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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Community Wildfire Protection Planning Underway in the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality**

FORT NELSON, BC – The Northern Rockies Regional Municipality is taking steps to ensure its communities are more prepared to deal with wildfire risks, including updating its Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

To support communities like Fort Nelson in mitigating risk from wildfire, the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative (SWPI) formed a suite of grant programs administered by the Union of BC Municipalities. Wildfire specialists recommend that communities develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to identify areas subject to wildfire risk along the boundary between urban and forested zones.

While the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality (NRRM) created a CWPP in 2012 (with the aid of UBCM grant funding), the existing plan does not comply with current standards. Rural areas will be included to expand the new plan by nearly 17,000 hectares, encompassing a total of 38,000 hectares.

The NRRM is coordinating efforts with its neighbours, the Fort Nelson First Nation (FNFN) who are also updating their CWPP, to benefit both communities as we work to keep the region safer for residents. With over \$20,000 in grant funding through the SWPI, the NRRM is now well into the development of the new Plan using locally sourced forestry consulting expertise.

This project is a natural precursor to a project in which the NRRM and FNFN are collaborating, using BC Rural Dividend Program funding. The “FireSmart Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) Wildfire Mitigation and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Pilot Project” will aid in wildfire prevention on private land, through the identification and reduction of fuel hazards.

“Each year, we seem to witness communities around us struggle with wildfires of varying impact on their residents, businesses and surrounding Crown land,” notes Mayor Bill Streeper, “We want you to know that we’ve taken every effort to make sure we’re well prepared for the inevitability of wildfires in the Northern Rockies.”

The final CWPP will be ready for submission by April 2018 with the information used for the development of fuel management prescriptions - projects that could be eligible for future SWPI grant allocations.

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[2012 Northern Rockies Regional Municipality Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#)