

Summary of Identified Risks and Action Plan

Risk Assessment

The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify the specific risks to a community and its assets. An ongoing review of the risk assessment should occur annually.

The risks listed below were identified based on background research, fieldwork data collection and discussions with RDCO Staff. The risks below are not listed in order of priority:

1. **Wildfire Exposure:** The RDCO is situated in a fire-prone environment. Since 2003, several large, wildfires have entered the Okanagan Valley from nearby forested plateaus, resulting in structure loss, damage to critical infrastructure, and community evacuations. The threat of wildfire affecting the RDCO remains a significant and ongoing concern.
2. **Population Growth and Development Pressure:** The RDCO has experienced population growth since 2016 (45% increase in West Electoral Area), which is expected to continue. As a result, housing developments are expanding into the wildland-urban interface (WUI), increasing the number of structures at risk from wildfire. This growth also places additional demands on emergency response services and municipal capacity.
3. **Privately Owned Land:** Approximately 41% of the WUI within the RDCO is privately owned. Under the current provincial funding model, wildfire risk reduction and fuel management activities on private lands are ineligible. This places a heavy burden on private landowners to take proactive measures and limits the areas where the RDCO can manage fuels.

The action table below summarizes the **High** or **Very High** priority action items that have been identified for the Regional District of Central Okanagan. **A comprehensive list of all recommended actions broken down by FireSmart Discipline can be found in the corresponding discipline section in section 5.0 FireSmart Disciplines**

Table 1. RDCO CWRP Action Plan Summary (Note: only items identified as High or Very High have been included).

RDCO CWRP Action Plan						
Action	Lead(s)	Priority	Timeframe	Resources Required	Metric for Success	Rationale/Notes
Education						
Read and understand the CWRP's identified risks and recommended actions.	FireSmart Coordinator, RDCO Fire Services Staff	Very High	Immediately	CWRP	Read and understand the recommended CWRP actions.	Making this CWRP publicly available is important for community education and engagement. Community understanding and buy-in is critical for the successful implementation of recommendations within this CWRP.
Develop a FireSmart public communication plan/strategy to effectively plan and monitor annual FireSmart educational strategies and activities for the entirety of the RDCO.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator, Communications staff	Very High	Immediate and ongoing	Communications and planning resources, FireSmart Community Funding and Supports (FCFS) Funding	Development of an annual communications plan that clearly outlines FireSmart education objectives and targets tailored for each RDCO Electoral Area and its residents.	A public communications plan/strategy can help clarify and set goals, objectives, and measurable targets. It also allows for successful tracking and adaptive management to improve activities that do not meet objectives or targets.

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Continue to employ a full-time FireSmart Coordinator. This position runs all aspects of the FireSmart program and oversees many aspects of this CWRP.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	Very High	Ongoing	An annual salary for the position, position training and orientation, FCFS Funding	Successfully retain at least one individual in the FireSmart position who is enthusiastic about promoting FireSmart.	A FireSmart Coordinator will be required to receive further FCFS funding beginning in 2024. Funding is currently available under the CRI program to support a salary for a FireSmart Coordinator, Local FireSmart Representative, Wildfire Mitigation Specialist, or Wildfire Forest Professional.
Continue to organize and hold a variety of FireSmart events throughout the RDCO.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	Very High	Annually, ideally between the months of May and October	Communication and public outreach resources, Resources to run events (location to host, volunteers, refreshments, etc.), FCFS Funding	Hold a minimum of one type of FireSmart event per year in each Electoral Area.	Public outreach and information sharing needs to occur on a variety of platforms to capture residents of all demographics.
Inform communities of upcoming FireSmart events and other fire/emergency management related updates via a variety of communication platforms.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator, Communications Staff	Very High	Ongoing	Communication resources, FCFS Funding	FireSmart resources are available in multiple locations and platforms to reach a wide variety of residents. FireSmart events are well advertised and attended.	Public outreach and information sharing needs to occur on a variety of platforms to capture residents of all demographics.

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Continue to conduct FireSmart Home Ignition Zone Assessments for RDCO residents	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	Very High	Ongoing	Qualified personnel to complete the Home Ignition Assessment, FCFS Funding	Residents within RDCO continue to request and receive assessments. Set reasonable targets for number of completed assessments based on interest in previous years.	The RDCO is actively conducting assessments and should continue to prioritize them, especially in the following neighbourhoods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ewings Landing • Shelter Cover • Upper Fintry • Joe Rich neighbourhoods
Conduct FireSmart Farm and Ranch Assessments	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	High	Ongoing	Qualified personnel to complete Farm and Ranch Assessments, FCFS Funding	Set reasonable targets for number of completed assessments based on interest in previous years.	Prioritize conducting these assessments in the following locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Rich • Upper Ellison Refer to FireSmart Farm and Ranch Wildfire Preparedness for more information.

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<p>Continue to administer the FireSmart Rebate Program to residential property or homeowners that complete eligible FireSmart activities from their FireSmart Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) Assessment. This provides incentive and assists with the financial barriers of implementing FireSmart activities on private land.</p>	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	High	Ongoing	Administrative services, FCFS Funding	Residents are aware of the FireSmart Rebate program and are actively taking part in implementing eligible FireSmart activities and applying for rebates upon completion	As of 2025, rebates are limited to 50% of the total cost of the eligible activities identified in the CRI Program Guide and up to \$5,000 per property. Rebate programs can be highly effective in aiding with the financial costs of FireSmart activities.

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<p>Continue support for FireSmart Canada’s Neighbourhood Recognition Program and encourage expansion. Once recognized, annually renew for FireSmart Recognition.</p>	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	High	Ongoing	FCFS Funding, Neighbourhood Champion and Local FireSmart Representative (LFR)	Have a minimum of three neighbourhoods recognized by the end of 2030.	<p>Prioritize the pursuit of Neighbourhood recognition on the following neighbourhoods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ewings Landing • Shelter Cover • Upper Fintry (West) • Joe Rich neighbourhoods (east) <p>For more details regarding FireSmart Canada Neighbourhood Recognition Program (FCNRP) and steps towards recognition status, please see the FireSmart BC FCNRP website.</p>
<p>Monitor eligible funding sources related to wildfire, FireSmart and emergency preparedness.</p>	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	High	Ongoing	Designated staff to monitor grant postings	Bi-annually review eligible funding sources for new opportunities.	<p>Diversifying funding sources increases program stability and allows the RDCO to pursue new initiatives such as youth engagement, demonstration projects, and expanded vegetation management. It also builds resilience by leveraging partnerships and aligning with broader community climate-adaptation goals.</p>
Legislation and Planning						

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<p>Planning and development throughout the RDCO consider wildfire risk in all aspects. This includes ensuring all local emergency and development plans and bylaws are developed, updated, or amended to align with wildfire risk reduction and FireSmart principles.</p>	RDCO Development & Engineering Services	Very High	Immediate and ongoing	Communication resources, internal staff capacity, FireSmart and wildfire risk reduction guidance	All RDCO plans and policies incorporate wildfire risk at multiple levels and bylaws are developed/amended to reflect higher-level goals and objectives for wildfire risk reduction.	<p>The implementation of the RDCO CWRP should align as much as possible with CWRPs being implemented by neighbouring jurisdictions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Kelowna, • City of West Kelowna, • Westbank First Nation, • District of Lake Country, and • District of Peachland.
Development Considerations						

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Revise Wildfire Development Permit Area (DPA) mapping for Joe Rich RLUB to better reflect changes in land ownership and other changes on the landscape that could impact wildfire hazard and risk.	RDCO Development Services	Very High	Within 5 years (2030)	FCFS funding, Communication resources, internal staff capacity, FireSmart and wildfire risk reduction guidance, subject matter expertise required for assessing and mapping wildfire hazard	The Wildfire Development Permit Areas established by the Joe Rich RLUB are revised to reflect current wildfire hazard and any changes in land ownership and encompass larger areas that better reflect ember transport from wildfires.	A Wildfire Development Permit Area is established in the Joe Rich Rural Land Use Bylaw (RLUB) No 1195. However, the Wildfire DPA mapping has not been updated in nearly 15 years to reflect population growth, ongoing changes on the landscape, and wildfire hazard. It is recommended that the Wildfire DPA areas should be expanded beyond 100m from forested landscape to better reflect the potential for ember transfer from wildfires.
Complete FireSmart Critical Infrastructure Assessments on RDCO owned Critical Infrastructure (CI).	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	High	Immediate	Qualified Local FireSmart Representative (LFR), FireSmart Critical Infrastructure Assessment Sheet, FCFS funding	FireSmart CI Assessments have been completed on highest priority CI by 2027	Funding is currently available through the CRI program to complete FireSmart assessments for publicly owned buildings, critical infrastructure, culturally significant sites and/or green spaces.

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Once a FireSmart Critical Infrastructure Assessment has been completed, implement FireSmart recommendations and mitigation activities resulting from the completed Assessments with the goal of reducing hazard scores.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	High	Within 5 years (2030)	FCFS funding, Labour, machinery, construction materials	FireSmart recommendations have been implemented for a minimum of two CI.	Funding is currently available through the CRI program to complete FireSmart assessments for publicly owned buildings, critical infrastructure, culturally significant sites and/or green spaces.
Interagency Cooperation						
Annually attend the Wildfire Resiliency Training Summit.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator, RDCO Planning staff	Very High	Annually	FCFS funding	A minimum of two people attend annually from the Regional District.	The intention of having multiple people attend the event is to foster awareness and education regarding wildfire resiliency across various RDCO departments.

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Continue to participate in the Okanagan Regional Community FireSmart Collaborative and share findings of CWRP with partners.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	Very High	Ongoing	FCFS funding	Continued participation in Collaborative.	The committee meets quarterly to discuss FireSmart and emergency management. Share high priority action items with other agencies/partners and identify synergies and opportunities to collaborate. Participation in a FireSmart Resiliency Collaborative is a requirement for further FCFS funding as of 2024.
Provide Indigenous cultural safety and humility training to emergency management personal.	RDCO staff	High	Ongoing	FCFS funding	Aim to provide training annually for staff until all emergency management staff have received training.	Training will provide emergency management staff with knowledge that can be used to successfully contribute to partnerships and assist Indigenous communities in both wildfire prevention and suppression.
Cross-Training						
Provide opportunities for additional wildfire cross training to RDCO Fire Department Staff.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	High	Ongoing	FCFS funding, qualified trainers	Additional courses are provided to all members of the RDCO Fire Departments.	Interface wildfire training is essential for fire department members to successfully respond to interface wildfires.

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Provide opportunities for additional training related to FireSmart and wildfire risk reduction to RDCO staff, FireSmart Coordinator, and committed community members.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	High	Ongoing	FCFS funding, qualified trainers	Regional district staff receive appropriate cross training in emergency management, FireSmart and Wildfire Risk Reduction.	Participation in these courses will improve the District's ability to effectively respond to an emergency event.
Emergency Planning						
Update the RDCO Emergency Plan to align with the new Emergency and Disaster Management Act.	RDCO Protective Services Staff	Very High	Immediately	Internal funding	Emergency Plan has been updated to align with EDMA.	The Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA) replaced the Emergency Program Act (EPA) on November 8, 2023. The updated legislation reflects the realities of the modern world including global pandemics, security threats and climate change, and shifts from focusing on emergency response to the four phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparation, and recovery. ²

² [Modernized emergency management legislation.](#)

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Assess, inventory and purchase FireSmart structure protection equipment.	RDCO Fire Services Staff	Very High	Ongoing	FCFS funding	FireSmart Structure Protection equipment is procured.	FireSmart structure protection equipment can aid in wildfire response and suppression efforts throughout the RDCO.
Encourage local residents to sign up for the Regional District of Central Okanagan <u>emergency notification program</u>.	RDCO Communications Staff	Very High	Ongoing	Communication resources and channels	75% of residents are subscribed by the end of 2027.	Residents need access to trusted, timely and accurate information to ensure their own safety during an emergency event. Encourage residents to follow the EOC's social media channels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facebook.com/CORDEmergency • twitter.com/co_emerg
Develop a strategic plan to address evacuation in areas identified by the <u>2022 RDCO Regional Evacuation Planning Framework</u>	RDCO Protective Services Staff	High	2026-2029	UBCM funding, internal funding sources	Areas with insufficient egress routes are identified.	The <u>Public Notification and Evacuation Route Planning</u> Stream of the UBCM administered Community Emergency Preparedness Fund provides funding to local governments.

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Develop and/or participate in cross-jurisdictional meetings and tabletop exercises specifically focused on wildfire preparedness and response, including wildfire readiness meetings.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	High	Immediately and then annually	FCFS funding, venue	Annual or biannual participation in a meeting and or tabletop exercise.	Consider hiring an emergency management consultant to facilitate an annual tabletop exercise focused on a wildfire event impacting the RDCO. Consider partnership with members from the Okanagan Regional Community FireSmart and Resiliency Collaborative.
Assess community water delivery ability as required for suppression activities in the municipal area and wildland urban interface.	RDCO Fire Services Staff	High	2026-2028	FCFS funding	Report and next steps are generated.	Address areas without water coverage and consider adding dry hydrants in key locations or similar infrastructure to support fire suppression.
Install dry hydrants or similar infrastructure in strategic locations throughout the WUI and municipal areas to enhance water availability and support interface suppression operations.	RDCO Fire Services Staff	High	2026-2028	Internal or external funding	Areas with inadequate coverage are addressed.	Address areas without water coverage and consider adding dry hydrants in key locations or similar infrastructure to support fire suppression.
Vegetation Management						

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<p>Encourage residents to remove/reduce flammable vegetation in the Immediate, Intermediate, and Extended zones on their properties. Promote the use of the FireSmart BC Landscaping Guide to inform vegetation management best practices and replace flammable vegetation with more fire-resistant landscaping.</p>	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	Very High	Immediate and ongoing	Communication and educational resources, FCFS Funding	Residents begin to show interest in FireSmart landscaping and actively removing flammable vegetation nearest to homes and structures on their property.	Utilize the funding available through the CRI program for the FireSmart Rebate Program and provide off-site vegetative debris disposal for property owners who have undertaken their own vegetation management in the Home Ignition Zone.
<p>Develop fuel management prescriptions or burn plans for vegetated areas identified on provincial crown land within the eligible WUIs.</p>	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator, RDCO Parks Staff	Very High	Annually, ongoing	FCFS funding, A Registered Professional Forester is required to write all fuel management prescriptions	1-2 fuel management prescriptions are developed for an identified fuel treatment area within the Regional District each year.	It is recommended to start with Priority 1 proposed fuel treatment units as identified within the CWRP. This must occur in collaboration with the Ministry of Forests, First Nations (Westbank First Nation FNWL and Community Forest Licenses), BC Wildfire Service (BCWS), and other applicable land managers. Fuel treatment areas should be planned as part of the integrated fuel management / prescribed fire planning table.

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Undertake fuel management treatment operations or prescribed burns on provincial crown land within the eligible WUIs based on completed fuel management prescriptions.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator, RDCO Parks Staff	Very High	Every 1-2 years, ongoing	FCFS funding, Contractors must be acquired to complete treatment operations	After the fuel management prescription phase is completed, at least 1-2 fuel management treatments are operationally completed for an identified area in the Regional District every 1-2 years.	This must occur in collaboration with the Ministry of Forests, First Nations (Westbank First Nation FNWL and Community Forest Licenses), BCWS, and other applicable land managers. Fuel treatment units should be implemented as part of the integrated fuel management / prescribed fire planning table.
Complete recommended mitigation activities identified in FireSmart assessments for residential homes and properties owned by seniors (65 years or older), elders, people with limited mobility, or vulnerable populations who cannot undertake mitigation activities themselves.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	Very High	Immediate and ongoing	FCFS funding, tracking system of vulnerable peoples requiring assistance implementing mitigation activities	Target mitigation activities for five properties a year.	Funding is available through the FireSmart Community Funding and Supports program and application guide.

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Work collaboratively with WoodlotsBC to manage wildfire risk reduction activities on Woodlot license areas adjacent to private residential properties.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator	High	On-going	Relationship with WoodlotsBC	RDCO establishes contact with WoodlotsBC and shares proposed FTUs from CWRP that have woodlot tenure overlap.	Identified FTU's and Wildfire Threat Assessments in this CWRP can be used to help prioritize treatments in woodlots. WoodlotsBC administers funding for woodlot holders to reduce wildfire risk with support from the Forest Enhancement Society of BC .
Create an inventory system to track areas that have been fuel managed, their respective maintenance cycles, and various FireSmart assessments.	RDCO Fire Services Staff, FireSmart Coordinator, RDCO GIS Department	High	Annually	Excel spreadsheet tracking system or geospatial database	Creation of a tracking system.	Establishing a tracking system will streamline the monitoring of ongoing fuel treatments and help identify necessary maintenance tasks at various intervals. This will ensure that treatments remain effective over time and allow for timely interventions to address any emerging risks or concerns. The tracking system should also consider various FireSmart assessments.