OKANAGAN NATION ALLIANCE

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Dove Hill Brush Land Ecosystem Enhancement:

2026-2030 Project Overview



Prepared by Okanagan Nation Alliance
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Background

The Dove Hill brush land is an important mosaic of habitats inhabited by a wide range of ungulates, reptile and birds, including many species-at-risk. Impacted by fire exclusion, invasive species and human encroachment, the mallow ninebark -oceanspray -bluebunch wheatgrass brush land ecosystem (Gb03) is red-listed by the British Columbia Conservation Data Centre (BCCDC). Additionally, the Dove Hill trail network represents an important recreational value for Castlegar and the Kootenay Community, providing a significant opportunity to promote awareness of the importance of fire in ecosystem stewardship.

With long-term fire suppression and exclusion of cultural burning practices, brush land ecosystems have been altered through forest ingrowth, changes in vegetation structure, health and habitat values. These changes have also resulted in increased fuel loading and wildfire risk in areas adjacent to communities.

The project would seek to reintroduce low severity prescribed fire in prioritized treatment units in 26 ha of Dove Hill brush land. The aim is to enhance brush land health, protect native plant diversity and restore fire resiliency in a valued ecosystem to the benefit of both wildlife and community.

Project Goals

- Enhance Resiliency in a Red-Listed Fire Adapted Ecosystem
- Restore Native Plant Diversity
- Incorporation of Indigenous Knowledge in Ecological Restoration
- Restore and Enhance Important Habitat for Ungulates
- Enhance and Protect Habitat for Species-at-Risk
- Protect Recreational Values and Promote Community Outreach Opportunities
- Increase Community Safety in the Wildland Urban Interface

Project Activities

2026-2028: Invasive management, native plant enhancement (seeding/planting), burn preparation (thinning and large diameter tree protection).

2028: Prescribed burn.

2029-2030: Invasive management, native plant enhancement (seeding/planting).

Ecological and Cultural Values on the Land

- *Red-listed brush land ecological community*
- *Key winter ungulate range*
- *Community safety, infrastructure and recreational values*
    - This project aligns with Kootenay Boundary Higher Level Plan (KBHLP , and ongoing Ministry of Forest Wildfire Risk Reduction treatments (Figure 1) and increases landscape level fire resiliency and community safety.
- *Species-at-risk habitat include:*
    - p̓aʕs (Common nighthawk, *Chordeiles minor)*
    - Short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*)
- *Culturally important plant species observed include*:
    - síyaʔ (saskatoon, *Amelanchier alnifolia*)
    - ɬəx̌ʷɬax̌ʷ (chokecherry, *Prunus virginiana*)
    - ʕacʕacaqs (biscuitroot, *Lomatium triternatum*)
    - skʷlsiɬmlˀx (kinnikinnick, *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)
    - wəx̌wax̌iɬp (mock orange, *Philadelphus lewisii*)
    - stɬ̓iʔ (bluebunch wheatgrass, *Pseudoroegneria spicata*)
    - qʷəc̓qʷc̓wixʷups (yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*)
    - ocean spray (*Holodiscus discolor*)
    - Orange honeysuckle (*Lonicera ciliosa*)

- qʷayqʷaytʕaps (Western skink, *Eumeces skiltonianus)*
- aslaiyaʔqnə kʷuxʷkʷuxʷap (Rubber boa, *Charina bottae)*
- Fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*)
- staxčin (Columbia lily, *Lilium columbianum)*
- sx̌ʷəsmiɬp - the bush (soopolallie, *Shepherdia canadensis*)
- mlmltiɬp (trembling aspen, *Populus tremuloides*)

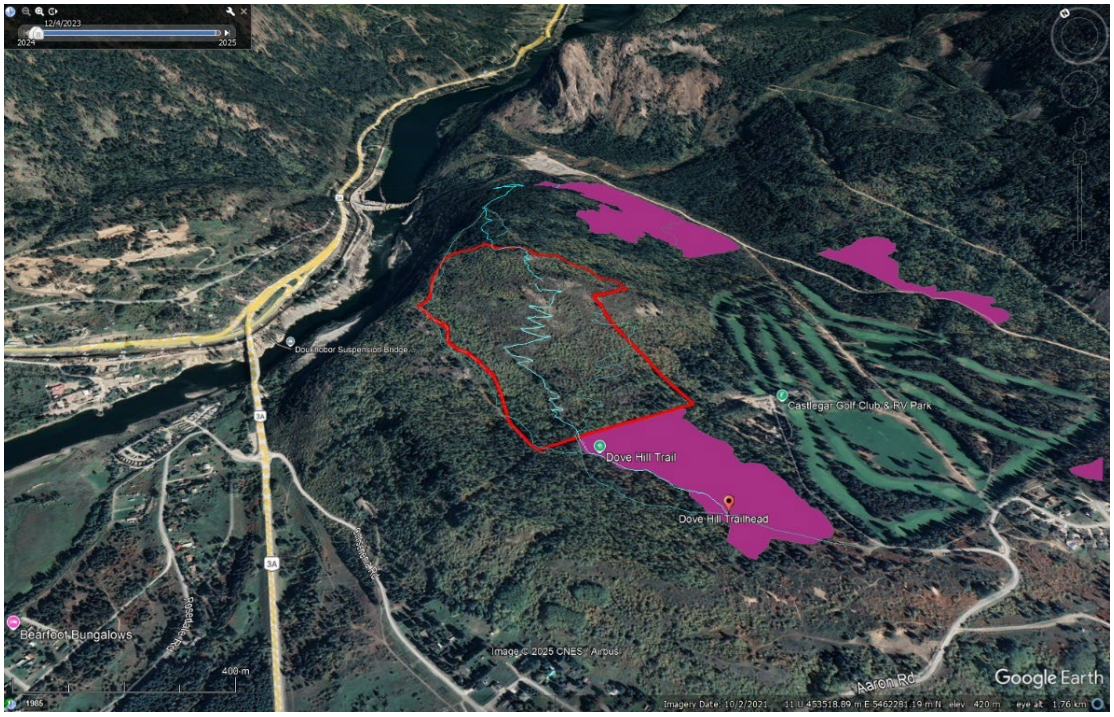


Figure 1. Ecosystem enhancement of red-listed brushland ecosystem, Dove Hil, east of the City of Castlegar. Total treatment area 26 ha (red boundary). Ongoing Wildfire Risk Reduction project, Airport Creek (purple).

Contact

For more information or to provide feedback, please contact:

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