



Climate Change Leading to Wildfire in Líl'wat Territory and Work to Mitigate Risks

Klay Tindall,
General Manager,
Líl'wat Forestry Ventures



Purpose & Takeaway

- **Purpose:** Explain how climate change is increasing wildfire risk in Líl'wat territory and outline the Nation-led forest stewardship & wildfire-mitigation work underway.
- **Takeaway:** Líl'wat Nation is combining traditional fire knowledge, modern fuel treatments, and community resilience actions to reduce risk, rebuild ecological values, and protect people and assets.



Climate Drivers & Local Context



Warmer, drier summers and more extreme weather increase fire frequency and intensity across B.C. - Líl'wat territory is not immune.



Wildfire risk is amplified near community assets (houses, school, roads) where changing forest composition and built-environment interfaces create high-consequence exposure.



Huge number of fires in Líl'wat territory- 20,000ha in 10 years, over 500ha in 2025.





Local Evidence & Recent Events

- Líl'wat Forestry Ventures (LFV) and partners documented wildfire threat in a Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan and have completed intensive local risk assessments (FNESS).
- LFV completed Phase 1 & Phase 2, completing Phase 3 of a forest fuels-thinning project (120ha hectares targeted above community infrastructure) as a direct, measurable mitigation step.

Tools Used to Reduce Wildfire Risk

1. Mechanical thinning & fuel treatments:

Strategic removal of ladder fuels and dense understory to reduce crown-fire potential and wildfire spread near the community. (Phase 1: ~70 ha.)

2. Prescribed & cultural burns:

Planned, controlled burns reintroducing low-intensity fire to restore cultural values (berries, mushrooms) and lower fuels; LFV has led burns (e.g., Owl Creek / Tenquille projects) in partnership with BC Wildfire Service.



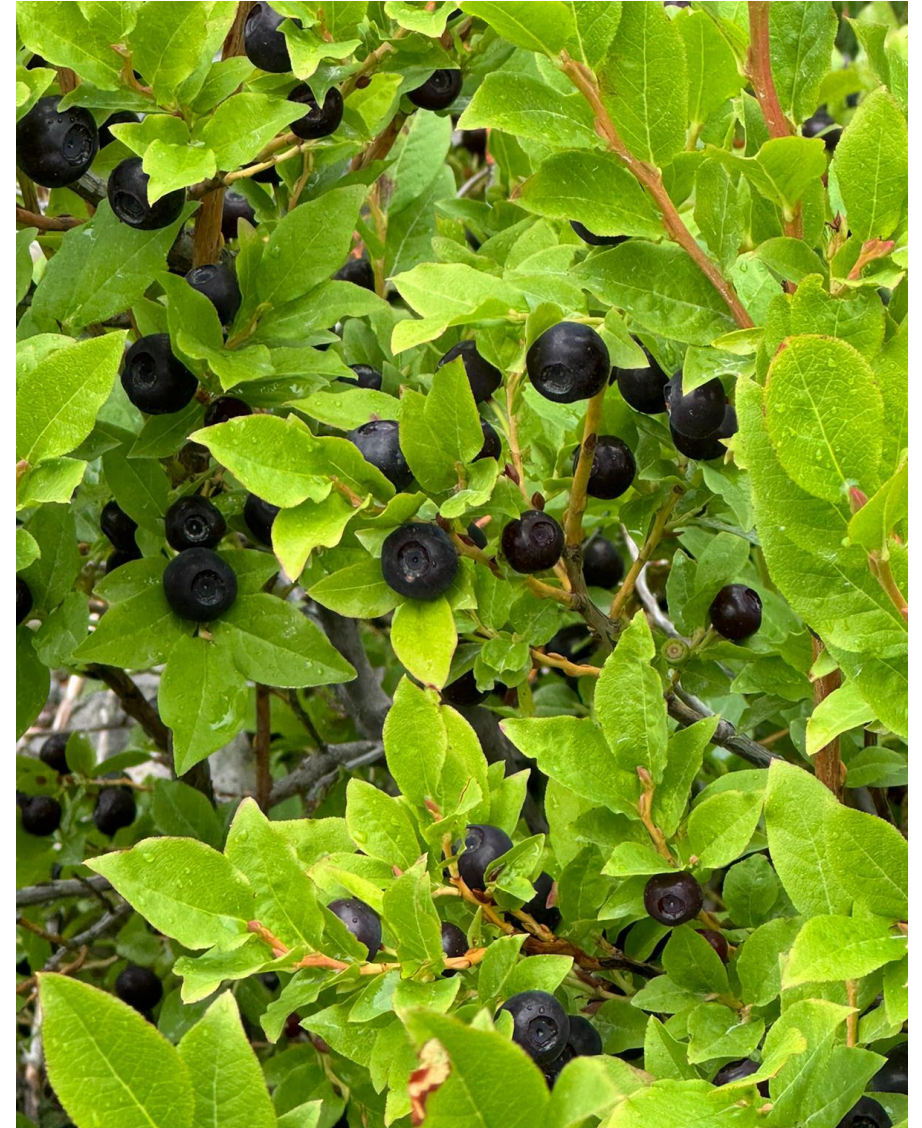
Tools Used to Reduce Wildfire Risk

3. Holistic planning & policy integration:

Lílwat's 2024 Forestry Policy and strategic planning embed climate adaptation and multi-value forest management (ecological, cultural (knowledge), community safety).

4. Training, partnerships & research:

Community training (wildfire & resilience courses- NRCan & Stillwater), collaboration with BCWS, UBC research on cultural burning and mapping high-risk zones.





Benefits Observed/Expected

- **Short term:** Lowered fuel loads around homes and infrastructure, reduced likelihood of high-severity fire ignition spreading into the community.
- **Medium term:** Improved food and medicinal plant productivity where cultural burns restore habitat (berries, mushrooms); increased biodiversity in treated stands.
- **Long term:** Strengthened local capacity, Indigenous-led stewardship models, and a blueprint for reconciling cultural fire practices with modern wildfire management.

Challenges & Risks

- Weather windows and smoke management constrain when burns/thinning can occur safely.
- Funding, regulatory permitting, and the legacy of fire suppression/cultural bans require sustained collaboration and sensitive community engagement.





Calls to Action

- Support Indigenous-led wildfire mitigation as a climate adaptation priority.
- Highlight community successes (LFV thinning, Owl Creek & Tenquille burns) as models for other Nations and regional partners.
- Ask: funding partners, policy-makers, and neighbouring land managers to coordinate on cross-boundary fuel management and share learnings.

Thank you!

