

What is the Cultural and Prescribed Fire Program?

The Cultural and Prescribed Fire Program supports communities to improve ecological health, wildfire resilience and build capacity through the use of cultural and prescribed fire. Projects will have a meaningful, measurable impact in supporting and strengthening health and resilience of the Basin's natural environment and community safety in a changing climate, which is a focus area in the [Columbia Basin Management Plan: Strategic Priorities 2024–2034](#).

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants include local governments, First Nations and registered non-profits with demonstrated experience in cultural and prescribed fire in the Columbia Basin Trust region (ourtrust.org/map).

What is the application process?

The Program has a two-stage application process. First, an online Expression of Interest (EOI) must be submitted. Second, if the project is invited to move forward, a full application must be developed for submission. Guidance from Trust staff and/or a Program Advisor will be provided through the application process.

When is the application deadline?

EOIs are accepted on a continuous basis until **October 1, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. PT / 3:00 p.m. MT**. If invited to move forward, you will be notified within four weeks of submitting your EOI.

The final deadline to submit a project application is **December 10, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. PT / 3:00 p.m. MT**.

What types of projects and costs are eligible?

Eligible projects include the following:

- Planning and application of cultural and prescribed fire on Crown land, local government-owned land, First Nations land, conservation land or community forest land for the objective of enhancing ecological function and improving wildfire resiliency.
- Development of fuel treatment prescriptions and/or burn plans.
- Development and implementation of invasive species control plans that are part of a larger cultural and prescribed fire project, including pre and post burn inventories.
- Post-burn analysis and reporting as required by Provincial regulations.
- Effectiveness monitoring for two years following the burn.
- Project signage and community notifications about the burn.
- Cultural and prescribed fire and related training (e.g. Prescribed Fire Training Exchanges (TREX), S-100, S-185, S-212, S-219, chainsaw operations and maintenance) including travel expenses to participate in training within BC.
- Small equipment for planning, implementing, and effectiveness monitoring of cultural and prescribed fires (e.g. weather monitoring stations, vegetation plot kits, drones and/or thermal imaging sensors, etc.) up to a maximum of \$10,000.

What are the requirements for funding?

Requirements for project funding include the following:

Project Rationale

- Rationale on how the project will improve ecological function, wildfire resiliency and mitigation of community wildfire risk.
- Rationale on how cultural and prescribed fire is the best approach as opposed to other treatment methods.
- Reflect input received from relevant community groups/non-profits and technical experts.

Regulations and Authorizations

- Take place on Crown land, conservation land, First Nations land, local government land or within community forests.
- Has received authorization in principle from the land owners/managers and any overlapping tenure holders (e.g. for Crown land it is the Ministry of Forests Land Manager in your Natural Resource District).
- Involvement of recognized and qualified professionals as required by the land owner/manager to fulfill required authorizations.
- Meet all requirements to maintain insurance coverage for all risks arising from the project in such amounts and with such insurers as are appropriate with regard to the nature of the project and associated and naming the Trust as an additional insured.
- Meet all applicable WorkSafe BC requirements and regulations.

Planning

- A pre-project planning meeting with the land manager, key individuals or organizations impacted or interested, First Nations, representatives from British Columbia Wildfire Service (BCWS) and anticipated contractors.
- Includes development and implementation of the following relating to the cultural or prescribed fire:
 - public communications plan;
 - invasive species control plan including pre and post burn inventory; and
 - effectiveness monitoring plan which relates to the ecological function and wildfire resiliency rationale.
- Ready or almost ready to implement on-the ground actions (rather than strictly research, education or planning) that support ecological health and wildfire resilience at a local level that yields meaningful and measurable benefits.
- Targeted completed within four years of grant approval (two years for project planning and implementation and two years for effectiveness monitoring).

What types of projects and costs are not eligible?

Ineligible projects include the following:

- Have the potential to duplicate or displace government or industry responsibility.
- Displace or negatively impact existing tenure holders, licenses and/or permitted users.
- Take place on personally or commercially held private land or in Provincial/Federal Parks.
- Costs incurred prior to receiving project approval.

- Activities primarily focused on environmental education or research.
- Take place outside the Basin.
- Projects that primarily benefit the applicant itself or the members of a membership-based organization.

How much will the Trust fund?

Up to 90 per cent of total project costs can be requested from the Trust. It is expected that the maximum Trust grant for any one project will be \$250,000.

What types of support are provided?

Advisory services are provided by the Trust's Program Advisor(s) to help eligible applicants navigate the application process. We require all applicants to speak with a Program Advisor about their project idea before submission. The Program Advisor(s) may also provide support from project implementation to completion.

How does the Trust select projects for funding?

The Trust uses the following selection criteria to prioritize funding.

- The project demonstrates it meets the program eligibility listed above.
- Community support is clearly demonstrated.
- The project shows it is ready to move forward in the stated timelines.
- The project integrates cultural and prescribed fire capacity building and cross-training opportunities.
- The project demonstrates connectivity to other wildfire resiliency projects.
- The project, and the organizations coordinating the project, demonstrate an understanding of the need to maintain the results long-term; this can be shown by a long-term budget and maintenance plan.
- The Trust strives to distribute program funds across communities, organizations and project types and will consider this as part of the adjudication process.
- Additional consideration may be given to projects that incorporate:
 - Indigenous perspectives or partnerships with Indigenous Peoples.
 - Climate change adaptation practices.

When will organizations hear the results?

The EOI review process may take up to four weeks. The final applications process may take up to eight weeks. Trust staff may request additional information during either of the evaluation phases.

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.

When can a project begin?

Funds can only be used for approved project expenses that occur after the Contribution Agreement has been signed.

What else to keep in mind?

Applicants must engage BCWS or fire professionals on the project feasibility prior to applying. Approved projects will require applicable regulatory approvals from BCWS. BCWS resources involved for the implementation of the burn will be determined by BCWS.

Successful applicants will be required to submit to the Trust the following before commencing activities:

- Final fuel management prescription if a prescription was required by the land manager.
- Final burn plan approved by a BCWS Wildfire Official.
- Final confirmation of project authorization from the relevant land manager.

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.

Ready to apply?

1. We encourage you to reach out to the Trust at wildfire@ourtrust.org if you have questions about the program and/or would like to discuss a cultural and prescribed fire project idea. We can also connect you with a Program Advisor.
2. To submit your EOI, use the [EOI Worksheet](#) to develop your EOI offline, if preferred. Complete the online EOI form at [Cultural and Prescribed Fire EOI](#)
3. Once you have received an invitation to submit your final application, the application form link will be provided to you. Use the Application worksheet [Application Worksheet](#) to develop your application offline, if preferred.