

## How Wildfire Will Shape Our Future

### "Firestorm" Book Launch

**Edmonton, AB – January 11, 2018 –** On Friday, January 19, TELUS World of Science – Edmonton is hosting Ed Struzik, the author of Firestorm, alongside Jamie Coutts, Regional Fire Chief for Lesser Slave Regional Fire Service; and Mike Flannigan, Professor of Wildland Fire at University of Alberta, for the launch of Firestorm.

Ed Struzik will discuss and present photographs of 12 incredible wildfires that have burned in North America, and had the biggest impact on society and fire management, over the turn of the last century.

In Firestorm, journalist Edward Struzik visits scorched earth from Alaska to Maine, and introduces the scientists, firefighters, and resource managers making the case for a radically different approach to managing wildfire in the 21st century. He discusses how Wildfires can no longer be treated as avoidable events because the risk and dangers are becoming too great and costly. Struzik weaves a heart-pumping narrative of science, economics, politics, and human determination and points to the ways that we, and the wilder inhabitants of the forests around our cities and towns, might yet flourish in an age of growing megafires.

**Presentation (7:00 p.m. to 7:40 p.m.):** In a panel discussion, Struzik will also explain how he came to the conclusion to leave the Fort McMurray wildfire off his list of 12 incredible wildfires that have burned in North America, over the turn of the last century, and find out what Jamie Coutts, Fire Chief for Slave Lake, Alberta -- who fought the wildfires in both Fort McMurray and Slave Lake -- thinks of this conclusion. Dr. Mike Flannigan, Professor of Wildland Fire at the University of Alberta, will also be involved in the discussion.

**Reception (7:40 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.):** Guests will enjoy a reception, with the opportunity to meet Struzik, Coutts and Dr. Flannigan. Ed Struzik will also be available for a book signing.

## **About the presenters:**

**Ed Struzik:** His numerous accolades include the prestigious Atkinson Fellowship in Public Policy and the Sir Sandford Fleming Medal, awarded for outstanding contributions to the understanding of science. Struzik was awarded the Knight Science Journalism Fellowship and is an active speaker and lecturer. He is also on the Board of Directors for the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, a citizens' organization dedicated to the long-term environmental and social well-being of northern Canada and its peoples. He lives in Edmonton, Alberta.

**Jamie Coutts:** Jamie Coutts has been in the fire service for 25 years, with 12 of those years spent as a volunteer in Slave Lake, Alberta, before becoming an instructor, then Deputy Fire Chief and finally Fire Chief. Coutts had the pleasure of serving many Albertans in a variety of deployments, including the Slave Lake Fire in 2011, the Southern Alberta floods in 2013, and the Fort McMurray Fire in 2016.

**Mike Flannigan:** Dr. Mike Flannigan is a professor with the Department of Renewable Resources at the University of Alberta and is the Director of the Western Partnership for Wildland Fire Science located at the University of Alberta. Dr. Flannigan's primary research interests include fire and weather/climate interactions. Dr. Flannigan recently appeared in an episode of CBC's Nature of Things with David Suzuki "Into the Fire: Small Window to Escape".

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## **About TELUS World of Science – Edmonton**

TELUS World of Science - Edmonton is a world-class, broad-based science centre that inspires and motivates people to learn about and contribute to science and technology. TELUS World of Science - Edmonton is a leader in providing high quality, interactive programs and exhibits that provide an avenue for both learning and entertainment, and which spark the imagination of people of all ages. The Edmonton Space & Science Foundation is a non-profit organization that operates TELUS World of Science - Edmonton.