

CONFERENCE PROGRAM



KAMLOOPS, BC
April 12–14th, 2024

Conference Wi-Fi: Coast Kamloops
Password: wireless

NESST 2024 is being hosted by:



NESST 2024 Organizing Committee

Anita deDreu

Ashley Hare

Cathy Semchuk

Christopher Walker

Deborah Jones-Middleton

Grace Zayac

Jennifer Jones

Jennifer Pinette

Kyle McGhee

Laura Steele

Lisbeth Lieb Gott

Lori Kirschner

Marion Cousineau

Monique Weir

Patricia Culham

Ryan Good

Sonja Krug

Tanya Spooner

Trina Bysouth

Wendi Omeasoo

Wendy Ackeral

Welcome to NESST!

Weyt-kp xwexwéyep, Hello Everyone and welcome to the 11th Annual Network of Emergency Support Services Teams Conference!

This event is being held on the traditional territory of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, we thank them for allowing us to come together on this beautiful land to learn and play together. We are also grateful to the City of Kamloops for opening their community to us. We are so excited to be here, this is the first time the NESST has been hosted outside of northern BC.

There are delegates from across the province attending this event, some are joining us in-person and others are joining virtually. We hope how ever you are joining us that this is a great opportunity to learn and network together.

This years theme is “At the Heart of the Response”, this has always been the role of ESS and we are so proud of the work that everyone engaged in ESS does to support residents affected by an evacuation.

The NESST Organizing Committee has worked to bring people who with differing perspective and experiences to help you expand your knowledge and skills in providing caring and compassionate support to those you serve. They have also found new and unique ways to help you get to know each other.

This event is possible in large part to the wonderful sponsors, their donations provide us with funding to assist in reducing the cost of your attendance and providing you with new tools and resources.

Personally I want to thank each and every ESS volunteer in BC for your dedication to training and exercising your skills so you can bring the best support possible to your friends and neighbors impacted by an evacuation.

From my heart to yours,

Deborah Jones-Middleton
NESST Organizing Committee
Chair & Founder



NESST Society Board of Directors

**Deborah Jones-Middleton,
President**

Regional District of
Bulkley-Nechako

**Tanya Spooner,
Vice President**
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**John Illes
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**Lisbeth Liebgott
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**Kyle McGhee
Director**
City of Prince George

**Ryan Good
Director**
Health Emergency
Management BC

**Anita deDreu
Director**
Regional District of
Fraser Fort George



WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR

On behalf of my colleagues on Council and the citizens of Kamloops, it is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to the 2024 NESST Conference participants and organisers. The conference is being hosted in Kamloops, BC from April 12th to 14th at the Coast Hotel.

We welcome all ESS volunteers that work so tirelessly for the betterment of our communities during times of desperate need. Kamloops is a central hub in the Interior and our Emergency Support Services team are no strangers to jumping into action. They have assisted thousands of people facing evacuations due to natural disasters in recent years. We have seen first-hand the amazing volunteerism from our community, generously donating their time to helping those in need. And to all involved we are grateful.

We would like to express our gratitude to the organising committee for choosing Kamloops to host this year's conference. This being the first time the conference is being hosted outside of Prince George. We are honoured to play a role in this regional planning and preparedness conference.

Please enjoy all that Kamloops has to offer while you are here. We wish everyone a productive and enjoyable experience at the 2024 ESS NESST Conference.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Reid Hamer-Jackson'.

Reid Hamer-Jackson
Mayor

/cc

AGENDA: Friday, April 12, 2024

Time	Event	Speaker/Instructor	Location
PRE-CONFERENCE EVENTS			
0800 - 1600	ESSD - EPC Meeting		Salon AB
0830 - 1600	Evacuation Registration Assistance Program Pilot #1	<i>JIBC Instructor</i>	Columbia
0830 - 1600	Evacuation Registration Assistance Program Pilot #2	<i>JIBC Instructor</i>	Ida
2024 NESST CONFERENCE			
1630 - 1900	Registration Open		Conference Entrance
1730	No Host Bar Opens		Ballroom ABC
1800 - 1815	NESST Conference Welcome & Opening Words	Deborah Jones-Middleton <i>NESST President</i> Tanya Spooner <i>NESST Vice President</i>	
1815 - 1900	KEYNOTE: BC Ombudsperson Report	Jay Chalke <i>Ombudsperson</i>	
1900	Dinner		
1930 - 22:00	Networking/Reception		

AGENDA: Saturday, April 13, 2024

Time	Event	Speaker/Instructor	Location
0630	Registration Open		Conference Entrance
0700 - 0800	Breakfast		Ballroom ABC
0750 - 0800	Opening Words & Announcements		
0830 - 1600	Quiet Room		Vista
0830 - 1600	Information Tables		Ida
0830 - 1000	ESS STREAM: Responding With Empathy	Susan Viveros <i>Skeena Valley ESS</i>	Salon AB
	ESS STREAM: Panel: Host Communities, Evacuation Registration Assistance, and Remote Mutual Aid	Marty Convery <i>Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness</i> Tanya Spooner & Kyle McGhee <i>City of Prince George</i> Lori Kirschner <i>City of Kamloops</i> Audrey McKinnon <i>Bulkley ESS</i>	Ballroom ABC
	ESS STREAM: Central Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre Tour	Andrew Morrison <i>Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness</i>	Meet in the Conference Entrance
	DPS STREAM: Welcome & Intro Team to Health Emergency Management BC Provincial Psychosocial	Dave Hutton <i>Health Emergency Management BC</i>	Mezzanine
1000 - 1030	Coffee Break - Networking & Information Table Opportunity		

AGENDA: Saturday, April 13, 2024 - Continued

Time	Event	Speaker/Instructor	Location
1030 - 1155	ESS STREAM: Responding With Empathy Continued	Susan Viveros <i>Skeena Valley ESS</i>	Salon AB
	ESS STREAM: Panel: Host Communities, Evacuation Registration Assistance, and Remote Mutual Aid	Marty Convery <i>Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness</i> Tanya Spooner & Kyle McGhee <i>City of Prince George</i> Lori Kirschner <i>City of Kamloops</i> Audrey McKinnon <i>Bulkley ESS</i>	Ballroom ABC
	ESS STREAM: First Nations' Emergency Services Society 101	Wendi Omeasoo <i>First Nations' Emergency Services Society</i>	Columbia
	DPS STREAM: Psychosocial Support Partner Panel	Dave Hutton <i>Health Emergency Management BC</i>	Mezzanine
1200 - 1300	Lunch - Networking & Information Table Opportunity		
1300 - 1430	ESS STREAM: Meet & Greet	Major Retired Ginny Kristensen <i>Salvation Army</i>	Salon AB
	ESS STREAM: Rural Reception Centres	Sonja Krug <i>Skeena Valley ESS</i>	Ballroom ABC
	ESS STREAM: Working with ERA & Paper	Monique Weir <i>City of Mission</i>	Columbia
	DPS STREAM: Central PREOC VISIT	Andrew Morrison <i>Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness</i>	Meet in the Conference Entrance
1430 - 1500	Coffee Break - Networking & Information Table Opportunity		
1500 - 1625	ESS STREAM: Meet & Greet Continued	Major Retired Ginny Kristensen <i>Salvation Army</i>	Salon AB
	ESS STREAM: Health Emergency Management BC	Tamara Sommer <i>Health Emergency Management BC</i>	Columbia
	ESS STREAM: Cultural Safety & Trauma Informed Practices in Reception Centres	Nicole Cahoose <i>First Nations Health Authority</i>	Ballroom ABC
	DPS STREAM: Choose from one of the three In-Person Sessions above		
1630	NESST Society AGM		Columbia

Official Hotel Host for NESST 2024!



COAST
kamloops hotel &
conference centre™

Thank you!

AGENDA: Saturday Evening, April 13, 2024

Time	Event	Speaker/Instructor	Location
1700	No Host Bar Opens		Ballroom ABC
1745 - 1815	Keynote: How Small Communities Can Respond to Large Events and Succeed - A Case Study of the South Okanagan Similkameen	Mel Kotyk <i>Keremeos ESS</i>	
1830 - 1930	Dinner		
1930 - 2000	Keynote: Premier's Expert Task Force on Emergencies	Tanya Spooner <i>City of Prince George Emergency Program Coordinator</i>	
	Networking		

AGENDA: Sunday, April 14, 2024

0630	Registration Open		Conference Entrance
0700 - 0800	Breakfast		Ballroom ABC
0800 - 1100	Breakouts with Regional Emergency Management & Climate Readiness Planners/Managers - Get to know who you're working with		
11:00 - 1130	Keynote: Minister Ma <i>Emergency Management & Climate Readiness</i>		
1130 - 1200	NESST Wrap Up		



CITY OF
PRINCE GEORGE

Watch for the NESST 2025 Dates to be announced on Facebook soon

2024 NESST Keynote Speakers



Jay Chalke 2024 Ombudsperson Report

Ombudsperson
Province of British Columbia

Jay Chalke was appointed Ombudsperson in May 2015 by unanimous motion of the Legislative Assembly and reappointed to a second six-year term starting July 1st, 2021. In his role as the Ombudsperson, Jay has led several wide-reaching systemic investigations, including the first referral of a matter to the Ombudsperson by the legislative committee. That investigation resulted in the 2017 report, *Misfire: The 2012 Ministry of Health Employment Terminations and Related Matters*, the most resource intensive investigation in the 40-year history of the Ombudsperson's office in BC. As Ombudsperson, Jay also recognized the need to share the office's 40 years of fairness expertise and established a permanent team dedicated to preventing unfairness in public service delivery. Jay is currently overseeing the implementation of the first material change in the office's mandate: the addition of the Ombudsperson's responsibilities to investigate allegations of wrongdoing and reprisals under BC's new whistleblowing protection law, the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*.

Jay has an extensive background in executive leadership, conducting fair and independent investigations and the use of modern technologies to dispute resolution. From 2011 to 2015, Jay led the Justice Services branch of the Ministry of Justice and was responsible for delivering justice services and fostering dialogue and collaboration across the justice system.

Prior to his appointment with the Ministry of Justice, Jay was the first Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia from 2000 to 2011. During this time, he was instrumental in implementing lasting changes to modernize service delivery, improve collaboration with stakeholders, and enhance public accountability. He was also a member of Canada's delegation to the Hague Conference on Private International Law, which negotiated on the Protection of Adults.

Earlier in his career, Jay held a variety of public sector positions including Deputy Public Guardian and Trustee of Ontario, Head of the Review on Certain Practices in New Brunswick Correctional Institutions, and Crown Council with the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General. He began his career as a Correctional and Psychiatric Services Investigator with the Ombudsperson of Ontario.

Jay is a member of the Law Society of British Columbia, and was appointed King's Council in 2006.



Mel Kotyk R.P. Bio, ESSD Keremeos ESS

Mel Kotyk is a Professional Biologist and the newly minted ESSD for Keremeos. In 2021, as a team of two, Mel and his wife were thrown into the world of ESS resulting from a series of evacuations due to wildfires and landslides. Through the leadership and support of neighboring ESS teams, the needs of the community were met.

ESS-Keremeos now has 14 volunteers and strong community support, and are positioned to repay others for the support received.

2024 NESST Keynote Speakers



Tanya Spooner Premier's Taskforce on Emergencies

*Emergency Program Coordinator
City of Prince George,*

Tanya Spooner is a former ESSD and now works as the Manager of Emergency Programs for the City of Prince George. She has been involved in Emergency Support Services (ESS) since the mid-90s, has held a leadership role in the Prince George ESS team for the past 20 years, and was the Fire Chief for the Cluculz Lake Volunteer Fire Department for 7 years. In October 2023, Tanya was named to the Premier's Expert Task on Emergencies and Wildfire and has done considerable work to advocate for ESS teams and local government to bring recommendations for the 2024 wildfire season.

Tanya holds a diploma in Business Administration from the University of Victoria and a Certificate in Emergency Management from the Justice Institute of British Columbia. She has worked in various roles in Municipal Government since she was 16 year old in areas including Parks & Recreation, Human Resources, Systems, and the Office of the Mayor/City Manager. This combination of operational, administrative and strategic experience allows her brings a unique perspective to her Emergency Programs role. Tanya held key ESS roles during the 2007 Ice Jam event, the 2011 Victoria Towers fire in Prince George and in the 2017 and 2018 wildfire evacuations, during which Prince George Reception Centre's hosted more than 13,000 evacuees, and several small host community activations in the past 5 years.



Honourable Bowinn Ma NESST Wrap Up

*Minister of Emergency Management
and Climate Readiness*

Bowinn Ma is British Columbia's Minister of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness. She is a licensed professional engineer with a degree in civil engineering, a master's degree from the UBC Sauder School of Business, and a certified project-management professional.

Bowinn previously served as minister of state for Infrastructure, delivering major capital transportation infrastructure projects and supporting highway recovery efforts following the atmospheric river events of November 2021. An advocate for environmentally and socially responsible transportation, Bowinn brought a strong focus on climate resiliency and low-carbon transportation systems to her work as minister of state.

In 2018, Bowinn led the Integrated North Shore Transportation Planning Project, which set the stage for a rapid transit concept for the North Shore and continues to guide regional transportation planning for all levels of government in the area.

She has also served as parliamentary secretary for TransLink and chair of the Select Standing Committee on Crown Corporations, where she led an all-party committee to develop recommendations for Transportation Network Services in British Columbia.

Before being elected MLA for North Vancouver-Lonsdale in 2017, Bowinn managed terminal expansion and redevelopment projects at the Vancouver International Airport. She is the Canadian-born daughter of Taiwanese immigrants and lives in North Vancouver with her husband, daughter and two cats.

2024 NESST Speakers/Instructors



Audrey McKinnon

Deputy ESSD, Bulkley ESS

Audrey has been a volunteer with Bulkley ESS for 5 years. Currently, she is a Deputy ESSD and training officer for the BESS team. She brings her passion for improving communication as a Speech-Language Pathologist into developing the multi-dimensional skill set required to be an effective ESS responder. As a relative newcomer to the field of emergency management, you know Audrey is in the room by the copious notes she takes, the flutter of post-it notes, and the endless questions she asks; frequently punctuated by “tell me more about that”. Her motto: “Be curious. Listen. Learn.”



Alagamił —Nicole Norris

Indigenous Planning Officer —Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

Knowledge holder, language preserver and regalia maker for the Northwest Coast Cultural Practitioner across 73 nations across the province of BC and down into Washington State. Previous to being the Indigenous Planning Officer with EMCR, she is an intergovernmental communicator carrying dialogue around aboriginal rights and title, child welfare, repatriations, fish farms, railway and land claims; in addition to be a facilitator of stages of treaty, aquaculture methodology and cultural safety since 1995.



Farrah Simpson

ESS Specialist — Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness

Farrah has been working in the field of Emergency Management for 11 years. She has been with the Provincial Emergency Support Services Program Office since 2018 where she started as the ESS Training Specialist before becoming the ESS Specialist and has supported many large events leading the ESS Branch within the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre. Prior to that, Farrah was an Emergency Manager with the Ministry of Health's Emergency Management Unit. She also volunteered with her own communities' ESS Team, on the Wasanec Territory, the Saanich Peninsula, on Vancouver Island where she gratefully calls home with her firefighter husband and three children. Farrah is honored to be sharing the Heart-centered work around Cultural Safety & Humility in ESS alongside her deeply valued and compassionate colleagues.



Ginny Kristensen

ESD Trainer The Salvation Army

Originally from Alberta, I have lived in BC (3 times), Alberta and Ontario. Since retirement in 2018, I have made my home in Cranbrook. The reason - 3 grandchildren live there. I have been involved with The Salvation Army since the mid 1990's and an officer (clergy) since 2000. In that time, I have been posted to Cranbrook, Toronto, Ottawa and Trail. I have been privileged to respond to a variety of emergencies and disasters ranging from forest fires, floods to bus/train crashes. My passion is to walk with survivors as they traverse this journey from disaster to recovery and wholeness. I am also passionate about equipping other volunteers to do the same.

2024 NESST Speakers/Instructors



Kyle McGhee

Coordinator of Emergency Programs, City of Prince George

Kyle has been with the City of Prince George since June of 2021 in various roles including ESS representative and Zamboni driver and has been the Coordinator of Emergency Programs since May of 2022. Kyle began his career in emergency response as a Jr. Firefighter with the Quesnel Fire Department when he was 16, and has volunteered in many organizations such as Pilot Mountain VFD, Prince George Regional Highway Rescue and others. During his time with the City of Prince George, Kyle has participated in many emergency activations including as the Planning Section Chief for the District of Hudson's Hope EOC during the Battleship Mountain wildfire evacuations, ESS Branch Coordinator for the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako during the 2023 wildfires, oversaw a remote ESS Call Centre supporting the Central Okanagan Wildfire Evacuations and both warming and cooling centres during periods of extreme weather. Kyle is also involved with the British Columbia Association of Emergency Managers as a Director.

When Kyle isn't fighting with printers and computers in a EOC or Reception Centre, he enjoys spending time with his family.



Lori Kirschner

Emergency Support Services—City of Kamloops

Hello, I still consider myself new to ESS as I just joined in 2021. Currently I'm a Deputy Director of the Kamloops ESS team but have filled several roles. As Kamloops has been a Host to many disasters over the years, we have adapted our team to support. I truly enjoy being part of such an amazing team. As for my day job, well it's equally large. I am a Financial Officer with the Department of National Defense (working remotely). So I also look at disasters from a different side of the coin. I was born in Kamloops and am very happy to be back after living in several different cities like Kelowna and Yellowknife.



Martin Convery

*ERA Integration & Coordination Officer
Ministry of Emergency Management & Climate Readiness*

Martin started with EMCR on an temporary basis, helping launch a contact centre to aid residents who were evacuated in the 2021 Wildfire and Atmospheric River events. His work during the Atmospheric River event involved the coordination of remote ESS teams across the province to assist the Kamloops Reception Centre, utilizing the Evacuee Registration and Assistance tool. Since joining the EMCR ESS Modernization team in January 2022, Martin continues to collaborate with developers and responders to fine tune the ERA tool to suit the unique needs of the communities, as well as facilitate transition and onboarding sessions for First Nations and local government ESS teams, and provide ongoing support as a dedicated ERA resource.



2024 NESST Speakers/Instructors



Monique Weir

Mission ESS

Monique began her involvement with Mission ESS in 2018 as a newly minted volunteer. Soon after, she was offered the role of ESSD. Since then, she has attended almost 100 structure fires in her community, deployed provincially and set up remote reception centers using ERA. As Emergency Program Manager for the City of Mission, she continues to hold the role of ESSD. She is passionate about ESS and using the ERA tool.



Nicole Cahoose

First Nations Health Authority

Nicole Cahoose, a member of the Dakelh Nation with roots in Nagwunt'loo (Anahim Lake, BC) and Nadleh Whut'en, B.C., serves as the Program Manager for Health Emergency Management on the provincial Mental Wellness Team at the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA). With a Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology and a Bachelor of Social Work Degree, Nicole brings a wealth of expertise to her role.

Drawing from her experience as a Crisis Counsellor in remote and rural communities, Nicole is dedicated to spearheading crisis response initiatives and fostering robust partnerships with Indigenous communities and health stakeholders. Her work focuses on crafting culturally safe services, establishing effective crisis pathways, and enhancing community capacity. Nicole's commitment extends beyond her professional role; she is also a dedicated foster parent and active volunteer, contributing to various community organizations. Her contribution to published works reflect her passion for empowering Indigenous communities and advancing mental health awareness.

With a keen interest in bridging Western mental health practices with Indigenous ways of knowing and healing, Nicole is an ASIST-trained, Critical Incident Group De-briefer and Crisis Response Planning Trainer. She finds fulfillment in facilitating group work and collaborating with communities to nurture cultural revitalization and youth development, embodying her passion for fostering resilience and well-being within Indigenous communities.



Sonja Krug

Skeena Valley ESS

Hi, my name is Sonja and I have been in ESS for 12 years and been a volunteer ESSD for the past 7 years with the Skeena Valley Team in Terrace. I really enjoy documentation and have been lucky enough to fill the roll of reception centre manager. ESS is something that I am passionate about and I have learned so much in my time with the organization—I look forward to learning more. In my day job I am a bookkeeper for a company that I co-own. I enjoy fishing, quadding and camping in my off time.



2024 NESST Speakers/Instructors



Susan Viveiros

RSW, CCC — Counsellor, Private Practice

Susan Viveiros, is a Canadian Certified Counsellor. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work degree from the University of Victoria and a Masters of Education Counselling from the University of Northern British Columbia. Susan operates a private practice providing one to one counselling support for women, men, families, and adolescents as well as responding to critical incidents. She has been a volunteer with the Skeena Valley ESS team since 2015 and joined the DPS in 2023.



Tamara Sommer

*Health Emergency Management BC
HEMBC/Interior Health*

For three years, I've served on the Interior Health Emergency Management team as both the HEM Indigenous Liaison and the HEM Specialist for the North Okanagan region. Throughout my tenure, I've played a significant role in coordinating responses to the 2021 Wildfire and Atmospheric River events, as well as the 2023 Wildfire Response. My primary focus has been on enhancing support for Emergency Support Services sites and local governments in health-related emergency needs. Moving forward, I am committed to nurturing these partnerships to ensure we prioritize the well-being of both our responders and the individuals we serve.



Wendi Omeasoo

First Nation's Emergency Services Society of BC

Hello, my name is Wendi Omeasoo, I was born and raised in Abbotsford, BC and moved to Prince Rupert in 1998 where my husband and I raised our 2 daughters. For the past 30 years I have volunteered in many organizations, from Treasurer and Recorder keeper for Prince Rupert Swim Club, Record Keeper for YBC, and Secretary - Treasurer for CUPE 411 and an ESS volunteer for the City of Chilliwack for 11 years. The Chilliwack ESS Team was very active in 2021 supporting evacuees from the Lytton Wildfires and the Atmospheric River event. In January of 2023, I accepted the role as ESS Director. I started with FNESS in July of 2022 as a Training Officer, providing online and in-person Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and Emergency Support Services (ESS) training for First Nation communities across the province. I am very fortunate to work with the FNESS Team to support communities to develop their emergency programs and provide guidance to build capacity and resiliency through training.



Emergency Management & Climate Readiness Regional Managers



Christopher McLean
Northwest Regional Manager

Christopher McLean is an EMCR Regional Manager working out of the Northwest Regional Office in Smithers BC on the Traditional Territory of the Wet'suwet'en Peoples. He has been working in this capacity with EMCR since 2021. Christopher's primary focus is supporting First Nations, local authorities and Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer groups that are located within the geographic boundaries of the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako. Christopher has experience in the field of emergency management dating back to 2002 (aka the PEP days), having been a member of 3 different SAR groups (currently active with Bulkley Valley SAR), 2 volunteer fire departments (one as a Fire Chief), a dog handler with the Canadian Avalanche Rescue Dog Association (dog's name was Chephren - best dog ever!) and several different roles within the provincial government. 'The people I work with in my current role with EMCR have an amazing passion for ESS. It is my pleasure and honour to do whatever I can to support their passion'.



David Schadt
Vancouver Island Regional Manager

David is an uninvited settler within sovereign Nuxalk territory in Bella Coola and has been with EMCR (previously EMBC) for the past 16 years. Throughout his time with the ministry he has filled numerous positions around the organization. He started back in 2008 in the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC), supported the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre (PECC) and the Provincial Regional Operations Centres (PREOCs) around the province through several notably large events over the years, moved into an Emergency Management Technician role to directly support a region to improve their PREOC readiness, and for the past 3 years has been operating as a Regional Manager as part of the Vancouver Island Coastal (VIC) Region. Although remote, David continues to support the VIC team in leadership, mentorship, PREOC readiness, PREOC response all while supporting all the remote communities within the Central Coastal 25,000 km². He, his wife, and their two sons Edward (19) and Daniel (18) have spent the previous twelve years on the territory of the Wsanec and Lkwungen Speaking Peoples (Saanichton/Victoria). His wonderful wife works for the Central Coast Regional District and has recently launched her custom clothing branded apparel. Leisurly, David enjoys giving back to the community (10 years with Scouts Canada as a Scout Leader), and hosting social events for friends and colleagues. Outdoors, David kayaks, fishes (poorly), and hikes. Indoors, David has a passion for gaming (Video/Card/Board gaming) and holds a soft spot for Dungeons & Dragons.



Farrah Simpson
Emergency Support Services Specialist

Farrah has been working in the field of Emergency Management for 11 years. She has been with the Provincial Emergency Support Services Program Office since 2018 where she started as the ESS Training Specialist before becoming the ESS Specialist and has supported many large events leading the ESS Branch within the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre. Prior to that, Farrah was an Emergency Manager with the Ministry of Health's Emergency Management Unit. She also volunteered with her own communities' ESS Team, on the Wasanec Territory, the Saanich Peninsula, on Vancouver Island where she gratefully calls home with her Firefighter husband and three children. Farrah is honoured to be sharing the heart-centered work around Cultural Safety & Humility in ESS alongside her deeply valued and compassionate colleagues.



Jeff Owens
South West Regional Manager



Kevin Coppock
Northeast Regional Manager

Greetings! I am a Regional Manager with EMCR's Northeast office, based in Williams Lake. I started my journey with EMCR in the summer of 2022. I have more than twenty years of experience responding to disasters around the world, mostly with Doctors Without Borders, where I currently serve as a Board Director. I have a Master of Professional Studies in Emergency and Disaster Management.



Leah Smith
Acting Director of Emergency Support Services

Leah first joined the BC Public Service in 2008 and has spent most of her career at the Ministry of Health and health-related organizations. Leah has been privileged to learn from and lead diverse teams in the implementation of new policies, programs and legislation designed to ensure that British Columbians can access safe and appropriate services when they need them most. In 2023, Leah joined the Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness, where she had continued her passion for supporting people and communities through the Emergency Support Services program.



Lindsay Smith
Central & Southeast ESS Planner

Hello! My name is Lindsay Smith and I am the ESS Planner for the Central and Southeast Regions. I have been with the EMCR ESS Program since May 2018. I started out as the ESS Coordinator and provided assistance as Deputy Branch Coordinator in the ESS branch in the PECC through activations in 2018 to 2021 and was ESS Branch coordinator for the Central PREOC during Atmospheric River 2021. Last year I was extremely lucky to become the ESS Planner for the Central and Southeast regions and was Evac Branch Coordinator for the Southern Interior PREOC last summer.



Lisa Dafoe
Vancouver Island Coastal ESS Regional Planner

Lisa has been the ESS Regional Planning Officer for the Vancouver Island Coastal region since October 2023. Before transitioning in her new role, Lisa was the ESS Deployment Coordination Officer and deployed approximately 50 ESS responders last summer to support host communities and evacuees.

With an education in Natural Resource Management and 20 years in the BC Public Services, Lisa comes with a diverse work history. Her career deviated where she spent over 10 years with the Ministry of Finance in public information where she specialized in creative forms design (and yes, she still really loves a good form). Prior to joining EMCR, she was a Policy Analyst with the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills. Lisa discovered her admiration for emergency management when she became an enthusiastic TEAMS member in 2018.

In Lisa's words - I am very grateful to have been born and raised on Vancouver Island on the Traditional Territories of the Kwakwaka'wakw, WSÁNEĆ and the Lekwungen peoples. I enjoy spending time in nature with my family, reading and participating in group fitness classes. I find joy in coffee, pastries and a good GIF.



Martin Convery
Evacuation Registration Assistance Integration Officer

Martin started with EMCR on an temporary basis, helping launch a contact centre to aid residents who were evacuated in the 2021 Wildfire and Atmospheric River events. His work during the Atmospheric River event involved the coordination of remote ESS teams across the province to assist the Kamloops Reception Centre, utilizing the Evacuee Registration and Assistance tool. Since joining the EMCR ESS Modernization team in January 2022, Martin continues to collaborate with developers and responders to fine tune the ERA tool to suit the unique needs of the communities, as well as facilitate transition and onboarding sessions for First Nations and local government ESS teams, and provide ongoing support as a dedicated ERA resource.



Nicole Norris
Indigenous Planning Officer

Knowledge holder, language preserver and regalia maker for the Northwest Coast Cultural Practitioner across 73 nations across the province of BC and down into Washington State. Previous to being the Indigenous Planning Officer with EMCR, she is an intergovernmental communicator carrying dialogue around aboriginal rights and title, child welfare, repatriations, fish farms, railway and land claims; in addition to be a facilitator of stages of treaty, aquaculture methodology and cultural safety since 1995.

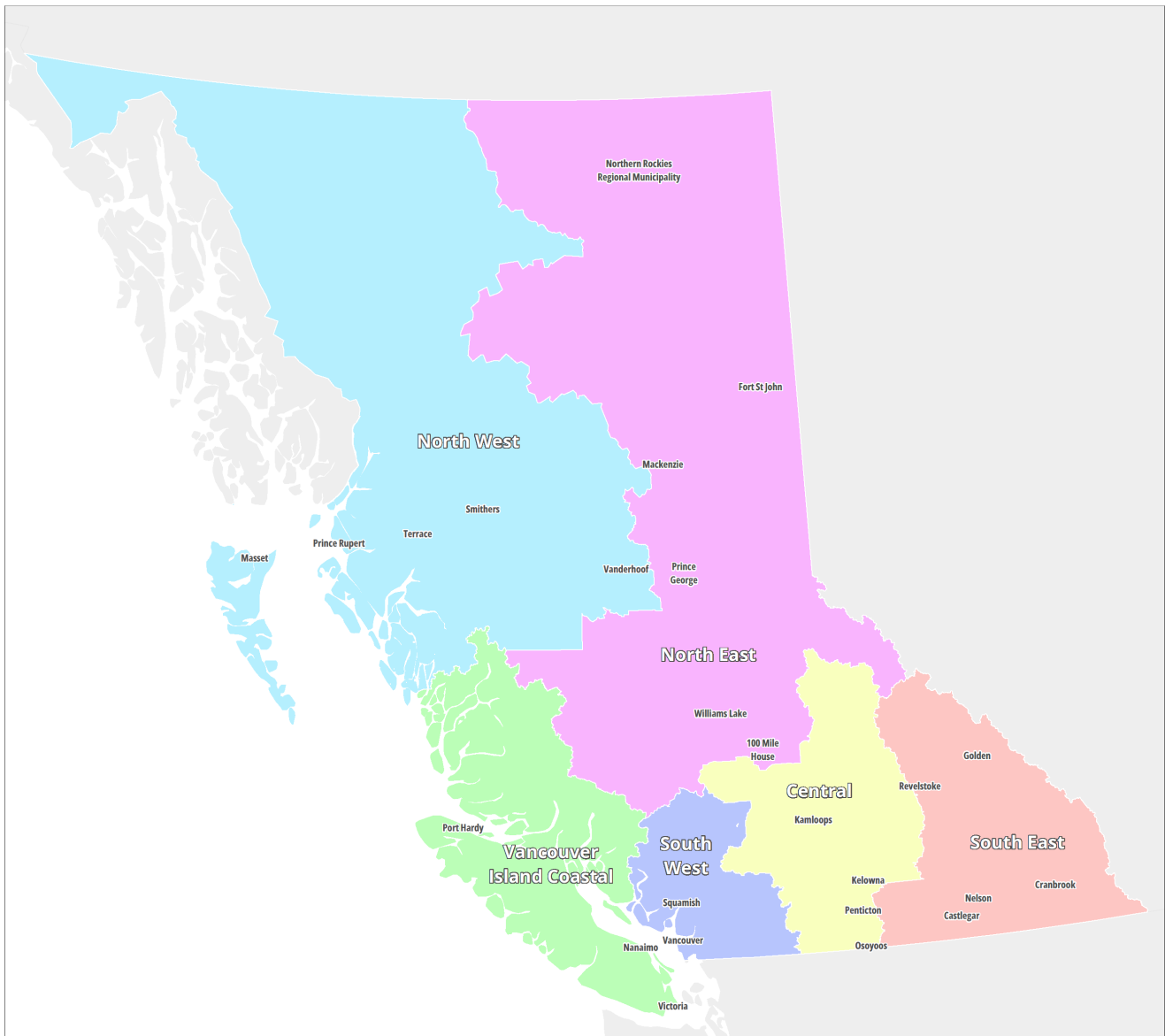


Robyn Hockey
North East Regional Manager

I am fortunate to have spent the last two years working with and learning from the Northeast Regional Office team before becoming the ESS Regional Planner in the North. I continue to expand my emergency management knowledge into Emergency Support Services and enjoy connecting with our Northern Communities. In my personal time I love spending time with family and friends exploring the outdoors in and around Prince George, working in the yard and walking our dog. I'm looking forward to taking a winter holiday to soak up some of the sun I've missed this summer, working in the PREOC during this very active wildfire season.



Emergency Management Regions



Region	Location
Vancouver Island	Victoria – EMBC.VICAdmin@gov.bc.ca
South West	Surrey – EMBC.SWEAdmin@gov.bc.ca
Central	Kamloops – EMBC.CTLAdmin@gov.bc.ca
South East	Nelson – EMBC.SEAdmin@gov.bc.ca
North East	Prince George – EMBC.NEAdmin@gov.bc.ca
North West	Terrace – EMBC.NWEAdmin@gov.bc.ca

At the Heart of the Response

Dedicated hearts like you
Are not easy to find.
It takes a special person to be
So generous and kind.

To care so much for your community
Is a quality all too rare.
You give of your time and talents,
For all in need of care.

So thank you for being a volunteer,
We're privileged to work alongside you.
We want you to know how appreciated you are,
Not just during response, but the whole year
through.



GAMIFICATION

My NESST Experience Video: Do a “My NESST Experience” video and get your name in the draw. Christopher Walker will be set up in the Ida room during all the breaks on Saturday.

People I Met: You have received a sheet of paper in your bags that with the names of the communities the people who have registered live in, in case we missed some locations we have some extra blank squares there too. Get the person you met to initial the box for the community they are from. On Sunday morning please deposit your filled in card into the People I Met box located at the Registration Table.

NESST Post Event Survey: When you are completing the please enter your email address into the last question to be entered into the Survey Draw: This draw will be done when the Survey has closed. The QR Code below will take you to the appropriate survey(s) for you.



Photo contest: Upload your NESST photos to our Facebook Event Page, using this QR Code make sure to put your full name on the photo so we know who to declare the winner.

POST NESST SURVEY

Your Opinion Matters

The NESST Organizing Committee really wants to hear from you about your NESST experience. We review all the survey results, please complete the survey below for the events you attended.



NESST Conference Survey

NESST Virtual Conference



ESSD/EPC Meeting Survey



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