

# **Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area Designation Review**

## **Bald Range Wildfire**

**Electoral Area Services Committee (EASC)**  
September 24, 2026

# ESDP Review / Bald Range Wildfire

## Background

- August 7, 2026; a wildfire sparked approximately 15 kilometres west of the District of Summerland and near the unincorporated community of Faulder.
- Approximately 110 structures would be either damaged or destroyed as a result of the fire.



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## Background

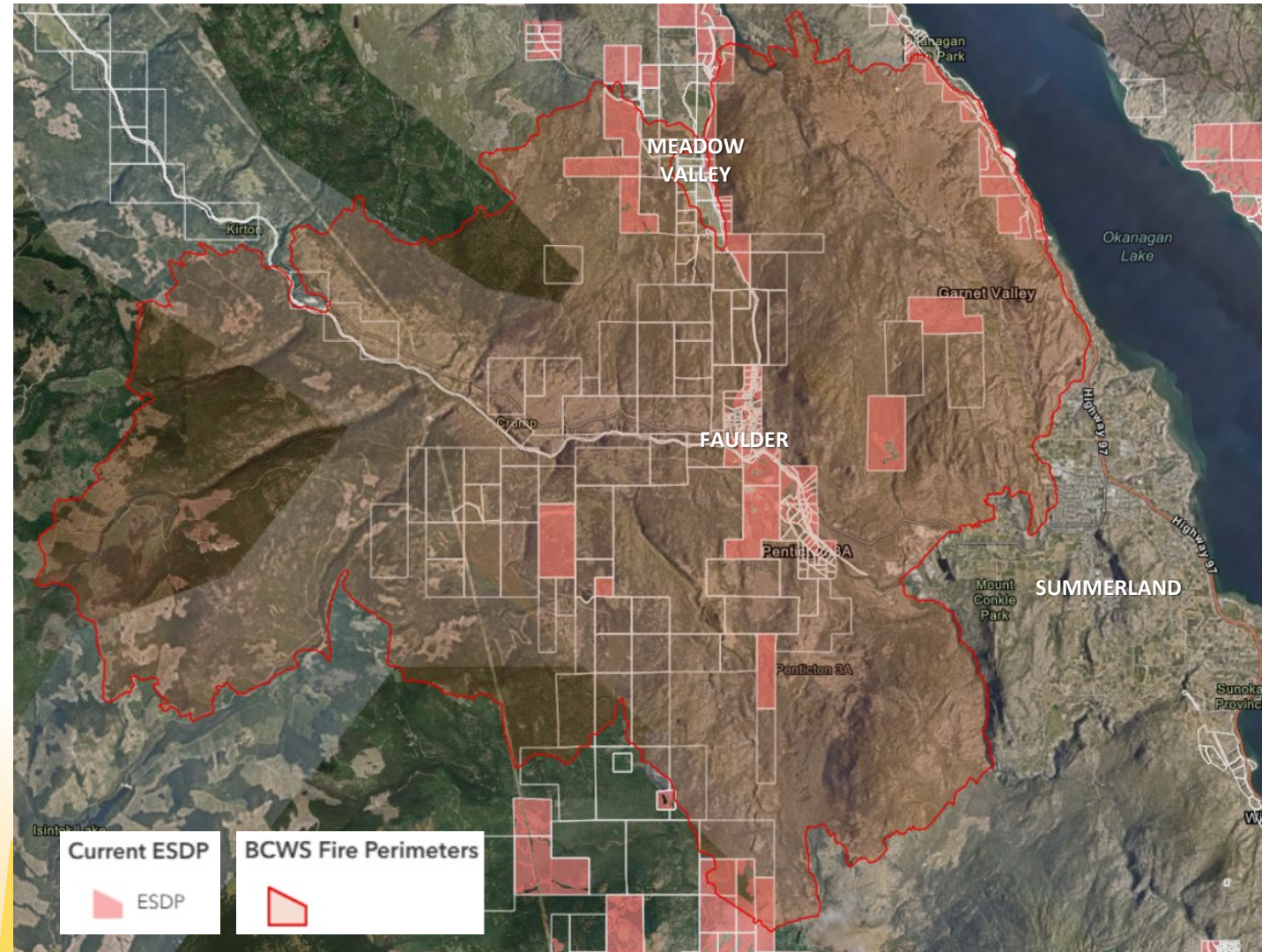
- As of September 25, 2026, the size of the fire was mapped at approximately 25,000 ha and significantly impacted the communities of Summerland, Faulder and Meadow Valley.



# ESDP Review / Bald Range Wildfire

## Background

- The burn area affected approximately 124 parcels designated as ESDP Areas.
- The land affected and designated as ESDP represents approx. 1,170 ha.



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## Statutory Requirements

- The *Local Government Act* requires that an OCP “include statements and map designations for ... restrictions on the use of land that is ... environmentally sensitive”.
- An OCP *may* also designate a development permit area for the purpose of protecting “the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.”



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## Legislative Compliance:

- The Board has undertaken the following:
  - adopting policies to limit the impact of development on environmentally sensitive lands; and
  - designating lands as ESDP in most Electoral Areas.



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## Board Policies:

- ESDP Map is generally based on mapping prepared in support of “Keeping Nature in Our Future” (biodiversity strategy).
- First introduced to Electoral Area “F” in 2017 as part of implementing “Keeping Nature in Our Future” (e.g. ESDP Update Project).



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## Issues:

- Administration is aware of the Board's desire to reduce bureaucratic delays and financial burdens for residents displaced by the Bald Range Wildfire
- Particularly where structures have been damaged or destroyed and reconstruction is required.
- Example: enforcement of RV occupancy.



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## Options:

1. Repeal ESDP Area Designation in whole of burn area
2. Repeal ESDP Area Designation in select areas
3. Residential Exemption
4. Status Quo



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## Option No. 1 - Repeal ESDP Area Designation

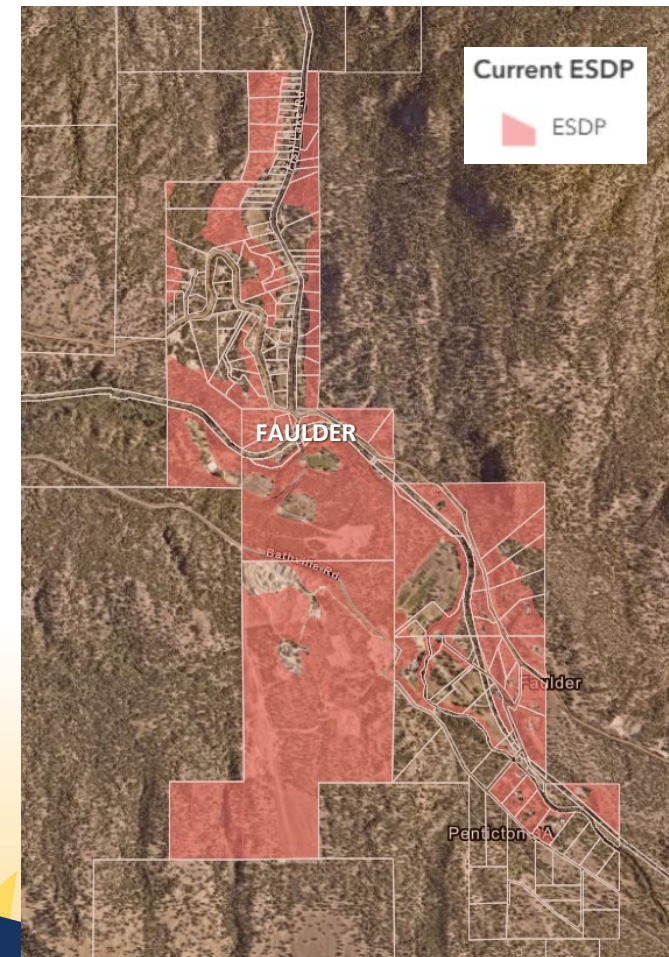
- Remove the ESDP Area designation from all properties within the burn area.
- Would recognize damage done to environmental values from the fire.
- Would remove requirement for property owners to obtain a QEP assessment and permit to undertake restoration and/or reconstruction.



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## Option No. 2 - Repeal ESDP Area Designation in Select Areas

- Remove the ESDP Area designation from select locations within the burn area.
- Could be limited to a community such as Faulder.
- Would recognize damage done to environmental values from the fire.
- Would remove regulatory burdens.



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## Option No. 3 – Residential Exemption

- Introduce an exemption for principal dwellings and accessory buildings within the burn area.
- The exemption could be reviewed at regular intervals based on the pace of re-building (e.g. every 5-10 years).
- Summerland already utilizes a similar exemption for the whole of its ESDP Area.



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## Option No. 4 – Status Quo

- The ESDP Area designation is not amended to reflect the impact of the wildfire.
- Construction as well as the “alteration of the land, including grading, removal of vegetation, deposit or moving of soil ...” would continue to require a permit.
- Permits would continue to require a report from a qualified environmental professional.



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## Consultation:

If OCP is to be amended, the following will occur:

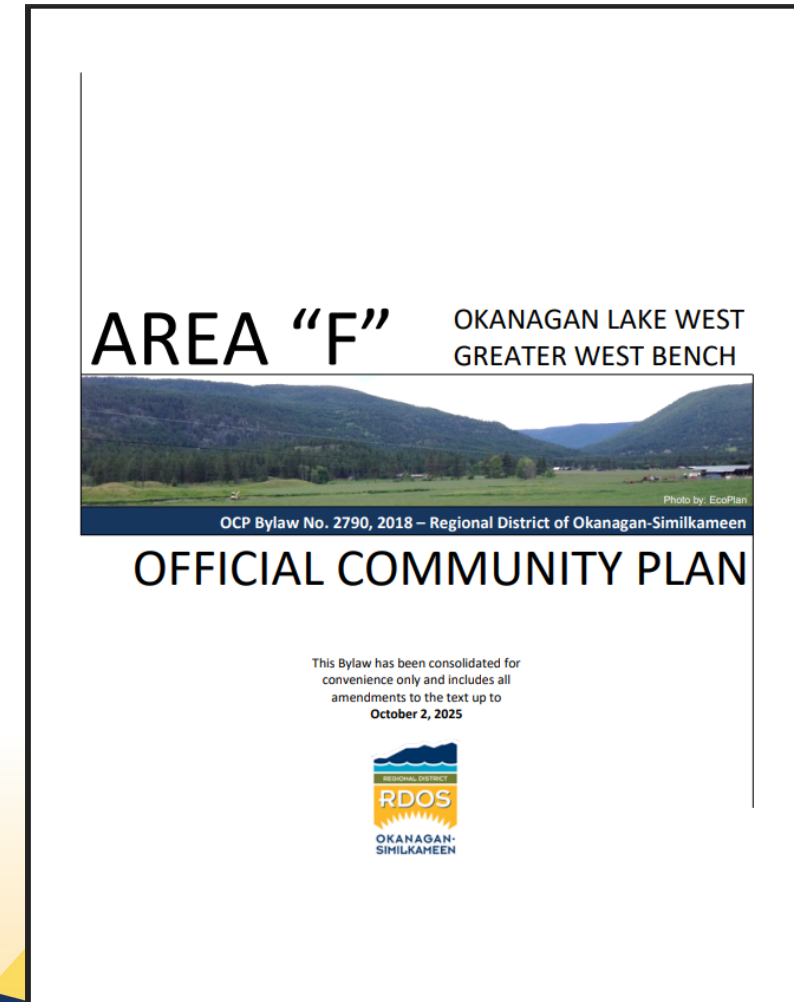
- Materials posted to RDOS webpage;
- Preparation of an Information Release;
- Social media notification;
- Voyent Alert! Notification;
- Scheduling of an online public info meeting;
- First Nations and external agency consultation;
- Written notice to affected property owners.



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## Administrative Recommendation:

THAT the Electoral Area “F” Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2790, 2018, be amended in order to remove the Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area designation from all parcels within the area of the Bald Range Wildfire.



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## Alternatives:

1. THAT the Electoral Area “F” OCP Bylaw No. 2790, 2018, be amended in order to remove the ESDP Area designation from all parcels within the area:
  - a) *TBD*
2. THAT the Electoral Area “F” OCP Bylaw No. 2790, 2018, be amended in order to remove the ESDP Area designation to exempt single detached dwellings and residential accessory buildings and structures on parcels within the area of the Bald Range Wildfire.
3. Status quo.

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## Provincial Response:

The Province has advised that its approach to the wildfire recovery in riparian areas will be in two phases:

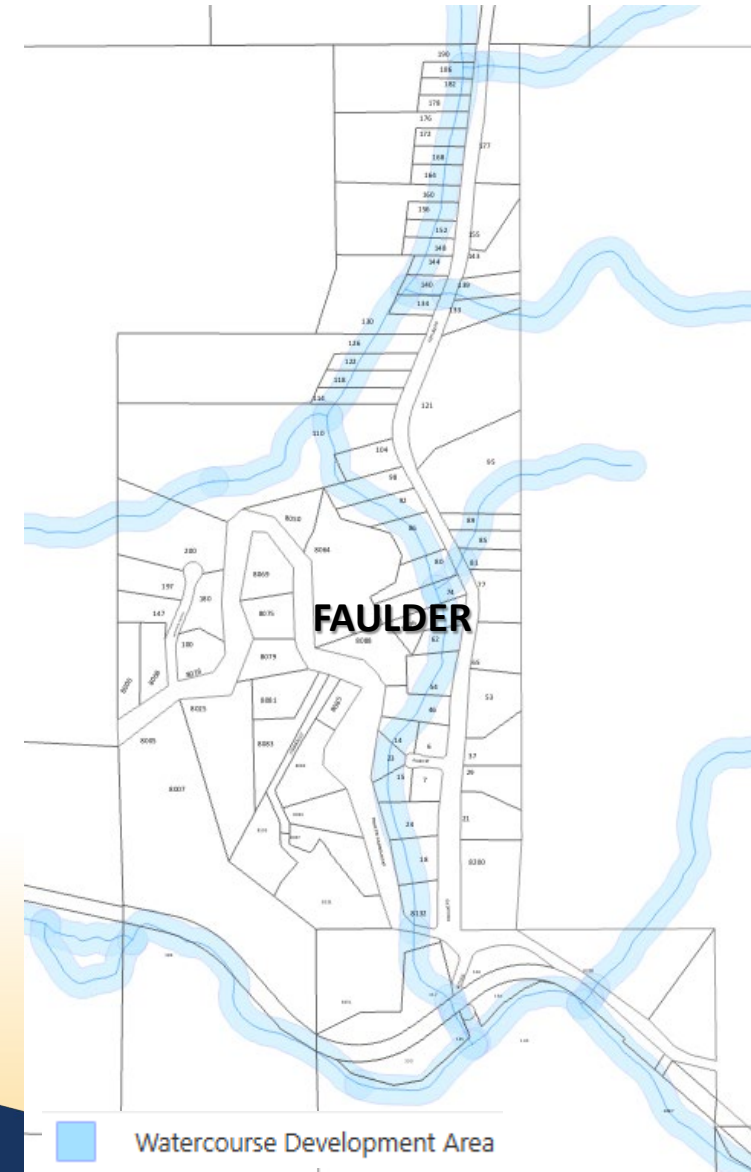
1. *by reducing regulatory requirements for urgent cleanup and safety work through interim exemptions\**; and
2. *by introducing a streamlined and lower-cost pathway for rebuilding destroyed homes once the RAPR amendments come into effect in January 2027.*



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## Further Board Consideration:

- Consider exemptions for clean-up works within a Watercourse Development Permit (WDP) Area designation under the Electoral Area OCP Bylaws.
- Consider possible zoning bylaw exemptions for accessory structures on parcels where a principal use no longer exists (e.g. where the dwelling unit has been destroyed).
- Amendment are currently being prepared for a future EASC meeting.



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Questions?