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Hay there!

Delta farmers led by Delta South MLA Ian Paton, far left, have loaded nearly 800 bales of hay on three trucks destined for Sageview Ranch in Kamloops to feed livestock displaced by wildfires in the region. Hay was donated by Danny Sherrell, Peter and Joe Vaupotic, Morgan Thompson, Scott Harris and Paton, and trucking was provided by Mike Wolzen. *PAM PATON*

Wildfire response improves

Ranchers play a key role

KATE AYERS & TOM WALKER

FALKLAND – This year’s wildfire response has benefitted from significant improvement in the working relationship between farmers, ranchers and provincial response teams, but property access remains a key issue.

Unpredictable conditions continued last month as fast-moving wildfires burned through 865,000 acres by August 24, surpassing the 20th century record of 855,000 hectares set in 1958. With rain still scarce, the final area could well approach the all-time record of 1.3 million hectares burned in 2018.

“This is the most volatile fire season I have ever seen,” Mark Healey, incident commander with the BC

See FIRE on next page ↗

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Bad timing for election call

PETER MITHAM

OTTAWA – Voters will go to the polls September 20 after the governor general approved Justin Trudeau’s request to dissolve parliament.

By law, a federal election wasn’t necessary until 2023 and the ongoing wildfires in BC mean it’s hardly welcomed in many parts of this province.

“We’re disappointed [by] an election being called while BC is currently dealing with a wildfire crisis,” says Danielle Synotte, executive director of the BC Agriculture Council. “As

we were in the midst of preparing for the next ag policy framework, we hope that the election won’t cause any program disruptions.”

BCAC is represented at the national level by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, which has promised to work “diligently during the lead-up to the federal election to ensure that agriculture is a priority in all party platforms.”

CFA wants Ottawa to invest more deeply in rural infrastructure and support family farms, in part through measures to enhance farm

succession and “regulations addressing on-farm activism that could endanger animals and farm families.”

While the incumbent Liberals have yet to release their platform, the Conservatives expressed strong support for supply management.

Conservative promises include completing negotiations regarding compensation for concessions under CUSMA and developing an Agriculture and Agri-food Labour Strategy to address the labour shortage in Canada’s agriculture sector.

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