



STAFF REPORT

To: Electoral Area Services Committee

Date: 2025-02-13

From: Tarina Colledge, Manager of Emergency Management

Subject: Evacuation Route Guide – Electoral Area E

Reviewed by: Graham Daneluz, Director of Planning & Development
Kelly Lownsbrough, Director of Corporate Services & CFO
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RECOMMENDATION

This report is being brought forward for the Board's information and there is no staff recommendation.

BACKGROUND

FVRD has a statutory responsibility for emergency management planning, declaring States of Local Emergency, and issuing evacuation alerts and orders when necessary to protect public safety. The Province of BC makes grants for evacuation planning available through the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) for evacuation route planning. This grant stream cannot be used to fund operations, signage installations, creation of roads, or implementation of new services. The scope of the grant is very specific and may be used solely for the purpose of planning.

Evacuation planning in electoral areas is unique when compared to municipal evacuation route planning where the municipality owns and manages most roads, operates public works with traffic control, has direct reporting relationships with first responder services, and also controls route signage. Comparatively, regional districts are structured with complexities and overlapping authorities. Some of our settled communities have singular egress. All roads in electoral areas are either the jurisdiction of the Province or are private roads. Many communities were settled before the existence of regional districts, and in advance of regional districts having a role in subdivision approval. In many cases, electoral area evacuation planning takes a point-in-time snapshot state of the land and resources with an aim to understand it and more readily inform specific evacuation orders and the public warning messaging at the time of their creation.

The Board approved an application to the UBCM in the 2023 grant year to create an evacuation route guide for Electoral Area E – Chilliwack River Valley.

DISCUSSION

The Electoral Area E evacuation route guide is now complete. Staff worked with Beacon Design Collective and Torpy Consulting on the creation of this guide. The guide provides mapped evacuation zones of the routes that could be considered for use during evacuations and a myriad of other information to enable successful implementation of evacuation orders. As a general rule, evacuation **plans are not 'plans' in and of themselves, but a suite of information** that enables incident-specific evacuation orders within an Emergency Operations centre and/or tactical evacuation.

The guide presents information that is relevant to 4 key audiences in the following ways:

FOR EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTRE (EOC) STAFF

- increases situational awareness and operational readiness for EOC staff
- assists in developing operational evacuation plans by quickly identifying places and populations, primary and secondary evacuation routes, first responder access, and potential emergency sites.
- describes the jurisdiction, responsibilities, and resources of the various entities on the landscape and how to communicate and coordinate with each other during emergencies.
- General evacuation complexities are noted for Area E, as well as specific complexities for each potential zone.

FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

- Supports landscape-based situational awareness to inform tactical plans during incidents and emergencies.
- describes jurisdiction, responsibilities, and resources of various entities on the landscape, including potential emergency sites.
- Places, population, evacuation complexities, and evacuation routes are listed within.
- outlines communication across entities, how to receive information from the EOC, how to provide intelligence to the EOC, and how to request incident site support from the EOC.

FOR PARTNERS ON THE LANDSCAPE

- Partners on the landscape include local authorities, agency authorities, response agencies, and community and institutional groups.
- provides vital situational awareness to partners, including how to coordinate, communicate, receive information from, and provide intelligence to the EOC.
- outlines jurisdictions, responsibilities, and resources of various entities on the landscape, and how to request site support during emergencies.
- Partners on the landscape can increase their effectiveness and resilience during emergencies by increasing their own levels of preparedness and operational readiness.

FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

- Combining the Community Profiles section of the Emergency Preparedness workbook, Emergency Management Plan, the Hazard Report, and evacuation guides together help FVRD residents have a clearer understanding of their hazard context, their situation during emergencies, how to receive evacuation notices and information from the FVRD, how to evacuate from their home or work, and the necessity to be prepared and self sufficient for up to 14 days during an emergency.
- **An individual's resilience to an emergency is directly related to their level of preparation.**

COST

This \$30,000 project was funded by a 2023 BC government funded UBCM Community Emergency Preparedness Fund Grant.

CONCLUSION

This guide will be added to the FVRD Emergency Management website documents library following in the coming days. Staff will begin work on the next grant funded evacuation route guide: Hemlock Valley and a Master Guide (general information & templates) applicable to this and all future guides that carries throughout all electoral areas) that will be designed to match the emergency management document series.