



## **Prescribed burning in British Columbian parks - balancing biodiversity, habitat, forest health, and fuel management issues with terrain hazards.**

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Over the last century forest fires have been controlled throughout British Columbia (BC) including its parks. The character of forests have changed in response to widespread fire suppression. In the last decades fire has been increasingly regarded as an important natural disturbance agent. Forest fires contribute to biodiversity and provide diverse habitats by creating mosaics of seral stages across the landscape. The spread of forest pathogens and insect pests may be kept in check by large fires. Forest fires also provide fuel breaks in the landscape, which are important in preventing catastrophic wildfire. Controlled burning may meet all of these objectives. Forest fires, can however destabilize hillslopes, resulting in soil erosion and debris slides and flows. Terrain stability mapping and gully assessments are required where elements are at risk below areas of proposed prescribed burns. All values must be considered in a total risk scenario.