



Agenda No: 8.2

Mtg. Date: October 26th, 2015

Regional Board Report

TO: Regional Board
FROM: Parks Services
DATE: October 19, 2015
SUBJECT: Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative, Support for Projects

Purpose:

To comply with the requirements of the UBCM Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative (SWPI) application process by providing a Board resolution when submitting the application indicating support for the proposed activities and willingness to provide overall grant management.

Executive Summary:

The Strategic wildfire Prevention Initiative is a funding program administered by UBCM that supports communities to mitigate risk from wildfire in the wildland urban interface. The current SWPI program provides 90% of funding for operational treatments.

Parks Services has submitted two applications for wildfire fuel reduction treatments in regional parks for the October 2015 intake. The Mill Creek application requests grant funding of \$64,638.00 for treatment of 7.56 ha. The Black Mountain / Sntsk'il'nten application requests grant funding of \$73,305.00 for treatment of 5.43 ha.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Regional Board support the October 2015 UBCM Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative applications for funding of operational fuel management treatments in Mill Creek and Black Mountain / Sntsk'il'nten Regional Parks including planned activities and overall grant management for these forest fuel reduction treatments;

AND FURTHER THAT the Regional Board continues to support future RDCO applications to the UBCM Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative which include planned activities and overall grant management for both forest fuel reduction prescriptions and onsite operational fuel treatments in Regional Parks in accordance with the 2015-2019 Financial Plan.

Respectfully Submitted:

Murray Kopp
Director Parks Services

Prepared by: Cathy MacKenzie, Parks Natural Resource Technician

Approved for Board's Consideration

Brian Reardon, CAO

Implications of Recommendation:

Strategic Plan: Forest fuel management treatments address the following priorities in the RDCO Strategic Plan: Climate Change and Hazard Management.

Financial: UBCM Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative funding applications are prepared in accordance with the 2015-19 Financial Plan.

Background:

Since the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative program inception, the Regional District of Central Okanagan has been approved for funding in excess of \$1,000,000.00. This includes a variety of projects such as the creation of a Region Wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Regional Parks Operational Wildfire Protection Plan, Operational Level Fuel Management Plan for the Westbank First Nation Community Forest, fuel management prescriptions on Crown land and in Regional Parks and operational treatments in Regional Parks.

The province recently announced a top-up of \$10 million to the SWPI. Currently, the funding can be used for developing or updating Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP), developing fuel management prescriptions and operational fuel treatments.

Regional Parks staff has developed a plan to address fuel management issues on a cycle of spring applications for prescription funding followed by fall applications for treatment funding to ensure treatment during the winter months. Prescriptions must be approved by SWPI prior to operational treatment funding applications. Missing one intake sets this plan back by a full treatment season.

The current SWPI grant program provides 90% of funding for operational treatments up to a maximum of \$600,000 per year for Regional Districts. The Mill Creek application requests grant funding of \$64,638.00 for treatment of 7.56 ha while the Black Mountain / Sntsk'il'nten application requests grant funding of \$73,305.00 for treatment of 5.43 ha.

Alternative:

The Regional Board may choose not to support the recommendation, at which time the applications become void for the October 2015 intake and staff will have to re-apply during the spring 2016 intake seeking further approval from the Board at that time.

In conclusion, staff requests that the Regional Board support the Parks Services funding applications to the SWPI in accordance with the 5-Year, 2015-2019 Financial Plan.