

YUKON FIRST
NATIONS WILDFIRE'S

Smoke Signals



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ALBERTA BOUND

Crews deploy to Alberta to assist the embattled Province during a fiery spring.

TREX OREGON

YFNW personnel travelled to Bend Oregon to attend this year's Training Exchange

2 BILLION TREES

Restoring forests, revitalizing ecosystems, and preparing for wildfires.

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Letter from the CEO



Dear Team,
I hope this letter finds you well. As we continue our tireless efforts in safeguarding our lands and communities, I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge and commend each and every one of you for the remarkable work you have done so far. Your hard work, dedication, and unwavering commitment to our mission have not gone unnoticed, and I am incredibly proud to be leading such an exceptional team.

I would like to highlight some of the recent achievements and initiatives that have showcased the exceptional abilities of our staff:

Skookum Unit Crew: Our esteemed Skookum Unit Crew has completed not one, but two fire tours in Alberta, providing invaluable support and expertise to tackle the challenging wildfire situation. Your hard work, professionalism, and ability to adapt to changing conditions have left a lasting impression and garnered recognition from our counterparts in Alberta.

TREX: We have taken another step towards enhancing our knowledge and capabilities by sending Ocean and Lulu to the Training Exchange program in Oregon.

This opportunity allows them to gain valuable insights into prescribed fire practices and learn how to conduct them safely. Their experiences and expertise will undoubtedly contribute to our ongoing efforts in managing wildfires effectively.

2 Billion Trees Project: Nick Brooks has been actively involved in planting trees with Wildside Reforestation as part of the Two Billion Trees Project. His efforts not only contribute to addressing climate change but also create natural barriers against wildfires.

Wildfire Resiliency Training Summit: We recently had the privilege of sending Troy Preet and Nick Brooks to the Wildfire Resiliency Training Summit. They have gained valuable knowledge about new tools and tactics to enhance our structure protection capabilities.

Their attendance at this summit reflects our commitment to staying updated with the latest advancements in the field.

Beat the Heat Training: I am delighted to announce that our new Director of Training and Preparedness, Hyder Bos-Jabbar, and his Cadre of instructors successfully trained 45 students at our Beat the Heat program. The skills and knowledge imparted during this training are crucial for combating wildfires effectively. We have another delivery scheduled for early July in Watson Lake, ensuring that more individuals are equipped with the knowledge and passion to fight wildfires.

International Wildfire Conference: Our very own Jordan Profeit represented us at the International Wildfire Conference in Portugal. His participation provided us with valuable insights into global wildfire management strategies and opportunities for collaboration. We are committed to positioning ourselves as contributors on an international level.

Community Engagement and Education: Our dedication to community engagement and education remains unwavering. I want to express my gratitude to Nick Mauro for his involvement in speaking at the Community Engagement Forum in Atlin, BC. Your efforts in sharing knowledge and raising awareness have a profound impact on our communities.

Atlin Fuel Mitigation Project: Troy Preete and his crew undertook the Atlin Fuel Mitigation Project from May 23rd to June 5th. This joint effort by the TRTC and Yukon First Nations Wildfire aimed to protect 65 homes from wildfires. Through a three-stage approach, they created defensible spaces by removing fuel sources. The project garnered local support and highlights the importance of proactive measures in building community resilience.

These accomplishments are a testament to our collective expertise, passion, and commitment to protecting our lands and communities. It is through your hard work and dedication that we continue to make a difference.

As we move forward, let us remember that our work is not only crucial but also deeply meaningful. Each one of us plays a vital role in ensuring the safety and well-being of our environment and the people who call it home.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment and exceptional work. Together, we are making a difference.

Jesse Latoski
CEO, Yukon First Nations Wildfire



PREScribed FIRE: OREGON TRAINING EXCHANGE

In April of 2023 Ocean Stimson and Lulu Bartholomeus embarked on a journey from the Yukon to Bend, Oregon, for a Wildland Fire Training Exchange at Rock Spring Ranch. Focused on prescribed burns, they gained invaluable expertise alongside experienced firefighters.

The training exchange highlighted the importance of cross-border collaboration in tackling wildfire challenges. Stimson and Bartholomeus learned essential skills to effectively plan, execute, and manage prescribed burns. They evaluated burn locations, considered weather conditions, and prioritized safety for personnel and communities. Recognizing the ecological significance of prescribed burns, they acquired crucial knowledge to mitigate future wildfire risks.

Equipped with expanded knowledge and skills, Stimson and Bartholomeus returned to the Yukon, ready to spearhead ecological restoration efforts and implement fire-adaptive practices.

This cross-border training experience exemplifies the importance of collaboration in addressing wildfires, harnessing the collective expertise of firefighters from different regions.

Stimson and Bartholomeus's journey serves as a testament to the power of international cooperation in combatting wildfires and preserving communities and natural environments.



Eagle Crew Leader, Lulu Bartholomeus, smiles as she smells smoke for the first time of 2023.



Skookum Unit Crew Supervisor Ocean Stimson surveys his handiwork.

ALBERTA EXPORT



Skookum Unit Crew and WFM Agency Representative, Linda Brandvold, arrive in Alberta.

In a resolute display of solidarity and firefighting expertise, Yukon First Nations Wildfire (YFNW) firefighters were deployed to Alberta in response to the escalating wildfire crisis. With three separate deployments, their unwavering commitment has made a significant impact in the battle against the growing fires.

The first deployment commenced on May 8th, as Yukon First Nations firefighters joined forces with Yukon Wildland Fire Management (WFM) to send a Type I Unit Crew to the embattled Alberta fireline. Their specialized skills and shared dedication to protecting lives and properties played a vital role in confronting the intense infernos head-on.

Recognizing the gravity of the situation, the Yukon First Nations Skookum Unit Crew was dispatched on May 17th, further bolstering the firefighting efforts in Alberta. These firefighters brought their extensive training and invaluable expertise to contain and suppress the fires that posed a threat to the region.



Skookum Bravo Crew after crushing out another day on the line. Left to right: Ethan Wilks, Randy Koe, Eddy Jim, Shane Singbeil, Wynter Grant.

Amidst the ongoing challenges, Yukon First Nations Wildfire Firefighters and Yukon Fire Management demonstrated their unwavering commitment to the growing wildfire by organizing a third deployment. Another YFNW/WFM Type I crew joined the ongoing firefighting operations on May 31st, strengthening the frontline with their specialized skills and determination.

As the fires continue to rage, Yukon First Nations Wildfire Firefighters remain dedicated to their mission of safeguarding communities and landscapes. Their tireless efforts, coupled with the support of the Yukon Government, demonstrate the unwavering resolve to overcome the challenges posed by wildfires.



The Skookum Unit Crew, YFNW Management, the WFM Director and A-Rep, take a quick picture after the Unit Crew received the prayers and blessing from Ruth Massie and Fred Koe before leaving for Alberta.

The appreciation and admiration for Yukon First Nations Wildfire Firefighters' deployments to Alberta extend beyond the affected communities. Their selfless commitment to firefighting serves as a testament to their professionalism and dedication, inspiring others to unite in the face of adversity.

In these critical times, the collaborative efforts between Yukon First Nations Wildfire Firefighters and the Yukon Government exemplify the importance of collective action and shared responsibility. Together, they stand as a symbol of resilience, working tirelessly to mitigate the devastating impact of wildfires and continue to protect the North.

HISTORY BEING MADE: A TALE OF TWO TOURS



Skookum Crewmembers are all smiles as they start tour 2.

After a grueling few weeks the Skookum Unit Crew from Yukon First Nations Wildfire successfully completed their first fire tour after being deployed to the Alberta Wildfires on May 17th. Their exemplary performance has garnered recognition, leading to a request for them to continue their valuable contribution. Following a well-deserved two-day break in Grand Prairie, the crew eagerly returned to the fireline for their second tour, providing them with an opportunity to confront more intense fire behavior and make critical tactical decisions.

This marks the first time in history that a contracted Type II Unit Crew has extended their deployment for a second tour.

Throughout their initial deployment, the Skookum Unit Crew's hard work and abilities shone brightly, leaving a lasting impression on both the incident leadership and their fellow firefighters. Their efforts were so highly regarded that they were specifically requested to remain and lend their expertise to ongoing firefighting operations. This request stands as a testament to their exceptional work ethic, professionalism, and effectiveness in combating wildfires.



Skookum Unit Crew setting up for a grid patrol.

The Skookum Unit Crew's hard work and dedication have not gone unnoticed, drawing admiration from both Alberta and Yukon alike. Their ability to adapt to changing fire conditions, their unwavering commitment to their mission, and their exceptional teamwork have left a lasting impression on all who have witnessed their efforts. The crew's professionalism and outstanding performance have not only bolstered their reputation but have also raised the bar for wildfire response and mitigation efforts.

As the Skookum Unit Crew continues their second fire tour, their impact and contributions serve as an inspiration to their peers and a source of pride for the communities they represent. Their unwavering commitment to protecting lives, property, and the environment is a testament to the resilience and determination of firefighting crews across Canada.



Skookum Unit Crew Supervisor Ocean Stimson and Delta Crew Leader Thomas Moore make an action plan for the day.

In the face of a challenging wildfire season, the Skookum Unit Crew stands as a shining example of excellence, reminding us of the immense importance of their work and the indomitable spirit that fuels their firefighting efforts. Their dedication, hard work, and remarkable abilities have united Alberta and Yukon in their admiration and gratitude for the vital role they play in protecting our lands and communities from the devastating impact of wildfires.



Nick Brooks recording plot centers to determine where the 2 Billion Trees project would be most successful.

CHANGING THE LANDSCAPE BY PLANTING

2 BILLION TREES

In a groundbreaking effort to bolster wildfire resilience and combat climate change, Yukon First Nations Wildfire's Field Operations Coordinator, Nick Brooks (Brooks), led a transformative project alongside a team of six tree planters from Wildside Reforestation, to convert coniferous trees, including pine and spruce, into aspen stands, bolstering fire resilience in the Yukon.

This innovative endeavour is part of the larger-scale Firebreak creation and 2 Billion Trees Project launched by the Yukon Government, aimed at increasing carbon sequestration and mitigating the impacts of climate change while creating defensible lines around communities.

The conversion process involves replacing existing conifers with aspen trees, known for their regenerative abilities and resistance to fire. By introducing aspen stands, the project seeks to create a natural barrier against the spread of wildfires, safeguarding both communities and the environment.

Beyond its impact on wildfire resilience, the 2 Billion Trees Project aligns with global climate change mitigation strategies. Carbon sequestration, the process of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it in trees, plays a pivotal role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Through the expansion of aspen stands, the project contributes to the vital task of removing carbon from the atmosphere, ultimately combating climate change on both local and global scales.

"...this project demonstrates the Yukon's proactive approach to tackling the challenges of climate change and increasing wildfire risks."

- Nick Brooks

The collaboration between the Yukon First Nations Wildfire team, led by Brooks, and the Yukon Government signifies a shared commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable land management. By harnessing the power of trees and their remarkable ability to sequester carbon, the Yukon is taking a solid step forward to addressing climate issues. "This project demonstrates the Yukon's proactive approach to tackling the challenges of climate change and increasing wildfire risks," responds Brooks when asked about the importance of the project.



The Yukon Government's dedication to the 2 Billion Trees Project underscores its commitment to addressing climate change and promoting sustainable land management practices. By focusing on carbon sequestration and enhancing wildfire resilience through aspen conversion, the government is actively taking steps toward a greener and more sustainable future for the Yukon and beyond.

In connection with YFNW's own 2 Billion Tree program objectives, Brooks is working to obtain approval for the first independent planting project in the Haines Junction area. The team is also actively scouting potential sites across the Yukon, searching for more areas that could benefit from reforestation efforts.

Through the combined efforts of Field Operations Coordinator Nick Brooks and his team, the Yukon is forging a path towards a more resilient, sustainable, and climate-conscious future.

The transformation of coniferous forests into aspen stands serves as a testament to the power of nature-based solutions in combatting environmental challenges and safeguarding the well-being of both present and future generations.



The trusty spade is the hallmark tool of any tree planter.



Beat the Heat recruits building a handline in a race to see which crew is faster.

BEAT THE HEAT

Igniting a New Era of Firefighter Excellence and Preparedness.

Yukon First Nation's (YFNW) Beat the Heat (BTH) course, held in April at the YFNW Base in Whitehorse, marked a significant milestone in preparing a diverse group of 45 students for the challenges of wildfire suppression. With participants ranging in age from 16 to 65 and representing various cultural backgrounds, including First Nations, Métis, and international students, the program fostered a dynamic and inclusive learning environment.

The success of the training program was due not only to hard work of YFNW's cadre of experienced instructors, but also thanks to the partnership between YFNW and Natural Resources Canada's Indigenous Firefighter and Multi-Hazard Training Initiative.

Thanks to the support from partners, YFNW was able to deliver a course where participants gained expertise in many areas, including wildfire suppression, fireline safety, pump operations, Incident Command Systems (ICS), First Aid, Multi-Hazard awareness training, as well as obtaining their Radio Operators certification as well as their Transportation of Dangerous Goods certificate.

"This course really prepares students for what to expect on the fireline. Training to be a firefighter is more than putting wet stuff on hot stuff, it requires both physical and mental strength. This course delivers that." says Hyder Bos-Jabbar, YFNW's Director of Training and Preparedness.

The curriculum encompassed a wide range of skills and knowledge necessary to combat wildfires with precision and efficiency.

"Training to be a firefighter is more than putting wet stuff on hot stuff, it requires both physical and mental strength. This course delivers that."

- Hyder Bos-Jabbar

Recognizing the importance of student well-being, YFNW ensured that participants were provided with nourishment throughout the course. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner were provided, along with a daily stipend, enabling students to focus wholeheartedly on their training and development.

Moreover, YFNW went above and beyond to eliminate any barriers that might hinder students from attending the program. This involved organizing transportation from various communities, offering accommodation support, and procuring necessary equipment such as boots for those in need.

The success of the BTH course was evident as the majority of students were presented with exciting opportunities to join firefighting or fuel mitigation crews.



Smoke in the air as recruits hustle to get their pumps and hose set up to put out their section of fire.

Many received offers to work in positions such as Initial Attack, the Skookum Unit Crew, or the Fuel Mitigation Crew. This not only underscores the effectiveness of the training but also highlights the dedication and potential of the participants.

By fostering an inclusive learning environment and equipping students with vital skills, the Beat the Heat course has played a crucial role in cultivating a strong and diverse firefighting force.



Putting out a fire requires more than water, it requires the knowledge to know how to do so effectively while providing for safety first.



Recruits troubleshoot their pumps during a mock fire exercise.



Recruits race to the finish as they make hand line under the watchful gaze of the YFNW Instructor Cadre.

The program's impact extends far beyond the classroom, as these newly trained individuals are now better prepared to protect their communities and the surrounding landscapes from the threat of wildfires.

Yukon First Nations Wildfire remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting and empowering individuals aspiring to contribute to wildfire management efforts. Through the Beat the Heat course, they continue to build a resilient and capable workforce, ready to confront the challenges posed by wildfires and safeguard the well-being of Yukon communities.

This remarkable achievement would not have been possible without the valuable partnership between YFNW and Natural Resources Canada's Indigenous Firefighter and Multi-Hazard Training Initiative.



YFNW at the International Wildfire Conference

On May 12th, Jordan Profeit, Chief Business Development Officer for Yukon First Nations Wildfire, embarked on a journey to Porto, Portugal, to attend the highly anticipated 8th International Wildfire Conference. This invitation, extended by Amy Cardinal Christianson, aimed to ensure the presence of Northern Canadian First Nations at the conference. Sponsored by CIFFC, Jordan's participation provided a valuable opportunity to explore global perspectives on wildfire management.

The conference, held from May 15th to 19th, gathered experts from various countries, including Canada, the US, Brazil, South Africa, Argentina, Australia, South Korea, China, the UK, Germany, and numerous other nations from the EU. Key topics of discussion revolved around the establishment of a global training export standard, enabling international collaboration in the sharing of firefighters and resources. Additionally, emphasis was placed on the vital aspects of structure protection and effective fuel mitigation techniques.

By attending the conference, Jordan Profeit represented Yukon First Nations Wildfire and gained insights into the international direction of wildfire management.

This experience will inform YFNW's approach and positioning in offering support on a global scale. The exchange of knowledge and collaboration with international counterparts will further enhance YFNW's ability to provide assistance and contribute to the global efforts in combating wildfires.

By attending the conference, Jordan Profeit represented Yukon First Nations Wildfire and gained insights into the international direction of wildfire management.

Yukon First Nations Wildfire continues to demonstrate its commitment to staying at the forefront of wildfire management practices, ensuring the protection of communities and landscapes both locally and internationally. The attendance of Jordan Profeit at the 8th International Wildfire Conference exemplifies the dedication of YFNW in seeking innovative solutions and collaborating with global partners to address the challenges posed by wildfires.

ATLIN FUEL MITIGATION PROJECT: SAFEGUARDING HOMES FROM WILDFIRES

From May 23rd to June 5th, a dedicated crew led by Troy Preete embarked on a mission in Atlin, British Columbia. The Atlin Fuel Mitigation Project, organized by the Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN) and Yukon First Nations Wildfire (YFNW), aimed to mitigate the potential devastation caused by wildfires in the vicinity of approximately 65 homes.

Through a systematic three-stage approach, this project sought to create a defensible space by removing potential fuel sources. With local support and assistance from the TRTC Operations and Management team, Troy and his crew worked diligently to protect the community and pave the way for future initiatives.

The Atlin Fuel Mitigation Project, a joint effort between the TRTFN and Yukon First Nations Wildfire, addressed the critical need to safeguard homes from the threat of wildfires. Troy Preete, along with his crew of five hardworking individuals, stayed in Atlin for the duration, ensuring a quick and efficient completion of the project. The project consisted of three stages, each designed to progressively reduce the risk of fire spread.

In stage one, the team prioritized the removal of garbage, brush, and other potential fuels within a 10-meter radius of each house.

This initial step aimed to create a buffer zone directly around the homes, minimizing the risk of fire ignition. Stage two involved the clearance of fuels between 10 to 30 meters from the houses, further expanding the defensible space. Lastly, stage three focused on eliminating all possible fuels within 30 to 100 meters of the homes, providing an additional layer of protection.



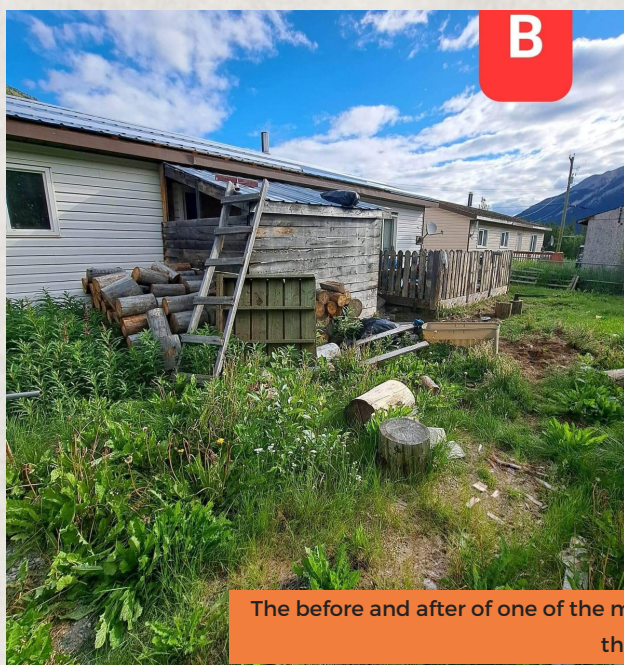
The Atlin community has been supportive of the fuel mitigation efforts, recognizing the importance of proactive measures to mitigate wildfire risks. Troy and his crew have also received assistance from the TRTFN Operations and Management team, further enhancing their efficiency. This collaborative approach underscores the significance of community engagement and highlights the shared commitment to protect the region from potential wildfire devastation.

As the Atlin Fuel Mitigation Project nears completion, Troy Preete looks forward to the potential for expansion and future endeavors. Reflecting on the project, Troy expressed his excitement, stating, "It's exciting because we are working in BC, so we will see where this takes us." The successful implementation of this project not only fortifies the resilience of the Atlin community but also paves the way for similar initiatives to be carried out in other regions facing similar wildfire risks.

The Atlin Fuel Mitigation Project, led by Troy Preete and his dedicated crew, showcases the commitment and determination to protect communities from the devastating impacts of wildfires.

"It's exciting because we are working in BC, so we will see where this takes us." - Troy Preete

Through the collaborative efforts of the Taku River Tlingit First Nations and Yukon First Nations Wildfire, this project has taken significant strides in creating defensible spaces around 65 homes. With local support and the potential for future scaling, the project sets a promising precedent for proactive wildfire mitigation efforts. By working together, communities can build resilience and safeguard against the destructive forces of nature.



The before and after of one of the many houses Troy and his team completed this spring.

In keeping in line with their commitment to bolster wildfire preparedness and community resilience, Yukon First Nation Wildfire dispatched Nick Brooks and Troy Preete to attend the Wildfire Resiliency and Training Summit held in Vancouver, BC, in early May 2023.

This summit served as a platform for providing comprehensive education to firefighters and the general public on the challenges posed by Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) wildfire events. Furthermore, the summit centred around equipping organizations and individuals with the knowledge and tools to access funding for preventative measures, including FireSmart initiatives, to safeguard homes and communities.

Spanning five days, the summit offered a diverse range of educational sessions and opportunities. Notably, participants had the chance to partake in the Structure Protection Unit training, a hands-on experience that focused on the practical aspects of safeguarding structures during wildfire events. This training equipped students with valuable skills and techniques to effectively establish protective measures, ensuring the safety of critical assets.

For Nick Brooks, the summit proved to be a truly enriching experience. The educational portions of the event built upon his existing expertise gained from the Beat the Heat training program, deepening his understanding of wildfire dynamics and prevention strategies.

Additionally, the Logan Lake Community Firebreak case study served as a standout feature for Brooks, offering valuable insights and practical examples of successful firebreak implementation.

By sending delegates to this summit, Yukon First Nation Wildfire demonstrates its unwavering commitment to proactive wildfire management and community protection. The knowledge and insights gained from the summit will undoubtedly contribute to ongoing efforts in enhancing wildfire resilience and ensuring the safety of Yukon's communities.



WILDFIRE RESILIENCY AND TRAINING SUMMIT

THE WARRIOR PROGRAM: EMPOWERING YUKON YOUTH



"My favorite part of the program is witnessing the growth in the participants from the start to the completion and how much confidence the students build in that time."

-Sean Charbonneau

Yukon First Nations Wildfire is making a significant impact on the lives of young individuals through its innovative Warriors Program. Designed for participants ages of 16 to 30, this empowering initiative provides invaluable training and skills development opportunities. Led by the program's visionary, Sean Charbonneau, the Warriors Program aims to instill confidence and equip participants with essential work skills, ultimately opening doors to a brighter future.

The Warrior Program not only equips participants with practical skills but also fosters personal growth, resilience, and self-belief

The Warrior Program, which was first delivered in February 2022 and most recently in February 2023, offers a two-week transformative experience. With limited availability of 20 seats per delivery, the program ensures personalized attention and comprehensive training.

Week 1 focuses on skill-building, pre-employment training, and developing a range of highly sought-after work skills. Participants engage in hands-on activities that enhance their practical knowledge and understanding of the industry.

During the second week, participants shift their focus towards enhancing their employability. They receive guidance on resume writing, refine their presentation skills, and embark on eye-opening tours of local businesses. The pinnacle of their Warriors Program journey arrives when participants engage in mock interviews with various esteemed local businesses. This opportunity enables them to demonstrate their newly acquired skills, showcase their growth, and receive invaluable feedback from industry professionals.

The driving force behind the Warrior Program, Sean Charbonneau, holds a deep passion for empowering youth. As the brainchild behind this transformative initiative, he takes pride in witnessing the remarkable journey of participants from start to finish. Sean has noted, "My favorite part of the program is witnessing the growth in the participants from the start to the completion and how much confidence the students build in that time." His commitment and dedication to their success have become the foundation of the program's positive impact.

The Warriors Program not only equips participants with practical skills but also fosters personal growth, resilience, and self-belief. By bridging the gap between education and employment, this empowering initiative opens doors to

diverse opportunities within various industries. Graduates of the program emerge with increased confidence, a solid foundation of work skills, and the potential for rewarding careers in a field they will be proud and happy to perform in for years to come.

Yukon First Nations Wildfire's Warrior Program is making a tangible difference in the lives of young individuals, providing them with the tools they need to succeed. Through dedicated training, personalized attention, and exposure to real-world experiences, participants gain the confidence and skills necessary to embark on a promising career path. As the program continues to thrive, it will undoubtedly shape the future of the Yukon by nurturing a new generation of talented and empowered individuals.



CEO Jesse Latoski address the Warriors in the February delivery.

STRENGTHENING EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS: LOCALLY AND ABROAD

May proved to be a month of engagement and collaboration for Yukon First Nations Wildfire (YFNW), as Chief Operating Officer, Nick Mauro, actively participated in two significant events. From attending the Community Emergency Preparedness Forum in Atlin to joining the Arctic Response Group Conference in Haines Junction, Nick's involvement reflects YFNW's commitment to fostering community resilience and extending our reach on an international level.



**NICK MAURO, YFNW CHIEF
OPERATING OFFICER**

These interactions not only highlighted the importance of emergency preparedness but also showcased YFNW's dedication to supporting and assisting communities in times of need.

On May 4th, Nick Mauro, representing YFNW, took part in Atlin's Community Emergency Preparedness Meeting. This gathering provided a platform for the community to come together and discuss strategies for emergency preparedness.

The primary objective was to encourage individuals to proactively consider their actions in the face of emergencies and devise appropriate plans. The meeting witnessed an impressive turnout, as over 100, 72-hour preparedness bags were distributed, demonstrating the community's active participation and eagerness to prioritize emergency preparedness.

YFNW's presence at the meeting served as a testament to our commitment and support for Atlin and its residents. The ongoing Fuel Mitigation Project in Atlin for the Taku River Tlingit First Nations further solidified YFNW's connection to the area. The ultimate goal is to position YFNW strategically, enabling them to swiftly respond and provide assistance during natural disasters. Nick Mauro expressed his desire to see the creation of an Atlin community fire crew, assuring YFNW's willingness to contribute and support such an initiative.

YFNW aims to enhance its capabilities and eventually offer support by providing firefighters and resources worldwide

Following the Community Emergency Preparedness Meeting, Nick Mauro headed to Haines Junction to participate in the Arctic First Response Group conference. This international gathering brought together representatives from Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, as well as organizations like Parks Canada, Yukon Wildland Fire Management, and the Canadian Association of Fire Chiefs, represented by President Ken McMullen. The conference served as a platform for participants to exchange insights, foster networking opportunities, and share their experiences in Arctic first response.

Nick Mauro emphasized the significance of conferences and events like the Arctic First Response Group, expressing his hopes that such engagements would contribute to YFNW's long-term vision of extending assistance on an international scale. By learning from global perspectives and establishing connections with experts in the field, YFNW aims to enhance its capabilities and eventually offer support by providing firefighters and resources worldwide.

Yukon First Nations Wildfire's active involvement in the Community Emergency Preparedness Meeting in Atlin and the Arctic First Response Group conference in Haines Junction underscores their commitment to strengthening emergency preparedness and fostering collaboration.

By engaging with local communities and international counterparts, YFNW aims to empower individuals, enhance their capacity to respond to emergencies, and broaden our reach in providing assistance beyond their immediate region.

Through these initiatives, YFNW continues to demonstrate its dedication to community resilience and its aspiration to contribute on a global scale in the realm of firefighting and emergency response.

Upgrading: Base and Culture

Yukon First Nations Wildfire (YFNW) Base has recently undergone significant improvements, reinforcing its commitment to accountability, respect, and ownership within its firefighting operations. The introduction of a new briefing room/class room, changerooms, crew workstations, and an equipment cage demonstrates a concerted effort to create a conducive environment that fosters professionalism and responsibility.

This season, the primary goal is to instill a strong sense of accountability, respect, and ownership for all the equipment assigned to the crews. YFNW has augmented its inventory of firefighting resources, acquiring 10 new Mark 3 pumps with essential attachments, 10 Stihl chainsaws complete with kits, as well as new hand tools, uniforms, tents, and other necessary gear. These additions ensure that the crews are equipped with the essential tools to train and carry out their duties efficiently and safely.

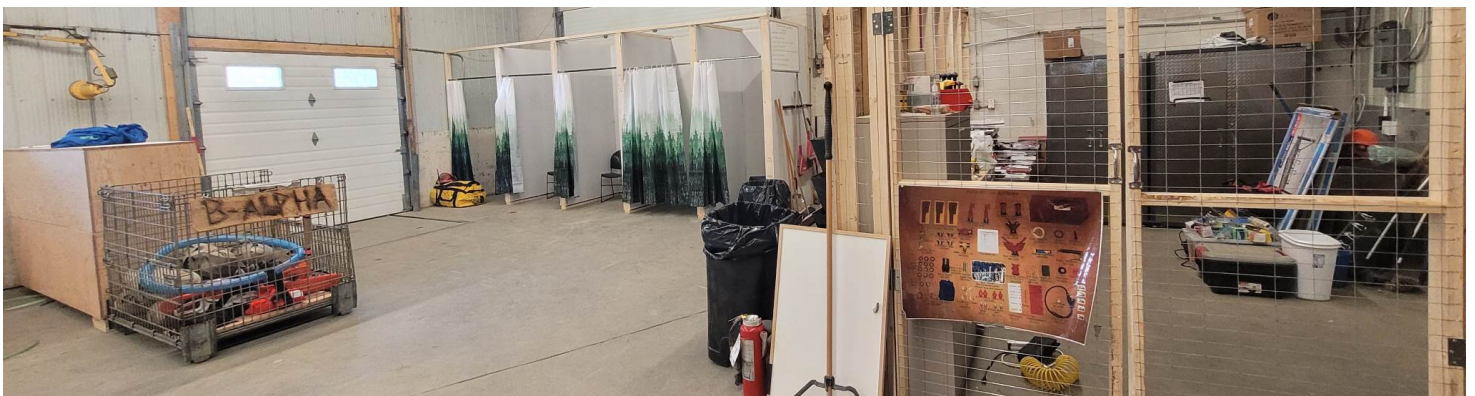
In addition to the expanded equipment inventory, YFNW has also made investments in the fitness aspect of its firefighters. The base now houses new fitness equipment to support the physical well-being of the crews. Furthermore, YFNW has procured two new WFX-Fit Test Ramps, which serve as essential tools to assess the firefighters' physical fitness levels.

Colin Henry, the Asset and Logistics Manager, is dedicated to supporting the crews. He affirms, "My job is to assist the crews and ensure they have all the required equipment to perform their duties." Colin's statement highlights the base's promise to provide firefighters with the necessary resources for successful operations.



Wayne Risby, the Operations Manager, emphasizes the importance of accountability and respect at the base. He states, "The changes implemented at the base are aimed at reinforcing accountability and respect. This entails maintaining professionalism, ensuring clean trucks, and immediately refurbishing gear upon the crew's return." Wayne's statement underscores YFNW's commitment to fostering a culture that prioritizes responsibility and excellence.

The upgrades at Yukon First Nations Wildfire Base, encompassing the new facilities, expanded equipment inventory, fitness equipment, and WFX-Fit Test Ramps, show that YFNW is committed to creating an elite wildfire program. By providing crews with the necessary tools and resources, the base cultivates an environment that nurtures professionalism, responsibility, and efficiency.



2023 YFNW Staff

Management Team

**JESSE
LATOSKI**

Chief Executive Officer

**NICK
MAURO**

Chief Operating Officer

**JORDAN
PROFEIT**

Chief Business Development
Officer

**HYDER
BOS-JABBAR**

Director of Training and
Preparedness

**WAYNE
RISBY**

Operations Manager

**SEAN
CHARBONNEAU**

Director of Human Resources

**LUKE
GRAHAM**

Finance Officer

**COLIN
HENRY**

Asset and Logistics Manager

**MOHAMMED
ALDAWASARI**

Financial Controller

**JO-ANNE
ARNOLD**

Executive Assistant

**NICK
BROOKS**

Field Operations Coordinator

Skookum Unit Crew

OCEAN STIMSON
UNIT CREW
SUPERVISOR

SKOOKUM ALPHA

Grayson Turner - Crewleader
Caleb Marsh - Crewmember
Nathan Omuvie - Crewmember
Elias Carpenter - Crewmember
Dylan Jacobson - Crewmember

SKOOKUM CHARLIE

Jeff Boyd - Crewleader
Brody Blake - Crewmember
David Lozada - Crewmember
Shyanne Still - Crewmember

SKOOKUM BRAVO

Eddy Jim - Crewleader
Duran Simon - Crewmember
Ethan Wilks - Crewmember
Wynter Grant - Crewmember
Randy Koe - Crewmember

SKOOKUM DELTA

Thomas Moore- Crewleader
Steve McGovern - Crewmember
Sammy Demchuk - Crewmember
Laszlo Kovacs - Crewmember
Shane Singbeil - Crewmember

Initial Attack

LITTLE SALMON CREW

Elijah Stevens - Crewleader
James Snyder - Crewmember
Devyn Kassi - Crewmember

GREY HUNTER CREW

Joaquin McWatters - Crewleader
Jenna Green - Crewmember
Brody Mclean - Crewmember

WHITE RIVER CREW

Alex Klubi - Crewleader
Adam Gemmink - Crewmember
Eli Cairns - Crewmember

EAGLE CREW

Lulu Bartholomeus - Crewleader
Julia Staudt - Crewmember
Lela Samuel - Crewmember

DRAGON CREW

Anthony Caesar - Crewleader

LIARD CREW

Aaron Chaput - Crewleader
Stedson Laverdue - Crewmember
Airian Woodhouse - Crewmember

XY CHARLIE CREW

Tanner Borsa - Crewleader
Malachi Lavallee - Crewmember
Mikaiah Ladue - Crewmember

KLUANE CREW

Chris Connely - Crewleader
Aiden Hupe - Crewmember
Marie-Eve Nolet - Crewmember

CHAMPAGNE-AISHIHIK CREW

Mitch Vollick - Crewleader
Yann Bonnafous - Crewmember
Elizabeth Duez - Crewmember

Fuel Mitigation Crew

**TROY
PREETE**

Project Crewleader

**ANTHONY
ANDRE**

Crewmember

**MATHEW
ROBINSON**

Crewmember

**ALLEN
CARLICK**

Crewmember

**JAKHI
RUDYK**

Crewmember

**CAMERON
O'SHEA**

Crewmember

**DRAYTON
MAMER**

Crewmember



Hey Team,

I hope you are all doing well as we dive into the heart of the fire season here at Yukon First Nations Wildfire. I wanted to take a moment to connect with you all and express my deep appreciation for the incredible work happening within our organization.

While I may not hold the official title of editor, I have taken great pride in curating the content of Smoke Signals to keep everyone informed about the latest developments. I have created Smoke Signals with the intent to provide timely updates and insights into the ongoing efforts of our dedicated team.

As we gear up for what promises to be a busy and challenging season, I want to emphasize the importance of safety and awareness in all our operations. The stories we share in Smoke Signals serve as a reminder of the risks we face and the collective responsibility we hold to protect both ourselves and the communities we serve.

Throughout the pages of Smoke Signals, you will find inspiring accounts of our team's dedication, resilience, and hard work. From training programs like Beat the Heat to the remarkable efforts of Skookum Unit Crew to the diligence of our Initial Attack crews, we strive to showcase the impactful work being done to combat wildfires and safeguard our communities.

NOTE FROM THE "EDITOR"

I encourage you to stay tuned to future issues of Smoke Signals as we continue to share updates on our progress, challenges, and successes throughout the season. This magazine is not only a platform for information but a testament to the incredible individuals who make up our organization.

I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to each and every one of you for your unwavering commitment and tireless efforts. Your work is essential, and your dedication is what makes Yukon First Nations Wildfire a force to be reckoned with.

Stay safe, stay informed, and know that your contributions are deeply appreciated. Together, we will navigate the fire season with perseverance and determination.

Warm regards,

Hyder Bos-Jabbar
Director of Training and Preparedness
Creator of Smoke Signals

