being incremental to provincial or federal program funding.

Up to **50 per cent** of total project costs can be requested from the Trust for capital purchases or improvements (no more than \$7,500) contingent upon the costs being incremental to provincial or federal program funding.

The application should clearly demonstrate that at least 50 per cent of total capital purchases or improvement costs will be received from sources other than the Trust.

The typical maximum amount of Trust funding for any one project is \$70,000.

How does the Trust select projects for funding?

The Trust often receives requests for more funding than what is available and will prioritize requests from Eligible Applicants that demonstrate:

- achievable and measurable wildfire readiness outcomes;
- appropriate training, experience and mandate to implement the activities for which funding is being sought;
- community susceptibility to wildfires;
- how the project will build wildfire resiliency in the community on a longer-term;

- linkages to your community's, or Regional District's Emergency Preparedness/Response Plan(s);
- Establishment of relevant partnerships, and partner awareness of the proposed activities (e.g. BC Wildfire Services, Regional District);
- project readiness and ability to move forward within the stated timelines;
- a cost-effective budget and efforts to access other funding streams to which project activities are eligible;
- requested expenses are supported by attached quotes, as applicable; and
- training courses are accredited.

Eligible Applicants requesting equipment must also demonstrate:

- the equipment will be stored on community property;
- operators of the equipment will be fully trained in its use;
- long-term plans to operate and maintain the equipment;
- the equipment will be used for the long-term benefit of the community;
- equipment purchases towards developing a FireSmart™ Structure Protection Trailer follow the BC Wildfire Service standards and approvals; and
- applicable regulatory approvals are obtained and followed.

When will organizations hear the results?

The review process usually takes up to eight weeks. Trust staff may request additional information during the evaluation phase.

Organizations will be contacted by email, at the address provided on the application form, to confirm if the project application has been approved for funding.

To finalize funding, both parties will sign a Contribution Agreement. Funds will be received after both parties sign the Agreement.

When can a project begin?

Funds can only be used for approved project expenses that occur after Trust approval of funding has been received and the Contribution Agreement has been signed. Projects must aim to be completed within one year of the date of the signed Contribution Agreement.

What else to keep in mind?

Even if a project meets eligibility criteria, it may not be selected for funding as the Trust often receives requests for more funding than what is available. The Trust retains the right to determine project eligibility and the amount of funding allocated to each project; this may be all or part of what was requested.

Depending on the nature of the project, applicants may have to obtain specific permits and approvals prior to receiving Trust funds.

Ready to apply?

1. Email wildfire@ourtrust.org or call 1.800.505.8998 if you have questions or to discuss your project idea.
2. If you would like to work offline, download the Application [Worksheet](#). The worksheet contains direction and advice on how to complete the application. This is optional and cannot be used as your application.
3. Complete the online [application form](#).