



Institute for Catastrophic
Loss Reduction

Building resilient communities

Institut de Prévention
des Sinistres Catastrophiques

Construction de resilient communities

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction supports today's announcement by the
Canadian Council of Forest Ministers to reaffirm a strong,
joint commitment to wildland fire management**

TORONTO: The Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction (ICLR) supports the announcement made today in Dawson City by the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers reaffirming the Council's commitment to the Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy. Paul Kovacs, Executive Director of ICLR said, "This is a thoughtful plan to address the growing risk to Canadians from wildfire. Our research shows that the approach set out in the Strategy, with a focus on prevention, mitigation, and preparedness, holds great potential to reduce the risk of loss across Canada from wildfire."

Through the remainder of this century, research by the Institute predicts that millions of Canadians are expected to choose to live, work, and play in or near Canada's forests. Over this period, wildfire experts predict that the area burned in Canada will double due to climate change. More people exposed to wildfire combined with more fire is a dangerous combination. Unless action is taken there will be an increase in devastating wildfire losses, like those experienced in Kelowna, Slave Lake, and Fort McMurray. In our opinion, the Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy sets out an innovative and welcome approach to confront this growing challenge.

The Canadian Council of Forest Ministers issued a Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy Declaration in 2005. Over the past decade, the provincial and territorial governments have invested in programs to implement important aspects of the Strategy. These investments are well advanced, although the size of the problem warns that the provincial and territorial governments need to do more. The federal government did not implement the 2005 strategy. Indeed, in several areas, like research, federal efforts have been reduced despite the growing threat. A formal commitment between the federal government and the provincial and territorial governments is required if the Strategy is to become a truly national initiative.

The Institute urges the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to invest in implementation of the Canadian Wildland Fire Strategy as announced today. The Strategy sets out a comprehensive, national approach to reducing the risk of loss from the growing threat of wildfire.

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Established in 1998 by Canada's property and casualty insurers, ICLR is an independent, not-for-profit research institute based in Toronto and at Western University in London, Canada. ICLR is a centre of excellence for disaster loss prevention research and education. ICLR's research staff is internationally recognized for pioneering work in a number of fields including wind and seismic engineering, atmospheric sciences, water resources engineering and economics. Multi-disciplined research is a foundation for ICLR's work to build communities more resilient to disasters.

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