

**Do they do it differently  
elsewhere?**

**Comparative policy and  
management in Alaska and the  
Yukon Territory: Implications  
for future fire management**

**A.L. Lovecraft**

# Thanks

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# Uncharacteristic Season 2004

- In both Alaska and the Yukon a normal fire season was predicted.
- In both locations fire season began slowly.
- However, in both locations the 2004 seasons burned more acreage than ever before in recorded history.
- What can we learn by comparing the responses of wildland fire fighting agencies?

# Alaska and Yukon – 2004 stats

- AK – 701 fires burned 6,590,140 acres which is over eight times the ten year average burned.
- Yukon – 282 fires burned 4,200,700 acres and consider that Alaska's land mass is 3.5 times larger than the Territory. An estimated 5.6% of the forested region of the Yukon burned which is 14 times the yearly average of the area burned from 1950-2003.

# Wildfire: Jurisdictions and Management AK

- U.S. – HFRA, NFP, NIFC
- AK - BLM (Alaska Fire Service), DNR, USFS coordinate their statewide efforts under the Alaska Wildland Fire Coordinating Group and the Alaska Wildland Fire Management Plan. The Plan has four management options that guide firefighters.

# Wildfire: Jurisdictions and Management Yukon

- October 2005 governments signed a nationwide rough equivalent to the NFP – Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy Declaration; CIFFC (MB)
- Yukon is in devolution process from federal government 2003-2008 (DTA); decreasing funding.
- “Values based” zonation policy 1973 – critical, full, strategic, transitional, and wilderness; 2001 public consultation
- First Nations Program and Service Transfer Agreements with Yukon

# Internal and External Reviews

- Alaska – In the FNSB a public commission and then the AWFCG did its own review based on a series of 13 public community meetings of approx. 300 people.
- Yukon – a territory wide public community meetings review but externally commissioned 5 member team with Yukoners and wildland fire experts (people with extensive experience). 40 meetings and ongoing discussions in 19 communities also “participating parties”

# What were the recommendations?

- Yukon – 9 sets of recommendations
- Alaska – 11 sets of recommendations
- What is interesting is where they *overlap*
- AIWFMP/ Strategic Approach
- Communications/ Public Information (FireSmart and FireWise)
- Post Fire recovery/Rehabilitation
- Wildlife/Subsistence
- Fuel Management/Fuels

# What were the recommendations? (con.)

And where they *diverge*...

- Yukon - First Nations, role of Climate Change, Training Crews, next major review likely around 2008
- AK – Smoke, Predictive Services, IMTs, no planned future review

# Future Management Challenges

- Wildland-Urban interface expansion: less population increase driven and more cabin, cottage, tourism driven
- Climate change: studies in both U.S. and Canada indicate more unpredictable seasons with an increase in hotter and more widespread fires
- Conflicts related to fuels treatments: prescribed burning, indigenous burning patterns

# Feedback!

- What do you know that we do not know?
- Have you made any direct changes as a result of 2004?
- What *could* actually cause the AK fire plan to be substantially revised?