

Drones count the costs of the 2017 B.C. wildfires

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Researchers at the University of British Columbia are using drones to survey the aftermath of the 2017 wildfires in B.C.

"Currently, we are testing the use of drones for various forestry applications, including [fire](#) burn assessment following the 2017 wildfires," said Nicholas Coops, Canada Research Chair in Remote Sensing and professor in forest resources management at UBC.

Coops and his students have partnered with a B.C.-based [drone](#) company, FYBR, on the project.

"We are working on a range of sites in B.C. that address the needs of the forest industry. We have some spots on the coast where we're going to be taking inventory of high-value timber, and in the Interior where we are capturing the 2017 fires."

Besides providing basic information like how big the fire was, the images acquired from the drones can also be converted into detailed 3D models. The 3D models provide information on the centimetre scale – a level of detail that cannot be obtained with traditional fire survey methods, such as [satellite imagery](#).

"Drones are a really exceptional technology that we're starting to use more and more of: we can observe the effect and severity of the fire on each individual tree and use all this information to really understand the general patterns in which fires occur in B.C.," said Coops.

The project will also look at using drones for other forestry applications such as monitoring the regeneration of [trees](#) after harvesting, mapping tree locations, determining tree species and assessing tree health as well as mapping the forest floor.

Provided by University of British Columbia

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