



August 30, 2018

Dear Member Communities

This year's wildfire season is now the second worst in the history of British Columbia. With more than 550 fires burning across the province and the most notable in the province's southeast, northwest and interior regions, I, on behalf of the North Central Local Government Association would like to express our sympathies to all the communities affected by this year's wildfires. Although the fires are more geographically dispersed and the total area burned is lower than last year, many people and their communities have been profoundly affected. Thousands of residents have been forced to evacuate to Prince George while others remain on alert or even refuse to leave in the hopes of saving their homes. You are all in our thoughts.

We would like to thank the City of Prince George for opening its doors once again for evacuees and helping in this hour of need. We would also like to express our deepest appreciation to those who are stepping up to assist in fighting fires, providing emergency operations support and aircraft that are supporting ground crews. We are grateful to the global community, in particular New Zealand, Australia and Mexico and any others who have sent firefighting personnel to our region.

On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, B.C. Premier, John Horgan, accompanied by the Minister of National Defense, Harjit Sajjan, visited PREOC in Prince George. They were briefed alongside local Mayors and First Nation leaders about the current state of the region's wildfires. Their support is appreciated.

We also very much appreciate the visit by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who visited Prince George on August 23<sup>rd</sup> to talk to firefighters, Provincial Regional Emergency Operation Centre (PREOC) staff, Indigenous leaders and volunteers. He also offered acknowledgement to displaced residents of how difficult the wildfire season has been.

The NCLGA will remain in contact with the Province regarding wildfire status. In addition, we will meet with Emergency Management BC during the UBCM Convention in September to express concerns and explore potential strategies for the prevention, mitigation, and improved response to wildfires in the future. We must learn from our experiences and use that knowledge to inform our approach moving forward.

Finally, I hope that everyone stays safe during this time. Please update us regarding the status of your community, as you are able. The NCLGA will stay in contact.

Sincerely,  
Gord Klassen  
President, NCLGA