



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN
FIRE SERVICES



PAID-ON-CALL FIREFIGHTER
RECRUITMENT APPLICATION MANUAL

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**Community Services
Fire and Inspection Services**

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www.regionaldistrict.com

The RDCO is committed to providing the most effective and most efficient fire protection for our area. You will find that participation as a Paid-on-Call (POC) Firefighter will bring personal reward, satisfaction and a tremendous sense of accomplishment and community service. The RDCO Fire Services objective is to save lives and property, and as a Paid-on-Call Firefighter dedication to meeting this objective is critical.

Service as a POC Member of any of our Departments requires serious commitment. Careful consideration of all our components of service should be undertaken and this application manual has been designed to provide information that will assist you in determining whether POC Firefighting is a suitable pursuit for you.

Thank you for your interest in serving our community as a POC Firefighter.

If you require further information, please contact RDCO Fire Services at (250) 469-6223 or by email to: fire.service@cord.bc.ca

Fire Services Department
Regional District of Central Okanagan

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Paid-on Call member of the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) Fire Service. We are committed to recruiting talented and motivated individuals, who possess a high level of integrity and have a desire to serve their community.

Paid-on-Call (POC) Firefighters are members of our team who play a key role in the delivery of fire and emergency services to the RDCO. POC Firefighters respond to fires, rescues, medical aid, hazardous materials, and a host of other calls to aid the public. The numbers of emergency responses will vary from department to department and from year to year. The average number of incidents is between 50 and 100 calls per year, depending on location.

Many of our POC Firefighters and POC Officers are trained to nationally recognized standards. The requirement to operate independently means that our POC Firefighters and Officers are well trained to perform their duties and operate safely and efficiently.

POC Firefighters come from all walks of life, from school teachers, to tradesmen, to paramedics. Some of our firefighters choose to take advantage of the skills and experience that they gain by pursuing a full time career in the fire service. Being a POC Firefighter is rewarding, exciting and fun.

FIRE HALL LOCATIONS:

RDCO has four fire departments with locations throughout RDCO:

- **Ellison Fire Department**
Hall #61 – 4411 Old Vernon Road, Ellison, Kelowna, BC, Telephone: 250-469-6155
- **Joe Rich Fire Department**
Hall #51 – 11481 East Highway 33, Joe Rich, Kelowna, BC, Telephone: 250-469-6179
Hall #52 – 6550 Goudie Rd, Kelowna BC
- **North Westside Fire Department**
Hall #101 – 514 Udell Road, Killiney Beach, Kelowna, BC, Telephone: 250-545-1195
Hall #102 – 7355 Westside Rd., Kelowna BC
- **Wilson's Landing Fire Department**
Hall #42 – 2396 Westside Road, Wilsons Landing, Kelowna, BC, Telephone: 250-469-6161

TIPS DURING THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

There is no single factor to ensure success in your pursuit to join the RDCO Fire Service as a Paid-on Call Firefighter; however, we do offer you these tips:

1. Before you submit your firefighter application, take the time to learn all you can about the job. Familiarize yourself with the job tasks, the different steps in the hiring process and about our region.
2. You must be able to follow and act on complex verbal and written instructions.
3. We expect you to be prepared and ready to participate in our assessments. Assessments will be scheduled for evenings and/ or weekends. If at any point you do not meet the required competencies, you will be advised and your application and training will be stopped.

SELF-EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Use these questions to help you decide if becoming a RDCO POC Firefighter is a good fit for you.

ASK YOURSELF:

- Does my lifestyle support ethical and responsible choices and actions?
- Am I prepared to maintain a level of professionalism on and off duty?
- Does my lifestyle align itself with the Fire Service values of respect, pride, professionalism and teamwork?
- Have I been free from involvement in unlawful activities?
- Am I actively supporting my community for the benefit of others?
- Have I adopted and do I maintain physical fitness?
- Am I physically able to perform firefighter job tasks?
- Am I able to meet the training schedules and requirements?
- Can I work for extended periods of time under difficult and strenuous conditions?
- Am I free of phobias relating to height, confined spaces and able to maneuver with limited or no visibility?
- Am I comfortable using different hand/power tools and technical equipment?
- Do I have a support system in place for debriefing and stress relief?
- Am I able to work harmoniously in close quarters with other people?
- Do I treat all people with respect, dignity and professionalism regardless of race, creed, gender or beliefs?
- Am I able to and do I take steps to maintain a positive attitude?
- Am I able to motivate myself? Do I motivate others?
- Do I actively engage myself in a problem solving capacity?
- Am I able to follow and carry out complex instructions?
- Does my lifestyle allow me to commit to a minimum of two and a half hours weekly for firefighting training?

FIREFIGHTER PAY RATES, BENEFITS AND WORKING CONDITIONS

POC Firefighters are paid for weekly training sessions as well as for attendance at calls. Some selected training courses are also paid. The POC rate of pay, effective after successful completion of the probationary period, currently starts at \$15 per hour (as at Sept 2014),

FIREFIGHTERS' BENEFITS

- POC Firefighters are covered by WorkSafeBC benefits.
- POC Firefighters are covered by a separate policy also paid for by the RDCO, which provides up to an additional \$100,000 accidental death & dismemberment medical coverage both on and off the job.

FIREFIGHTERS' TAX DEDUCTIONS

- POC Firefighters are eligible to claim a \$1000 CRA tax credit.

HOURS OF WORK (Training)

- POC Firefighters are expected to attend 70% of the training sessions, with training nights varying between department, Monday or Tuesday. Practices usually last for approximately 2.5 hours.

HOURS OF WORK (Fire Response)

- POC Firefighters are expected to attend a minimum 25% of page outs for response to emergency calls.

TRAINING WE PROVIDE

- POC Firefighters are trained on an ongoing basis by in house and guest instructors. Levels of training will vary between RDCO Department with priority given to achieving and maintaining NFPA 1001 Firefighter skills with a minimum Basic Firefighting Certification.
- Training is provided at no charge to the member and required training time is paid.

Other Training:

- ✓ ICBC Air brake endorsement (department pays for ICBC training and testing).
- ✓ NFPA 1001 – Basic Firefighting Certification
- ✓ NFPA 1002 – Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator
- ✓ First Responder Level III with spinal and AED endorsement.
- ✓ S100 Forestry Firefighting

Senior POC Firefighters

- ✓ NFPA 1021 – Fire Officer I
- ✓ NFPA 1041 – Fire Service Instructor I
- ✓ Rapid Intervention Team
- ✓ Incident Command System 100 & 200

MINIMUM FIREFIGHTER QUALIFICATIONS

You must be:

- At least 19 years of age on the date of your application
- Eligible for employment in Canada – you must be a Canadian citizen, a holder of a Permanent Resident Card, a Landed Immigrant or otherwise legally entitled to work in Canada (i.e. holder of a work visa)
- Physically fit

Living Boundary

A POC Firefighter must work or reside within reasonable commuting distance of the fire hall (usually within 8 km).

Employment History

This section represents your employment history. Outline information to the best of your ability relevant to this position. If contact information is no longer available for a past employer, please indicate so.

Applicant's Declaration

Carefully review each statement thoroughly and sign.

STEP 1 - ORIENTATION

Applicants will be given a tour of the station and attend a briefing. In the briefing session applicants will learn more about the RDCO Fire Service, our recruitment process, the expectations that RDCO has of a POC Firefighter and what RDCO provides a POC Firefighter in return.

STEP 2 - PHYSICAL ABILITIES ASSESSMENT

Applicants will be assessed for their ability to perform the tasks of a firefighter. These include the ability to work from heights, the ability to safely lift items up to 40 lbs. (18.15 KG) and the ability to work while wearing a self-contained breathing apparatus. Candidates will be required to present a letter signed by a physician indicating that the candidate is medically able to undertake the physical demands of a POC Firefighter.

STEP 3 - THE INTERVIEW

You will be interviewed to allow us to learn more about you, your experiences and your abilities. This will also be a forum for you to discuss any questions you might have regarding the POC Firefighter experience.

STEP 4 – SELECTION PROCESS

Our selection process is based on consideration of your competencies, skills, physical abilities and job fit.

STEP 5 – REFERENCE, DRIVER'S ABSTRACT AND CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

At this stage of the process, we will check your references who will be asked about their experiences with you as an employee. We will then need to request from you a Driver's Abstract from ICBC and a RCMP criminal record check. These are necessary to ensure public safety when performing firefighting duties.

STEP 6 – MEDICAL CLEARANCE

The final step for a candidate before receiving a job offer will be to have a medical professional ensure your ability to perform fire related duties. RDCO will pay for any required testing and documentation.

Probationary Period

Upon successful completion of your basic firefighter training you will be issued a pager and placed on a six month probationary period. During your probation you will receive ongoing training and evaluations regarding your ability to work as a team member and perform your duties as a firefighter. You may expect to be paid at the established BC minimum wage, for all training and regular duties performed during your probation. Should you not meet the expectations of a POC Firefighter, you will be released from the RDCO Fire Services.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. “How can I determine if a medical condition I have makes me ineligible for hire?”

Your physician is the best resource for information on your personal health. We encourage you to book a complete physical with your physician before you decide to submit a firefighter application to identify and/or discuss any conditions that may affect your ability to perform essential firefighter job tasks.

2. “Do I require a commercial vehicle driver’s licence?”

No, you require a minimum of a Class 5 driver’s licence with no more than six (6) demerit points to apply. Once you complete your recruitment training, you will need to obtain an air brake endorsement and complete our emergency vehicle driver training program to drive a fire apparatus.

3. “Do I require previous firefighting experience or training prior to making an application?”

No. The department will train you in firefighting skills including hands-on live fire training.

4. “Do I need Basic First Aid or a First Responder Certificate?”

No, you will be trained by the department in CPR and First Aid to the First Responder Level III including spinal immobilization and AED endorsements.

5. “What happens after you’ve received my application?”

Your application will be reviewed for completeness and suitability. We will get back to you if we require any further clarification and we will let you know whether you meet our qualifications.

6. “What other responsibilities do firefighters have other than fighting fires?”

Firefighting actually represents a relatively small portion of the work of a typical fire department in today’s world. The number of residential and commercial fires has steadily decreased over the years due to a variety of factors including improvements in construction and a greater public awareness of the risk factors leading to fires and property loss. Seventy percent of RDCO’s emergency responses are, in fact, calls for medical aid, including illness/accidents at home and work, injuries resulting from vehicle accidents and other medical trauma. Other calls for emergency response involve hazardous materials releases, response to fire alarms and for other calls for public assistance. Firefighters also spend quite a bit of time maintaining equipment, assisting with public safety education, training for all types of emergency responses and filling out reports and paperwork associated with these activities.

7. “Do firefighters have to do any extra training?”

As the world changes, firefighters have to change and train along with it. RDCO POC Firefighters continually train to remain current with medical standards, fire suppression tactics, and even new vehicle technologies (we respond to numerous car accidents). We do offer occasional extra training opportunities on weekends.

8. “Who do I contact if I have any additional questions?”

Please contact Fire Services at 250-469-6223 or by email to: fire.services@cord.bc.ca

9. “What do I need to bring with me to my interview?”

When your interview has been booked, we will phone or send you an email outlining items you are expected to bring to your appointment.

Items required for your interview:

- Your driver's licence – for identification purposes
- A current copy of your resume (optional)
- Any of the certificates and licences you mentioned in your application form

10. “Who can I use as a reference?”

The reference has to be a supervisor that you have reported to in a work situation. The reference cannot be a family member.

11. “What is a vulnerable sector record check?”

A vulnerable sector record search is completed in conjunction with a criminal record search. The vulnerable sector search is required of all members who have contact with youth.

12. “Do I pay the costs of the medical examination?”

No. Medical testing is completed by your Doctor, upon receipt of invoice RDCO will reimburse costs.

13. “Am I expected to respond to calls right away?”

No. Pagers are issued to POC Firefighters after they have completed basic firefighter training.

14. “What is the cost of the required training?”

The required training for POC Firefighters is provided free of charge. This includes all protective firefighting clothing.

15. “Who provides insurance coverage for my activities as a Paid-on-Call Firefighter?”

WorkSafe BC (Workers' Compensation Board) coverage is in effect when the individual member is performing the duties of a POC Firefighter. The RDCO also has insurance coverage for auto liability when operating Fire Service vehicles, as well as accidental death and disability coverage.

16. “Are Paid-On-Call Firefighters directly paid in any way?”

POC Firefighters are paid for essential training and response to calls.

17. “How much time am I expected to give as a Paid-On-Call Firefighter?”

While the exact time requirements vary, the average training and call out time is approximately 12-15 hours per month.

18. “How quickly will I be expected to respond to emergencies?”

The RDCO expects members to respond immediately to a page out but we are realistic to the challenges regarding work and child care.

19. “How often will I be on call to respond to emergencies?”

Calls can vary but historically 1 to 2 calls per week lasting 1-2 hours in length would be an average. Potential members should be aware that this commitment cannot be taken lightly as their response to emergencies is a lifeline to the public they serve.

RDCO Fire Service realizes that no one can be available all of the time; however, it relies on the commitment from POC Firefighters to respond whenever they are available.

20. “What if I have consumed alcohol?”

POC Firefighters are not allowed to attend training or respond to emergencies if they have consumed alcohol.

21. “Is it possible for me to concentrate my participation and specialize in one area of Fire Service response?”

All Paid-On-Call members are generalists, capable of doing any of the fire or rescue tasks that may occur at an emergency. Specialist training is provided, but not to the exclusion of the ability to participate in all Fire Service activities.

22. “Is there a social aspect to being a member of the Paid-on-Call roster?”

Yes. Being a member of a Paid-On-Call fire service means being an active participant in your community. There are often opportunities for community service, education and fund raising. Being a member of the fire service also means being part of the community of firefighters which has a long history of camaraderie and involvement. Many of the best friends and connections any of us have come from our time with our local fire service.

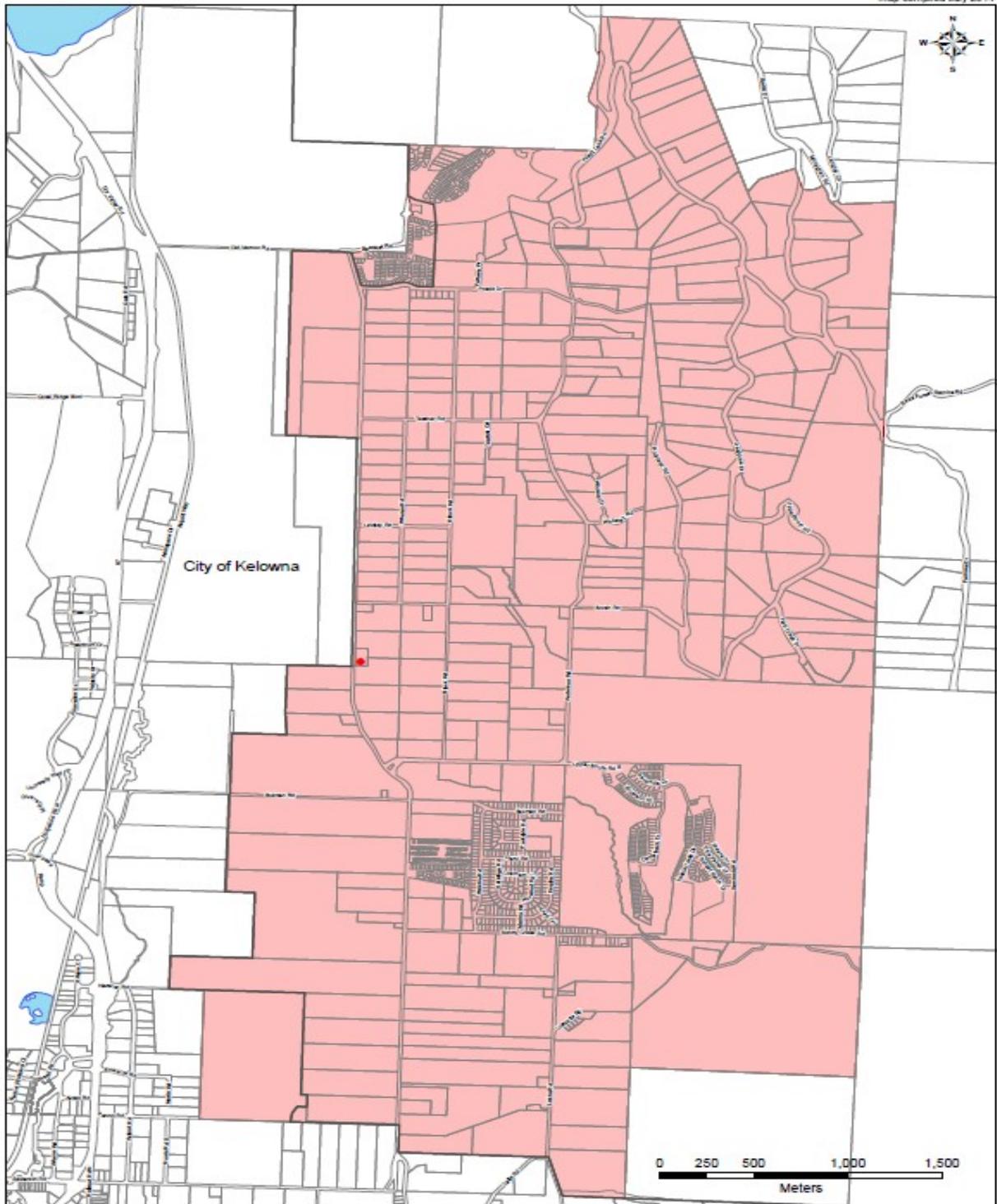
We thank you for your time in completing the application process. Please let us know if we can be of any assistance in going through these steps. We believe that the rewards of becoming a firefighter make the process well worth your time.



Ellison Fire Protection Area

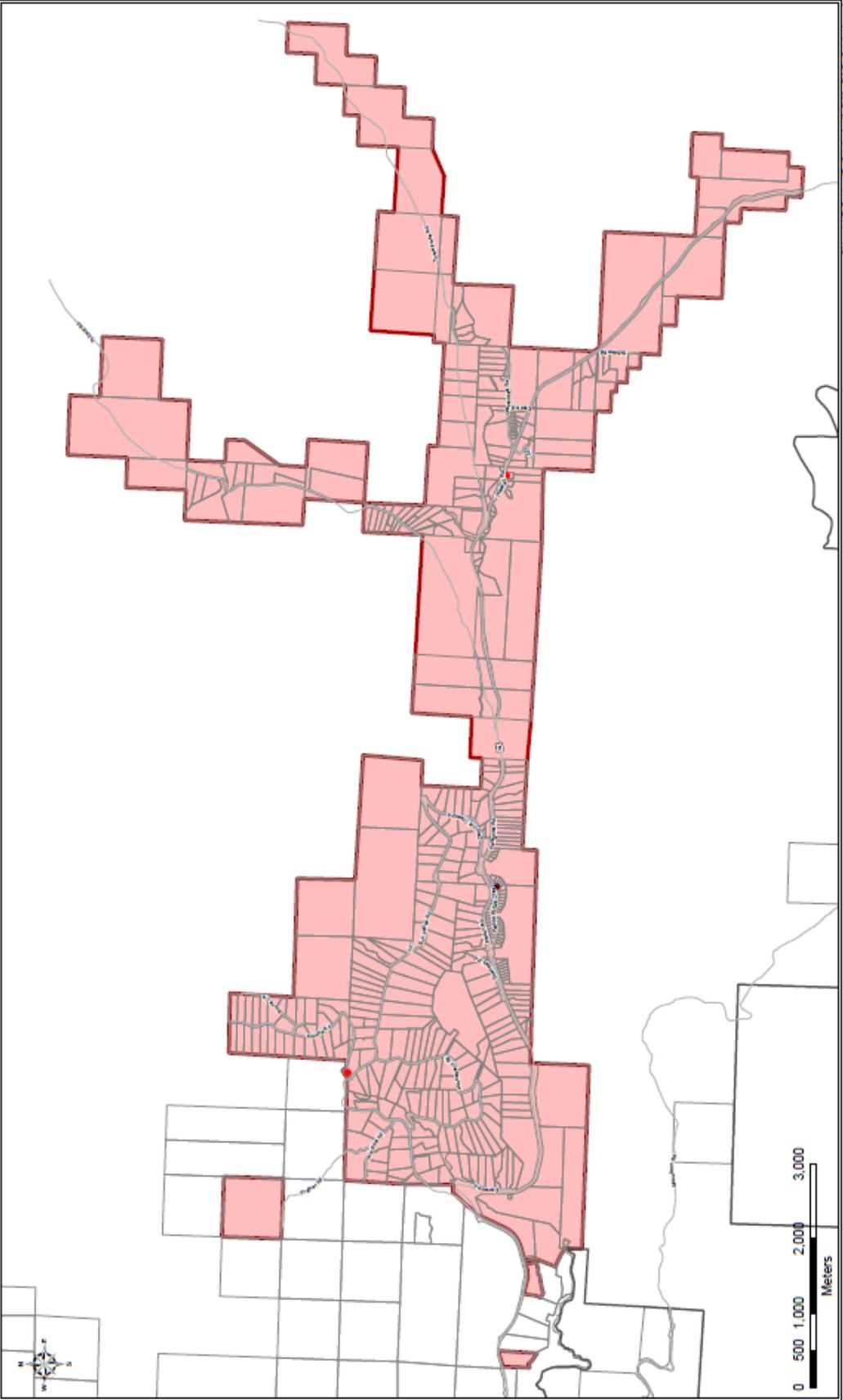


map compiled July 2014



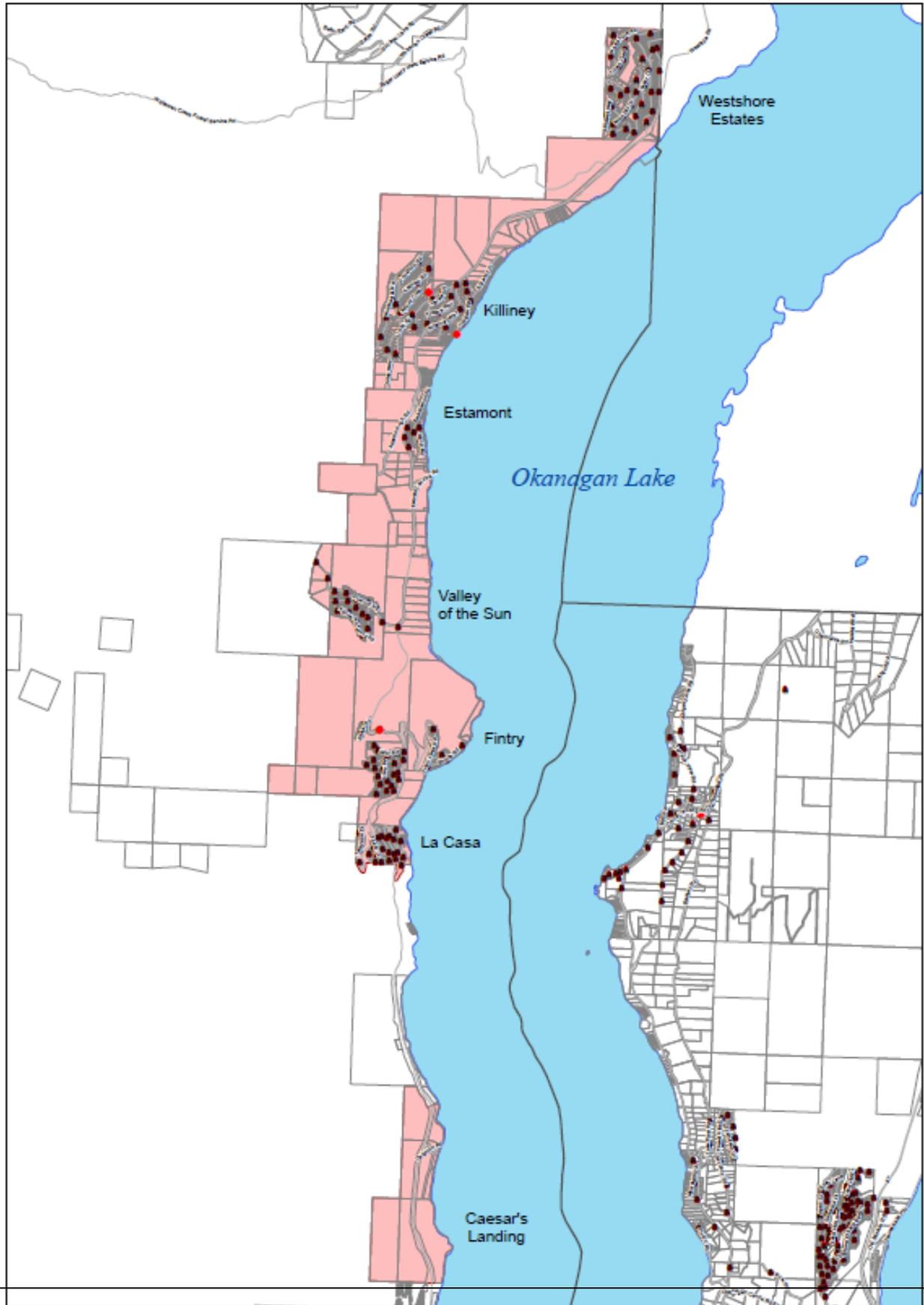
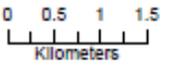


Joe Rich Fire Protection Area





North Westside Fire Protection Area



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Wilson's Landing Fire Protection Area

