



# **FIRESTORM 2003**

## **Provincial Review**

**The Honourable Gary Filmon P.C., O.M.**

# **FIRESTORM 2003**

## **Provincial Review**

- **Terms of Reference**

- Was British Columbia prepared?
- How well did emergency systems deal with the situation?
- What could be done better in the future?
- What action should be taken?

- **Timeline**

- Early October 2003 to mid February 2004



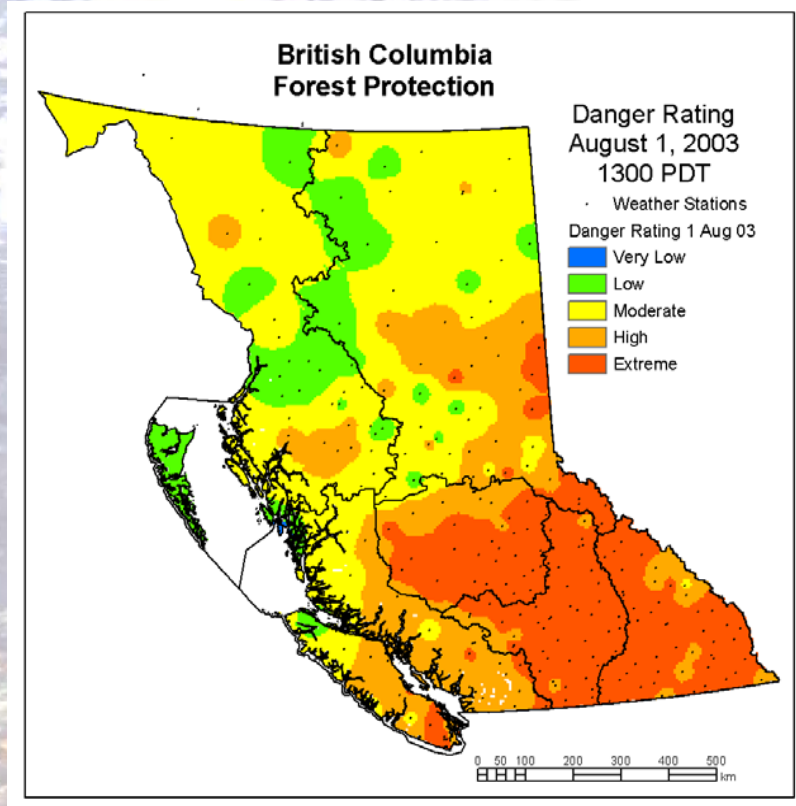
# **FIRESTORM 2003**

## **Provincial Review**

- **Process**
  - 9 days of Public Meetings
  - 9 days of Stakeholder Meetings
  - 3 days with MoF, PEP, OFC
  - Consultations with First Nations
  - 400+ submissions
  - Transcripts on-line

# FIRESTORM 2003

## Provincial Review



- **Context**

- Worst drought in 100 years
- Record high temps
- Strong gusty winds
- Significant fuel loads
- 2500 wildfires
- Predicted to continue hot and dry



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### **The Issues**

- **Forest Management**
- **Emergency Management**
- **Command and Control**
- **Communications**
- **Evacuations**
- **Resources**
- **Financial Accountability**
- **Post Emergency Recovery**

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- **Forest Management**
  - **Strategic Approach to Fuel Management**
  - **Use Prescribed Burning**
  - **Allow Selective Harvesting in Parks**
  - **New Approaches in Marginal Tree Stands**



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- **Emergency Management**
  - **Make Local Emergency Plans Mandatory**
  - **Require Fire-Proofing**
  - **Maximize Firefighting Expertise**

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- **Command And Control**
  - **Standardize the Use of BCERMS and ICS**
  - **Single Province Wide Focus for Training**
  - **Practice, Practice, Practice**



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- **Communications**
  - **Develop a Crisis Communications Strategy**
  - **Establish a Communications SWAT Team**
  - **Move Towards Compatible Technology**
  - **Public Education**

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- **Evacuation**
  - **Allow More Local Decision Making**
  - **Increase Understanding of the Evacuation Process**
  - **Simplify Access to Post Evacuation Assistance**



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- **Resources**
  - **Implement Firefighting Databases**
  - **Better Access to Local Firefighting Expertise**
  - **Increase Type 1 Unit Crews to 27**
  - **Local Governments Should Pay for Volunteer Firefighter Training**

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- **Financial Accountability**
  - Random Post Event Value for Money Audits
- **Post Emergency Recovery**
  - Prepare Ahead of Time
  - Deal with Watershed Restoration
  - Engage Federal Government in Funding Fire Prevention



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- **Conclusion**
  - **The Time to Prepare is Now**
  - **The Responsibility is Shared Between All Levels of Government as well as Private Individuals**
  - **An Ounce of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure**