

# Grand Forks Flood 2018

## Unusual Weather Conditions

In the first half of 2018, the Boundary area experienced:

- **Extremely heavy snow loads**—snow pack peaked at 230% of normal levels
- **A later than normal spring**—snow melt normally starts in mid-April but in 2018 was delayed until mid-May
- **A spell of hot weather**—April temperatures were 1-2°C degrees below normal and changed to 5-10°C above normal in the first two weeks of May
- **Heavy rains**—rain accumulation ranged from 25-43 mm from May 8-11

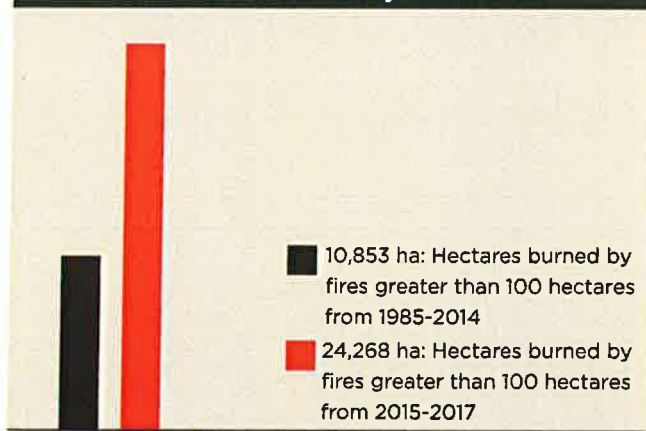
This combination of weather conditions was the main factor in the flooding of Grand Forks in May 2018.

### More information on the unusual weather conditions:

- Chantal McCartin, Climatologist, Environment & Climate Change Canada, summarized the weather conditions well on *The Early Edition* on Dec. 20 (listen from 1:22:43 to 1:24:21): <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/shows/the-early-edition/episode/15652035>.
- The Canadian government summarizes the weather conditions well as part of its "Canada's Top 10 Weather Stories of 2018": <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/top-ten-weather-stories/2018.html#toc5>.

## Wildfires on the Land Base

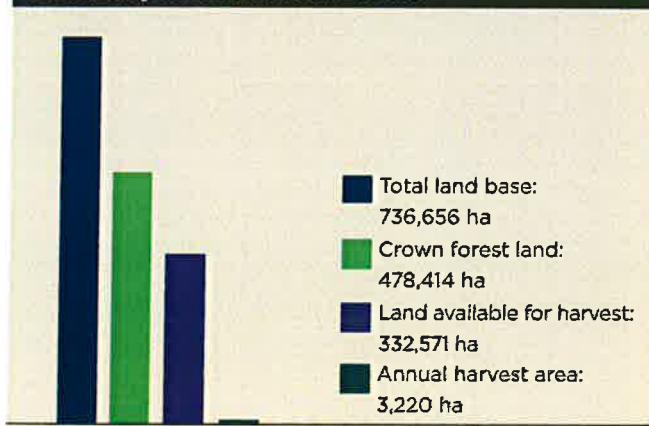
### Wildfires in the Kettle Valley Watershed



- The impact of wildfires on the land base has been significant in the last three years.
- More than twice the number of hectares burned in 2015-2017 wildfires than burned in the previous 30 years.
- The charred forests, devoid of vegetation from last summer's wildland fires, were especially vulnerable to flash flooding, mudslides, and debris flows.

## Forestry on the Land Base

### Boundary Area Harvest Levels



- Within the Boundary area, the annual harvest area is less than 1% of the land available for harvest.
- The number of trees logged year-over-year in the Boundary area does not vary significantly.
- Local forest managers and the provincial government are working together to do a cumulative effects assessment of the Kettle Valley watershed.
- As part of this assessment, a professional hydrologist will interpret risk and make recommendations.



# FORESTRY FACTS

## FOREST INDUSTRY & WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT

The forest industry helps reduce the risk of and fight wildfires by:

- Logging high hazard fuel types such as insect damaged wood and trees within the wildland-urban interface
- Building and maintaining logging roads that firefighters use to access fires quickly
- Designing layouts and building fire breaks when wildfires occur
- Contributing industrial forestry equipment and operators to fight fires
- Being first on the scene—often forestry workers are the first responders who get wildfires under control when they are still small

## SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT IN BC

- BC is a global leader in sustainable forest management and has more certified forest land than any other jurisdiction other than Canada as a whole.
- Our forest professionals use tools such as wildlife tree patches, partial cuts and riparian reserves to manage forests for biodiversity.
- 15% of BC's land base is in provincial and federal parks and protected areas, 23% of BC's land base is available for harvesting.
- The amount of recognized protected land in BC has more than doubled since the early 1990s.

## FORESTRY'S LOCAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

- **The Boundary area mills**—Interfor's Grand Forks Division and Vaagen Fibre Canada—**create over 450 jobs.** Between both mills and their woodlands, there are 195 employees and approximately 257 contractors.
- \$442 million in labour income is earned by the Kootenay forest industry.
- More than 6,800 jobs—direct and indirect—are created or supported by the Kootenay forest industry. **That's 10% of the entire Kootenay workforce.**

## QUESTIONS?

If you have questions about this fact sheet, please contact us:

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## LEARN MORE

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Council of Forest Industries  
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