

## HEARTLAND ECONOMICS

### 2009 Community Forest Wildfires

On Saturday July 18, 2009 two fires broke out in Westbank, both of which were in the Westbank Community Forest. The Glenrosa fire which was over 300 hectares was approximately 50% within the Community Forest. The Rose Valley fire, which was approximately 100 hectares was entirely in the Community Forest.



Approximately a week later a lightning strike started a fire near the western boundary of the Community Forest. Within just a few hours of this fire being reported Ministry of Forests firefighters had crews on the ground and two helicopters transporting water to the scene. With their hard work this fire was kept to less than 4 hectares.

Now that the fire season has come to an end WFN, through Heartland Economics, has been engaging the Ministry of Forests to develop rehabilitation programs for these 3 fires. In addition Lakeview Irrigation District (LID) and the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) have also been involved in addressing the Rose Valley fire. Rose Valley is of concern to LID since the reservoir is the last holding area for drinking water for 11,000 people on the west side. Any impacts to the reservoir may compromise the quality of water that LID is responsible for.

We are anticipating that this fall rehabilitation of roads and trails built during the fire will be completed.

In addition we are investigating opportunities to use these fires as outdoor classrooms by tracking the reestablishment of vegetation over time. This could turn into a great opportunity to show the membership, especially the school children, how the forest heals itself and recovers from these dramatic impacts.



If you have any questions about WFN's forestry program feel free to contact Grant Thompson at 768-5617, via email at [Grant.Thompson@wfndc.ca](mailto:Grant.Thompson@wfndc.ca) or drop in to see us at the old Grizzly office.