



BRITISH COLUMBIA

January 6th, 2023

Reference: 634640

Lori Mindnich
Past President
Southern Interior Local Government Association
PO Box 27017 Cityview PO
Kamloops, BC, V2E 0B2
Email: lorideann2@gmail.com

Dear Lori Mindnich:

I would like to thank the delegation from the Southern Interior Local Government Association for such an informative meeting at last year's Union of British Columbia Municipalities Convention held in Whistler. I am writing to follow up on our discussion regarding funding to support communities in preparing for climate risks through more permanent mitigation measures.

The provincial and federal governments provide disaster risk reduction funding through several programs. The Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) recently announced two intakes for the Disaster Risk Reduction – Climate Change Adaptation stream under the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) administered by UBCM. This funding stream includes small-scale structural funding up to \$2 million per community. It also includes up to \$150,000 for risk assessments, planning, and mapping, and up to \$150,000 for non-structural activities such as public education. The next intake closes February 24, 2023. Additional funding for preparedness activities is also available through the CEPF (for example, Emergency Operations Centres and Training).

We invite you to reach out to Heather Stober, Manager, Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation, EMCR, to discuss the concerns you raised and options that may be available. She can be reached by email at Heather.Stober@gov.bc.ca or by phone at 778-698-4026.

EMCR does support the placement of temporary berms and dikes during a flood response; however, these are considered an emergency response measure of last resort and must be removed following the event as they are not typically engineered and maintained to ensure protection in future flooding events.

Regulated dikes (even some on private property) fall under the *Dike Maintenance Act*, which is administered by the Ministry of Forests. We invite you to reach out the Shaun Reimers at the Ministry of Forests' Regional Dike Safety Program by email at shaun.reimer@gov.bc.ca or by phone at 778-622-6826 to discuss specific concerns.

EMCR recognizes the challenges facing communities regarding volunteer availability to support evacuees receiving Emergency Support Services (ESS). The new Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) Tool, implemented this past summer, enables virtual surge support and direct payment to evacuees in order to alleviate some of the pressure. In addition, the ESS team is looking forward to engaging with communities across British Columbia in the coming months on ways to further modernize delivery of emergency supports to better meet the changing needs of communities and evacuees.

Additionally, EMCR recognizes there are concerns with the speed at which Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) payments have been issued. The November 2021 Atmospheric River event resulted in more than 2,300 applicants from homeowners, tenants, small businesses, charities, and farm owners. This is the most applicants the DFA program has ever received in its history. To respond to this historic demand on the DFA program, EMCR has taken significant steps taken to increase application throughput and adjudication speed. This includes increasing surge staffing, expanding contracting functions to private sector service providers, and also completing two phases of modernization to expand eligibility to applicants. As of November 2022, approximately 86 per cent of all applications have been adjudicated, and the remaining applications will be completed as soon as possible.

I appreciate these important opportunities to exchange ideas and share information. Through a continued partnership, I am confident we can work together to increase the safety and security of the citizens represented by the Southern Interior Local Government Association.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Rice
Parliamentary Secretary for Emergency Preparedness

CC: The Honourable Anne Kang, Minister of Municipal Affairs
Madeline Maley, Assistant Deputy Minister, Emergency Management BC
Jennifer McGuire, Assistant Deputy Minister, Emergency Management BC
Heather Stober, Manager, Emergency Management BC
Shaun Reimer, Section Head, Ministry of Forests