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JOINT NEWS RELEASE - FIRESMART GRANT FUNDING AWARDED

The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, Hupacasath First Nation, Tseshah First Nation, and the City of Port Alberni are pleased to announce that they have received the 2022 FireSmart grant from the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM). This partnership has been awarded \$240,000 to undertake local FireSmart prevention, mitigation and preparedness initiatives that will improve wildfire resiliency in the region.

A focus of the FireSmart program is on the individual homeowner and what actions they can take to become more resilient to wildfire, including having a FireSmart home assessment conducted on their property. The program will include a rebate option, where residents can receive up to \$500 after completing the identified recommendations. A curbside yard waste removal program will be offered to residents and education programs will be presented. Another focus of the program will be to mitigate the wildfire risk to critical infrastructure in the region, ensuring the continued delivery of essential services during a wildfire event. The grant funding also allows cross-jurisdictional training and exercises, and the development of a Long Beach Electoral Area Community Wildlife Protection Plan.

The project will commence in late April and residents can follow the Alberni Valley Emergency Program Facebook page for further updates, or visit the ACRD website: <https://www.acrd.bc.ca/firesmart>

Quotes:

“Hupacasath First Nation values working together with local governments to protect everyone from the consequences of climate change. FireSmart prevention, mitigation and preparedness initiatives will reduce the risk of wildfire in our community and make us all more resilient when we do this work together,” said Elected Chief Councillor Brandy Lauder, Hupacasath First Nation.

“Tseshah First Nation is proud and honoured to be working alongside local and regional governments to continue our important work with FireSmart initiatives. While it’s important that Tseshah continues to work on our individual plan for our Nation, we are also pleased to work alongside ACRD, Hupacasath First Nation and the City of Port Alberni on a plan for the safety of all our people.” – Ken (Wahmeesh) Watts, Elected Chief Councillor, Tseshah First Nation

“Seeing the devastation caused by wildfires this past summer shook us all but knowing that we can take measured and tested steps to protect ourselves and our community against loss, damage or injury is empowering,” said City of Port Alberni Mayor Minions. “We give thanks to UBCM for awarding a FireSmart grant to the City and partnering organizations and take seriously our role in building community resilience through education and action.”

“With the prevalence of wildfires on the rise in recent years, we are excited to expand on our previous progress with the FireSmart Program to help make our community safer for everyone,” explains ACRD Chair John Jack. “We look forward to working together with the City of Port Alberni, Tseshah First Nation, and Hupacasath First Nation to build a more wildfire resilient community. By collaborating on projects like this, we make our community stronger.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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