



building communities together

2021 Business Plan Barlow Creek Fire Protection (1330)

Stuart Larson, Manager of Protective Services

Working in partnership with communities large and small to offer local, sub-regional, and regional services to ensure that the Cariboo Chilcotin is a socially, economically, and environmentally desirable region.

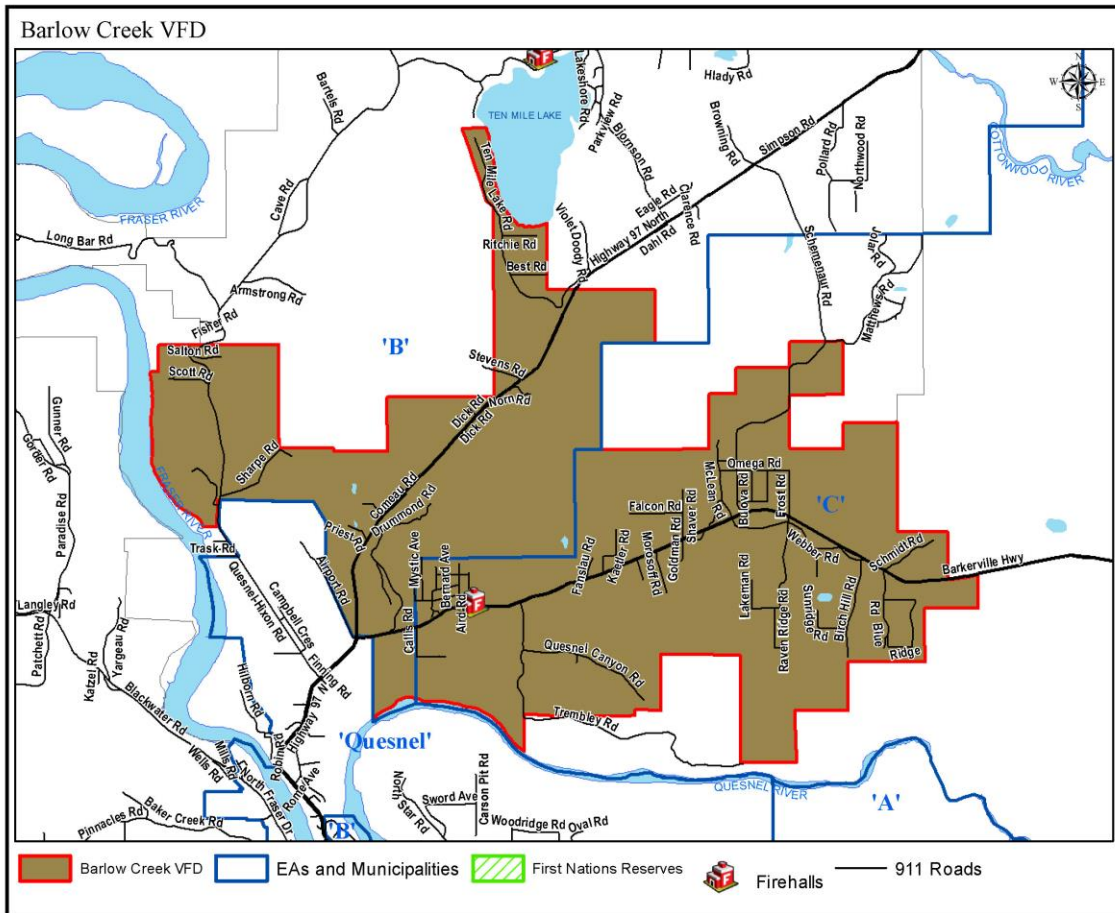
Department/Function Services



The Barlow Creek Volunteer Fire Department, authorized by Bylaw No. 2339 (1989), was established as a function of the Cariboo Regional District in 1987 by means of a referendum assented to by the property owners within the local service area. Barlow Creek Fire Protection was amended in 1998 by Bylaw No. 3375. Barlow Creek Fire Protection is funded by means of a tax rate applied against the assessed value of improvements only and a parcel tax rate of \$25. The maximum requisition for this function is the greater of \$78,000 or a tax rate of \$2.55/\$1,000 of assessed value.

The Barlow Creek Volunteer Fire Department provides fire protection and suppression services only, within their specified area.

As the Director for Electoral Area C is the only stakeholder, and because the *Local Government Act* requires more than one vote, the entire Board is responsible for the governance of this service.



Business Plan Goals, Rationale & Strategies

2021 Regional Goals

1. **Goal:** Ensure compliance with OH&S.
Rationale: In light of the Jolley report, several issues need to be rectified, including, but not limited to, OH&S inspections, PPE, and operations.
Strategy: Use operational funds and support organizational change with Protective Services staff.

2. **Goal:** Records Information Management System (RIMS).
Rationale: Staff will work with VFD personnel to implement and maintain records management for all fire department documents as per mandated requirements.
Strategy: Staff to sync FDM with Laserfische for all records to be submitted to the RIMS at the main CRD office, and to ensure proper records are being updated and maintained.

3. **Goal:** Purchase turnout gear and PPE.
Rationale: Ensure all members have NFPA compliant Personal Protective Equipment, keeping within the 10-year lifespan. Plan on purchasing two new sets each year.
Strategy: Use operational funds.
4. **Goal:** Ensure training plans are in accordance with core service(s).
Rationale: Training must reflect the primary functions listed within the Fire Services Bylaw. Exterior operations certification will be the sole focus for membership. Leadership training will be developed and delivered by CRD staff.
Strategy: Use operational funds and internal resources to achieve success.

2021 Barlow Creek VFD Specific Goals

5. **Goal:** Receive and train on new engine.
Rationale: Engine was ordered in 2020 and will be received in the first quarter of 2021. Department members will need to be trained on use as well as tactics and strategies as this engine will require standard departmental procedures to change.
Strategy: Support with Protective Services staff.
6. **Goal:** Increase Required Training for VFD members.
Rationale: Due to newly appointed officers and a new Chief, members will need to receive additional training for their roles, adding additional costs for travel and instruction.
Strategy: Support with Protective Services staff.

Significant Issues & Trends

Issues: Recruitment and Retention; Proper Monitoring for Compliance; and Building Capital Reserves.

The sustainability of small volunteer departments is being challenged not only by rapidly increasing legislative requirements and related costs but all the increasing administrative demands which accompany these requirements. The 2020 audit of the internal operations of the VFD will allow staff and the Board to review the findings and prepare a strategy to ensure the department has the tools and support necessary to provide this service for the community in the safest and most cost-effective manner while adhering to all mandated regulations and policies.

- **Recruitment:** The CRD will be administering a regional recruitment campaign in 2021 to educate the residents in all CRD fire protection areas on what is required of a volunteer fire department, the financial impacts of not having this service, the money saved in reduction of fire insurance for residences.

- **Proper Monitoring of Fire Departments:** Fire departments must be monitored to ensure compliance of WorkSafe, NFPA/ULC, CRD policies and Operational Guidelines. CRD staff will engage in person with departments to ensure compliance, reduce administrative burden, and promote fiscal responsibility.
- **Build Capital Reserves:** With the continual strain on current budgets, all CRD VFDs are struggling to maintain acceptable capital reserves. Staff must investigate options and ensure capital reserve yearly contributions are being maintained. This will include the disposal of unnecessary equipment.