



For Immediate Release
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BC Wildfire Service

Changes to Coastal Fog Zone

PARKSVILLE – When putting on open fire prohibitions, the Coastal Fire Centre has commonly excluded a 2 km strip of land along the extreme outer coast of Vancouver Island from Port Renfrew to Port Hardy. This area has become known as the “Fog Zone” and persons recreating within this zone were allowed to have campfires and local residents could conduct Category 2 open burns. This decision to exclude this area was made because of the lower risk of a wildfire spreading due to the presence of fog and a general lack of community bylaws and campfire procedures in Provincial and Federal Parks in the Fog Zone.

Following the 2018 forest fire season a review of the effectiveness of this procedure was conducted with Federal and Provincial Park staff and local governments in the area including other partners such as First Nations. The review concluded that many of the reasons the “Fog Zone” was implemented had been resolved. The communities of Bamfield, Ucluelet and Tofino all have open burning bylaws to manage their own local situation and the Pacific Rim National Park has built a system of designated camping sites in its remote areas and campfires are managed through an effective permit system.

As a result the Coastal Fire Centre has decided that for the 2019 forest fire season it will discontinue use of the Fog Zone concept. The *Wildfire Act* and Wildfire Regulation will administer open burning and prohibited activity restrictions on Crown Lands including Provincial Parks while areas covered by local government bylaws and Federal Parks with their own open burning rules will govern themselves. The Coastal Fire Centre will work with our partners including BC Parks to ensure a smooth transition into the new process. This change in administration will be implemented when the forest fire danger rating reaches levels where open burning activities become a risk of causing forest fires.

The *Wildfire Act* and Regulation can be viewed on our website at BCWildfire.ca.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status/about-bcws/governance/legislation-regulations>

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