



Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
3400 – 30th Street
Vernon, BC
V1T 5E6

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MEDIA CONTACT: Nick Nilsen
TELEPHONE: 250-550-3519

The Era of Megafires Coming to Town

The City of Vernon, North 40 Productions, and the US Forest Service are pleased to bring *The Era of Megafires* to The Schubert Centre on May 14, 2018 at 7 p.m. This presentation is open to the public and is free of charge.

The *Era of Megafires* is a 60-minute, video presentation featuring Dr. Paul Hessburg, a research landscape ecologist with Pacific Northwest (PNW) Research Station. In this multi-media presentation, Hessburg explains that over the past decade, the number of large, severe wildfires has been on the rise. These megafires are wildfires that burn more than 100,000 acres; they can destroy or severely damage human communities, wildlife habitat, and natural resources. This special presentation conveys the conditions that lead to megafires and how they might be managed or mitigated.

“The risk from wildland interface fires is a growing concern for many BC communities, including Vernon,” said Vernon Fire Rescue Services Interim Chief David Lind. “Past efforts to reduce these risks have often been project based and lacked the continuity required to be effective and sustainable. Government policies have placed environmental or other priorities at odds with wildland interface fire safety. We are realizing the answers to these challenges resides in programs which balance priorities, crossing all levels of government, NGOs, private land owners and including the efforts and buy-in of every citizen. Increased awareness of the issues and of the practical steps required to reduce the destructiveness of wildland interface fires is a foundational element of addressing these risks. VFRS encourages policy makers and all community members with an interest in addressing wildland interface fire to attend this informative session.”

“A future without wildfire isn’t an option,” Hessburg says. “So, what kind of future do we want for our forests? The goal of this project is to share a vocabulary and increase the understanding and ability of ordinary citizens so that they can enter into local discussions and planning for a more certain future for public forest lands.”

Since June 2016, the presentation has reached 86 cities and towns and more than 25,000 citizens. There is also an *Era of Megafires* presentation on Ted Talks with over 850,000 views: https://www.ted.com/talks/paul_hessburg_why_wildfires_have_gotten_worse_and_how_we_can_stop_them

For more information and updates, visit the Era of Megafires website: www.eraofmegafires.com