BRC CONFERENCE 2025 – BUILDING BRIDGES

November 25-28, 2025

PROGRAM SESSION DETAILS

Tuesday November 25, 2025

9:00–Salon B Business Continuity Training
Clive Lunn

This full-day workshop will give you access to essential materials to assist you in developing a tailored business continuity program for your local government. You will learn how to measure impact and plan for a crisis as well as being guided to create an operational roadmap for continuity

9:00 –Salon C Wellness Centered Emergency Management Training – Cultivating Safe Spaces
Kayla Pepper & Ian Foss

Wellness Centered Emergency Management Facilitators: Kayla Pepper, and Ian Foss Session Description: Introduces participants to the transformative Cultivating Safe Spaces (CSS) Framework developed by Naqsmist Storytellers Inc. This trauma-informed, transformational leadership framework equips emergency management professionals with practical tools to foster emotional safety, connection, and stress resilience—both within emergency programs and among those they serve. Wellness. This session bridges the gap between traditional emergency management approaches and innovative, wellness-centred strategies—transforming how we lead ourselves and others through emergencies of any scale.

9:00 –Room 6 Emergency Operations Centre Practical Training- EOC Skills and Tools pt 1
Steve Newton

Steve Newton will deliver this comprehensive workshop on the EOC Planning Section. Steve has worked in the various functional elements of the Planning function at both the tactical and strategic levels. A major component of this workshop will address the Planning Sections' role to coordinate EOC management by objectives, and he will present on the use of status reports and the EOC Action Plan.
Steve will be introducing the use of the ICS concept of PPOST (Priorities, Problems, Objectives,Strategies and Tactics) in the context of an EOC's transition from response to recovery planning and operations. Other emphasis will be Steve's discussion regarding pre-planning and re-entry planning for evacuations and the implementation of Declarations of State of Local Emergency under the Emergency Disaster Management Act to acquire extraordinary authority in crises. He will guide a discussion on Advance Planning using a process developed in the course of EOC operations. He will also present additional workshop topics including critical infrastructure assurance, components of a good situation map, the Situation Unit and documentation management best practices.

10:00 – Offsite Meet at the SOEC. **Community Recovery & Experience Tour**

What is a trip to the Okanagan without a trip through the Wine Country , to visit some of the Award-winning wineries? We will share stories of the floods, fires, heat domes, and cold snaps and how it has impacted this region. We have some amazing story tellers, who will share with you their journey through these emergencies and the recovery experience. Learn from some of the innovators within the region about their adaptations from water conservation and wetland rehabilitation to energy production. Enlighten all your senses while you not only see the impact to this region, but you can also taste and feel it too. **Pick up from the SEOC.**
Guided by Anne Benn

13:00 – Rooms 1-7 **Emergency Operations Centre Practical Training- EOC Skills and Tools** pt 2
EOC Operations Section (with Kevin Skrepnek)
EOC Finance & Logistics (with Sandy Miller)
EOC Director (with Greg Solecki)
EOC Information & Liaison (with Ben Morgan)

Team Exercise EOC participants are placed into five cohorts to run through a scenario exercise, providing them with a safe and fun space to practice with the tools and insights of the morning focus sessions.

13:00 – Salon C **Wellness Centered Emergency Management Training**
Sybille Sanderson

Re-Energizing an Exhausted EOC Team and Reducing Burnout Facilitator: Sybille Sanderson Session Description: Exhaustion and burnout are both physical and mental. Ideally we come into the EOC prepared for the long hours, challenging circumstances and decision-making. With climate change, we often do not get time to ramp up or recover. EOC responses and recovery operations can turn into weeks, months and maybe even years. What can we do to reduce burnout and re-energize ourselves and our EOC teams? This workshop demonstrates a variety of techniques for re-energizing our mental and physical systems and dealing with challenging issues in the moment to learn and experience practical ways to deal with the struggles of long hours dealing with challenging situations. The workshop will combine Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT Tapping) and Donna Eden Energy Medicine exercises. Participants will experience at least 5 different techniques to re-energize and process challenging issues to encourage better decision-making.

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 26

8:00 – Room 1 **Emergency Management Navigator: Your Conference Compass**

New to emergency management or just looking to make the most of your time here? This open forum is your opportunity to ask questions, get oriented, and connect. Whether you're curious about an acronym, exploring, career paths, or hoping to meet someone with specific expertise, this is your starting point for navigating both the profession and the conference with confidence.

8:30 – Salon A **Welcoming and Opening Sessions**
Edward Matley, Honorable Kelly Greene, Mayor of Penticton

9:10 – Salon A **Role of Witness in Indigenous Engagement Case Studies for Iterative Initiatives, Reflective Practices and Place-based Storytelling**
Cari McIntyre, Dean Seal, Jalissa Moody, Makaila Wenezenski, Robyn Holme

This session delves into collaborative resilience planning with K'ómoks First Nation, focusing on two pivotal case studies: the Coastal Flood Adaptation Strategy and the Regional Community Wildfire Resilience Plan. These initiatives highlight how the process of witnessing can meaningfully disrupt long held policy-driven practices and create makespace for iterative strategies, reflective dialogue and shared un/learning. Witnessing serves not only as a cultural practice but also as a form of objective storytelling. By observing and sharing experiences, witnessing fosters mutual understanding around a collective narrative.

10:30 – Room 6 Building Your Relationships Now, Before you Need Them.

Ian Briscoe

In the aftermath of the 2024 wildfire season, the Regional District of Central Kootenay undertook a coordinated community recovery effort to support impacted residents and rebuild local capacity. As the designated Community Recovery Manager, I was responsible for facilitating this work and engaging with a wide range of provincial agencies, non-profit organizations, and community partners. Through this experience, it became clear that many of the relationships most critical to effective recovery were only formed after the emergency response had ended. The absence of pre-established interagency and cross-sector connections led to delays, information gaps, and additional strain on already impacted communities. This presentation will explore the importance of proactive relationship-building in emergency management, with an emphasis on the distinction between personal and organizational connections. Using this recovery experience as a case study, I will discuss the risks of relying solely on individual relationships, and the value of embedding interagency collaboration within organizational systems and culture.

10:30 – Room 6. Provide for Health and Safety of Responders, Are we?

Cam Challenger, Paul Berry

Goal number 1. Provide for the Health and Safety of Responders.

Morally, ethically we must do this…and legally.

Are you using Public Works staff to operate in the community immediately after a disaster? Are you using administration staff who normally working in an office for RDAs? Is your fire dept responding to a disaster they have not trained for? Are your people responding to the EOC/IC/office during an emergency…have you done a risk assessment for their travel?

Do they have the right training/certificate? Do they have the right experience in this uncommon event? Do they have the right equipment for the tasks they are being asked to do?

Do we have an appropriate rescue and medical team on standby as required in the regulations?

Just because it is an emergency or disaster does not mean our legal reasonability is negated. A DSOLE offers an opportunity to access more powers and options, it doesn't take away or pause OHS regulation.

In this presentation we will explore and open with you, some of the requirements in legislation that must be met in an emergency and disaster that we find are forgotten and/or not widely known to meet goal number 1.

What will you take away.

1) Greater understanding of the right training, experience and equipment matrix needed for ALL staff working in an emergency or disaster.

2) Requirement of Hazard Assessments before ANY task in an emergency response

3) Exploration of legal requirements of a any worker, supervisor and employer during an disaster or emergency.

10:30 – Salon C Haisla Nation Firehall: Culture, Collaboration and Community Resilience

Robert Grant

Haisla Nation Volunteer Firehall: Culture, Collaboration, and Community Resilience With over 65 years of service, the Haisla Nation Volunteer Firehall is evolving to meet modern emergency response challenges while staying rooted in Haisla culture and values. Through strategic partnerships, updated training, and community-led initiatives, the firehall is building a culturally grounded, resilient response system. By embracing vulnerability and collaboration—such as the pivotal partnership with Kitimat Fire Department—the firehall has grown into a trusted and capable force, launching programs like FireSmart and contributing to regional projects like tsunami modeling. This story is a testament to leadership, humility, and the power of relationships in keeping our people safe.

10:30 – Salon A Business Impact Analysis (BIA)

Greg Solecki

Enter the world of business impact analysis (BIA), and learn how important this element is to the functional requirements phase of the business continuity management program. Emphasizing class participation and utilizing team ideas, you'll learn to plan and successfully conduct a Business Impact Analysis project. Topics include the business continuity management program and a proven planning methodology.

10:30 – Room 1 Navigating Recovery in BC: A Guide for Emergency Managers

Jaya Bremer

Recovery is one of the most complex and misunderstood phases of emergency management—and for many local authorities in BC, it remains unfamiliar territory. This session offers attendees a practical introduction to community-led disaster recovery. With a focus on rural communities and drawing on real lessons from recent flood and wildfire events across the province, participants will explore what recovery really entails. The session will cover key early decisions, common challenges to anticipate, and how to navigate provincial systems, and access available supports. Whether your community is planning ahead or has never faced a major event, this session will leave you with a better understanding of what to expect, what questions to ask, and how to ensure a recovery that is community-centered and fulsome.

11:20 – Salon A Communication Complexity Through Documentary Film

Trevor Bennett

Communicating complex stories and perspectives through collaborative filmmaking approaches that engage stakeholders, and encourage knowledge transfer. Explored through case studies: Communicating risk through film, Showcasing Indigenous perspectives, and Filmmaking as research in emergency medicine.

11:20 – Salon B Evidence-based, Best Practices for Building Resilience & Psychosocial Support for Wildfire Response

Laurie Pearce, John Hill

This presentation will integrate the findings from over 60 peer-reviewed articles and books with hands-on clinical experience from supporting responders to wildfires in Canada. This presentation will build bridges between the findings from first hand/direct clinical experience with front-line firefighters and Emergency Operations Centre staff and research-based best practices to support wildfire response in Canada. Climate change has brought about historical increases in wildfires and as a result deployments have been longer and more often and the mental health toll on leaders and responders has also increased. John Hill brings to this presentation over 40 years of direct experience in fire-fighting and Laurie Pearce brings over 25 years in disaster response. Through directly working with responders these presenters have developed a comprehensive approach to optimize resilience and support for responders and managers. Findings will focus on the value of building resilience through training, the development of competency-based peer support programs, and the provision of on-the-ground and embedded clinical supports. Psychosocial support begins at the time of hiring, continues through pre-season preparedness, direct response, and post-deployment impacts. Fighting wildfires is dangerous and although the physical safety of responders is paramount, nevertheless, as experience has shown, tragedies occur and have devastating impacts on all response personnel and leaders. Having clinical support for these incidents is crucial to minimizing the negative impacts.

11:20 – Room 6 Fostering Resilience In Our Communities: envisioning the future, mentoring young professionals

Michael Moore

Training and building trust with youth and families, through the youth. Engaging youth training and opportunities to create confidence and cohesiveness. Giving way to succession planning long term, as well as developing pride in our community.

11:20 – Room 1 Local governments Perspective on BCP

Discussion based session moderated by Neha Nat

11:20 – Salon C Rural Realities: readiness, response, recovery, and resilience in the Venables Valley

Kevin Skrepnek, Mike Knauff, Dale Kronebusch

In July 2024, the Shetland Creek wildfire descended on the Venables Valley, a small community between Ashcroft and Spences Bridge in BC's southern interior. Staff from the Thompson-Nicola Regional District's emergency program will share the story of this community's unique journey through recovery following the devastation left in the fire's wake, and what practitioners can learn for future events in rural areas.

13:15 – Salon A Decoding the Forecast: Behind the Scenes of Weather Prediction and Colour-Coded Alerts (ECCC)

Derek Lee

Weather is constantly changing, and staying ahead of evolving conditions is critical to minimizing disruptions and ensuring effective preparation for natural hazards. Recognizing the limits and uncertainties of weather forecasts allows us to better plan, communicate risk, and account for potential margins of error in response strategies. This session will take participants behind the scenes of how forecasts are produced, explaining why achieving precise predictions like spot forecasts are often challenging. It will also outline what information is available to support operational decision-making and how to interpret that information effectively in real time. Using practical examples, the session will guide participants on what key weather elements to focus on when preparing for hazardous weather, including heavy precipitation, extreme temperatures, and other significant threats across British Columbia.

As the Meteorological Service of Canada advances its approach to risk communication, this session will also introduce the Colour-Coded Weather Alert System—a new framework designed to provide more context and more actionable weather warnings to the public. Applied examples of each alert tier and retrospective analyses of past high-impact events will be showcased to illustrate how the new system reframes weather risk communication and supports more informed decision-making.

14:10 – Room 1 Building Resilient Communities: A Guide to Pre-Disaster Recovery Planning

Carly Benson

This presentation explores the role of pre-disaster recovery plans in enhancing municipal resilience. The Canadian Centre for Recovery and Resilience, an initiative between Public Safety Canada and the Institution for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, has developed a toolkit to support Canadian communities in developing recovery plans in advance of disasters. International research has shown the benefits of pre-disaster recovery planning in improving recovery outcomes for communities. Without effective planning, communities may experience unnecessary delays restoring their communities after a disaster and may make expensive mistakes in repairing / restoring damage without consideration for long-term risk reduction and financing. This session walks participants through key components of the pre-disaster recovery planning toolbox, which provides guidance for recovery planning across seven essential sectors: governance, buildings and land use, people and communities, critical infrastructure and community lifelines, environment and natural systems, housing, and economic recovery. Participants will have an opportunity to test some of the toolbox features with a rapid-fire walkthrough of practical steps for pre-disaster recovery planning. The session concludes with a description of the other resources available as part of the Canadian Centre for Recovery and Resilience, including direct support for recovery planning workshops for communities.

14:10 – Salon C Collaborative Risk Reduction: Connecting Communities in the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George

Kris Holm

The Regional District of Fraser Fort George (RDFFG), City of Prince George, District of Mackenzie, Village of McBride, Village of Valemount, Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, and McLeod Lake Indian Band are engaged in a District-wide "collaborative disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation" project. With more than 100 damaging hazard events in the RDFFG over the past century, the goal is to reduce risks and increase community resilience to hazards in a changing climate. The project's first phase completes three foundational activities delivered with a web-based tool that facilitates access and updates: • Flood, steep creek, and landslide hazard characterization throughout the RDFFG with more detailed flood hazard mapping in five areas. • Identifying valued assets and their exposure to mapped hazards at a regional scale. • Developing a framework to advance strategies for long-term disaster risk reduction. In a second project phase, the team is characterizing regional extreme heat and drought exposure and completing policy and regulatory review. The key objective is to inform development decisions with earth science, planning, and legal perspectives that reflect learnings from all project partners. Throughout this project, partners are advancing goals that reflect both their distinct responsibilities and shared needs to manage risks from multiple hazards crossing jurisdictional boundaries.

14:10 – Salon B Health Canada's Decompression Program

Caitlyn Mischki

Stress and burnout are occupational hazards frequently associated with emergency management, particularly following extended deployments and periods of crisis. In the wake of the Covid 19 pandemic - essentially been a constant two-year activation period for its teams - Health Canada launched its customized Decompression Program to support employees there and at the Public Health Agency of Canada who had experienced intense operational stress. This evidence-based and trauma-informed psychoeducational training program supports mental health and well-being for federal public servants who have experienced significant workplace stress. It features a two week slate of sessions integrating training and group work guided by mental health professionals, along with time away to reflect, recharge and rebuild; all while gaining practical training and tools to improve resiliency and wellness for participants as they transition back to their regular work.

14:10 – Room 6 **National Earthquake Early Warning System for the Reduction of Earthquake Risk in Canadian Communities**

Alison Bird

Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) has developed a national Earthquake Early Warning (EEW) system in areas where earthquake hazard is moderate to high, and where there are concentrations of population and infrastructure. In Canada, earthquake risk is concentrated in western British Columbia, eastern Ontario, and southern Quebec. EEW may provide a few seconds to tens of seconds of notice before potentially harmful shaking arrives, which can aid in the reduction of injuries, deaths, and property losses. The national EEW system sends a message to the National Public Alerting System (NPAS). Through Pelmorex, NPAS then distributes alerts to mobile devices via cellular providers, and to radio and television via broadcasters. Critical infrastructure operators, emergency management organisations, and government operations centers can use EEW to initiate automated technologies - to protect people and property. Facilities can reduce impacts, for example, by opening doors, closing valves, stopping trains, and sounding alarms. Additionally, people at these facilities can be provided with the opportunity to take personal protective actions, usually to drop, cover, and hold on. By allowing safety measures to be taken before strong shaking arrives, the national EEW system will help reduce the risks from the significant earthquakes that occur in Canada.

14:10 – Salon A **One Region Working Together – Emergency Management Partnerships in Action**

Kayla Pepper, Deborah Jones-Middleton, Justin Smith, Saisha Wagnitz

One Region Working Together – Emergency Management Partnerships in Action brings together leaders from the South Okanagan and Similkameen to explore how Indigenous and local governments collaborate to strengthen emergency management. Moderated by Kayla Pepper, this panel features emergency managers from Penticton Indian Band (Anthony Moore), Lower Similkameen Indian Band (Justin Smith), the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (Deborah Jones-Middleton), and the City of Penticton (Amanda Newell). Through real-world examples, panelists will highlight how relationship-building, trust, and shared values have helped communities navigate emergencies, implement inclusive emergency programs, and co-lead meaningful change. These partnerships are reshaping emergency practices and aligning with the Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Participants will gain a practical understanding of what it takes to collaborate across jurisdictions—how to move from siloed operations to integrated, respectful relationships that centre Indigenous leadership and regional coordination. This is a timely, honest conversation about the challenges and opportunities of building a regional approach rooted in mutual respect, cultural safety, and collective resilience. Whether you're just beginning to build partnerships or looking to deepen them, this panel offers tools, stories, and strategies to guide your path forward.

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 27

8:00 – Room 1

Emergency Management Navigator: Your Conference Compass

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8:30 – Salon A **Opening Sessions**

Mayor of Summerland

8:40 – Salon A **Plenary Session. The British Columbia Disaster and Climate Risk and Resilience Assesment**

Dominique Sigg

The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions, recently released a provincial disaster and climate risk and resilience assessment (DCRRA). This work will help inform risk reduction and resilience planning and support regulated entities under B.C.'s Emergency and Disaster Management Act. The assessment looked at six key hazards: riverine flood, coastal flood, extreme heat, wildfire, drought and water scarcity, and earthquake, as well as a multi-hazard event. It examined the consequences of these hazards across six value areas: built environment, natural

environment, health and wellbeing, economy, governance, and society, cultures and relationality. This session will provide an overview of the process and results, including the B.C. Hazard Insights Tool, a new web-based mapping tool that allows practitioners to explore hazard extent and the potential impacts on people, infrastructure, the environment, and economy.

9:25 – Salon A Youth Perspective Session

9:40 – Salon B Bridging the Gap—Empowering Community Voices for Unified Emergency Management

Cari McIntyre, Vanessa Howard

If unified command is truly the goal, it must be built from the ground up, shaped by the needs of the communities it seeks to protect. This presentation explores how lessons learned from a multi-agency wildfire and air disaster exercise in the Comox Valley revealed the power of community-driven insights to help transform understanding of emergency management across all levels of government.

At the heart of effective EM is a deep understanding of local needs, priorities, and knowledge. During the exercise, integrating community-level data informed tactical incident responses and shaped strategic decision-making in impactful ways. The collaboration of military, civilian airport, First Nation, regional district and municipal governments, emergency and fire services, Nation Guardian Watchmen and Archeologists, RCMP, BCWS, HEMBC, hospital, BC ambulance and BC transit providers, demonstrated how local and regional expertise can address jurisdictional complexities, reconcile differing mandates, and foster seamless communication.

These findings emphasize that unified command isn't achieved through top-down directives. Instead, it is an evolving reality that depends on trust-based relationships and the active integration of community voices. By leveraging informal pathways and incorporating local perspectives, Indigenous knowledge and experience, the broader emergency frameworks can adapt to the complexities of the communities they serve.

The outcomes of this exercise now inform planning and response strategies for large-scale events that capture national headlines and more importantly have created new connections and opportunities for knowledge sharing and joint training. From managing high-stakes logistics to ensuring public safety and protecting critical infrastructure, the lessons learned are applied to enhance emergency preparedness across diverse scenarios.

Attendees of this presentation will gain actionable strategies for amplifying community contributions, fostering trust-based collaboration, and achieving shared success in emergencies that require coordination across jurisdictions. Unified command, when rooted in community engagement, is not just an ideal—it is the foundation for resilient and cohesive response frameworks that work for everyone.

9:40 - Salon A Exploring Temporary Pass Systems / Agriculture Support Tools

Ken Nickel, Reg Steward, Stuart MacDonald

The agriculture sector presents a unique challenge to Local Authorities during emergencies. Temporary access to parts of an Emergency Evacuation Order area, during times of lower risk, is extremely important to agriculture for supporting animal welfare and business protection/recovery activities, and can be critical to preserving regional food security. Temporary access pass systems can be difficult for an Emergency Operations Center to manage, require significant resources, and become the front-line of conflict with residents and farmers. This presentation will explore temporary access pass systems using feedback received in 2024/25 from a number of Local Authorities with experience running them. We will review the benefits of providing temporary access opportunities to the agriculture sector and discuss some of the issues that often arise. A model temporary access pass system template for addressing difficulties, reducing conflict and promoting cooperation during emergency evacuations of agricultural areas will be presented. A Local Authority representative with experience in facilitating temporary access will share their innovative electronic approach (ArcGIS based). In addition, there will be a short overview of agriculture support tools available to local authorities including an update on the EOC Agriculture Coordinator training program.

9:40 – Room 1 Systemic Risk Assessment: A Beauty or a Beast?

Sahar Safaie

As climate-related disasters grow in frequency and complexity, traditional risk assessments often fall short in capturing the interconnected, cascading, and compounding nature of risks facing communities today. Taking a systemic approach to risk assessment can be a powerful yet challenging approach that aims to illuminate these dynamic interdependencies across social,

physical, environmental, economic, and governance systems. This presentation explores the dual nature of systemic risk assessment: its "beastly" complexity and its "beautiful" potential for transformation. This interactive session will reflect the practical realities of designing and implementing a systemic risk framework that provides information for specific risk management objectives. The speaker will share insights on how a comprehensive list of risk statements allows for including drivers of risk, impacts on what is valued, equity considerations, Indigenous values and knowledge, and enabling conditions for resilience.

9:40 – Salon C The Rural Resilience Initiative – How Community Futures BC is Building Economic Resilience

Chris Marsh, Jennifer Wetmore

The Rural Resilience Initiative (RRI) is a province-wide program delivered through Community Futures British Columbia, focused on strengthening business continuity planning, economic preparedness, and recovery capacity for businesses in rural communities. Over the past year, RRI has worked to ensure Community Futures offices are not only equipped to manage their own continuity needs but are also positioned as trusted, ready partners in supporting local businesses, nonprofits, and entrepreneurs through hardship - whether caused by disasters or economic disruption. Community Futures organizations are uniquely placed: with deep local relationships, extensive coverage across remote regions, and a strong track record of cost-effective program delivery, they are often the "boots on the ground" in emergencies. RRI has highlighted the important, often-overlooked role CF offices play as economic recovery leads, aggregators of resilience resources, and trusted advisors during crisis response. This presentation will share RRI's key accomplishments over the past year, including the development of tools, training, and success stories. We'll also outline what's next—including how RRI will continue to support the mental wellness of business owners, promote peer-to-peer learning between communities, and ensure rural economies are better prepared for whatever comes next.

9:40 – Room 6 Towards a more inclusive and measurable public engagement strategy: a collaborative project between researchers and practitioners

Gillian Wong, Sarah Hunn, Theodore Lim

There is a long-standing understanding that emergency preparedness education and risk communication practices are not reaching enough people and are not reaching a diversity of populations. At its worst, this gap is likely to exacerbate people's vulnerability to disasters and emergencies and disproportionately impact certain community members and groups more than the general population. Previous research has identified some reasons why barriers to emergency preparedness may exist generally, however more research is needed to address gaps in how emergency management risk communication is received and understood at a demographic level. In October 2024, researchers from the UBC Disaster Resilience Research Network and staff from the City of Vancouver launched a multi-lingual mixed methods research project to illuminate people's perspectives on emergency preparedness and disasters. Themes emerged in the data – with variations among demographic groups -- around trust in government, hazards of most concern, motivations for preparedness actions, and more. The findings developed from this research-practice partnership are being used to transform traditional public education and community outreach in Vancouver to be meaningful, more inclusive, and measurable.

11:00 – Room 1 A deep dive into hazards at a community scale: a case study for the City of Nanaimo

Robert Larson, Evan Lloyd

The Snuneymuxw First Nation (SFN) and City of Nanaimo, are growing coastal communities on the eastern edge of Vancouver Island, that face diverse natural hazards, many of which are changing with climate. To support future decision-making around risk reduction, emergency response, and climate adaptation, SFN and the City are undertaking a detailed multi-hazard assessment of the community. They are working with consultants, Ebbwater and specialist sub-consultants, to conduct a comprehensive review of all climate hazards, and to then provide detailed information and mapping for priority climate hazards (extreme heat, extreme cold, wildfire, coastal flooding, riverine flooding, extreme precipitation, drought, wind, and landslide). Each of the priority hazards is being examined in detail by hazard experts, and are then being brought together in a consistent and comprehensive manner to communicate the all-hazards and multi-hazard landscape. In addition to western science approaches, this project has included lived-experience data to support the prioritization of hazards, as well as the identification of local anthropogenic factors that are

exacerbating the hazards (and risks). This presentation will focus on the outcomes and lessons learned from this work, both the process and expertise required to develop multi-hazard assessment, as well as the science and communication of them.

11:00 – Room 6 GIS Solutions for Situational Awareness

Gurdeep Singh

Situational awareness is at the core of effective emergency management, providing the insight needed for timely, coordinated action. This session introduces participants to the suite of GIS-based solutions that enhance operational awareness during emergencies. Through live demonstrations, participants will explore how platforms such as BC EM COP and the Chilcotin Landslide Portal bring together critical data, dashboards, and applications to create a common operating picture across jurisdictions. The session will highlight when and how to apply these tools, their benefits for decision-making and coordination, and examples of how communities have successfully adopted them. Participants will also learn how to embed these technologies into EOC business processes and build organizational capacity through existing provincial training and support programs. The session concludes by inviting participants to join a growing Community of Practice that connects emergency management and GIS professionals across B.C., fostering collaboration, innovation, and shared learning in support of a more resilient province.

11:00 – Salon B Professional Identity Formation in Emergency Managers

Darren Scott Blackburn

According to Statistics Canada, over 12.4 million Canadians have directly experienced a major emergency. During such events, emergency managers play a vital role in maintaining essential government functions and supporting community resilience. Despite their importance, there are no widely adopted educational standards or clearly defined stages of professional development for those entering the field. This raises critical questions: Who chooses to become an emergency manager in Canada? What defines these professionals, and to what extent can their skills and characteristics be taught—versus acquired through lived experience? These questions form the foundation of Darren Blackburn's four-year doctoral study, which investigates how Canadian emergency managers develop their professional identities. In this session, Darren Blackburn will present key findings from his doctoral research on professional identity development among Canadian emergency managers. Topics will include how individuals first discover emergency management as a career, the role of communities of practice in shaping their development, and how professionals from diverse public safety backgrounds share language, practices, and understandings. The presentation will also examine the pathways that newcomers follow as they begin to identify and function as emergency managers. Finally, Darren will explore how these insights can inform the design of formative educational experiences.

11:00 – Salon A Public Safety Power Shut-off; a Utility's Last Line of Defence

T.M Sandulak

11:00 – Salon C Skwlāx te Secwepemcúl̓ecw: Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the 2023 Bush Creek East Wildfire

Andrea Stelter

In this session, I will be sharing our story of response and recovery from the 2023 Bush Creek East Wildfire, best practices and lessons learned. Many times, it is said that First Nations communities are adversely affected and through this presentation we will answer the question as to why through the sharing of the firsthand experience.

13:00 – Salon B Bridging the Communications Gap

Joanne Malar, Tracy Hughes

Information needs are changing. Social media requires local governments to provide more information, more often. Bridging the gap between public expectations and staffing capacity helps foster a more resilient community. This presentation will focus on effective communication strategies and provide opportunities to discuss ideas from different perspectives.

13:00 – Salon A Bridging the Gap: How Incident Management Teams Collaborate with Communities in Times of Crisis

Mark Healey

This interactive panel highlights the vital role of Incident Management Teams (IMTs) in building resilience during emergencies. Drawing on real-world wildfire and disaster experiences, panelists will explore how IMTs integrate with local governments and Indigenous communities, foster trust across jurisdictions, and strengthen operational continuity. The discussion will address structure protection in the wildland urban interface, the integration of Indigenous knowledge, and the importance of supporting responder mental health. Attendees will gain practical strategies and tested approaches for enhancing interagency coordination, community engagement, and long-term resilience.

13:00 – Room 1 Community Perspectives on Risk

Sarah Hunn

Community members and their experiences need to be considered in all aspects of Risk Assessments, from their creation to how the results are then shared back with the public. In 2023, the City of Vancouver worked to incorporate community perspectives and lived experiences into its Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (HRVA) process. In previous iterations, City staff alone could not accurately anticipate social impacts. Engaging people with lived experience provided feedback on how different hazards may affect them, in some cases changing technical expert opinions. In 2024, Vancouver staff then undertook a process to take the detailed and technical information from the HRVA report and display it in a way that is accessible, dynamic, and catered to the public. Community members were again engaged in shaping the tool itself that allows the public to explore neighbourhood level risks for four of Vancouver's top hazards, the first of its kind for the City. More than a website, the Hazard & Risk Explorer, made using Esri StoryMaps, centres the needs of the public, collating data and information from many sources in an easy-to-read and visually striking way that empowers the public to learn and take action to increase their preparedness.

13:00 – Room 6 Mobile and Aerial Solutions for Field Data Collection

Gurdeep Singh

Accurate, real-time field intelligence is vital to emergency operations. This interactive session focuses on how mobile and drone-based GIS tools are transforming the way local authorities, First Nations, and regional districts collect and visualize situational data. Participants will explore key mobile solutions e.g. Rapid Damage Assessment, Windshield Assessment, and Evacuation Mapping and see how these tools have been used in recent wildfire, flood, and landslide events. The session includes a hands-on demonstration where participants will create and test a Survey123 form using the new AI Assistant, submit live observations via a QR code, and watch their data populate a pre-built dashboard in real time. The showcase will also highlight the use of UAV (drone) imagery in post-disaster reconnaissance, using the Chilcotin Landslide as an example of integrating aerial and mobile data for faster situational awareness. The session concludes with a discussion on how to operationalize these technologies within EOC workflows and strengthen field-to-command communication through standardized digital tools

13:00 – Salon C PRIME - Partnerships for Resilient Indigenous and Municipal Emergency Management

Chirstina Kelly, Monique Weir

The Partnerships for Resilient Indigenous and Municipal Emergency Management (PRIME) is a pilot initiative to establish a multi-jurisdictional emergency management organization under BC's new Emergency and Disaster Management Act. Rooted in cooperation, reconciliation, and mutual benefit, PRIME brings together the City of Mission (population 41,500) and Leq'á:mel First Nation (128 on-reserve and 650 off-reserve members) to enhance emergency preparedness, response, and recovery across their jurisdictions. Recognizing differences in capacity, resources, and governance, PRIME is designed to ensure equitable participation and culturally informed collaboration. Key objectives include: • Sharing resources and strengthening training and knowledge across both communities • Extending an invitation for participation in the EOC to support collaborative unified command whenever either opens an Emergency Operations Centre • Co-developing a culturally informed emergency management playbook and concept of operations • Creating a resource-sharing matrix to guide mutual support • Fostering a model of collaboration that reflects the true spirit and intent of partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, beyond conventional mutual aid agreements PRIME is a demonstration project, with the long-term goal of developing a scalable, inclusive model for multi-jurisdictional emergency management that can be expanded to additional partners in future phase.

14:00 – Salon A **Plenary Session: Advancing Risk Reduction in BC: From Silos to Systems Through Relationship-Centered Governance**

Kari Tyler, Chad Pacholik, Stephen Roddick

Disaster and climate risk management in BC is shifting from siloed, reactive approaches to integrated, relationship-centered strategies. This session invites participants to engage in a deeper conversation about the enabling conditions that make this shift possible—such as strong relationships, leadership support, and sustained collaboration across sectors and scales. Rather than offering prescriptive tools, the session creates space for shared reflection, peer learning, and dialogue grounded in recent research and real-world experience. Participants will explore how to move beyond reliance on individual champions, navigate institutional barriers, and foster a culture of integrating risk and resilience information into planning and decision making. In the context of BC's evolving policy environment—including the Emergency and Disaster Management Act—this session is an opportunity to strengthen the collective effort to embed risk reduction into everyday decision-making and governance.

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14:45 – Salon A **Plenary Session: Multijurisdictional Emergency Management Organization (MJEMO) Implementation - Technical Advisory Team**

Trevor Pratt, Kathy Sinclair, Christina Carbrey, Cari McIntyre, Dean Seal, Brittany Seibert, John Hawkes

A discussion on how the advisory team came to be and provide an update on the status on the work of the MJEMO Implementation Project; panel discussion representing the different First Nations and local authorities on the technical advisory team; Each representative can provide a 5-minute overview of their work, what's working, what's not working, challenges on regional emergency management organizations, etc.

Multijurisdictional emergency management organizations (MJEMOs) are a mechanism under the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act* that can be used to support cross-jurisdictional collaboration in emergency management between any combination of the Province, local governments, and Indigenous governing bodies. Join the MJEMO Technical Advisory Team for a session highlighting unique examples of regional collaboration in emergency management, followed by a panel discussion.

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 28

8:00 – Room 1 **Emergency Management Navigator: Your Conference Compass**

New to emergency management or just looking to make the most of your time here? This open forum is your opportunity to ask questions, get oriented, and connect. Whether you're curious about an acronym, exploring, career paths, or hoping to meet someone with specific expertise, this is your starting point for navigating both the profession and the conference with confidence.

8:30 – Salon A **Daily Opening Session**

Mayor of Princeton

8:40 – Salon A **EMCR – What we heard?**

10:00 – Salon A **Fireside Chat – A Conversation on Resilience**

Chad Pacholik, Patrick Quealey

This fireside chat moves beyond frameworks and technical language to explore the lived experiences behind resilience work. Through honest conversation and personal insight, we'll look at how this field shapes us, challenges us, and teaches us over time. The session creates space to reflect on the human side of collaboration, leadership, and community resilience. It's an opportunity to pause, reconnect with purpose, and consider where we find meaning and momentum in a rapidly changing landscape.

10:45 – Salon A Conference Closing Remarks & First Nations Closing

12:30 – 14:30 Salon C, Room 1 Unscheduled Dialogue Sessions