

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 make reasonable efforts to apply for open funding calls 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 \(FNESS\)](#).

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;
- have a primary organizational mandate that aligns with wildland fire response and related activities (e.g. emergency preparedness);
- demonstrate established working relationships with their 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?

October 29, 2025 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 project costs must be incremental to those project activities approved by other provincially or federally funded programs.

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

Accredited Training Courses:

- emergency management and support services, including Incident Command System (ICS) training;
- First Aid;
- structural firefighting relevant to wildfire suppression;
- wildland urban fire suppression;
- WorkSafe-recognized chainsaw training;
- dangerous tree awareness training;
- leadership training related to developing shared, proactive strategies and resources for supporting mental health and resilience for fire department crews (e.g. Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)); and
- other accredited training (e.g. WSP-115).

Other Related Training including:

- FireSmart BC Wildfire Resiliency and Training Summit 2026 attendance (up to \$2,000 per person for up to four crew members).

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 assessment (directly related to wildfire suppression and/or wildland urban suppression); and
- wildfire equipment inventory.

Wildfire Prevention and Protection Equipment:

- chainsaws;
- equipment trailers;
- truck-mounted portable skid unit (water tank / pump combination);
- forestry cutting hand tools;
- firefighting hand tools;
- portable generators and compressors;
- portable berms;
- portable tanks;
- pumps;
- wildland hose;
- portable sprinklers;
- water thieves, adapters, nozzles and valves;
- wildland personal protective equipment;
- ladders;
- safety equipment;
- handheld Thermal imaging camera to a maximum amount of \$4,000 per camera;
- emergency communication devices used primarily for wildfire prevention and protection purposes;
- handheld weather monitoring equipment; and
- other related equipment.

**Equipment (fittings, sprinklers, etc.) should be similar to what is used by BCWS structure protection and wildfire crews, to ensure easy transition to working together once BCWS arrives.*

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 purchases related to retrofitting or converting an existing vehicle to a wildland vehicle;
- are the purchase of a permanently installed generator;
- are upgrades, testing or installation of permanent water distribution infrastructure for fire response (e.g. hydrants or dry hydrants);
- 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.

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, mandate and insurance 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;
- 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 that 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 insurance and 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 directions and advice on how to complete the application. This is optional and cannot be used as your application.
3. Complete the online [application form](#).