

Navigating Recovery in BC: A Guide for Emergency Managers



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Recovery Advice from the Field

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Survive-t Disaster Preparedness

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Executive Director
Community Futures BC

Mark Phillips

Director of Protective Services
SLRD

What Guides Recovery in BC?



**The
Emergency
and Disaster
Management
Act (EDMA)**



**The Disaster
Guide for Local
Authorities and
First Nations**



**The
Provincial
Disaster
Recovery
Framework**

EDMA

**3. Ability to Declare a
“State of Local
Recovery”**

**1. Now a Required Part
of the Emergency
Management Program**

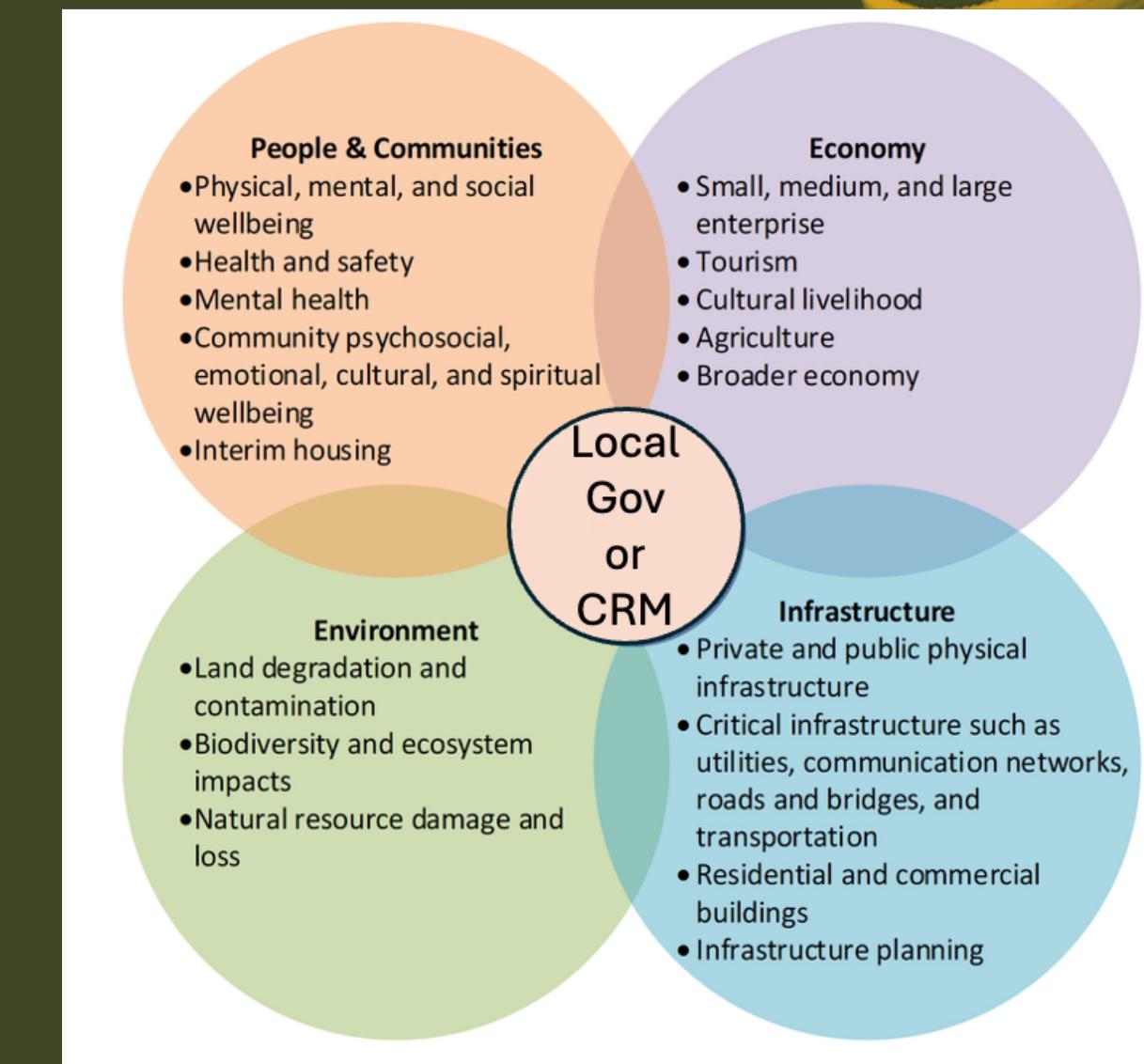
**4. Recovery is
Comprehensive**

**2. Requirement to Plan
for Recovery**

**5. Coordination
Requirements during
Recovery**

Recovery Guide for Local Authorities and First Nations

- Divides recovery into sectors
- Sectors are a method of analysis to divide up recovery efforts
- Provincial level mirrors the local level
- Community led, provincially supported
- EMCR helps coordinate





“Recovery must be led by community. This is the only way a region or community can truly become resilient.”

– Jennifer Wetmore, Executive Director
Community Futures BC

Recovery Frameworks

“Recovery is not just a technical or financial process; it is deeply human and cultural. Engaging Elders, families, and youth created a sense of ownership and direction that government-driven frameworks could not provide.”

- Jenna Noppen, Disaster Recovery Manager
Sumas First Nation



Who does what
in Recovery?

* The Role of Local Government

- Advocate on behalf of the community
- Coordinate information and services
- Build a recovery team
- Facilitate recovery tables (Provincial, private, economic, environmental)
- Complete a Post-disaster needs assessment.
- Develop a recovery plan
- Understand the needs, then pursue the funding
- Resilience/Recovery Centres/Unmet Needs Committees



“No one is coming to do this for you. You’ll need to be the one guiding, convening, and pushing forward—even in areas outside your direct authority.”

— Mark Phillips, SLRD

Local Government

“I wish I had better understood the gap between government and community; on the one hand, the province is under capacity and needs to be efficient so they can't effectively support communities on a granular level. On the other side, communities generally aren't aware or don't believe that they can take the lead in their own recoveries.”

— Deb Borsos, Provincial and Local Recovery Specialist



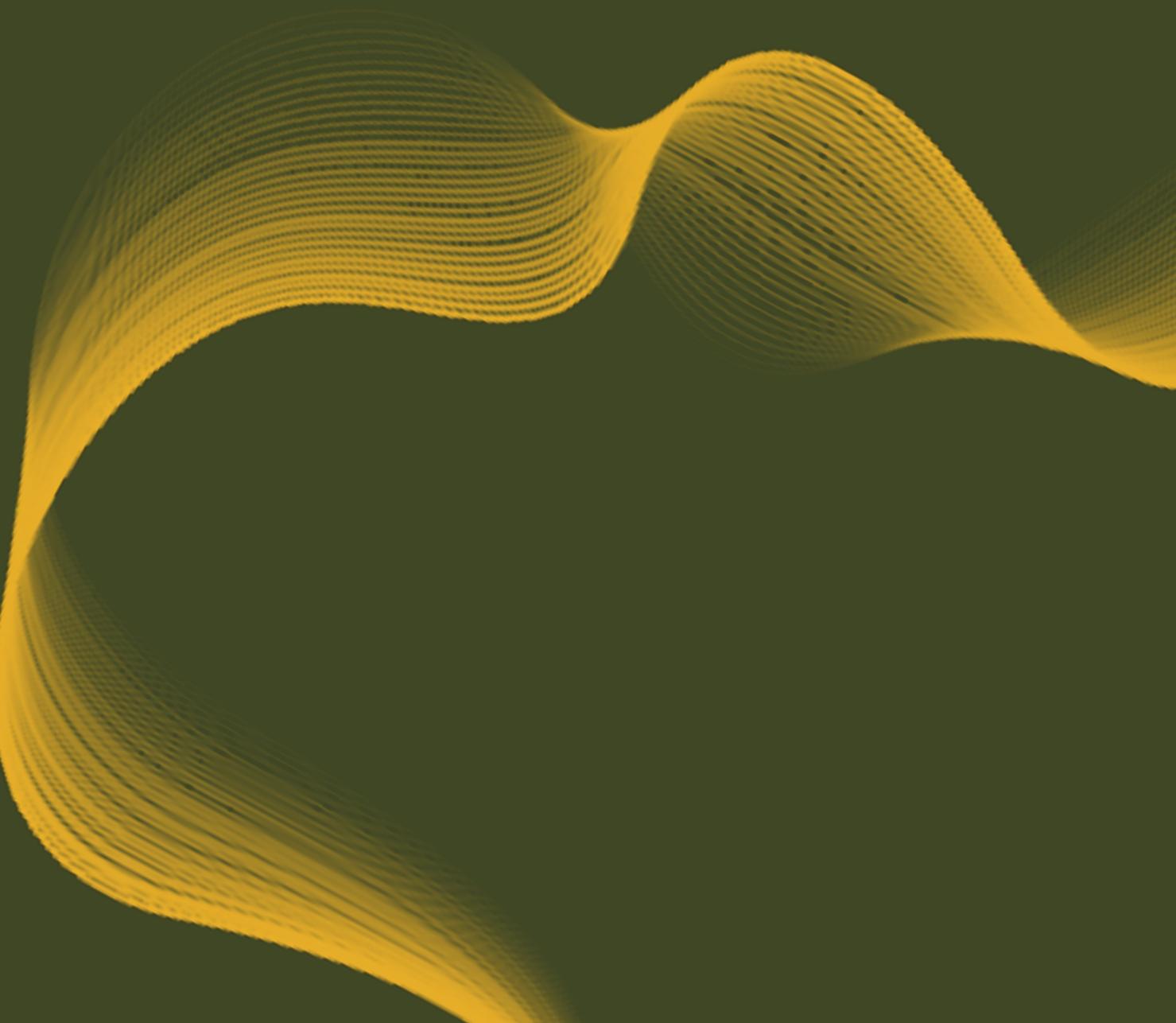
Supporting Partners

- Local Government
- Provincial Ministries (EMCR, JEG, FOR, MOTT, WLRS, etc.)
- Community Recovery Manager
- Federal Agencies (ISC)
- Business Associations / Chamber of Commerce
- Tourism Associations
- Non-profits (Red Cross, United Way, Samaritans Purse, etc.)
- Local community service providers
- Volunteer community groups
- Residents

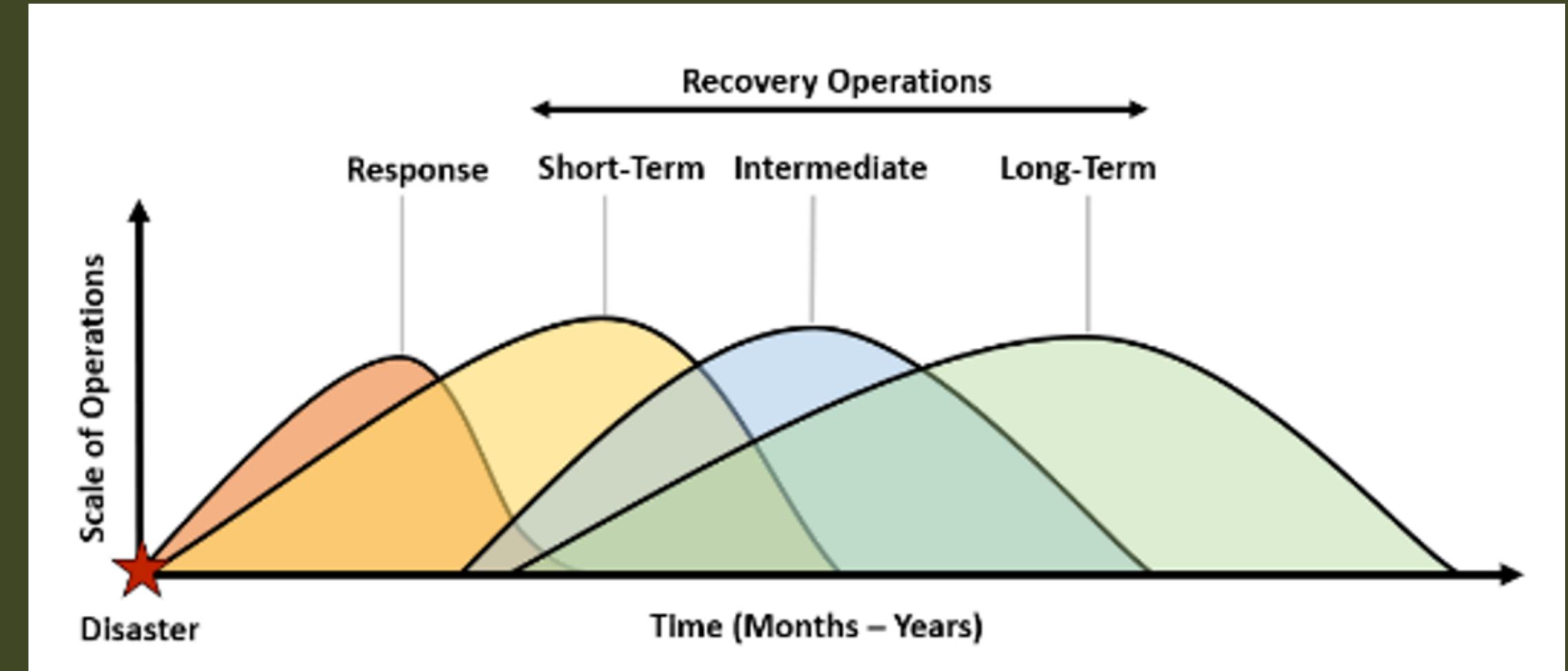
Supporting Partners

“Build relationships now - before the event. Know your partners, your community and your neighbours, and understand their capacity and the community structure. When recovery hits, you don’t have time to start from scratch.”

- Jackie Kloosterbour, Survive-it Disaster Preparedness



Recovery Timeline



✓ Short-Term Recovery (0-8 weeks)

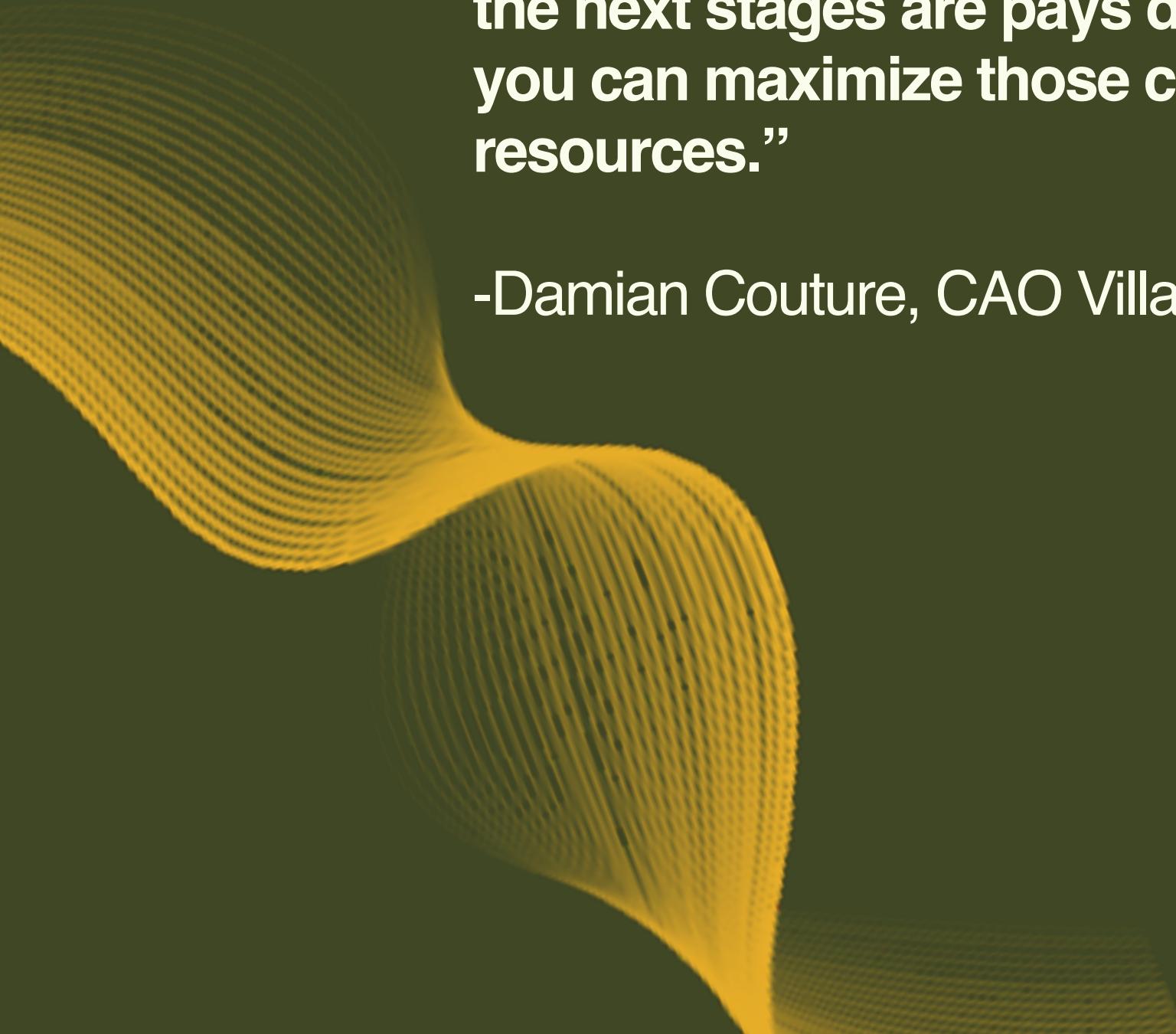
- Conduct RDA and PDNA
- Restore Essential Services
- Support displaced residents
- Provide mental health supports
- Initiate recovery coordination calls

✓ Medium-Term Recovery (2-12 months)

- Develop a recovery plan
- Hire a community recovery manager
- Support economic recovery
- Advance environmental recovery
- Begin repairs to infrastructure
- Provide community engagement opportunities

✓ Long-Term Recovery (1+ Years)

- Major infrastructure projects
- Permanently rebuild damaged housing
- Review and update bylaws and policies
- Advance economic diversification
- Complete environmental restoration



“Think about recovery as soon as response starts. During response “the work” is more straightforward. People are engaged, you have the attention of the world, you have extraordinary powers. Things get done. Then the dust settles and you have a long process ahead of you... having that foresight into what the next stages are pays dividends because you can maximize those convergent resources.”

-Damian Couture, CAO Village of Cache Creek

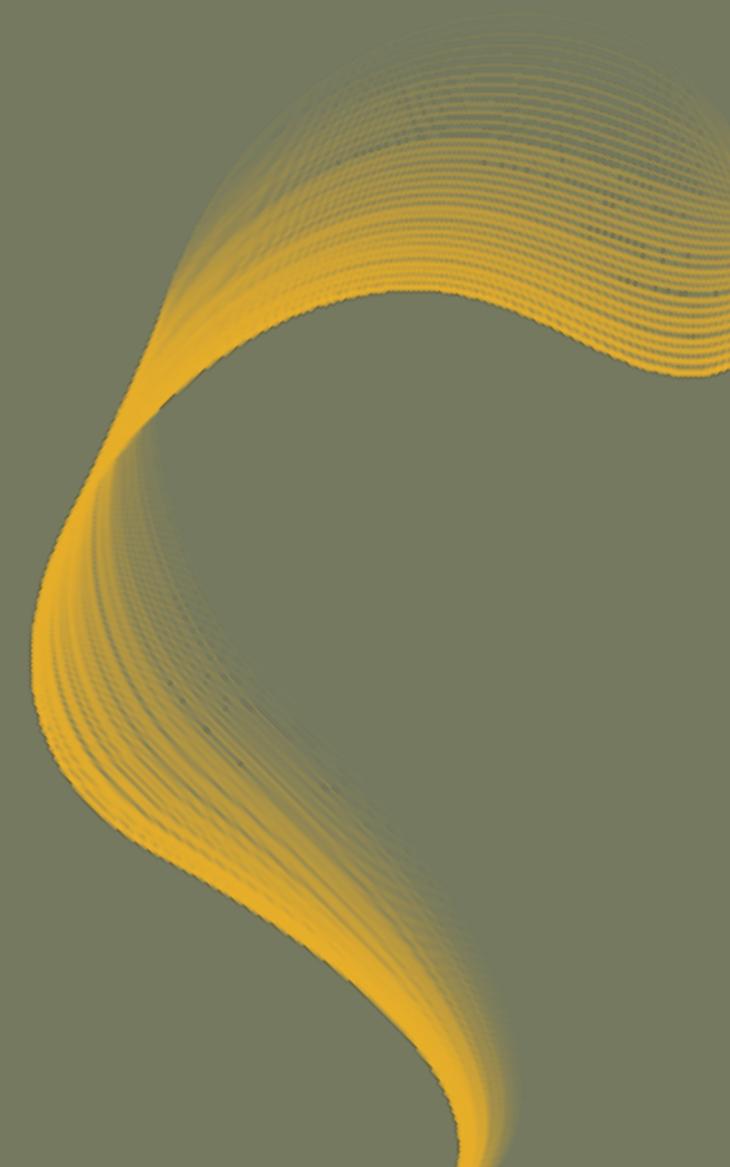
Recovery Timelines

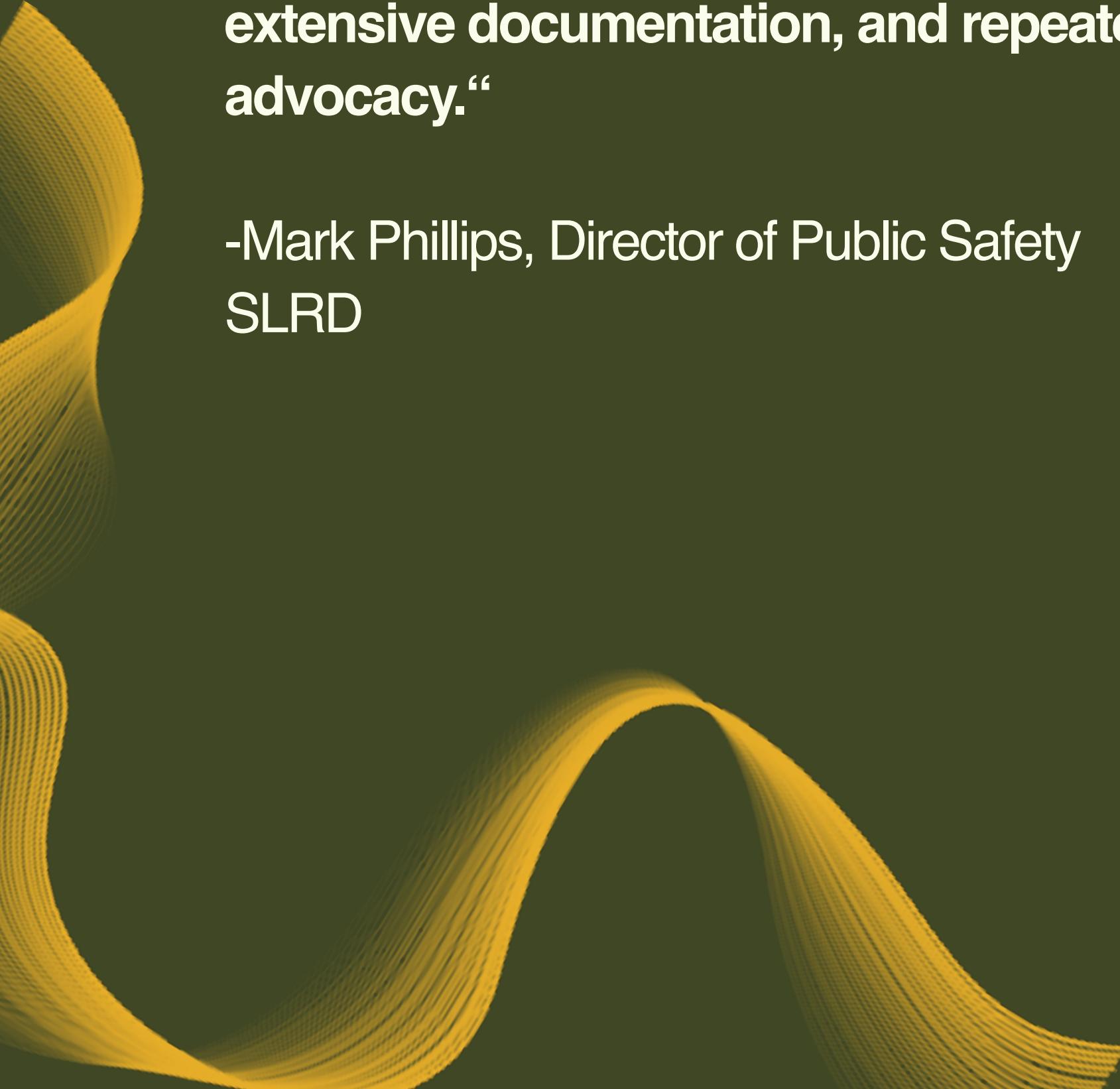
“People assume the hardest part is the first 48 hours. It’s not always the case, sometimes it’s the weeks after, when fatigue, frustration, and the emotional toll set in.”

-Jackie Kloosterboer, Survive-It
Disaster Preparedness

Funding Streams

- ✓ **Expenditure Authorization Forms (EAFs)**
- ✓ **Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA)**
- ✓ **Local Authority Initiatives**
- ✓ **Tourism Associations**
- ✓ **Mitigation Programs (DMAF/DRIF)**
- ✓ **Local and Provincial NGO Initiatives**
- ✓ **Private Donations**





“Even when impacts and needs were obvious, securing resources required extensive documentation, and repeated advocacy.“

-Mark Phillips, Director of Public Safety
SLRD

Funding Streams

“No person at the province wants to say no to your funding request... (but) they are bound by rules and regulations. Do your homework and make it easy for them to say yes. There is often a way to get to a mutually beneficial solution.“

-Damian Couture, CAO Village of Cache Creek

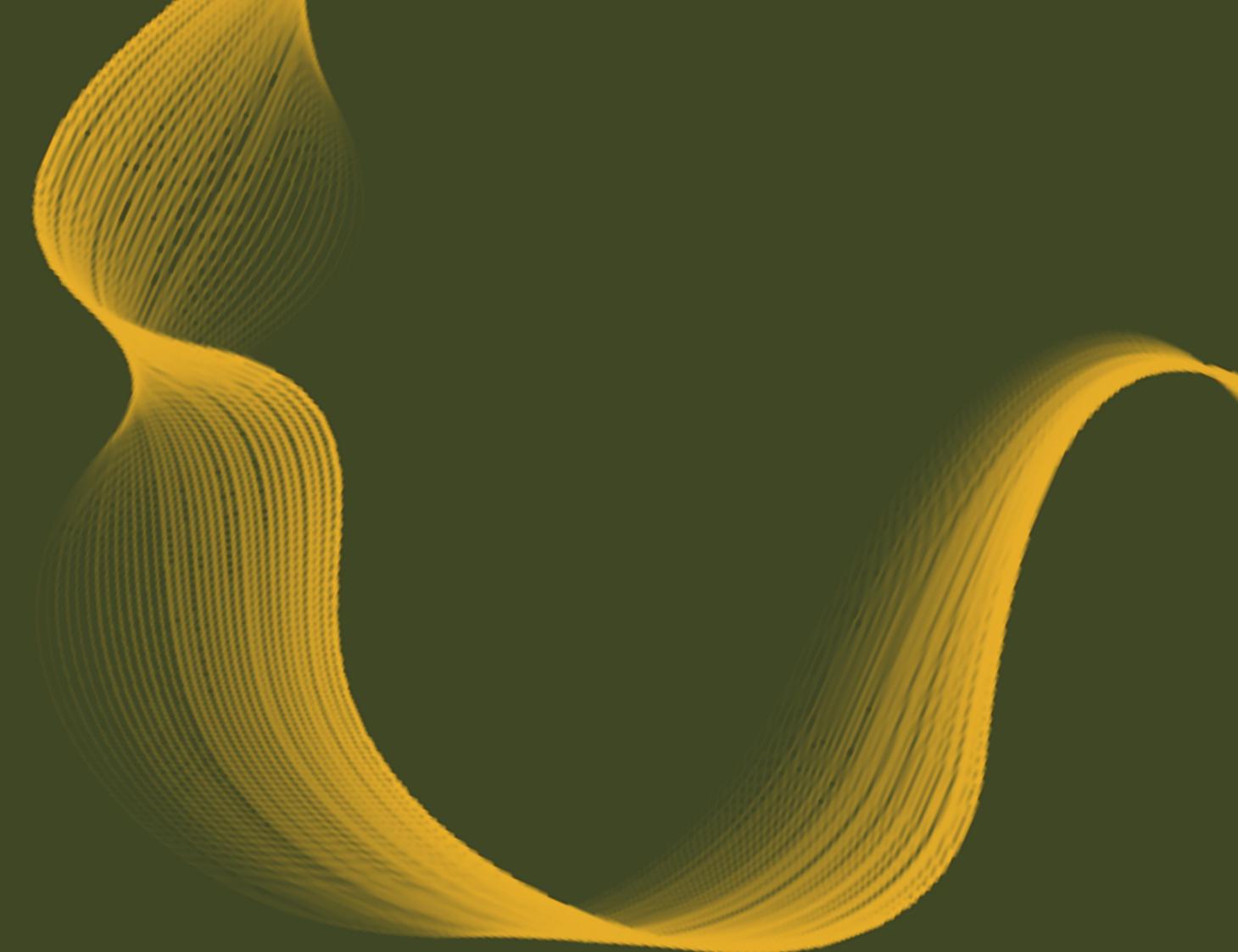
Common Recovery Pitfalls

**Waiting too long
to start**

**Not involving the
community early or deeply
enough**

**Underestimating
emotional fatigue**

**Unrealistic expectations re:
funding or timelines**



“I wish I had known how much the recovery process would test our patience, capacity, and cultural safety. A lack of cultural humility led to repeated breakdowns in communication and trust.”

-Jenna Noppen, Disaster Recovery Manager Sumas First Nation

Common Pitfalls

“I’m still amazed how many people are unprepared, have no insurance or plan—and believe someone will replace everything they lost. For example, DFA is poorly understood in this Province. Managing those expectations took months.”

— Chris Marsh, Recovery Manager Grand Forks 2018

Advice for Emergency Managers

1. Stand up your recovery team immediately
2. Hire external contractors thoughtfully
3. Be honest, transparent, and compassionate with the public
4. Set up strong communications from Day 1, it builds trust
5. You'll need creative solutions, humor, and support
6. Plan ahead: undertake pre-recovery planning
7. Build relationships now, who is already working within your community?
8. Be tenacious, be persistent, and be kind

Thank You!



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