



For Immediate Release — Wednesday, July 8, 2015

## **University of Lethbridge researcher Dr. Judith Kulig available to speak to wildfire events, recovery**

University of Lethbridge Faculty of Health Sciences researcher Dr. Judith Kulig, through her work with the Rural Wildfire Study Group, is a renowned expert on rural health issues and community resiliency, particularly in communities that have experienced wildfire events.

Her most recent work related to wildfire events saw her group involved in a detailed study of the 2011 Slave Lake, Alta. wildfire event, its effect on the community, the resilience of its people and strategies to aid in the rebuilding process.

In past years, the Rural Wildfire Group has conducted a series of qualitative interviews with community members who experienced the Lost Creek Fire (Crowsnest Pass, Alta., 2003) and both qualitative interviews and household surveys for those who experienced wildfire events in Barriere, B.C. (2003) and LaRonge, Sask. (1999).

Her research indicates that tragic events, such as wildfire, have the capability to bring communities together in a cohesive and supportive manner. The group also discovered that residents in wildfire events, whether they experience loss or not, are all significantly impacted. In order to facilitate the social rebuilding of these communities, it is important that community resources be made available to all members of the community to mitigate lingering negative effects of the event.

The Rural Wildfire Study Group website ([www.ruralwildfire.ca](http://www.ruralwildfire.ca)) contains more information about this research and recommendations for community rebuilding after a disaster.

The following links also detail Dr. Kulig's work with the Rural Wildfire Study Group.

<http://www.uleth.ca/unews/article/kulig-and-wildfire-group-are-community-focussed>

<http://www.uleth.ca/unews/article/kulig-research-released-slave-lake>

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