



Friday, May 15, 2020
1:00 PM to 2:30 PM ET

FRIDAY FORUM

Thoughts on Living With Fire in Canada's Forests

The prevalence of wildfire disasters across Canada over the past two decades such as occurred in Kelowna, BC in 2003 and Fort McMurray, AB in 2016 has prompted a continuing search for solutions to address the wildland-urban interface or intermix (WUI) problem in the country. While it is theoretically possible to exclude human-caused wildfire occurrences, the complete exclusion of unwanted fires is not likely given even the most highly sophisticated fire prevention, detection and suppression programs. Professor Dougal Drysdale (2011) – *Introduction to Fire Dynamics* has stated that "Further major advances in combating wildfire are unlikely to be achieved simply by continued application of traditional methods. What is required is a more fundamental approach which can be applied at the design stage ... Such an approach requires a detailed understanding of fire behaviour." The concept of forest conflagration control through managing vegetation or fuels is discussed on the basis that the elimination of ignition risk in the WUI is not foreseen as feasible and that addressing the "fuel" component of the fire environment offers the only viable course of action possible given that neither weather or topography can be modified. The aim of fuels management is to reduce a fire's intensity and spread rate so that containment by conventional suppression forces can be effective. In this regard, the creation of "aspen fuel breaks" offers one of the best chances for success.

Dr. Marty Alexander is a registered professional forester who began his wildland fire career in 1972 as a hotshot crew member. He retired from full-time work in late 2010 as a senior fire behaviour research officer after nearly 35 years with the Canadian Forest Service. His primary research and technology transfer interests have principally focused on the practical application of empirical fire behaviour knowledge to community protection and firefighter safety concerns. Marty has continued this line of emphasis in semi-retirement. Author website:
https://www.frames.gov/applied_fire_behavior

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WEBINAR LINK:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_sR1unInBQJaO2iKXjUfxtA



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