

This document contains the Executive Summary, Summary of Recommendations, and key CWPP maps (Area of Interest, Local Wildfire Risk Analysis, and Land Ownership Maps).

The purpose of this document is to provide a brief summary of the analysis, results, and recommendations associated with the 2020 Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Refer to the complete CWPP document and associated maps for more detailed information and references.

The Summary of Recommendations in this document are organized by the Level of Priority. In the complete CWPP document, the Summary of Recommendations are organized in the order in which they appear in the document. The numbering is consistent across all documents.

Read Island and Surge Narrows Area (Strathcona Regional District – Electoral Area C) 2020 Community Wildfire Protection Plan



Submitted to:

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June 26, 2020



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This plan was prepared by Colin Filliter, RPF and Cynthia Lu, RPF of SuavAir Aerial Imaging Inc. Colby Day, RFT completed the spatial data analysis and mapping. The authors of this report would like to thank and acknowledge the following people for their assistance and participation in creating the Read Island and Surge Narrows Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

Shaun Koopman – Emergency Program Coordinator, Strathcona Regional District

Ginny Vassal – Surge Narrows Community Association

Surge Narrows Community Association and residents

This report would not be possible without funding from the Union of BC Municipalities through the Community Resiliency Investment grant.

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL SIGN & SEAL

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| Date Signed: June 25, 2020 | Date Signed: June 25, 2020 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Read Island and Surge Narrows Area Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was completed under the framework established by the Community Resilience Investment program, administered by the Union of BC Municipalities. The area of interest (AOI) is the wildland urban interface (WUI) surrounding settled areas on Read Island, Maurelle Island, Rendezvous Island, and Sonora Island (Owen Bay) within Electoral Area C of the Strathcona Regional District. The AOI's are within the traditional territories of the We Wai Kai First Nation, Wei Wai Kum First Nation, Homalco First Nation (Xwemalhkwa), Tla'amin Nation, K'omoks First Nation, Kwiakah First Nation and Klahoose First Nation.

The purpose of this CWPP is to identify the wildfire risks surrounding the community, potential consequences of a wildfire to the community, and to recommend possible ways to reduce the risk. Prior to the development of this CWPP, there has been no formal engagement in wildfire protection planning in the area.

The fuel types in the area are predominantly a mixture of mature conifer forests, immature forests, recently harvested cutblocks, and deciduous patches. Previous fire history in the area indicates low number of ignitions, both human and lightning caused. However, two fires have occurred on Read Island during the past two wildfire seasons (2018 and 2019). The local wildfire threat is Low to Moderate with some pockets of High. The local wildfire risk classification ranges from Low to High, with higher risk areas associated with fuels in close proximity (within 500m) to structures.

Recommendations are summarized in the table below. The recommendations are based on a review of best practices from other jurisdictions, gaps identified through community engagement, the local wildfire risk analysis, actions to help prevent human-caused ignitions, and integration of FireSmart program principles. FireSmart is a national initiative to educate and empower the public on what can be done to protect their families, properties, and communities from wildfire. Fuel management recommendations focus on FireSmart hazard assessments and activities within 100m of structures. Fuel management should focus on the reduction of surface and ladder fuels. In addition to fuel management, community awareness and education play a critical role in reducing wildfire risk. Community awareness focuses on FireSmart principles, understanding and abiding by fire use restrictions, emergency preparedness, and regularly sharing fire safety related information with the community.

The BC Wildfire Service is responsible for wildfire management and response on Crown land. The area does not have fire department service, or connection to electrical, water, or sewage utilities. The remote location, marine access, limited communication and road networks, and isolated nature of structures and homes dispersed throughout the WUI creates unique challenges. Due to these challenges and limited water availability for fire suppression, prevention of human caused ignitions and FireSmart planning are focal points for the recommendations in this plan.

This plan makes 24 recommendations to the Strathcona Regional District and residents. The recommendations should be further prioritized by the SRD depending on local strengths, opportunities, and the availability of human, financial, and physical resources. At minimum, the plan should be revisited every five years to assess the progress and relevance of previous recommendations and for the continual improvement of wildfire protection planning as more information becomes available.

HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

| No. | Priority | Objective | Recommendation / Next Steps | Responsibility |
|--|----------|--|---|--|
| 1. | High | To reduce the risk of human caused WUI fire events within the WUI. Start with assessing the level of community support for enacting a local bylaw to regulate fire use. | Conduct a community/resident survey on possible intent and objectives for a local fire use bylaw that regulates open burning. A Bylaw may restrict the timing, size, materials, and location of open burns within the AOI. Bylaw enforcement will be a logistical challenge. Alternatively, consider a voluntary local open fire ban or related restriction to be adopted by community members. | SRD and community groups |
| Rationale: Recommended best practice, to use policy tools to reduce the likelihood of human caused WUI fire events. | | | | |
| 2. | High | To develop emergency preparedness and evacuation plans specific to each of the AOI's. | Assess and map emergency evacuation routes, muster points, emergency reporting and communication plans for each AOI. Make Emergency Evacuation Maps available on the SRD and community group websites. | SRD |
| Rationale: Based on gaps identified during CWPP engagement. No specific evacuation plan is available for the AOI's. | | | | |
| 5. | High | To improve community FireSmart awareness and implementation of FireSmart practices to help reduce the likelihood of disaster in the event of a WUI fire in isolated areas. | Contact a Local FireSmart Representative to conduct FireSmart Community Hazard Assessments for priority areas identified in Table 7. | SRD with support from community groups |
| Rationale: FireSmart program, as referred to in #4. Priority areas for community hazard assessments based on clusters of homes within the AOI's. | | | | |
| 6. | High | To improve community FireSmart awareness and implementation of FireSmart practices to help reduce the likelihood of disaster in the event of a WUI fire in isolated areas. | Generate a list of property owners interested in a FireSmart hazard assessment. Co-ordinate and organize LFR hazard assessment trips to interested properties. | SRD with support from community groups |

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| Rationale: FireSmart program, as referred to in #4 | | | | |
| 7. | High | To assist private landowners who have undertaken FireSmart vegetation management with fuel/debris disposal. | Seek funding opportunities to assist private landowners in disposing of removed fuels – this may include hiring contractors with wildfire suppression and pile burning expertise, or community chipping days. Logistics and costs are a challenge, consider working with industrial partners to reduce the costs of barging equipment. | SRD with support from community groups |
| Rationale: Fuel management requires the removal of fuels which can be costly and a barrier to action. Providing free or subsidized debris disposal is a best practice for encouraging private landowner participation in fuel management activities. | | | | |
| 8. | High | To reduce the ignition risk within the FireSmart structural ignition zone by making property owners aware of preferred FireSmart building materials. | Connect property owners to FireSmart guides for selecting building materials and incorporating FireSmart principles into construction and location. The FireSmart Home Development Guide is a key resource. In the absence of an Electoral Area C building bylaw, the SRD should recommend best practices for building within Area C to minimize WUI risk. Make the resources available online where other SRD building code/bylaw information is located | SRD |
| Rationale: Best practice recommendation associated with the development planning discipline of the FireSmart program, as referred to in #4. | | | | |
| 10. | High | To make this Plan and its associated maps available to the community for education and awareness. | Upload a digital copy of the CWPP to the SRD Emergency Planning website | SRD |
| Rationale: Recommended best practice for community education and awareness regarding wildfire protection planning and FireSmart program implementation. | | | | |
| 11. | High | To community education material available to improve understanding of WUI fire threat and risk; to raise awareness of preventative and mitigative actions. | Develop a Surge Narrows/Outer Islands specific Fire Safety and Wildfire Preparedness information factsheet for residents. Link this resource on the SRD and community group websites. | SRD |

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| | | | Make hard copies available for property owners. This factsheet should include information on frequently asked questions regarding legal requirements, FireSmart principles, emergency evacuation routes, wildfire safety, wildfire reporting, and BCWS resources on fire bans, air quality. | |
| Rationale: Recommended best practice for community education and awareness regarding wildfire protection planning and FireSmart program implementation. | | | | |
| 16. | High | To improve the availability of firefighting tools for residents. | Inventory current fire tools available within the community, purchase community fire tools and personal protective equipment (PPE) where there may be deficiencies. Encourage neighbours to cooperatively build up tool/PPE caches. S100 wildland firefighting training course is recommended for safety and training on how to use fire tools. | Community groups, residents |
| Rationale: Recommended as a good practice for residents because properties are remote/isolated and the response time for external resources may take time to arrive. | | | | |
| 17. | High | To improve water availability for fire suppression to reduce the risk of a structure fire spreading to the forested interface. | Assess the water availability, volume requirements, and equipment needed for fire suppression in the community hall/school area. A professional with expertise in structural and WUI firefighting should be consulted. | SRD |
| Rationale: The school/community hall is critical community infrastructure. The current water storage reservoir is not set up to directly support fire suppression and the amount of water required for suppression has not been assessed. | | | | |
| 18. | High | To improve water availability for fire suppression to reduce the risk of a structure fire spreading to the forested interface. | Individual property owners, with the help of professional expertise, should assess the water availability and volume requirements for fire suppression. Where increased water availability is required, property owners should invest in water tanks or other storage systems to store rainwater/surface water for fire | Community groups, residents |

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| | | | suppression during drought conditions. | |
| Rationale: Surface water is limited during fire season, water readily available for fire suppression was a gap identified through the CWPP engagement and research process. | | | | |
| 21. | High | To improve community capacity to address WUI fires by providing access to formal training. | Generate local interest and organize S100 training and annual refresher courses for community members. | SRD with support from community groups |
| Rationale: Recommended for residents to increase local capacity and knowledge in firefighting techniques and use of water pumps and hand tools. Training is recommended for residents as it supports skills beneficial to isolated/remote living. | | | | |
| 22. | High | To improve community preparedness for structure protection due to the remote and isolated location of properties and absence of a local fire department. | Develop a checklist for property owners of fire suppression equipment and emergency supplies to keep readily available during fire season. Items should include smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, hand tools, personal protective equipment, communications devices, and a first aid kit. | SRD |
| Rationale: Recommended best practice for emergency preparedness considerations that uniquely address isolated/remote local conditions of the WUI. | | | | |

MEDIUM PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

| No. | Priority | Objective | Recommendation / Next Steps | Responsibility |
|--|----------|---|--|-----------------------|
| 3. | Med | To reduce the fuel hazard within the identified treatment areas. Treatment areas are associated with High Risk within WUI100. | Engage a qualified forest professional in developing and implementing site level prescriptions for each treatment area (Table 6. Summary of recommended treatment areas.) Consultation with applicable First Nations, and engagement with private landowners, industry tenure holders, and MFLNRORD will be required as part of the operational planning process. | SRD |
| Rationale: Recommended treatment areas based on local wildfire risk analysis. High risk areas within 100m of community structures or critical infrastructure are priority for treatment. | | | | |
| 4. | Med | To engage community members in FireSmart | Contact a Local FireSmart Representative to conduct a | SRD with support from |

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| | | planning to help reduce the likelihood of disaster in the event of a WUI fire in isolated areas. | FireSmart Awareness workshop and Local FireSmart Champion Workshop. Advertise the workshop on the SRD and community group websites. | community groups |
| Rationale: The FireSmart program is a nationwide initiative. Several post-wildfire examples across the country show how FireSmart activities reduce the structure losses associated with WUI fires. FireSmart activities are a focus area for all CWPP's developed under the UBCM CRI funding program. FireSmart is implemented through best practices in 7 disciplines: education, emergency planning, vegetation management, legislation, development, interagency cooperation, and cross-training. | | | | |
| 9. | Med | To improve community awareness of the FireSmart program principles and activities. | Encourage residents to complete the free, online, FireSmart 101 course. | SRD and community groups |
| Rationale: Best practice recommendation related to community education as part of FireSmart program implementation. Refer to #4. | | | | |
| 12. | Med | To improve community understanding of wildfire risk and raising awareness of the wildfire threat to the community. | Organize an annual Community Fire Safety day. Activities may include checking fire extinguishers and smoke alarms in homes, conducting FireSmart clearing of Priority 1 (up to 10m) zones around critical community infrastructure, FireSmart presentations, fire extinguisher practice, water pump practice, etc. | SRD with support of community groups |
| Rationale: Recommended best practice for community education and awareness regarding wildfire protection planning and FireSmart program implementation. Addresses education and emergency planning FireSmart disciplines (refer to #4). | | | | |
| 13. | Med | To share the content of this plan with industrial stakeholders operating within the areas of interest. | Share the contents of this plan with industrial stakeholders operating in the area – engage in dialogue about fire weather monitoring, slash management and fuel hazard management initiatives. | Community groups with SRD support |
| Rationale: Based on CWPP engagement, improved dialogue would benefit awareness, planning, and cooperation. | | | | |
| 20. | Med | To identify, clear and maintain helicopter landing areas for emergency evacuations and/or wildfire response operations. | Identify potential helicopter landing sites throughout the AOI's. Designate areas within a Local Emergency Plan. Helicopter landing sites should be continually maintained to be | SRD |

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| | | | free of obstructions, loose debris and overhanging vegetation or obstacles; and visibly marked where possible. The field at the Surge Narrows school is a good example. Due to the remoteness and limited road connectivity, the identification of multiple sites is recommended. Landing areas should be easily accessible and easily controlled spaces. | |
|--|--|--|--|--|

Rationale: Recommended best practice for emergency access and evacuation planning.

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|------------|-----|---|---|-----------------------|
| 23. | Med | To improve community capacity for structure protection. | Purchase sprinkler kits to be set up on the community hall/school structure. Consider water availability for fire suppression, as additional water storage may be required to supply sprinkler kits through summer months. | SRD, community groups |
|------------|-----|---|---|-----------------------|

Rationale: Recommended best practice because, based on CWPP engagement, the equipment availability for structure protection in the area could be improved. Deployment of a structure protection unit faces logistical challenges.

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|------------|-----|---|--|-----|
| 24. | Med | To improve community capacity for structure protection. | Encourage property owners to purchase sprinkler kits and water supply systems for sprinkler kits to deploy on their homes/critical structures. | SRD |
|------------|-----|---|--|-----|

Rationale: Recommended best practice because, based on CWPP engagement, the equipment availability for structure protection in the area could be improved. Deployment of a structure protection unit faces logistical challenges.

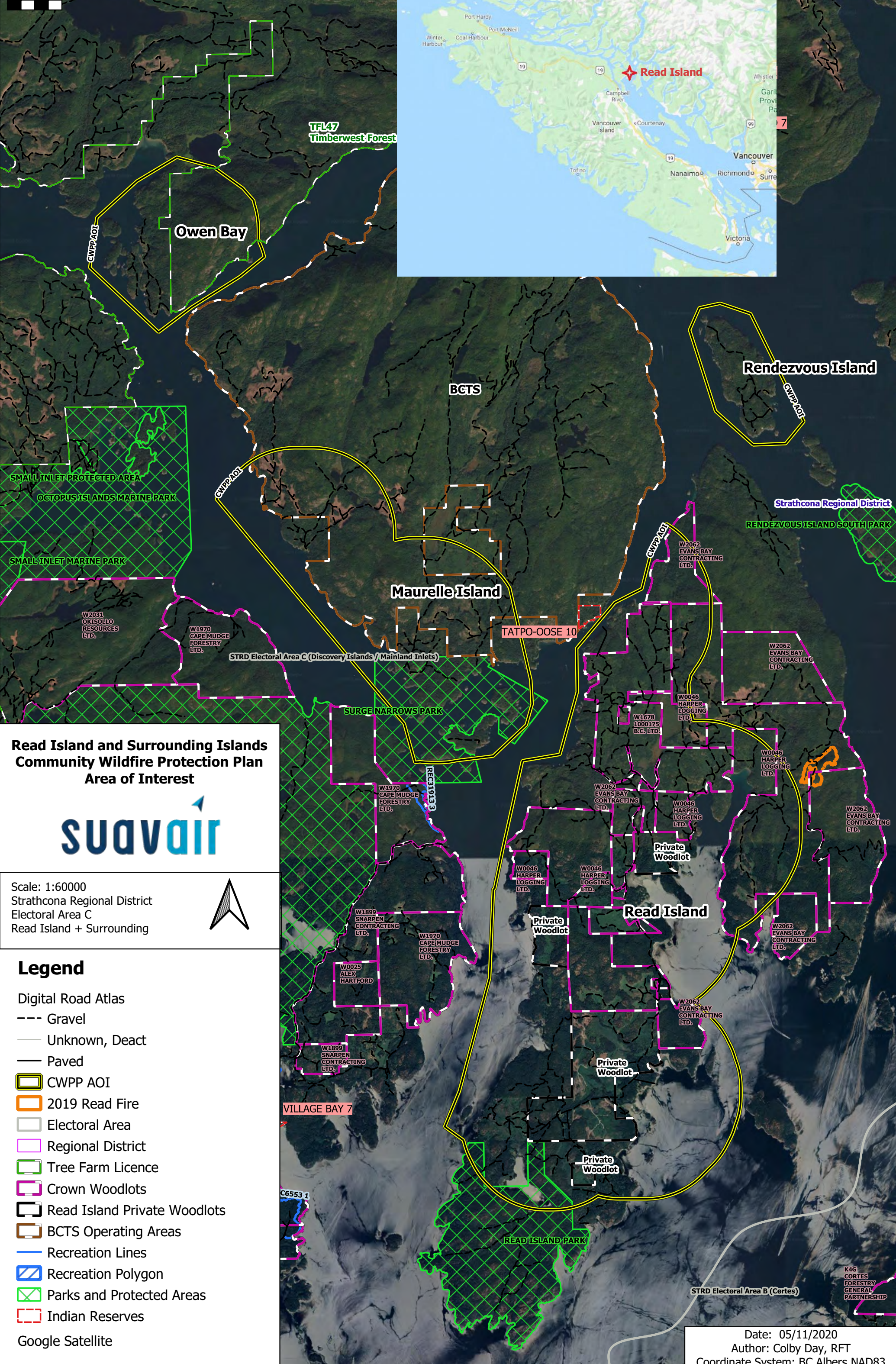
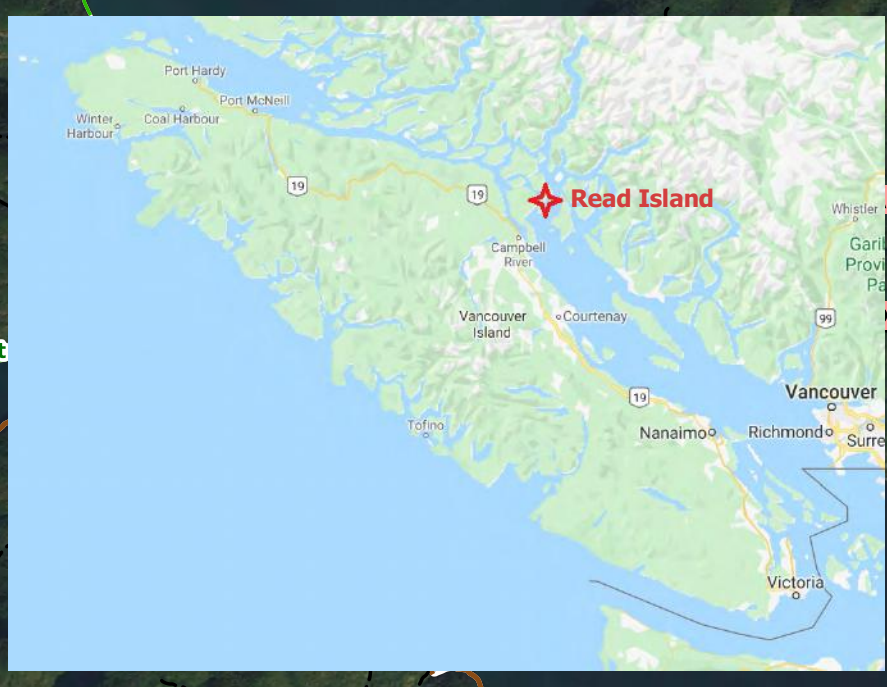
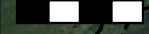
LOW PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

| No. | Priority | Objective | Recommendation / Next Steps | Responsibility |
|---|----------|---|--|--------------------------|
| 14. | Low | To reduce the risk of human caused WUI fire events by promoting alternative means of yard management and yard waste disposal beyond open fires. | Provide residents within information on alternatives to burning yard waste. Link this information on the SRD website. Alternatives to burning include chipping, composting or xeriscaping. | SRD |
| Rationale: Recommended practice, observed from other similar jurisdictions. Contributes to public education and development planning; potential to reduce the likelihood of human caused WUI fire events. | | | | |
| 15. | Low | To improve resident and visitor awareness of wildfire prevention measures through signage. | Work with the BCWS to install informational signage at a high traffic location (Surge Narrows dock or other highly visible locations for marine traffic) visible to residents and visitors (i.e.: Prevent, Observe, Report sign) | SRD and community groups |
| Rationale: Recommended best practice for community education and awareness regarding wildfire protection planning and FireSmart program implementation. | | | | |
| 19. | Low | To improve emergency evacuation communications. | Encourage residents to sign up to the SRD's free Connect Rocket emergency notification service which sends out text messages to cellular subscribers and voice calls to landlines. | SRD |
| Rationale: Existing program/infrastructure to continue to encourage residents to use. | | | | |

SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL RESOURCES AND FUNDING SUPPORTS

| Resources | Land Jurisdiction | Types of Projects |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Local government taxation | Municipal Private | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various projects as directed by local governments including FireSmart assessments and activities, debris disposal, equipment purchases, training, etc. |
| Forest Enhancement Society BC (FESBC) | Provincial Crown | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuel management treatment prescriptions and implementation |
| UBCM Community Resiliency Investment Program (CRI) | Municipal First Nations Private | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FireSmart hazard assessments, demonstration projects, off-site debris disposal (i.e.: chip trucks) • Community Education • Development planning • Emergency planning and cross training |
| UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) | n/a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency support services training • Fire department training or equipment • Emergency evacuation planning • Emergency operations training |
| First Nations Emergency Support Services – Indigenous Services Canada (FNESS/ISC) | First Nations Reserve lands | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuel management prescriptions and treatments On-Reserve |
| BC Wildfire Service | Provincial Crown | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuel management treatments (in coordination with local fire zone officer) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public education and outreach |

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**Read Island and Surrounding Islands
Community Wildfire Protection Plan
Area of Interest**

Scale: 1:60000
Strathcona Regional District
Electoral Area C
Read Island + Surrounding

Legend

- Digital Road Atlas
- Gravel
- Unknown, Deact
- Paved
- CWPP AOI
- 2019 Read Fire
- Electoral Area
- Regional District
- Tree Farm Licence
- Crown Woodlots
- Read Island Private Woodlots
- BCTS Operating Areas
- Recreation Lines
- ▨ Recreation Polygon
- ▨ Parks and Protected Areas
- ▨ Indian Reserves
- Google Satellite

Date: 05/11/2020
Author: Colby Day, RFT
Coordinate System: BC Albers NAD83

**Read Island and Surrounding Islands
Community Wildfire Protection Plan
Updated Fire Risk**



Scale: 1:35000
Strathcona Regional District
Electoral Area C
Read Island



Legend

Digital Road Atlas

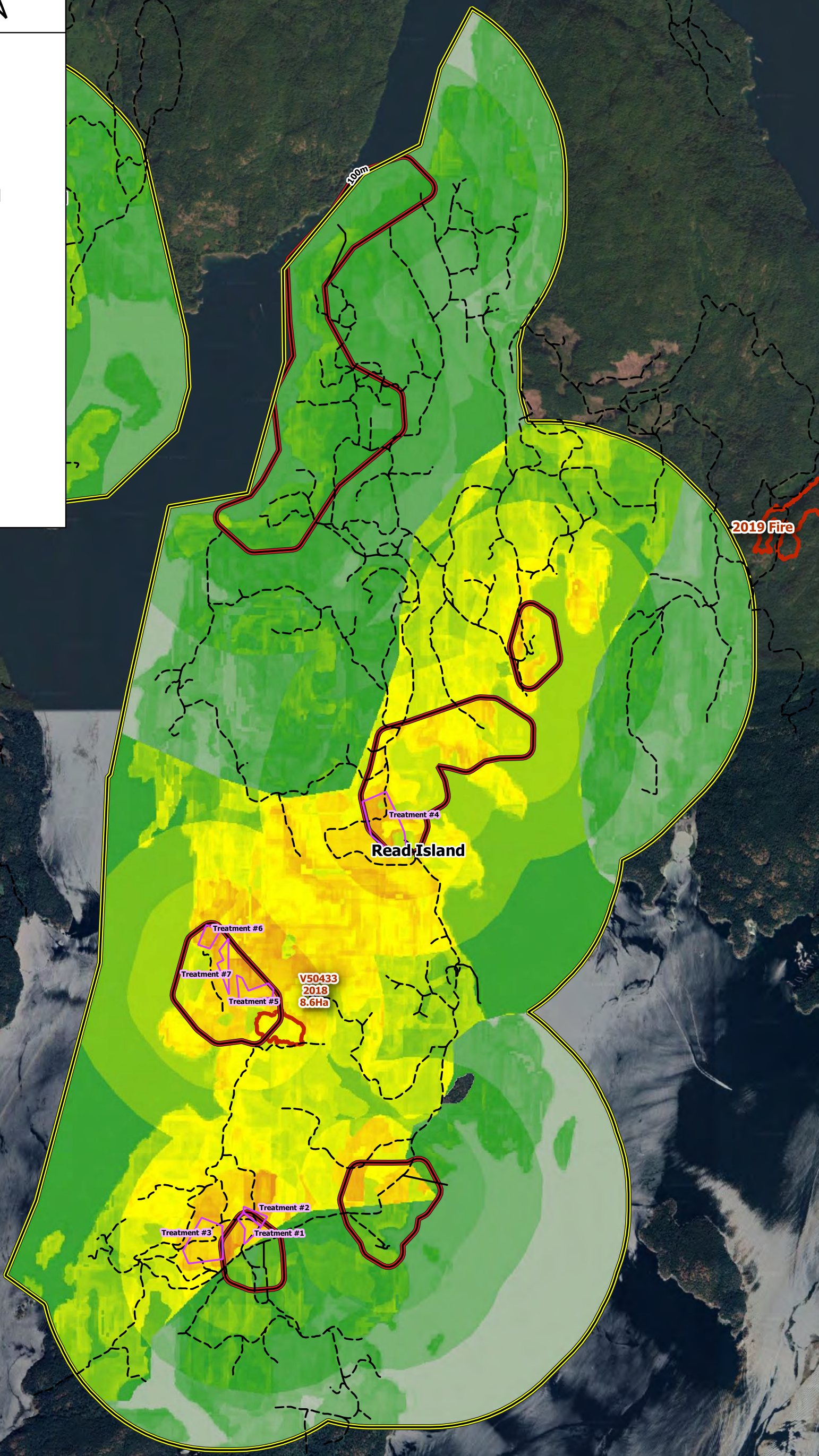
- Gravel
- Unknown, Deact
- Paved
- Proposed Treatment Updated
- CWPP AOI
- 100m Buffer
- 2018 Historical Read Fire
- 2019 Historical Read Fire

Fire Risk Updated

- 0.1 (No Risk)
- 3.9 (Low)
- 6.9 (Moderate)
- 8.9 (High)
- 9 + (Extreme)

Google Satellite

| Read Island Updated Fire Risk Summary | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Updated Fire Risk | Area (ha) |
| No Risk | 1 |
| Low Risk | 1,686 |
| Moderate Risk | 2,247 |
| High Risk | 799 |
| Extreme Risk | 5 |
| Total: | 4,738 |



Rendezvous Island

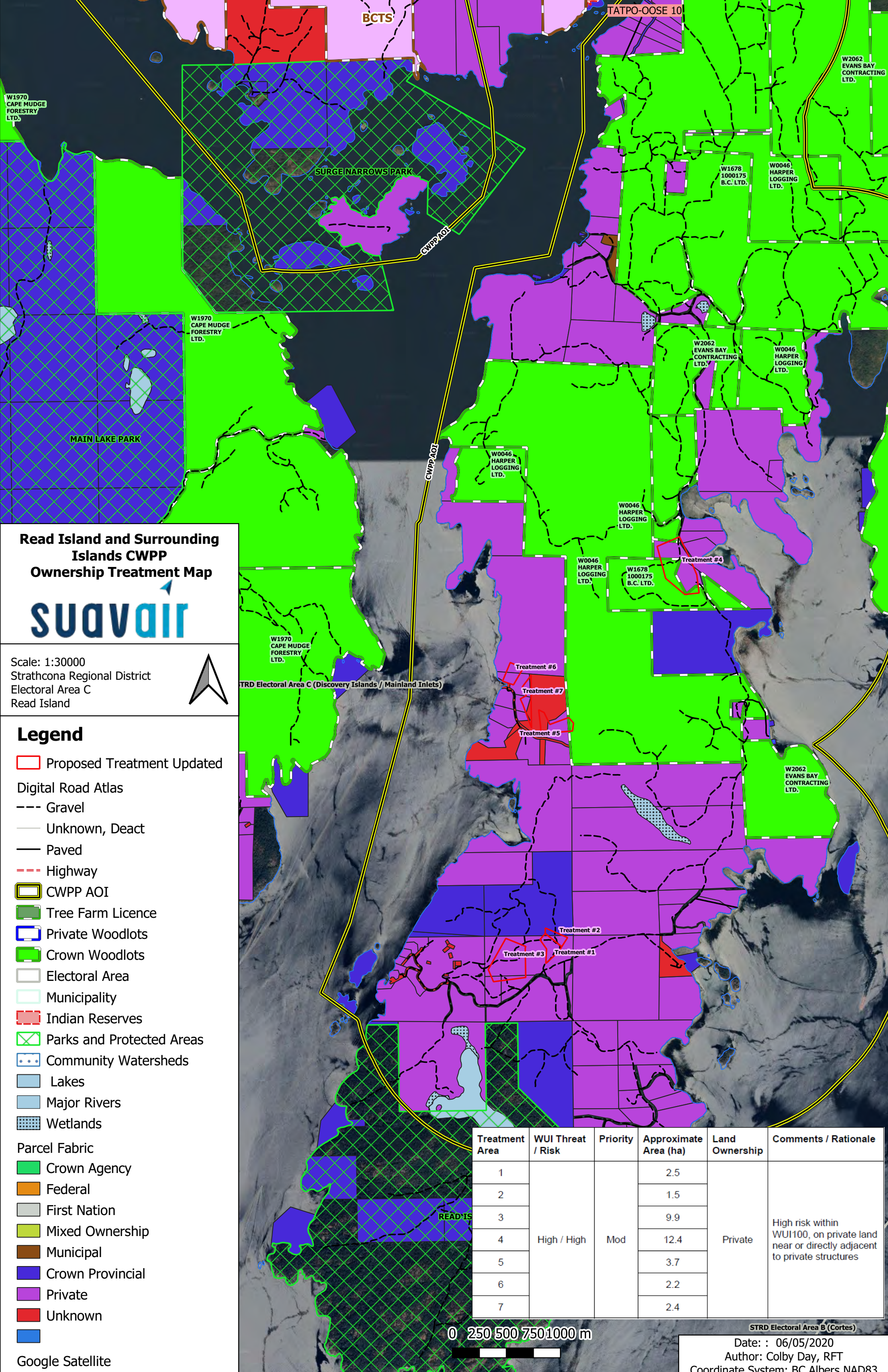
Date: 05/27/2020

Author: Colby Day, RFT

Coordinate System: BC Albers NAD83

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Read Island and Surrounding Islands CWPP Ownership Treatment Map



Scale: 1:30000
 Strathcona Regional District
 Electoral Area C
 Read Island



Legend

- Proposed Treatment Updated
- Digital Road Atlas
- Gravel
- Unknown, Deact
- Paved
- Highway
- CWPP AOI
- Tree Farm Licence
- Private Woodlots
- Crown Woodlots
- Electoral Area
- Municipality
- Indian Reserves
- Parks and Protected Areas
- Community Watersheds
- Lakes
- Major Rivers
- Wetlands

- Parcel Fabric
- Crown Agency
 - Federal
 - First Nation
 - Mixed Ownership
 - Municipal
 - Crown Provincial
 - Private
 - Unknown
 -

Google Satellite

| Treatment Area | WUI Threat / Risk | Priority | Approximate Area (ha) | Land Ownership | Comments / Rationale |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------------|--|
| 1 | High / High | Mod | 2.5 | Private | High risk within WUI100, on private land near or directly adjacent to private structures |
| 2 | | | 1.5 | | |
| 3 | | | 9.9 | | |
| 4 | | | 12.4 | | |
| 5 | | | 3.7 | | |
| 6 | | | 2.2 | | |
| 7 | | | 2.4 | | |

0 250 500 750 1000 m

STRD Electoral Area B (Cortes)

Date: : 06/05/2020
 Author: Colby Day, RFT
 Coordinate System: BC Albers NAD83