



REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: CS-BRD-010

From: Trish Morgan, General Manager of Community Services

Date: July 17, 2020

Subject: West Peace Fire Services Mutual Aid Agreement

RECOMMENDATION: [Corporate Weighted]

That the Regional Board authorize a fire service mutual aid agreement with the District of Chetwynd, the District of Hudson's Hope and the Moberly Lake Volunteer Fire Department Society, for a period of five years from the date of execution; further, that the Chair and Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to sign the agreement on behalf of the PRRD.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

On March 26, 2020, the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General issued [Ministerial Order M084](#) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In that Order, it states that:

7 (1) Each local authority must use best efforts to enter into mutual aid agreements with neighbouring jurisdictions to ensure that first responder, waste water and drinking water services are maintained during the period referred to in section 2.

After a review of mutual aid agreements for fire services in the region, it was determined that a mutual aid agreement was needed for the West Peace departments to provide support to each other.

Mutual aid is an agreement between fire departments to provide support across jurisdictional boundaries in the event that a local fire department determines that its resources are insufficient to bring a fire or other emergency under control. In this case, the responding department may request assistance from another department, who, if available, may provide an engine or tender and a wildland unit plus personnel to assist. The advantage of having a sub-regional mutual aid agreement is that if one fire department is unavailable, mutual aid could come from the next closest neighboring fire department.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- ☒ Partnerships
 - ☒ Collaboration with Local and First Nations governments.
- ☒ Responsive Service Delivery
 - ☒ Enhance Emergency Planning and Response Capacity.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

In the event that a responding department utilizes consumables in excess of \$1,500, they may invoice the receiving department for the costs. If the receiving department requests resources beyond primary mutual aid (e.g., 1 unit), the responding department may invoice the receiving department, as per the [British Columbia Inter-Agency Working Group Reimbursement Rates](#) for the current year.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

None.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

A South Peace Mutual Aid agreement is being developed to provide mutual aid between the City of Dawson Creek, the Village of Pouce Coupe, the District of Tumbler Ridge and the Tomslake and District Fire Department Society. It is anticipated that this agreement may come forward to the Regional Board in September 2020.

Staff have started initial discussions regarding the possibility of a mutual aid agreement for drinking water and waste water services between local governments, in the event that there are staff shortages in the region due to a resurgence of COVID 19 (second wave) – as per the requirement under Ministerial Order M084.

Attachments:

1. Draft West Peace Mutual Aid Agreement 2020