



THE DISTRICT OF MACKENZIE

P | 250-997-3221 info@districtofmackenzie.ca

F | 250-997-5186 districtofmackenzie.ca

February 29, 2024

Honourable Bruce Ralston  
Minister of Forests  
P.O. Box 9049 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Via Email: [FOR.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:FOR.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Dear Minister Ralston:

Northerners have a strong sense of loyalty and responsibility when it comes to neighbouring communities who often face challenges that we recognize our community could find itself in. In that spirit of kinship, at our February 26, 2024, Council meeting, the District of Mackenzie passed a resolution to provide support to Chetwynd in their efforts to maintain an Initial Attack crew in their community.

The past few years have clearly demonstrated Wildland fires are becoming more frequent, larger and have increasingly more devastating impacts to rural communities. The removal of well-trained qualified wildfire fighters in any community erodes the confidence of residents and their concerns are well founded. As has been well documented the impact of "initial attack" crews clearly demonstrates the quicker the response, the better the outcome. In addition, the Pine Pass which is the crossing of the Rocky Mountains between Mackenzie and Chetwynd is an essential transportation corridor linking the rest of BC to the Peace Region and Alberta. The removal of a fire crew in Chetwynd means longer response times to this important section of Hwy 97 North.

The District of Mackenzie respectfully requests the decision to move the Chetwynd crew to Dawson Creek be re-considered. Residents of our province are entitled to feel safe in their communities and if this decision is not reversed, the people of Chetwynd have suffered a major blow when it comes to community safety.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Atkinson".

Mayor Joan Atkinson  
District of Mackenzie

Cc: Mayor Allan Courtreille

Via Email: [ACourtoreille@gochetwynd.com](mailto:ACourtoreille@gochetwynd.com)