



# Prince Albert Grand Council

## Media Release

For Immediate Release

Thursday, September 23rd, 2021

### **PAGC revisits wildfire task force recommendations following unprecedented year of fires**

**(Treaties 5, 6, 8 & 10)** – Prince Albert Grand Council’s leadership is returning to the recommendations outlined in its Wildfire Task Force report regarding the management of wildfires in the territories of its member communities.

The 2021 wildfire season in Saskatchewan has risen at an alarming rate, with 591 wildfires burning over 864,669 hectares of land throughout the province that includes a significant loss of commercial timber. More than 2,200 community members were evacuated and received emergency assistance from the Canadian Red Cross, including Lac La Ronge Indian Band, Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, Shoal Lake Cree Nation, and Red Earth Cree Nation.

Grand Chief Brian Hardlotte said there is a need to address current fire management practices and improve the handling of evacuations into the future.

“I want to commend the efforts of our valued partners in fighting the wildfire and supporting the evacuation efforts. This past year was marked by a series of disasters, but it also displayed the resilience of our people and the generous support of many others who helped them through it,” said Hardlotte.

“We have made progress with our partners and changes have been made; however, we need to re-shift our thinking around wildfires in the midst of climate change, and it is important that we revisit the recommendations in our wildfire task force report, and look at ways to strengthen our relationship with our partners, and discuss opportunities for a closer and more integrated working relationship that will improve supports in place for disasters in the coming years,” he continued.

The recommendations include fire crew configurations, remote camp models, Type 2 and 3 fire crews, climate change factors, and the state of emergency procedures.

PAGC’s Executive, Chiefs, and Task Force members plan on meeting with officials from Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency and the Canadian Red Cross into the near future.

PAGC’s Wildfire Task Force was first created in January 2018 to review and provide recommendations to the Saskatchewan Public Service Agency (then Saskatchewan Ministry of

Environment – Wildfire Management Branch) and consists of representatives from PAGC communities who have experience in management, firefighting or emergency services.

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