

ELWOA has looked into becoming a FireSmart partner. We live in this beautiful forestland, but with it comes responsibility.

In light of:

- the Fort MacMurray fire and its similarity to our limited access/egress location with only one highway in an out of Elliot Lake
- and the fact that we had 2 forest fires this spring
 - one on Quirke Lake which was very close to Bobcat Trail and
 - one on the Little White Highway which blocked a northern escape route from Elliot Lake

We need to be vigilant about fire safety. This project needs to extend beyond ELWOA members to all of our neighbours. I am hoping that this will not be an ELWOA project, but an Elliot Lake project. Everyone should come on board to keep our properties and loved ones safe.

I just spoke to Jim Murphy, Provincial Fire Advisor for FireSmart Ontario. Jim had come up last year along with Mike Kane from the MNR in Sault Ste. Marie, and made notes about the type of forest and properties on the 3 lakes (Dunlop, Quirke and Popeye).

Jim will come back to Elliot Lake on Wednesday, June 29 to get us started on the **FireSmart registration** and implementation of our program. We will meet at my house at 9:00 a.m. to do the initial work.

- he will **outline the plan** for our area based on his findings from his visit last year
- we sign the paperwork to **become registered** as a FireSmart Program participant. He will explain again what this entails.
- then we will drive around a bit to be **instructed** in what hazards to look for
- next he would like to pick a property to actually do a demonstration clearing. The best way to learn is to do. So you will need to bring:
 - sturdy boots/shoes
 - gloves
 - pruners
 - pruning saw
 - NO chainsaws(If it is too difficult to participate, watching is good so that you can direct your spouse??!)

The day might last until 4:00 ish.

Rick Way's property on Popeye was a great place to start, as Jim had seen it before. However, as Rick will be away, he asked about a property west of DSR boat launch as that is where the more problematic trees are. There are some areas on Quirke as well that we may have to explore.

We can work out the property later.

The whole purpose of the demonstration part is to:

- educate interested people about how to recognize problem areas and learn how to deal with them
- to then be able to educate others
 - by working with property owners. They in turn can advise others about the need to examine the problem areas on their own property
 - AND by having others see FireSmart representatives doing the work. Other property owner may then become interested in being educated about their property safety

It would also be a good way to get acquainted with our neighbours (and maybe increase our membership as an aside).

I am hoping that we could have a representative in each of the same areas as we cover with our ELWOA reps. The FireSmart reps DO NOT have to be ELWOA members, but they can be. So if you or you know of someone who might be interested in attending this workshop and information session, please let me know. At least come out to see what the program entails.

RSVP to me to let me know who would like to attend. That way I can have coffee and tea and goodies available.

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Thank you for your interest and assistance in advance.