How does the BC Wildfire Service make predictions about a fire season?

Season forecasts are assessed by meteorologists and fire behaviour specialists who consider a range of environmental factors and observed weather data. This includes accounting for conditions that affect soil moisture (e.g. the dryness of fine fuels and vegetation growth), which influence how much fuel is available to burn in the event of a wildfire.

The severity of a wildfire season is highly dependent on local weather patterns and conditions, such as: timing and amount of precipitation; length of dry periods; thunderstorms; and wind events. Although, long-term weather models are useful to indicate trends and patterns over time, daily weather cannot be reliably forecast more than a few days in advance. The BC Wildfire Service maintains its levels of preparedness by studying forecasts, using experience gained in previous fire seasons, and analyzing trends to get a good indication of what to expect. The BC Wildfire Service will continue to collect data and use forecasting models to produce monthly updates for the Season Outlook.

What can people do to prepare for the current wildfire season?

As we head into the 2020 wildfire season, this is a good time for people to take steps to prevent wildfires and consider how to use FireSmart principles to help protect their homes and properties. Although open burning is currently restricted in High Smoke Sensitivity Areas of British Columbia (and further open burning activities will be prohibited throughout British Columbia as of noon on Thursday, April 16), other activities can be undertaken around the home to reduce the risk of wildfire damage. They include cleaning gutters, clearing debris from yards, and mowing dead grasses. For more information about wildfire resiliency in our forests and communities, visit: www.bcwildfire.ca and www.firesmartbc.ca