



First Nations'
Emergency Services Society
O F B R I T I S H C O L U M B I A

First Nations' Emergency Services Society

FNESS

Presented to
AFOA
December 4, 2025

Supporting BC First Nation Communities Since 1986



First Nations'
Emergency Services Society
O F B R I T I S H C O L U M B I A

First Nations' Emergency Services Society (FNESS) is a charitable, non-profit organization incorporated under the Society Act of British Columbia.

[Video: 2023 A Look Back](#)

Our Vision and Our Mission



OUR VISION

Safe and Healthy First Nation Communities

OUR MISSION

FNESS serves First Nations in developing and sustaining safer and healthier communities through:

- Emergency Planning, Training, Response and Recovery
- Fire Training, Education and Prevention
- Forest Fuel and Wildfire Management
- Leadership and Collaborative Relationships



FIRST NATIONS' Emergency Services

B R I T I S H C O L U M B I A

First Nation's
Emergency
Services Society
(**FNESS**)

- **FNESS** is an organization dedicated to supporting First Nations communities in British Columbia with comprehensive emergency management services.
- Our work is built upon the 4 Pillars of emergency management.
 - Preparedness, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery
- We achieve this by integrating traditional knowledge with modern practices.
- How we do this is by walking with First Nations

Matt Nelson

- Integrated Fire Management Supervisor
- I am Lílwat Nation
- BCWS Unit Crew for 11 years
- FNESS Wildfire Specialist for 1 ½ years
- IFM supervisor for 5 months



Preparedness Division



1. Emergency Support Services (ESS)

Action: Program Support & Mentorship.

Goal: Ensuring communities are ready to provide food, lodging, and care to evacuees immediately.

2. Recovery Planning

Action: Recovery Plan Development.

Goal: Moving beyond the immediate crisis to long-term community restoration.

3. Resource & Funding Support

Action: Recovery Management Recruitment & Funding Assistance.

Goal: Helping communities find the right people and the financial resources to manage the disaster.

4. Rapid Deployment (FNESS-TEAMS)

Action: Recruit, Train, and Deploy.

Goal: Providing "boots on the ground" via the Temporary Emergency Assignment Management System when a community is overwhelmed.

The Preparedness Division supports the development and enhancement of the emergency program.

Contact preparedness@fness.bc.ca for more information.





Response Division

The Response Division provides Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) support, risk assessments, structure defense planning, structure protection training, drone mapping, and deployment of structure protection, mitigation, and tiger dam trailers.

Contact response@fness.bc.ca for more information.



**EOC Support
(Emergency
Operation
Center)**

**Mentorship (ICS) and
Critical Advocacy** with
EMCR/ISC.

Brings order to chaos and
secures **priority
resources** for the
community.

**Structure
Protection**

Deploying **SPU Trailers**
(pumps/hoses) for
tactical defense.

Creates a '**humidity
bubble**' to stop embers—
the #1 cause of home
loss.

Flood Response

Utilizing **Tiger Dams**
(flexible tubes) for rapid
deployment.

Achieves **speed and
efficiency** in protecting
critical infrastructure and
expedites **Recovery
Funding** via Rapid
Damage Assessments
(RDA).

Fire Services



We provide fire prevention and structural firefighter training that includes fire safety education, fire service training and community support.



Fire Services



Home and Community Protection

Fire Department Training

Youth Mentorship Programs

Fire Safety Assessments





Mitigation

- Mitigation supports all BC First Nations to increase community resiliency, reduce wildfire risk, and build capacity to carry out prevention and mitigation initiatives.

[Lillooet Tribal Council Feature](#)



Wildfire Resiliency Advisors (WRA)

FireSmart™ Program

Cultural & Prescribed Fire

Wildfire

Integrated Fire Management (IFM)

Funding, planning, and technical guidance for the **CRI** grant program.

Empowering home and property-level defense against wildfire.

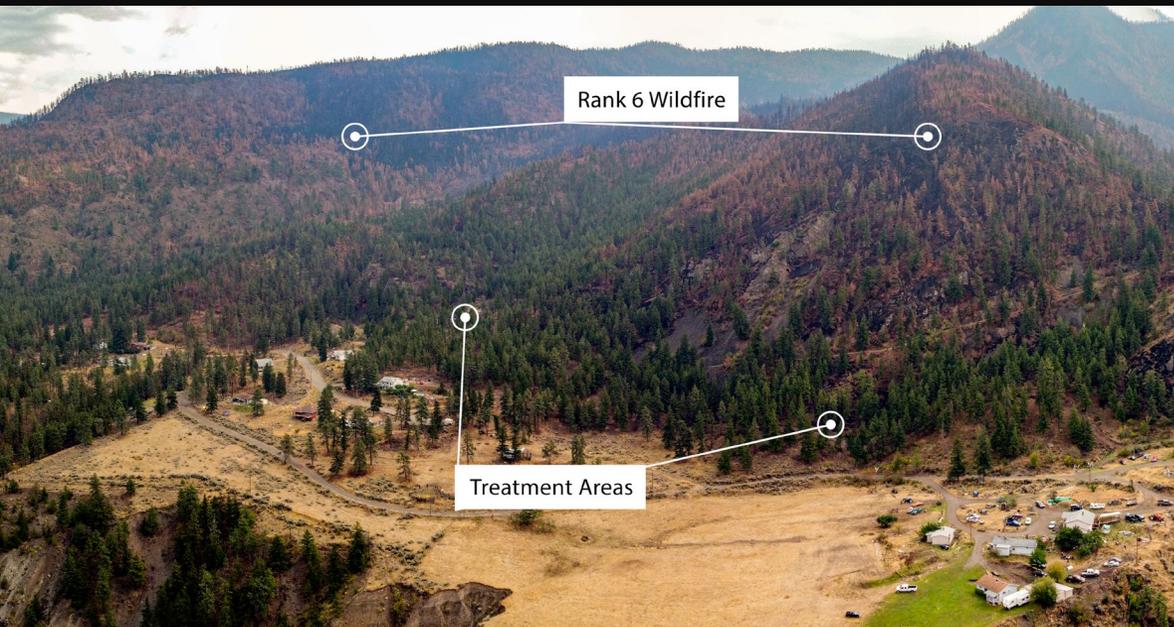
Revitalizing traditional stewardship and using fire as a restoration tool.

Training, equipping, and supporting local suppression capacity.

Supports Nations on **Gathering data to make informed decisions** and guide long-term strategy.



Wildfire Resiliency Advisors



- The Wildfire Resiliency team runs the FNESS-Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) On-Reserve Operational Fuel Treatment and FireSmart programs, as well as the Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) programs, with the supports of the FNESS FireSmart Division to help BC First Nations achieve wildfire resiliency.

- Contact Fuels@fness.bc.ca to learn more.

- **1. CRI Funding**

- **Primary Role:** Assisting Nations with applications and requirements for the **Community Resiliency Investment (CRI)** grant program.

- **2. Technical Planning & Treatment**

- Providing expertise for developing **Community Wildfire Resiliency Plans (CWRPs)** and implementing **Operational Fuel Treatments (OFTs)**.

- **3. Long-Term Resilience**

- Empowering Nations to lead sustainable, flexible wildfire mitigation strategies that protect assets and cultural values.



FireSmart™ Division

- The FireSmart Division supports First Nations in building wildfire resilient communities. Every FireSmart journey is unique.
- Contact us at FireSmart@fnss.bc.ca for questions, feedback, mentoring, and support on the FireSmart BC program.
- **1. Education & Awareness**
 - Teaching community members how embers spread and ignite homes (often kilometers ahead of the fire front).
- **2. Home Partners Program**
 - Conducting assessments on individual homes to identify vulnerabilities (e.g., gutters, woodpiles, siding).
- **3. Local Capacity**
 - Training **Local FireSmart Representatives (LFRs)** within the community to lead these initiatives long-term.

[Leq'á:mel First Nation Feature](#)





Cultural and Prescribed Fire Division

- The Cultural and Prescribed Fire Division works with First Nation communities to determine traditional burn areas and objectives within reserve lands and traditional territories.
- Contact CulturalFire@fnes.bc.ca for more information.
- **1. "Good Fire" vs. "Bad Fire"**
 - Reintroducing fire to the land under controlled conditions to consume fuel and restore ecosystem health.
- **2. Cultural Revitalization**
 - Supporting Nations in bringing back traditional burning practices that have been suppressed for decades.
- **3. Burn Plan Support**
 - Assisting with the technical writing of Burn Plans to ensure liability, safety, and weather conditions are managed.
 - [Stellat'en First Nation shows how FireSmart can be lush, green, and vibrant](#)





Wildfire Division

- The Wildfire Division supports BC First Nations to help build community wildfire response capacity, empowering Nations to effectively safeguard their own communities and traditional territories from the threat of wildfires.
- Contact Wildfire@fnss.bc.ca to learn more.



Crew Training & Certification

Providing certified training for **Type 2** (entry-level) and **Type 3** (supervisory) Wildland Fire Crews.

Ensure local personnel meet provincial standards for safety and effectiveness during suppression.

Equipment & Assets Supply

Assisting Nations with the procurement, maintenance, and staging of essential fireline gear, pumps, and tools.

Ensure local crews have the right equipment for **initial attack** and extended defense operations.

Technical Support

Offering field mentorship, safety oversight, and coordination with outside agencies during active deployments.

Enable safe and autonomous operation of local crews on the fireline.

Integrated Fire Management

“Supporting all Four Pillars of emergency management with a lens on the future and the interconnectedness of all living things” Larry Price

- 1. Integrated Spatial Database
 - Assembling Critical Data on community infrastructure, ecological Values, and Cultural Heritage
- 2. Spatial Tools & Products
 - Utilizing tools Like ArcGis and Wildfire Modeling to assess risk and Guide decision making.
- 3 Governance
 - Empowering Leadership with data to access resources and drive strategic planning





The Recovery and Emergency Support Services (ESS) Division provides ESS program support and guidance, recovery plan development, recovery management recruitment and funding support.

Contact ess@fness.bc.ca for more information.



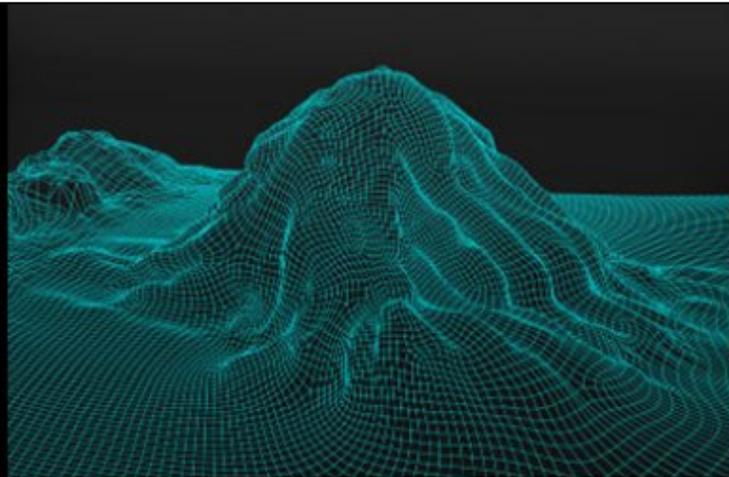
Decision Support



We support community emergency management decision making.



**INFORMATION
COLLECTION**



**MAPPING & VISUAL
DATA SUMMARIES**



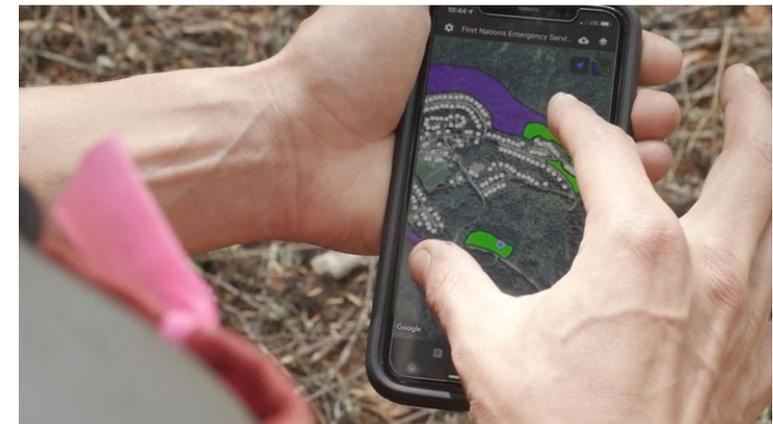
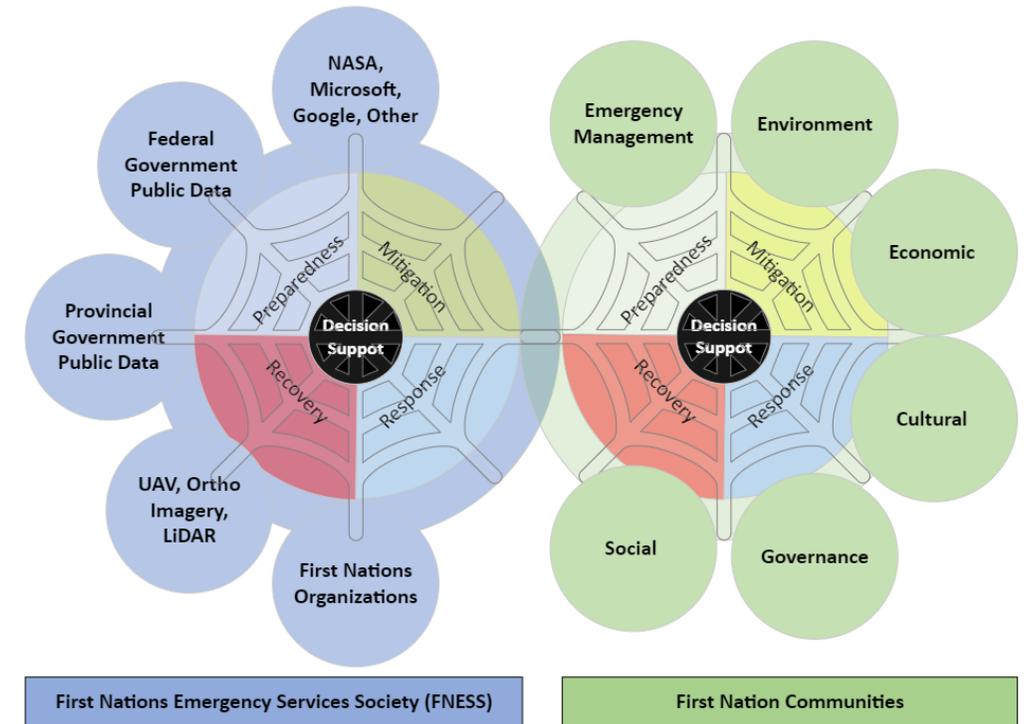
**BETTER DECISIONS &
EFFICIENT RESPONSE**

Decision Support



We accomplish this by:

- Finding and integrating the best data sources into an online platform.
- Facilitating streamlined EM data collection, analysis and reporting.
- Facilitating real-time mapping opportunities.
- Providing free platform access and training to every First Nation in BC.
- Creating innovative opportunities for youth.
- Embracing the core principles of First Nations data sovereignty.





Community Support Department

- Preparedness Division – preparedness@fnss.bc.ca
- Recovery and ESS Division – ess@fnss.bc.ca
- Response Division – response@fnss.bc.ca

Decision Support Department – decisionsupport@fnss.bc.ca

Fire Services Department – fireservices@fnss.bc.ca

Mitigation Department – mitigation@fnss.bc.ca

- Cultural and Prescribed Fire Division - CulturalFire@fnss.bc.ca
- FireSmart Division - FireSmart@fnss.bc.ca
- Forest Fuel Management Division - Fuels@fnss.bc.ca
- Wildfire Division - Wildfire@fnss.bc.ca

Special Projects Department – bmills@fnss.bc.ca

After Hours Assistance: 1-888-822-3388