

FireEd

An educational resource package, which assists teachers in promoting student learning through the exploration of outcome-based, locally relevant and diverse lessons plans. Bringing the issues and excitement of forest firefighting to your classroom.



**Community
Weather
B.C. Resources
Teamwork
Human Impact
Physical Fitness**

**Environment
Fire Science
Careers
Prevention
Safety
Leadership**

**Mapping
Forest Ecology
Communication
Smokey-the-Bear
Wildlife
Public Awareness**

FireEd

“Learning From B.C.’s Forest Firefighters”



Introduction

Each summer, young men and women from across the province come together to accept the immense task of protecting the communities and valuable forests of British Columbia from the devastation of wildfire. They are B.C.’s forest firefighters. Their work is extremely challenging and demands strength of character, in addition to a high level of physical and technical training. Firefighters take great pride in their commitment to this task, leaving friends, family and the comforts of home behind for grueling work in the hot summer months.

In the past, these firefighters have traveled to the remote and inspiring wilderness of B.C.’s uninhabited regions to protect the natural resources and wildlife of our province from the annual cycle of summer forest fires caused by lightning, industry and sadly, by human carelessness. Today, much has changed for our province’s forest firefighters. Now, as community development and recreational pursuits spread further into B.C.’s forests and wilderness, firefighters find themselves not only battling to save trees, but to help prevent the destruction of homes and save lives.

Following the 2003 season’s exhausting battle with the fires which plagued many of B.C.’s communities, two crews, the Coastal and the Valhalla Unit Crews, developed an education package to be used in classrooms across the province to inform children with respect to wildfire. With the support of **FORED BC**, (<http://www.landscapesmag.com>) the non-profit conservation education

charity that manages these crews, and the Ministry of Forests, these professional wild land firefighters worked together to contribute their years of experience, knowledge and passion regarding the field of firefighting to this project. The following package of information and activities is the result of their efforts. The development team included a certified B.C. school teacher and two senior crew leaders with over twenty years of firefighting to their credit.

As they have for many years, the firefighters of the Coastal and Valhalla Unit Crews also volunteer their time as classroom speakers throughout BC, answering questions, displaying equipment and sharing their knowledge of fire prevention and suppression – making the learning experience “real”. They are also fully prepared to help teachers conduct the enclosed lessons. As positive and influential role models for children, these young men and women are capable of motivating students and leaving a lasting impression upon those eager to learn. Students will also delve into the exciting career possibilities in forest firefighting, not for the feint of heart. In fact, crewmembers have often been told they’re heroes for doing this kind of work, but they take this in stride.

Please consider this educational package as an appropriate learning opportunity for your students and one that will enhance your teaching objectives. Please contact us via the email address education@foredbc.org if you have any questions or to determine if local Unit Crew firefighters are available to come to your classroom.

Have a safe summer,

Sandra Ulmer
Classroom Teacher B.Ed/B.C. Unit Crew Firefighter for FORED BC

Acknowledgements



Photo: Noel Hendrickson

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Sandra Ulmer – Crewmember, Coastal Unit Crew & Teacher, York House School
Noel Hendrickson – former wildland firefighter, professional photographer and co-creator of the book, “Coming Through Fire: The Wildland Firefighter Experience”

(visit: <http://www.hendricksonphoto.com>)

Kerry Brewer - Fire Operations Specialist, Preparedness

Ross Wilde - Fire Operations Specialist, Detection/Prevention

Jim Price - Superintendent, Fire Preparedness & Operations

•Ministry Home

•Government of British Columbia

Protection Branch

Ministry of Forests



**-VANCOUVER FOUNDATION
Conservation Fund**



Natural Resources
Canada

Ressources naturelles
Canada



Cheryl Ziola – President of FORED BC and FireEd project Editor

*Additional thanks to all the members, past and present, of the **Coastal and Valhalla Unit Crews** – for all your sacrifice, dedication and hard work.*

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Weblinks Page see page 23

FireEd Classroom Kit Contents:

-available only when FORED firefighters can visit a classroom. If you contact your local Ministry of Forests office, they might be able to supply some examples of "retired" equipment.

- sample "Nomex" fire-resistant clothing (firefighter's uniform)
- firefighter's boots
- Pulaski (hand tool)
- fire shelter
- Hard hat with eye & ear protection
- Samples of hose & nozzles
- safety whistle

Objectives –Intermediate Level (Grades 4 – 7)

This FireEd package was produced with the B.C. Ministry of Education's *Integrated Resource Package Learning Outcomes* as its basis (<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/>). Each of the grade level outcomes achievable through the use of this package is listed below.

Grade 4 outcomes in blue, Grade 5 in red, Grade 6 in orange, Grade 7 in green

Social Studies

Environment:

- analyze how people interact with their environment, in the past and in the present
- demonstrate understanding of sustainability, stewardship, and renewable versus non-renewable natural resources
- assess effects of lifestyles and industries on local and global environments
- assess effects of lifestyles and industries on local and global environments
- interpret and use graphs, tables, aerial photos, scales, legends, and various types of maps
- construct, interpret, and use graphs, tables, scales, legends, and various types of maps
- locate and describe current and historical events
- analyze ways that people's interactions with their physical environments change over time
- evaluate the impact of natural processes and human-induced changes on communities

Personal Planning

- explain reasons for school and community safety rules
- identify appropriate responses to emergency situations
- demonstrate safe behaviours in a variety of environments
- describe the contributions of paid and unpaid work to society
- describe the potential for injury in a variety of environments and situations
- describe how to minimize hazards in a variety of situations
- describe social pressures that contribute to risk taking
- analyze emergency procedures, in the home, school, and community
- identify the talents and skills of positive role models in a variety of occupations and careers
- describe the immediate and long-term consequences of unsafe behaviours on self and others
- describe the factors that relate to injury prevention

Language Arts

Comprehend and Respond:

- describe and recount key ideas or information from various media
- organize information or ideas they have read, heard, or viewed in the form of simple charts, webs, or illustrations
- identify the main information given in illustrations, maps, or charts
- compare their preferences for, opinions about, and responses to several selections
- categorize roles and describe stereotypes portrayed by characters in various print and non-print works
- compare their own opinions with information presented
- compare the portrayal of males and females in mass media with their own experiences
- express agreement or disagreement with information
- identify viewpoints, opinions, stereotypes, and propaganda in literary, informational, and mass media communications

Science

Life Science:

- Knowledge of B.C.'s living resources is important to our future. Students investigate the effective uses of various living resources (e.g., forest, waterway, animal, and scenery). They consider issues of resource use from various perspectives. They identify ways in which living resources are used responsibly in their communities.

Atmosphere and Weather:

- describe the key features of a variety of weather conditions
- identify and measure the factors that influence local weather
- describe the consequences of extreme weather conditions

B.C.'s Living Resources:

- identify living resources in the local environment
- describe how humans use BC's living resources
- describe the known and potential environmental impacts of using BC's living resources

Ecology:

- describe all organisms in terms of their roles as part of interconnected food webs
- describe ways in which species interact with each other
- compare and contrast the major biogeoclimatic zones of B.C.
- determine the limiting factors for local ecosystems
- outline the stages of recovery of a damaged local ecosystem

“Getting Started”



Prior to the beginning of the unit, incite interest in your students by preparing a small area of your classroom to be devoted to this project. If you are having Unit Crew firefighters into your classroom for a visit, they may be able to bring you the “FireEd Kit” prior to their visit for you to display genuine firefighting materials (see table of contents).

In your designated FireEd area you can create an eye-catching display using any of the following:

- pictures/documents printed from the suggested internet links
- newspaper clippings
- natural materials (leaves, branches, bark, cones, needles...)
- sample firefighting materials (ask at your local MoF protection branch)
- local area maps (check with local tourism offices & parks departments)
- books on wildlife, forests, ecology & wildfire (check your school and public library)
- information pamphlets & posters from local forestry associations

"The Cleansing Power of Fire"

Using a Weblink to the CBC archives to conduct research on the fire control practices in Western Canada.



Teachers: please click this link to play the CBC archives clip:

http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-75-849-4924/science_technology/forest_fires/clip6

Curriculum Link: Science, Social Studies & Language Arts.

Learning Outcomes: *Using critical thinking skills, students will develop and defend a personal viewpoint regarding forest practices in Canada with a specific focus on the philosophy and science of wildland fire suppression.*

Time: One 45-minute session in computer lab, plus class time to hear oral presentations and view visual presentations.

Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on their overall understanding of the topic through persuasive presentations. Students will be scored on how well they understand the topic and how effectively they argue their point of view.

Materials:

- Evaluation form (blackline master #1)
- Computer lab with adequate high-speed internet
- Presentation criteria (blackline master #2)
- CBC archive information sheet (blackline master #3)

Background Knowledge:

When a forest fire sweeps across the landscape it leaves behind it a charred, blackened area devoid of life. And yet, this seemingly

destructive event is often a starting point for incredible growth and rebirth within a forest's ecology. For years, the province of British Columbia has endeavored to aggressively suppress forest fires. Now, forestry officials are taking a second look at this practice. Many are beginning to see that nature's approach to forest management may actually be one to support, providing that allowing those fires to burn freely are not threatening homes, people's lives and valuable timber.

Activity Summary:

1. Students will view the video clip "The Cleansing Power of Fire" from the CBC archives. Go to:

<http://archives.cbc.ca/300c.asp?id=1-75-849> and click on CLIP #6

2. Then, using the additional links provided below, the students would create a persuasive argument in the form of either an oral or visual presentation. Presentations will be graded on a given criteria. See blackline master #2 for sample criteria.

Students perform or share their presentations, then meet in small groups to discuss their opinions. Following the small group discussions, come back together as a class and hold a grand discussion followed by a vote to see which of the forest protection practices presented is the most supported in your class. Whose was most influential and why? What presentation techniques were employed to convince other students of that viewpoint?



Additional Sources:

B.C. Ministry of Forests: "**Fire in Nature**" and "**Prescribed Burns**"

<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/protect/burning/prescribedfire.htm>

Parks Canada: "**Renewer, Recycler and Rearranger**" and "**Living With Fire**"

http://www.pc.gc.ca/progs/np-pn/ecosystem/ecosystem5_e.asp

Extension:



Go back to the CBC archives to and allow the students to explore the website. Read the article, **In-depth: Fighting Fires**. A pdf version of the story is included in case the web link is not accessible.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/indepth/fightingfires/>

"The Statistics of Fire"



Curriculum Link: Mathematics – graphing and statistics.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will demonstrate their understanding of current provincial wildfire statistics through a graphic presentation.

Time: 30 minutes in computer lab, 30 minutes of class time.

Evaluation: Students are evaluated on their ability to successfully create a graph that represents current forest fire data from British Columbia. (see blackline master #1 and appropriate rubric).

Materials:

- Evaluation form (blackline master #1)
- Average Fires in B.C. 1993-2002 (blackline master #4)

Background Information:

The 2003 forest fire season in British Columbia was the worst summer on record. Hot weather and tinder dry fuels allowed for thousands of hectares of land to burn despite firefighters best efforts. Caused by both humans and lightning, these fires became the most important news story of the summer. Are forest fires on the rise in B.C.? Statistical information given on the Ministry of Forests website tells us just how exceptional this summer was.

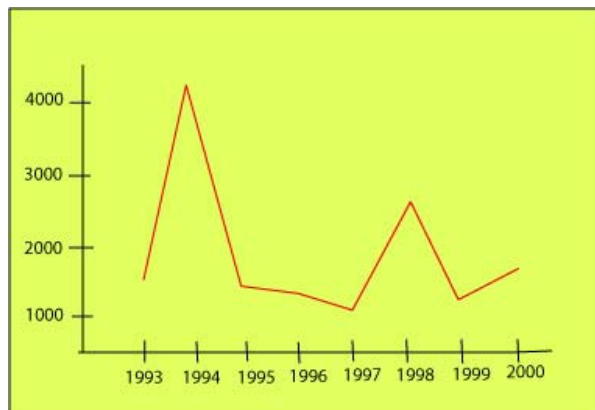


Activity Summary:

1. Using the Ministry of Forests website, students collect data to be graphed and displayed. Use the information below to collect the data. Blackline master #4 also contains this data.

<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/protect/average.htm>

2. Students create graphs to visually represent the trend in forest fires in B.C. over the past decade.
3. Display these results and have the students write a paragraph that speculates what the graph might look like over the next decade, based on weather predictions, droughts, farmer's almanac, snow pack levels, etc.



“Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires!”



Curriculum Link: Art – creating graphic representations & creative expression

Learning Outcomes: *Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the conflict between forest ecology, human interests and wild fires through the creation of a poster.*

Time: 45 minutes class time (+ homework)

Evaluation: Students are evaluated on their ability to create a poster that effectively highlights the impetus for preventing wildfires. (see blackline master #1 and appropriate rubric).

Materials:

- Evaluation form (blackline master #1)
- Examples of previous “Smokey” advertisements (see blackline master #5)
- Poster paper, paints, felt markers and/or pencil crayons

Background Information:

The Smokey Bear campaign began as a result of World War II. With many able-bodied men overseas fighting in the war, the remaining American public began to worry about the security of their national forests under the threat of forest fires. Many believed that the enemy would use incendiary shells to ignite the timber of the Pacific Northwest. In an attempt to encourage vigilance, the first Smokey Bear advertisement was produced in 1944. His popularity grew extensively. You can trace the evolution of the Smokey Bear campaign through the web link provided. <http://www.smokeybear.com.smokeybear.com>

Activity Summary:

In this activity, students will have the opportunity to create their own advertisement meant to instill care and concern in the citizens of British Columbia for the protection of our forests from the impact of wild fires. Given that many of the forest fires are started by human carelessness, the importance of raising awareness on what people can do to prevent fires is paramount.

1. Brainstorm some examples of things that are precious within BC's forests (consider wildlife, natural resources, atmosphere, aboriginal's sacred areas (i.e. totems of Haida Gwaii) and man-made structures such as people's homes and the Kettle Valley railway).
2. Provide the students with an opportunity to view some examples of previous public campaigns attempting to draw attention to, or prevent, wildfires (the Smokey website is an excellent resource).
3. Try a pair-share activity, in which the students are paired up and given a brief opportunity to discuss their poster plans before beginning. This allows those ready to go to solidify their plans and those who need some ideas to be inspired.
4. Model some simple sketches of your own on the board or overhead, presenting key words and the wild fire reporting number:



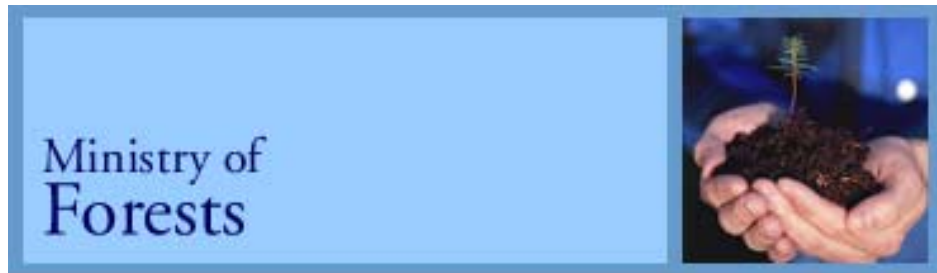
1-800-663-5555

Extension:

Hold a school-wide contest for the best fire awareness poster. Choose a small panel of judges, which include students and staff. Have your students advertise the contest around the school, posting details, deadlines and prizes. If you live in an area of the province that has a high risk of forest fires, why not talk to local businesses to see if you can post your school's posters in their windows. This gets the students involved in their community and working towards a common good, realizing that they CAN make a difference! Ask your local Ministry of Forests staff to judge the best poster. Maybe they can donate a prize, such as a seedling to plant, or tee-shirt or mug with the report wildfire logo and phone number.



"Grow a Class Tree"



Curriculum Link: Social Studies – community

Learning Outcomes: *Students will develop personal links to their own community, recognizing that they play an important part in community growth and ecological balance.*

Time: This project will be ongoing and (hopefully) will take place over years.

Evaluation: Students are evaluated on their participation in the care of their class tree and their demonstrated concern for their environment through journaling. (see blackline master #1 and appropriate rubric).

Materials:

- evaluation form (blackline master #1)
- "The Importance of Trees" (blackline master #6)
- shovel, peat moss, watering containers
- Select a tree that grows naturally in your area. You could purchase (or ask for a donation from a local nursery) a seedling, or find a young immature tree to dig up and replant (be sure to ask landowner's permission).

Activity Summary:

Students will have an opportunity to become stewards of their own community's forest. By planting a tree, your class will have the opportunity to develop a connection with their own environment. Provide your students with some background knowledge so that they are aware of the importance of trees to our environment. Then host a "planting ceremony" in which your class' tree is officially planted. Following the ceremony, provide your students with a chance to write or draw in their journals, expressing how they feel about being a part of their environment.

Planting your class tree:

- 1. PICK A SPOT FOR YOUR TREE.** Most trees like plenty of sun and water, but some will grow in the shade. Remember, your tree is going to grow up and out, so don't plant it too close to a building or other trees.
 - 2. DIG A HOLE** that is approximately 12 inches wider and 12 inches deeper than the root ball.
 - 3. LOOSEN THE SOIL** at the sides of the hole by cutting it with a shovel. This will allow the roots to grow into the surrounding soil.
 - 4. MIX THE SOIL** that was removed from the hole with peat moss or another organic material to make it soft and ready to absorb water.
 - 5. PUT PREPARED SOIL** (around 12 inches) back into the hole. Pour water into the hole until it makes a puddle.
 - 6. PLACE THE TREE INTO THE HOLE.** The top of the root ball should be at, or just above, ground level. Make sure the stem is straight, then replace the soil around the tree.
 - 7. PACK THE SOIL LIGHTLY** with your foot and water until a puddle forms on top of the soil.
 - 8. APPLY COMPOST** to the ground around the base of the tree.
- Watering may be necessary if rainfall is limited, especially during the first four weeks after planting. If so, water twice a week.



“Fire Weather”



Curriculum Link: Science – atmosphere and weather

Learning Outcomes: *Students will determine the relationship between a forest fire and weather conditions.*

Time: 60 minutes (plus 30 minutes for quiz on separate day).

Evaluation: Students’ understanding is evaluated on their performance in a written quiz and their participation in a group activity. (see blackline master #1 and appropriate rubric).

Materials:

- evaluation form (blackline master #1)
- Fire weather information sheets (blackline master #7)
- Fire Weather Quiz (blackline master #8)

Background Information:

One important part of all wildland firefighter’s training is their development of a firm understanding of fire weather information systems and the impact of weather on fire behaviour. Firefighters must get frequent weather briefings while working in the field in addition to keeping their “eyes on the skies” to watch for changing conditions. A change in wind conditions and directions for example could endanger firefighter’s lives if the fire is blown back toward them or cuts off an escape route.

Extension:

Have students use the website below to research projected climate change in British Columbia – linking it to future forest fire suppression.
<http://www.ekes.org/climate/globalchanges.html> (Should you have any trouble accessing this information, FORED will gladly provide you via email with pdf copies of the information from that website.

Jigsaw

Activity Summary:

1. Students are divided into small "base" groups of 4 persons. These groups then brainstorm on a sheet of paper all the information they know about weather and its effect on forest fires (tapping prior knowledge). Five minutes is given for this task.
2. Following this, the base groups are then divided so that one member of each group moves to a designated area of the classroom to join with a member of another base group to become an "expert" on one of the fire weather topics provided. Each new "expert group" will use the information provided in blackline master #7.
 - Wind
 - Precipitation
 - Temperature
 - Relative Humidity
3. Each new group of "experts" spends approximately 15 minutes reading and discussing their information sheet.
4. The original groups then reunite to share the information that they have learned about weather's effect on forest fires and to prepare for the quiz.
5. Students should be graded based on their group's average score...putting the onus on each student to do a good job of becoming an "expert" and reporting back to their base group.



Extension:

Have the students use the link below to view the Ministry of Forests current weather maps which detail the province's ratings for wind, precipitation, temperature and relative humidity in graphic form.

<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/protect/weather/>

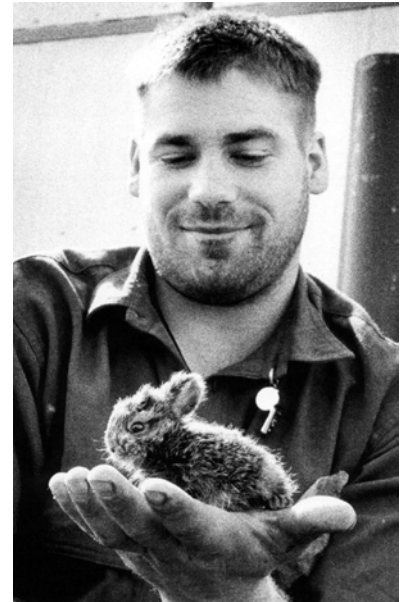
"Fireline Safety"

Curriculum Link: Personal Planning – personal safety & career risks

Learning Outcomes: *Students will identify unsafe situations for forest firefighters in their line of work. Students will then compare the risks between this career and their own "ideal" career choice.*

Time: 30 - 45 minutes.

Evaluation: Students are evaluated on their ability to relate the hazards of forest firefighting to a given career choice. (see blackline master #1 and appropriate rubric).



Forest firefighter Scott Mitchell and a rabbit he rescued from fire.



Materials:

- evaluation form (blackline master #1)
- "If in Doubt, Back Out!" poster (blackline master #11)
- "Find the Hazards (blackline master #12)

Activity Summary:

Students discuss their prior knowledge of forest firefighter's jobs with specific attention to how much risk is involved. Brainstorm the ideas on the board and then allow the students to complete blackline master #12 worksheet. Following this practice, the students will be asked to write down their "ideal career" choice on the top of a sheet of paper. Each student must then write a comparison paragraph in which they compare their choice career with firefighting in terms of the existing hazards.

Extension: What are the advantages and disadvantages to each contrasted career choice? Consider working conditions, salary, physical requirements, opportunities for promotion, fun factor, among others. For more information and lesson plans for teachers on careers in the environment, as well as an interactive student career game/quiz please visit <http://www.cchrei.ca.cchrei.ca>.

"The Fire Triangle"

Curriculum Link: Science

Learning Outcomes: *Students will demonstrate their understanding of the fire triangle.*

Time: 30 minutes.

Evaluation: Students are evaluated on their ability to demonstrate their understanding of the fire triangle's three elements in a creative manner. (see blackline master #1 and appropriate rubric).

Materials:


- evaluation form (blackline master #1)
- The Fire Triangle diagram (blackline master #9)
- The Fire Triangle pyramid (blackline master #10)

Background Information:

Oxygen, heat, and fuel are frequently referred to as the "fire triangle." Add in the fourth element, the chemical reaction, and you actually have a fire "tetrahedron," or, having four faces. The important thing to remember is: **take any one of these four things away, and you will not have a fire or the fire will be extinguished.** When firefighters work to put out fires, they try to eliminate at least one of the elements of the fire triangle. Hoses send water onto burning materials; this helps to remove the heat. Cutting down trees and clearing away the wood on the forest floor removes the fuel. And digging moist, rich soil from in the ground and mixing burning ashes with it suffocates the fire and removes oxygen.



Activities:

1. A great visual demonstration of the fire triangle at work can be simply performed in front of the class. With only a **candle, some molding clay, a glass jar and a match**, you can show your students how removing one element of the fire triangle will extinguish a fire.

 - Place the candle in the bottom of the jar, holding it in place with the molding clay. Now light the candle and ask your class to observe.
 - Question your student: "What would happen if I poured water into this jar?" The students should think of it in terms of what element of the fire triangle will that eliminate? If they said adding water to the fire will reduce the heat or remove the oxygen, they are right.
 - Question them about the fuel being used in this demonstration. Do they know that the candle is actually burning wax?
 - Now tell them you are about to put the lid on the jar. Have the students predict what might happen. Will the fire go out right away? Why or why not? What element was removed? (Oxygen).
 - After the demonstration, have the students write in their journals about what they learned or observed in the demonstration.
2. Copy and complete blackline master #9 to solidify the student's understanding of the concepts learned.
3. Blackline master #10 will also be useful for students to make a hands-on representation of the fire triangle.
4. Now that your students know and understand the fire triangle, have them come up with a way to represent their understanding. Allow the students to be creative and to make their representation interesting. They may wish to do a short speech, a poem, a drawing, a rap, a journal entry, a diagram...

Useful Web Links

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/>

This link provides you with access to the BC Ministry of Education's K-12 Curriculum and learning resources page. From here, one is able to access all of the IRP's created by the Ministry of Education.

<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/protect/>

This link allows you to access the Ministry of Forests' Protection Branch homepage. From here, a wealth of information is available on the current wildfire situation, planning a "fire smart" community, information on firefighting and becoming a firefighter, weather and excellent maps of the province related to wildfire.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/indepth/fightingfires/>

This address links you directly to a special CBC indepth report on fighting fires in Canada. All of the information is current and Canadian. This site provides you with many excellent news stories, including: "The Tools", "The People", "The Ecological Benefits" and "Consequences of Climate". In addition to great access to relevant external links, this site allows you to enter the CBC archives and a special "for teachers" section.

<http://www.smokeybear.com>

This is an excellent site for children and teachers. An extremely user-friendly site, Smokeybear.com is divided into three sections. In the "Smokey Kids" section, one can play games, read stories, and learn interesting bear facts. In the "Only You" section, visitors are invited to discover the science of wildfire, how to fight wildfire, how to prevent wildfires, and to consider the positive and negative impacts of fire on the land. Any finally, Smokey's Vault allows you access to the history and development of the Smokey the bear public awareness campaign.

http://www.nrcan-rncan.gc.ca/cfs-scf/science/prodserv/firereport/firereport_e.html

Great resource from the Canadian Forest Service for graphing – access to many wonderful fire related graphs.

<http://www.landscapesmag.com/common/movie.cfm>

This link allows you access to the FORED BC website "Bringing the Environment to the Classroom". From here, one is able to choose from the following: FOR Students, FOR Teachers or FOR Everyone. Additionally, there are a variety of forest fire related articles in past issues of FORED's internationally award-winning magazine, Landscapes, such as the link:

<http://www.landscapesmag.com/landscapes/pdf/landscapes-volxiii.pdf>
(pages one and 14)