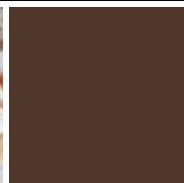




Forests in Good Hands

THE WOODLAND ALMANAC



www.woodlot.bc.ca

Winter 2023/24

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2023 Woodlot Conference: Looking Back



It was a full house at the conference

By Sarah Sutton

From time to time I find myself reminiscing about the 2023 Woodlot Conference and AGM on October 26-28, 2023 at the historic St. Eugene Golf Resort and Casino in ʔaqam, near Cranbrook, BC. It was my first woodlot conference ever and that in and of itself made it special to me, and here is an overview for you.

Attendance hit an all-time high, with 175 delegates from across the province, representing all the forest regions of the province and hailing from 62 different communities. Thirteen showed up from the Ministry of Forests, and seven from

Community Forests. It would be remiss not to mention the 16 sponsors who supported the conference both financially and by sending delegates.

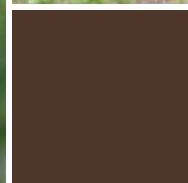
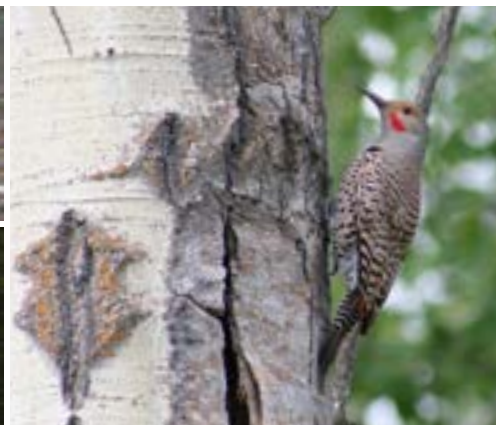
Here's a few more highlights:

- 123 acceptable ballots were submitted for the Special Resolution regarding the transition to a singular governing entity, with 96% voting in favour.
- \$4,300 raised in the Silent Auction for the FBCWA woodlot scholarship program
- Member-driven election process with 11 candidates vying for 7 Director positions to the WPDC Board

cont'd on page 3 ...



Forests in Good Hands



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WOODLOTS BC

E-mail: admin@woodlot.bc.ca Website: www.woodlot.bc.ca

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WPDC BOARD COMMITTEES

Governance & Nominations: Mark Clark (Chair), Dean Daly, Ken Dodd, Kevin Webber

Financial Risk & Oversight: Samantha Carter (Chair), Dean Daly, Gernot Zemanek

FBCWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:	Rick Walters
Vice President:	Don Whyte
Secretary/Treasurer:	Steven Wright
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Director:	Jeff Beale
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Kispiox	Jim Allen
Nadina District	Jon Seinen
North Island	Wolfram Wollenheit
Peace River	Jeff Beale
Prince George	Mark Clark
Quesnel.....	John Massier
Robson Canoe	Norm Lorenz
Shuswap/Okanagan	Don Whyte
South Island	John Gregson
Stuart /Nechako.....	Cliff Manning
West Kootenay	Hugh Watt

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 Publication # 40035578



- Post-conference: the FBCWA welcomed 5 Directors to their Board

On Day 1, delegates arrived Thursday evening to an impactful welcome by Nasu?kin (Chief) Joe Pierre Jr. of ?aqam who shared about the journey of St. Eugene’s from residential school to resort. Following, keynote speaker Paul Hessburg, a forest ecologist from Washington, spoke about forest resiliency and wildfire at the landscape level.

Day 2 (field tours) dawned with a frosty -10C (in October!) to start the morning and it didn’t warm up much throughout the day. But the sun was shining, and the larch showed up in lovely fall colours.

Woodloters toured W0423 and Wildfire Risk Reduction treatment areas near Peavine and Gold Creek, with speakers from Ministry of Forests, BC Wildfire Service, FESBC, Recreation Sites and Trails BC (Chief Isadore Trail, a part of Trans Canada trail runs through W0423), Canfor, Vast Resource Solutions and Skookumchuck Pulp. Despite being sufficiently cold, participants were well informed visually and intellectually throughout the day and then they headed back to the resort for dinner.

Day 3 celebrated 75 years of woodlots in BC during the final day of the conference, with the ‘Woodlots and Wildfire’ stewardship video, and two panel discussions featuring Garry Merkel and other

speakers highlighting the importance of building relationships and engagement as well as tackling forest resiliency and wildfire management.

Jon Seinen of Houston (W0126 and President of the Nadina Woodlot Association) was recognized by the Province of BC with the Minister’s Award for Innovation and Excellence in Woodlot Management, with his acceptance speech touching even the most gnarled of woodlotters as he paid homage to woodlot legends like Wilf Chelle and Miles Fuller.

“The Seinen family has been managing Woodlot 0126 since 1981,” said Mark Clark, President, Federation of BC Woodlot Associations. “Jon took over the role from his father in 2010 and

cont’d on page 4 ...





has worked through the mountain pine beetle epidemic and now through adjacent wildfires. Jon’s story is an excellent example of the hands-on resilience that woodlotters use every day in managing their operations and it demonstrates that the forests are in good hands.”

On Saturday night, the community of ʔaḡam glowed in the late fall sun and delegates enjoyed a banquet and silent auction.

At the conference, the membership voted 96 per cent in favour of supporting the Woodlot Product Development Council in the approach it is taking to benefit and promote the woodlot industry as described in the Development Plan 2023 Update (essentially, moving towards a single organization to effectively deliver more value to the woodlot licence program).

To our delight, on December 21, 2023, the Honourable Pam Alexis, Minister of Agriculture and Foods, in accordance with s.2 of the *Farming and Fishing Industries Development Act*, approved the Woodlot Product Development Council’s (WPDC) Development Plan Update 2023.

As we look ahead to the year 2024, I am excited to see what the next conference will hold and wondering where in Beautiful BC it will be.



For more photos and info, visit woodlot.bc.ca/conference-agm/2023-conference-agm. ♦



FEDERATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
WOODLOT ASSOCIATIONS
Forests in Good Hands

FBCWA Vision

Woodlot holders/owners will participate in a healthy and diverse forest industry with woodlot licences and private forest lands, making significant contributions to local communities and providing a sustainable supply of forest products. The FBCWA will have a voice in forest and economic policy. BC’s woodlots will be models of forest management excellence, and world-renowned for their social, economic, recreational, cultural, and educational contributions to rural communities. ♦



In with the New

by Gord Chipman

2024 will be another year of changes in the Forest Industry. As the song of Auld Lang Syne suggests, "Should auld acquaintance be forgot. And never brought to mind?" is it right that "old times be forgotten and never brought to mind?" After 75 years of Forest Management, Woodlot Licensees can be proud. As the woodlot tenures developed over the past 75 years, much has been accomplished. We have a program that is based on continuous improvement and "letting old times be forgotten" would be a mistake, because there is so much valuable information to pass down to the next generation of Woodlotters. We need to continue with succession and demonstrating great forest management in this province and do more.

2023, the year of uncertainty and permacrisis came and went; now that 2024 has arrived we can reflect on achievements. Internally, there were changes in the past year to the woodlot program which many of you were involved in. Externally, changes to government policy and legislation will affect you. With all this change it makes one think about what is important and what we want to achieve. When people ask me this question, I say we plan to maintain the existing number of woodlot tenures. A strategy called "no net loss." With all the uncertainty in resource management these days I think that will be a good achievement for 2024.

After personally meeting with over



Gord Chipman,
General Manager

200 woodlotters and with guidance from the Board of Directors we restructured the contracting staff of the Federation to create 3 Regional Woodlot Representatives in the province. These positions started just before the summer break and went into the fall, while building

momentum.

We restructured the administration and communications and have a new modern website. We created a Funding Coordinator position and already see impressive trends. We had a large response from woodlotters to apply for funding. The current ask is to the tune of 6.6 million dollars. Initial indications are that this could be a big program in 2024 and into the future.

The Plebiscite to reconfigure the Council conducted in the fall and at the Woodlot Conference, resulted in a 96% vote in favour to move the operations of the Federation to the Woodlot Product Development Council. On December 21, this proposal was approved by the Minister of Agriculture and Foods, who is responsible for the Act that governs the Council.

Transition Plan

Over the next 3 months we will be moving the operations from the Federation to the Council. An Operational Transition Plan was reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors of both boards. Starting in mid-December and moving forward, the

following steps were identified in the plan and are being executed.

Goals and Timeline

1. Approval of Development Plan by the Ministry of Agriculture and Foods by December 30, 2023.
2. WPDC will execute a Contract with Gord as the Executive Director by January 15, 2024.
3. Gord will review Operational Policies by December 28, send to the Board by Jan 1 2024, with a goal to have Board approval by February 13, 2024.
4. Review of Budget and Workplan by January 15, 2024. Approval by January 30, 2024.
5. Contract approval of contractor staff by February 15, 2024.
6. Notify the organisations that have formal agreements with the Federation that the WPDC will begin representing Woodlots in British Columbia with the intended transfer April 1, 2024.
7. Executive Director with Operational Financial signing authority by March 15, 2024, as approved by WPDC Board.
8. Signing authority of WPDC Bank Account by March 30, 2024 for the President, Treasurer, and Executive Director.
9. WPDC Credit card assigned to Executive Director April 1, 2024.
10. April 15, 2024 Formalise the branding process (Woodlots BC) to determine the appropriate brand name for the organisation going forward.
11. ED to develop a draft 5-year strategic plan for review and

cont'd on page 6 ...



Support for using the Woodlot for Windows AAC program is available to all woodlot licensees or their representatives.

Contact Tom Bradley email: tom@woodlot.bc.ca ♦

approval by the WPDC Board of Directors by April 30, 2024.

- Governance training for BOD to occur within the first fiscal quarter of 2024 fiscal year.

This first quarter of 2024 will be remarkably busy with internal operations.

Provincial Government

The Provincial Government has continued to make changes. In the Fall of 2023 over 800 employees were reallocated from the Ministry of Forests to the Ministry of Water Lands and Resource Stewardship. The cutting permit process changed through 2023 Bill 41 and District Managers will have the right to request more information to support a permit approval. *(Note: As of January 19, this change has not received formal endorsement. If you plan to submit a cutting permit, I advise you to do so before this new permitting process becomes live.)*

6

The 2021 Bill 28 regulations were approved during the summer without any formal announcement. Compensation rules have been signed off by the government (see the 2021 Bill 28 report in this issue of Almanac).

Environment

The prediction that we were entering into a hazardous fire season in 2023 came true. Today we have lower snow levels than a year ago. Drought levels have been reported throughout the Peace

River and the Central Interior. There are still over 100 wildfires smouldering in the province. If this weather continues, we will have smoky skies in July and August. I want to be wrong about this. However, if I say any more about this, it could quickly become a climate change rant. Like any person in their fifties. I have my opinions, but I respect the Almanac too much to get into rants.

Operating under the Council: Policy based

For the Council, the Directors endorse a governance policy-based model where there is a distinct separation between governance roles of the Board and operational roles of Management.

During the transition, we currently have two Boards of Directors. The Federation will evolve into something different that is yet to be sorted out by that Board. The Council will become the organisation that will represent Woodlots in matters with the provincial government. The Board of Directors will govern with policies in place. It is expected that efficiencies will be realised.

Operational Committees

We have six internal working committees that we plan to use to sort out land management objectives on woodlots. These committees are designed so that Woodlottees can engage in some of the biggest issues affecting woodlots. The committees are:

- Sustainable Resilient Old Growth Forests: Chair Melissa Steidle

- Rents and Timber Pricing: Chair Ed Hughes
- Wildland Urban Interface Management: Co-Chairs Gord Chipman and Samantha Charlton
- Fire Management and BC Wildfire Service: Chair Tyler Hodgkinson
- Waste and Residue, Log Grades, AAC: Chair Tyler Hodgkinson
- Communications: Chair Sarah Sutton

These committees will be made up primarily of Woodlottees and will meet online to discuss issues related to the committee. We are looking for volunteers willing to spend 12 hours per year to discuss these issues. If you or anyone you know are interested to get involved, please contact us, we will hook you up with an operational committee.

Biodiversity Resiliency Plan

The provincial government supported the publication of an Old Growth Strategy in 2020. Through the pandemic we identified that Woodlots are part of the solution for this strategy. Over the past year we have been engaged through confidentiality agreements about the steps the government wants to take to realise their plan. In 2024 we intend to move forward on this discussion and formalise how woodlots are part of the solution. In early spring, the Provincial Government intends to

cont'd on page 7 ...

Please help us out! If you are transferring or selling your woodlot make sure the new licensees get their own copy of the Almanac by asking them to send their contact information to the WPDC Coordinator. Also if you wish to remain on the Almanac's mailing list let Cathy know. ♦

Purpose of the WPDC: Connecting Woodlot Licensees and giving voice to their tenure.
Values we believe in:
✓ Woodlot Licences and small-scale forestry
✓ The diversity of licensees, and the privilege to be a caretaker of the land
✓ Achieving social licence by developing and maintaining a good reputation with neighbours, communities, and business partners
✓ Excellence in forest management
✓ Resilient and healthy ecosystems
✓ Advancing innovation ♦

► From page 6

announce the next steps to meet the 14 recommendations that were in the Old Growth Strategy.

Provincial Election

“Silly season is upon us.” What does that mean? The provincial government is going into election mode in early summer. It is interesting to note that only 46% of MLA’s have a woodlot in their riding. I was told that no policy decisions will be made 6 months before or after the election. So that means any legislation changes will occur between now and May. The Legislature is scheduled to meet 42 days between the end of February and mid-May. I understand that in the past, the Federation made a concerted effort to advocate the importance of Woodlot Tenures. It is expected that the urban issues such as housing, emergency management, the medical system and climate will be the election issues. Woodlots fit into a couple of those categories. We have already weighed in on the emergency management topic.

Management Plans and Woodlot Licence Plans

There will be conversations about strategic plans this year. Not many people are happy with the current process of permit approval. As a result, the current harvest levels are only at 65%. We will be looking for opportunities to improve our process; for example, having government consult with First Nations using the entire woodlot boundary as the footprint for their discussions of any resource management concerns. However, this will be a longer-term project with the focus of the election on the horizon. Hopefully, we will be able to streamline for changes in 2025/26. Precedent has been set by the Bulkley-Nechako with the Wet’suwet’en for about 70 woodlots with the idea that management plans, Woodlot Licence Plans (WLP) and Cutting Permit (CP) consultation is now covered by the ministry of Forests (MOF) with this approach for 12-18

months of submissions. Cheers to proactive thinking.

Forest Landscape Plans (FLP), Forest Operation Plans (FOP), and Forest Operational Maps (FOM)

Efforts within the forest industry will focus on these new processes that affect the other 97% of the forest tenures. Woodlots are exempt but are they really? This will be a work in progress. I know Woodlotters who will be involved with these planning processes through the Community Forest Program. There are other Landscape plans that First Nation (FN) communities are working on. There is an expectation that woodlots will fit with FN plans. Going forward I suggest all woodlotters set their operational planning horizons for at least the next ten years. Longer term planning and full disclosure are some of the intents of the FLP, FOP, and FOM processes. Salvage plans will still be a reality but for many woodlotters the single cutting permit is especially important. Expectations are that having a long-term plan in place will be required to achieve approval of a single cutting permit for your entire Woodlot.

Well Managed Forests

We promote the motto that “Forests are in Good Hands.” The degree of management and the expectations have evolved over time. In this province we have witnessed and participated in the evolution of managing and reforesting the land since Farm woodlots were established 75 years ago. We have many forests that are 35 years old now, but the question is are they managed? A Feral Forest (this is just a concept not a technical term) is a reforested area that has been allowed to become wild to the point that their wildness is outgrowing their managed state.

Let me leave you with these questions to ponder. For your woodlot, how is the stocking? Is the density too high? What should the stocking be? If it was declared Free to Grow and then naturals invaded, has it become overstocked? Is it a fire hazard now?

It is not up to me to judge. Instead, I encourage you to look at your own woodlot. How much of your woodlot is managed, how much is wild, and how much is feral? ♦

Introducing the WPDC Board of Directors



(From Left to Right Kevin Webber, Mark Clark, Samantha Carter, Lee Pond, Dean Daly, Gernot Zemanek and Ken Dodd. Missing from photo Lisa Zabek)

E-Business: Déjà vu or Forging ahead

by Tom Bradley

Woodlot for Windows (W4W) Improvements

Stop me if you've heard this one before.....

Yes, we have been announcing Woodlot for Windows improvements for years and getting nothing done. We finally have an agreement from the Ministry of Forests (MoF) and the work can go ahead.

A friend asked if the changes mean that someone currently working on a Management Plan (MP) should down tools and wait for the new W4W version. Which will roll out In June 2025 at best.

The improvements are mostly about improving W4W ability to model more complex silviculture systems and to easily use custom yield tables. Think partial cutting, interface fuel management, and mixedwood management. And situations where first harvest pass creates a stand that will occupy the site for 40 years, which will then be harvested and regenerated. And modeling group selection will be built in, and the model will return to cut the next pass in a group selection area on the designated schedule.

Other improvements will allow the use of multi-clause constraint statements,



Tom Bradley

and direct import of numerical constraint values in the shape file.

So if the management regime on the Woodlot Licence is clearcut and plant, and constraints are simple, my answer is "No. Do not wait".

But:

If you are struggling with "But the actual constraint is that 40% of this watershed has to be both > 60 years old and > 20 meters tall", or

If you are trying to model yields on partial cuts done 25 years ago, or

If your silviculture system is 2 harvest passes leading to a regeneration cut, then the new version can help.

Whether or not MoF would be willing to agree to a pause in situations where they have directed that a MP be prepared is another question.

MapView

I was completely shocked when a friend told me that MapView was back in RESULTS.

Years ago, clicking the MapView button in the RESULTS page header led to MapView. The greatly superior predecessor of iMap. However, the MapView button in RESULTS went non-functional a long time ago.

When RESULTS got ported to Chrome last year, the MapView button became functional again. It is not the real classic MapView from 2010 that used Microsoft Silverlight and had a killer search function, but it is way better than no MapView.

Note that at this time, MapView is opening a little too zoomed in - you have to zoom out one step for it to draw. And it takes 5 minutes to open all the map layers that they have turned on by default. But being able to click a button in RESULTS and eventually see the spatial on file for that block is darn nice.

KMZ is a ZIP

Random Info: Did you know that a KMZ file is just a zip file?

Many of us use Avenza. To send out spatial data (tracks and points) and associated pictures we export a KMZ. But using that KMZ is a bit of a pain. You can see the pictures on Google Earth. You can see the spatial data on Google Earth or the GIS system. But simply accessing the picture JPG files is clumsy. At best.

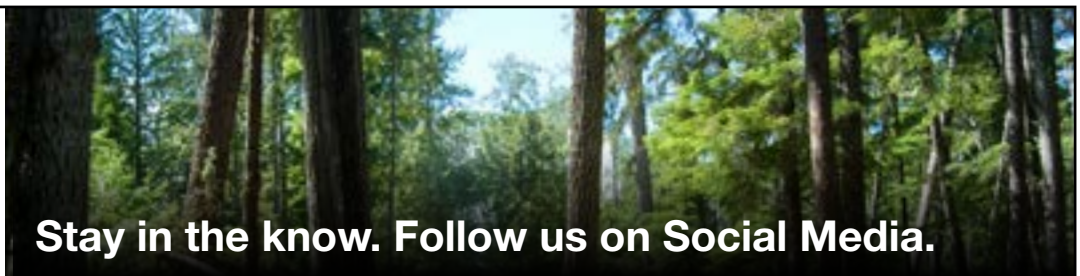
If you change the name of the KMZ from My_Block.KMZ to My_Block.ZIP, you can "unzip" the file and get all your pictures in the Images folder this creates.

When Do We Report Forest Cover

cont'd on page 9 ...



Forests in Good Hands



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I was asked another question recently: “When are we supposed to report forest cover?” I wrote an answer that seems worth sharing with all of you as well.

The chain starts with WLPPR 76 which requires us to report “activities” and any other information specified by the Chief Forester in a format satisfactory to the Chief Forester. Activities include logging, planting, silviculture treatments, and surveys.

The Chief Forester has specified that RISS-wl tells us the satisfactory format - what to report, how to report and when to report it. (If you Google RISS-wl you end up at my web site, which has a link to the doc in the Manuals section.)

RISS-wl requires that we report harvesting activity completed in a calendar year, with the stocking standards applicable to and forest cover in the harvested areas, by May 31 of the following year. The forest cover has to include spatial. Even if the forest cover is NSR, you have to do the full forest

cover report, including spatial, and report FC attributes of “NSR”. If you left trees > 5 m²/ha basal area, you are to report info on them too.

Woodlot Licensees are not required to report achievement of regeneration but are free to do so if we want. One rationale to report it is that it helps with admin if you are impacted by wildfire or other tree killing disturbance. Some woodlot licence holders just like to do it. Choosing to report achievement of regeneration triggers an obligation to report new forest cover that describes the regen.

If you want to report achievement of regeneration and forest cover, you need a forest professional to write a declaration that said trees exist. This will likely require a survey.

Once free growing is achieved, WLPPR 75(3) and 75(7) require reporting FG forest cover to RESULTS. Again, a declaration is required.

In summary, forest cover with spatial is to be reported (1) immediately after

harvest, (2) possibly when regen is achieved (your choice), and (3) at free growing. ♦



Links of Interest

- Our own website:
<http://woodlot.bc.ca>
- BC Government:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca>



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Reflection on the AGM

By George Delisle W0411

Upon quiet reflection on the recent Woodlot Conference held in Cranbrook, a number of things stick in my mind. First, the group that organized the meeting deserves a big heart felt “Thank You” for putting on a very informative meeting. It was very well attended by both government representatives and licensees.

Some of the field tours were a real eye opener. The wildland/ urban interface treatment was a real concern. Taking a “scorched earth” approach to a thirty-year-old Larch stand on the outskirts of town seemed rather extreme. While I understand the “Thought Process” it seems that, had that area been put up for a woodlot licence with a requirement that the area be spaced and pruned, then a similar impact on fuel loads could have been achieved without costing the taxpayer so much money and we would still have a productive forest standing. With a healthy forest cover there would have been a wind barrier to slow the spread of embers down somewhat.

Expecting a 500-meter-wide strip of cleared land to be an effective barrier to a wildfire is perhaps dreaming of fairies, not to mention the cost of maintaining this area free of fuel in the future. If the Fraser River or the Lake Okanagan is not a barrier to the spread of a wildfire, then I doubt that a narrow strip of scorched earth is going to help much.

Granted it is a position of defense, but unless all the land within the city limits is treated to a similar degree the loss of productive forestland may not be justified. The village people may have a false sense of security and that can sometimes be fatal. This policy appears to be a direct result of too many “Silos of Power” all laying claim to



the same piece of ground. Over the years, the government has passed out some sort of authority or suggested authority that amounts to, in my calculations, about 250% of what the land base can deliver or sustain.

Perhaps we need to gather all the Silos of Power, including self-appointed silos, and have them come to an agreement on what 100% actually looks like. We are all fighting over the land base like a flock of Seagulls fighting over a bag of spilled potato chips which is producing some very questionable results. Let us hope that wiser minds will be able to solve this problem before it is too late. It reminds

me of a saying I heard years ago, “My Will is easy to decide for I have nothing to divide”. I do not think it is wise to wait until there is nothing left of our natural resources before we can come to an agreement on who gets what.

Another field stop generated a lot of discussion around selection harvesting and historic wildfires. Some suggested that we were going back to Pre-contact landscapes and that there was nothing we could do but let it happen. This was by no means a topic of agreement. One has to question if society can afford to allow our forested land base to go back to Pre-contact stocking levels. Can the environment cope with such little forest cover with today’s demands on it to supply the resources required for people to survive? Or for that matter, simply storing carbon out of the atmosphere? We really need a “Rethink” of what we need from the natural world and how we can ensure it survives for us.

Just a few thoughts on a very good AGM. Those that did not attend are the poorer for it. ♦

The Woodland Almanac is always looking for creative submissions for “Member Reflections” related to small-scale forestry. We’d like to hear from you on stories from the woodlot or see your photos from the block. “Member Reflections” can also be used to share obituaries on licensees who are no longer with us. If you’d like to submit an article or photo, contact Cathy McClary at cjmclary401@gmail.com.

Check It Out: Cutting Permit Status

By Melissa Steidle,
North Region Representative

As the winter season is upon us, many woodlots are harvesting. It is very important to confirm the status of your cutting permit. Is it active? When does it expire? What do you do when it expires? Not knowing the status of your Cutting Permit (CP) is one of the easiest ways to run into a rather large harvesting problem.

Here is a quick way to check your cutting permit status, without relying on your consultant or Ministry of Forest contact.

1. Click the link: <https://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/hbs/opq/P480.jsp>

2. Enter your Timber Mark. If you don't know this, its always the same first 4 letters for your woodlot, followed by your two letter CP number. For example: it may look like: WABCCC. It may also be in your contract you have with your mill. Type this into the only space on that page that allows data

entry. There should be no spaces in your Timber Mark.

3. At the Timber Mark Query information page, you've got all sorts of details. The section labelled **Timber Mark Info** tells you the status, expiry and issue date of your cutting permit. It will look like the clip below. The status will tell you if the CP is active, but most importantly: the expiry date. When will the Timber Mark expire? That is the last day you have an active CP. (see graphic below)

So, check your cutting permit status before you sell your wood, and again before you send your harvesting contractor out to the woodlot. Make sure your CP is active and will be active for the length of your harvesting

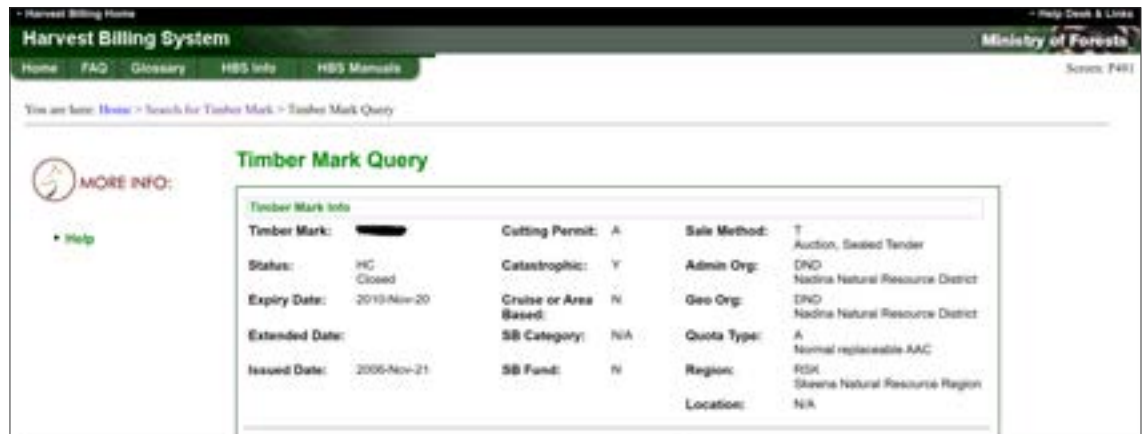
season. Remember, sometimes the rain comes early and you can't haul. Is your permit active if you can't haul right after harvesting?

For more information about cutting permits, the link below is to a woodlot reference guide that is located on the woodlot.bc.ca website. Check out page 24-26 for information about extensions, amendments and a CP Checklist to keep you in compliance.

<https://woodlot.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021.07.19-WL-Reference-Guide.pdf>

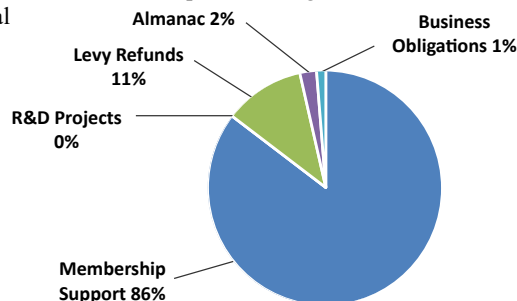
Here is a link to the CP Reminders list to help you out:

<https://woodlot.bc.ca/cp-reminders-list/>



Where your \$0.25 annual levy goes

The Woodlot Product Development Council has a responsibility to ensure funding originating from the woodlot levy is prudently managed and used only for work and activities consistent with the Purpose of the Council which are to: Promote a positive image of the woodlot industry and its products; educate the general public and buyers about the benefits of BC woodlots and small-scale forest management and initiate and support research programs for the development and enhancement of the woodlot industry in the province. The pie chart shows a breakdown of where the levy is used. ♦



Please note:

The opinions expressed in the Almanac do not necessarily reflect those of the Federation, the Council, or their members.





Rainfall Shutdown Procedures - Overview for Licensees

Hazardous geotechnical processes are more likely to occur under some environmental conditions than others. Specifically, many mass movement processes, such as landslides and debris flows, occur when the ground is unusually wet, and slope instability is elevated. As part of their duty to ensure worker safety, Licensees have responsibilities to make sure workers are aware of the risks and have a plan to respond. One might ask why a Rainfall Shutdown Procedure is necessary now, if one has not been needed in the past. In a world of changing weather, think of it as a seat belt. As a safe driver, you may have never needed it to save your life, but when the unexpected happens, you sure appreciate you have it. Having a simple process to monitor rainfall and to train crews in recognizing when conditions are changing for the worse can save lives.

Elements of a Rainfall Shutdown Procedure

An effective Rainfall Shutdown Procedure has several essential elements.

- **Drainage Rate** – This is a measure of how fast water passes through the terrain in a region. It is specific to the area in which you are located and is the land base's response to typical rainfall levels. This should be available from the MoF for your area. See below link for a document with guidelines for rainfall amounts.
- **24-hour, 48-hour rainfall** – These reports on rainfall accumulations as measured by a weather station, typically an established MoF weather station but can be an airport, municipal or in-site station. The weather station data you use must be representative of the area where you are operating.
- **Immediate Rainfall** – Rainfall measured with a rain gauge located at or near the operating location. Monitoring on-site changes to the local water balance helps crews make decisions to help ensure their safety.
- **Soil Water Balance** – Based primarily on the volume of rainfall inputs and the drainage rate, this is a measure of the how much water is in the soil. Soil water balance is a key indicator of landslide risk. Sites with an elevated and increasing soil water balance have greater potential risk of slides.

- **Hazards associated with access routes versus on-site hazards** – Planners and workers need to be aware of the risks at their immediate worksite as well as along their travel routes. Even though a work site might be safe, roads into and out of the area can be at risk of being impacted by terrain instability.
- **Triggers** – During and following peak rainfall events when the soil water balance is high, there are several triggers that can initiate slides. These include but are not limited to:
 - Increasing soil water balance
 - Machinery on slopes – during road building or harvesting
 - Blasting
 - Wind generated tree action
 - Impounded water (blocked culverts)
 - High stream flow mobilizing bed loads
- **Stream flow as an indicator** – Remind workers to check stream levels in their work areas. Particularly high stream flows and streams with a great deal of suspended material (colour) are often indicators of a system that is approaching its limit with regards to handling incoming water.
- **Rain on snow** - While immediate rainfall and soil water balance are helpful indicators of terrain stability hazards, workers must be aware of snow in and above their work area and access route. Rising freezing levels and rain-on-snow can significantly increase stream flows and the risk of slides and debris flows. Workers should be aware of potential impacts if there is snow above them.

Post-Event Best Management Practices

Following a significant rainfall event, there are safety matters to address before workers re-start work. Typically, if none of the triggers above are present, it is usually safe to re-enter areas once the soil water balance is declining and it is at least 24 hours since the peaks in rainfall and soil water balance.

An effective Rainfall Shutdown Procedure includes a plan to resume work safely. Apply the following best management practices.

cont'd on page 13 ...

- 1) Access – Before resuming work, check the access route to verify there are no washed-out roads, slides or destabilized areas.
- 2) Drainage structures – After major events, conduct a detailed inspection of drainage structures. Make sure they have not been compromised during high rainfall / stream flow. Failure to check structures can lead to ongoing / increasing damage and eventual loss of access.
- 3) Destabilized timber – High rainfall accompanied by heavy winds can de-stabilize standing trees. Have a close look, especially at trees that are exposed or immediately beside road cut banks.

Summary

Each Licensee is not necessarily responsible to develop a Rainfall Shutdown Procedure for their crews, but they are responsible to ensure that an appropriate procedure is available, that it has been communicated to crews and that they follow it. Identification of site-specific hazards is an important responsibility. Failure to properly assess and mitigate hazards can lead to injury and death. In a world with changing climate conditions, it pays to be prepared even for issues which are uncommon.

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Woodlot Product Development Council Extraordinary Project Proposals (EPP) Awarded and Completed

EPP #	Description	Product	Reference	Status
2022-002	Forest Carbon and Woodlot Licences	Summary of carbon opportunities for woodlot licensees		Ongoing
2022-001	Small Forest Tenure Capacity Building Phase 3	Explore partnerships	Almanac Summer 2023	Complete
2021-003	Small Forest Tenure Capacity Building Phase 2	Network Database	Summer 2022	Complete
2021-002	Small Forest Tenure Capacity Building Phase 1	Final Paper	Almanac Fall 2021	Complete
2021-001	Silviculture Survey Practices	High Gain vs Minimum Practice Decision Chart	Almanac Spring 2021	Complete
2020-002	WL Association Building			Awarded, not completed
2020-001	Mixedwood Management in Northeastern BC	Measurement Data and Report	Almanac Fall 2020	Complete
2019-002	WL Succession and Tax Planning	WL Succession and Tax Planning Guide November 2020	Almanac Fall 2020	Complete
2019-001	Fire Mitigation and Fuel Hazard Reduction on Woodlot Licences	Fire Mitigation and Fuel Hazard Reduction on Woodlot Licences Phase 1 - Situational Analysis	Almanac Summer 2019 & Presentation 2019 Woodlot Conference	Complete
2018-001	WLP Training	Training at various locations	Almanac Winter 2018	Complete

Is it time to fight fire with fire (again)?

By Sara Grady

During the course of learning about Prescribed and Cultural Burning returning to government-endorsed forestry management plans, a common theme emerged. And these two phrases sum it up nicely.

“We’re dealing with 100 years of fire suppression.”

“We did 100 years of fire fighting in one night.”

The first refers to the curtailment of burning in BC’s forests as a strategic management plan in the early 1900s, and the parallel practice of stopping every single naturally occurring fire in its tracks. We know now that complete fire suppression resulted in fuel loads accumulating at dangerous levels, leading to catastrophic wildfires and leading to climate change.

The second refers to the comments of a firefighter tasked with tackling the McDougall Creek wildfire that consumed homes and businesses in West Kelowna in August, 2023. Despite coordinated efforts of multiple structure firefighters from other communities and the BC Wildfire Service, forests and neighbourhoods were scarred on both sides of Okanagan Lake. It is an experience that was shared in the Cariboo, the Kootenays, and Vancouver Island.

It is with optimism, and a willingness to collaborate, that stakeholders in BC’s crucial forest industry greeted the news that Prescribed and Cultural Burning are reentering the mainstream conversation. And not simply for fire suppression.

It is tough to avoid the elephant in the room. The 2023 fire season was the most devastating – and expensive – one in BC’s history. And our province was not alone in the fight. Wildfire crews were stretched thinly as wildfires raged from coast-to-coast last year.

When West Kelowna Fire Chief Jason Brolund addressed the UN



Team prepares for controlled burn on Echo Valley Grasslands

General Assembly in New York during Climate Week last September, he had pointed words to say about the impact of climate change on forest – and community – resiliency, in the wake of the McDougall Creek fire. The budget for trying to contain wildfires in the province was roughly \$20 million, not including insurance claims, loss of revenue for businesses, impacts on air quality, not to mention the trauma.

But the last factor – the trauma – may have been a mitigating factor in allowing controlled burns to become common practice after back-to-back wildfire seasons that dotted BC’s forests throughout the 2000s. As outside observers, we came to see all fire as bad.

Last year, though, was a wakeup call. And government agencies have answered that call.

Experts who were trying to advocate for changes to fire suppression policies at a summit in 2016 were thrust into the spotlight during the analysis of the fire seasons that followed. Coupled with an ongoing dedication to reconciliation with First Nations, the ground became more fertile. The seeds of returning to ancestral forest management

practices started to take root, coupled with a body of modern research that confirmed there was a real benefit in fighting fire with fire.

It is important to delineate prescribed burning and cultural burning, and the contrasting impact of those practices to the wildfires the public experiences in person and on the news.

Wildfires of the speed and magnitude of those experienced since 2003 bear no relation to controlled burns. Their heat and speed sterilize the soil and challenge firefighters. Trees burn with such intensity that their roots burn, too. The temperatures are high enough to melt the silicone in the soil, making it hydrophobic. The soil cannot absorb water, and flooding and drought are inevitable results when there’s finally precipitation or spring melt.

Prescribed burning is a practice of burning undergrowth and ladders to reduce the risk of wildfire and secure nutrients in the ground. Low, slow burns that creep along the forest floor, consuming leaves, needles, dead grass and deadfalls are “medicine for the soil,” as one expert called it.

cont’d on page 15 ...

Strategic, prescribed burns reduce forest floor fuel, discourage invasive plants and insects from taking hold of the ecosystem and choking out native plants and wildlife. The resulting growth attracts ungulates, rodents, coyotes, bears and birds. A combination of brushing, thinning and burning is proven to create a balanced environment, and reduce the risk of wildfires.

For First Nations, cultural burning also seeks to achieve those benefits, and is not just about fire suppression. It is about returning their territory to a resilient state. Their burning practices are rejuvenating the growth of huckleberries, blueberries, raspberries, soap berries, and medicinal plants. Given franchise over the land management of their territories, they are returning to practices that fuel their ancestral traditions while softening the blow of climate change.

This trend does not come without its risks. While few in number, some prescribed burns have resulted in considerable loss when weather patterns have bucked predicted



Constant monitoring of weather conditions during Joe Lake controlled burn

trends. The United States has an aggressive program of prescribed burning but have a mark on their record due to a fire that cost residents of California their homes and resulted in the planners doing time in jail. Liability is part of most conversations around any burning in BC's forests but should not prohibit stakeholders from pursuing it as part of a balanced forest

management plan.

The Province is working hard to clear a path for more forest managers to reintroduce fire as a tool to encourage health of the ecosystem. Granted, the Ministries of the Environment and Health must have a role to play in assessing the safety of any burn plans, on Crown or private land. But a constructive, collaborative dialogue has been launched, and there are great successes in the books – like the prescribed burn that saved the airport in Cranbrook – to show as an example of how fire can be an ally in the fight to keep our forests healthy.

Experts agree that it is not a refined science yet. But initiatives like UBC's Centre for Wildfire Coexistence in the Faculty of Forestry, headed by Dr. Lori Daniels, show that the coming generations of forest managers will be educated in the use of fire as a food for the forest. Their research, combined with renewed consultation and cooperation with First Nations Fire Keepers, give us cause to be optimistic about its success going forward. ♦

Photos: Gord Chipman



Controlled burn on Echo Valley Grasslands

Buckle Up: Let's Talk Cut Control

By Melissa Steidle,
North Region Representative

Cut Control is probably the most complicated piece of legislation to try to explain and work through. I am sure you have all raised an eyebrow while someone explained the ins and outs of cut control.

Basically, cut control is the way in which the Province regulates the amount of timber harvested from a forest tenure. A woodlot licensee is responsible for being in compliance with cut control. However, cut control is full of contradictions, so buckle up, here we go:

Cut control is a set amount of volume you can harvest over a five-year period, BUT:

1. There may be volume you harvested that would not apply. There are grade 4 credits, species adjustments and other downward adjustments that may apply to your woodlot.
2. The volume on your Waste Survey will also be attributed to your cut control. This will be an upward adjustment.

Cut control has some flexibility in the set amount you can harvest. You don't need to harvest 100% of your cut control, you have the flexibility to harvest between 0 and 120%. BUT

3. If you harvest over 100%, the extra volume carries forward to the next cut control period. BUT if you harvest less than 100%, that volume is 'lost' as you don't get that unharvested volume attributed to your next cut control period.
 - a. In other words: if you have a 5-year cut control of 5000m³ (1000m³ each year) and you harvest 4000m³, your next cut control period does not become 6000m³ as the 1000m³ you didn't harvest isn't carried forward.
 - b. If you harvest 6000m³ in your 5-year cut control period, your next period will have a cut control

harvestable volume of 4000m³ as the overcut of 1000m³ is carried forward.

4. Exceeding cut control by more than 120% is a finable offence. Exceeding 120% is very serious and the government does not take kindly to overcuts. In fact, recently two woodlot licensees made a decision to disregard cut control and keep harvesting. As a result, the government is looking at increasing cut control fines. In some parts of the province, districts will no longer begin working on the next cutting permit until the previous cut control period has passed. Please DO NOT overcut. This reflects poorly on the entire woodlot program.

Cut control is for a set amount of time, five years, BUT not really:

5. If your cut control period ends December 31, and you are hauling between December 1 and December 31 of that final year, that volume will be attributed to your next cut control period.
6. You CAN have this volume adjusted back into the cut control period you hauled it, but you need to write letters to the Ministry of Forests to make that happen. Do this BEFORE you start logging, or at least three months prior to the end of your cut control period.

The Ministry of Forests will send you a cut control statement, BUT:

7. It might not be right. READ your statement! If there is an error, you can send in a letter requesting a review. You have 30 days to do this. DO NOT DELAY.
8. Cut control is a bit like a vault, once you are in a new cut control period, and 30 days has passed since you received your statement, trying to make adjustments due to an error is just not possible.

Cut control is for five years, BUT:

9. You can apply for an early termination of cut control. As per

section 75.4.1 of the Forest Act, a woodlot licence licensee has the option to terminate a cut control period early and start a new 5-year cut control period.

- a. Make sure you have good professional advice prior to requesting cut control termination.
- b. An example of when a cut control reset might be applicable would be:

- i. It's 2008 and you are in year two of your cut control period. You've cut two years of volume and don't foresee a log market for some time. You could reset so that the log market has another 5 years to rebound.
- ii. A woodlot gets sold. Again, the cut control is balanced (i.e. the number of years that have passed equals the amount of volume logged) and the new licensees want to start with a full 5 years of cut.

For more information, I am going to refer you to a handy reference guide that the Federation produced:

<https://woodlot.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021.07.19-WL-Reference-Guide.pdf>

Cut control is discussed on page 42 to page 46. There aren't any checklists to accompany cut control, but here are the questions you need to know the answer to prior to harvest:

- How much volume is remaining in your cut control period?
- Is this remaining volume enough for your harvest plan?
- Does your cut control period end during your harvest timeframe?
- Where is that Cut Control Statement Document?
- READ the cut control statement! Is this correct?

Now for the how-to section. This is less clear than searching for a Timber Mark, and does not replace a

cont'd on page 17 ...

cut control statement from the government. But it is a good place to confirm when you harvested and how much went across the scale. You need to know what type of volume to remove (see point 1 above). Also, if you are looking at statements over your cut control period end date, you need to consider point 5 and 6 above.

Tap the following link: <https://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/hbs/>. At the top is Harvest Reports. You have two choices, date of invoice and date of scale. Either will work unless you are tracking volume across a cut control period. Tap the one of your choice. Within this screen:

- Change the dates in the Month Billed Interval. You can choose up to a 12-month period.
- Click the Forest File ID bullet and

add your woodlot. This should be in a W1234 format.

- Tap *Configure* PDF Report
 - If a new page doesn't appear, you never logged during those dates or double check your woodlot number.
- On the Report *Configuration* page choose the following bullets for a basic report:
 - Group output by: *Licence and Mark*
 - Detail Lines Displayed: *Volume (M3)*
 - Include Species/Products/ Grades Groups: *Species and Grades*
- Tap SEND PDF REPORT as view PDF only gives you one month.
- Put in your email address twice.
- Wait patiently for an email with

a link. If you don't get one in a couple minutes check your spam folder.

Sorting out your own cut control is a Do-it-yourself (DIY) that really should be done by a professional. It's a bit like doing your own electrical in your house. Just because you watched a YouTube video doesn't mean you should rewire your breaker box. This will just get you some rough information for you to talk intelligently with your MoF contact when discussing cut control.

Bottom line: If you don't know your cut control position, and you are about to harvest, or are harvesting, request a statement from your Forest District. Do not put yourself in a position where you have overcut! ♦

2021 Bill 28: What to Do If Your Woodlot is to Be Cancelled by Government

By Gord Chipman, Mike Larock, & Ed Hughes

Overview

For the past several years Woodlot Licensees have experienced a high degree of uncertainty with respect to their livelihoods, their family businesses, and tenures. The pressures have come from several sources including administrative delays, legislative and regulatory change, climate impacts on growth and changing standards to build adaptation, and catastrophic loss. The anxiety is enormous for many Woodlots. Unfortunately, there is not an easy path forward to answer the question, "What to do about the recent legislative changes?", regarding potential cancellation or suspension of rights and regulatory compensation.

There are currently 8 woodlots in the province that have been notified informally that their woodlot tenure

will likely end. There are no formal Designated or Special Purpose Areas on these 8 woodlots.

There are 2 woodlots in the Peace River region that have formally received Part 13 (section 169) Declared Area notifications under the Forest Act. There are 3 other woodlots in the Peace that have been informed that their tenure will be taken back, however these other 3 have not had Designated areas formalised. These 5 licence holders are negotiating compensation with the District Manager of the Ministry of Forests (MOF).

There is confusion out there since there are multiple branches of Ministry involved in the discussions. On Vancouver Island, there are 5 woodlots at risk, and they have been in contact with negotiators from the Ministry of Indigenous Relations

and Reconciliation. They have been informed that any Woodlot licence plans or Cutting Permits will take considerable time for approval. There are also First Nation (FN) Government representatives that have expressed that all tenures including woodlots are within their Traditional Territories and do not consent to timber harvesting (this even affects FN owned Woodlots by FN territory overlaps).

On November 25, 2021, the Forest Amendment Act, 2021 (otherwise known as 2021 Bill 28) passed through the BC Legislature and received Royal Assent. While it also includes other miscellaneous changes to the Forest Act (the Act), the primary focus of 2021 Bill 28 is on the expropriation and redistribution of existing harvesting rights. As a government news release announced when Bill 28 was introduced into the Legislature,

cont'd on page 18 ...

“government will be able to reduce the timber harvesting rights of existing forest tenure holders, compensate them and then redistribute the timber harvesting rights to First Nations, Communities, and BC Timber Sales.

This past summer, this Act was followed by regulations enacted July 15, 2023, Special Purpose Areas Regulation B.C. Reg. 153/2023 and Designated Areas Compensation Regulation B.C. Reg. 154/2023.

On July 10, 2023, the Federation of BC Woodlot Associations sent a detailed list of questions to the MOF Tenures Branch regarding the new regulations. This request was never answered, and the verbal response was it is summertime, and we will respond in the fall. To date, a response has never been received. The following is based on research conducted by and on behalf of the Federation of the laws created from the 2021 Bill 28.

The Issues in Front of Us

Under the Act, Designated Areas (DAs) and Special Purpose Areas (SPAs) that overlap area-based tenures such as a woodlot licence are more problematic than they are for volume-based tenures. In the case of the latter, the consequences of a DA or SPA are shared among all forest licences in the Timber Supply Area (TSA) that includes the DA or SPA – the forest licence holder still has the right to harvest timber, though the Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) for the TSA is potentially subject to a reduction that will get distributed pro-rata among all forest licence holders. All forest licence holders in the TSA with volumes over the statutory minimum (10,001m³) may experience some reduction of harvesting rights, though the reduction is not entirely visited upon a single licensee. In the case of an area-based tenure, if a DA or SPA is declared over the area of the area-based tenure, then that licensee suffers the entire loss of harvesting rights for

that area – the loss of harvesting rights associated with a DA or SPA is not diluted among other licensees.

Without a negotiated resolution, the only statutory tool currently available to allow the government to permanently expropriate a woodlot licence is declaration of a SPA over the woodlot licence area. There is no mechanism under Part 13 of the Forest Act with respect to DAs that would allow the government to permanently terminate the rights of a woodlot licensee. DAs have a maximum duration of 10-years and can only “pause” a licensee’s activities under a woodlot.

If a SPA is declared over a woodlot licence area (and the area is deleted from the woodlot), compensation is contemplated under the Forest Act and the regulations (Special Purpose Areas Regulation, First Nations Purpose or BCTS Licence Purpose Regulation). The Forest Act contemplates compensation potentially with respect to loss of AAC and losses due to overlaps with or reduction in value of cutting permits and road and timber production improvements. For a woodlot licence, AAC compensation under the Act is determined based on the “net income that would be earned on the sale of harvested timber during each year of the remaining term of the licence” (Section 233(2)). The net income is determined in accordance with criteria and formulas included in the Forest Act and regulations. The Minister (or delegate) determines the amount of compensation applicable, and the legislation leaves much to the discretion of the Minister. Note that compensation for AAC appears based upon net income that “would be” earned during each year of the “remaining term” (defined under Section 229 as the period that commences on the date that Crown land is deleted from the woodlot licence and that ends on the expiry date of the term of the licence in effect as of

the effective date of the designation of the SPA). There are other issues with a SPA. If it is unclear what the special purpose for the area is then to declare the area without justification for the special purpose is problematic.

What Can You Do?

There is a lot that the Woodlotter can do. The important aspects are being informed, being current with obligations and costs, being engaged with local First Nations, the public, the Ministry of Forests and Woodlots BC.

1. The first important step for the Woodlot Licensee is to become aware and familiar with changes.

As a business operating on Crown land, it is your responsibility to stay current with the actions of the government and others that share an interest in the woodlot licence area. Becoming aware and familiar is necessary for you to determine what you can do in your specific area.

The good news is that you are not alone. The woodlot community shares a common interest in learning, sharing experiences and doing something together.

2. Ensure that you are current with all your licence obligations.

A woodlot that has outstanding obligations is at risk. There are more than 200 separate obligations that exist in a small-scale forest management enterprise. One strength of the woodlot program has been attention to detail in small-scale forest management. Let’s move to our strengths and demonstrate achievement of excellence.

3. Be current with the documentation of revenue and costs of your operation.

The new formula for compensation uses AAC and net revenue as the tool for determining valuation. This can be a difficult metric for those who do not keep reasonable documentation. Fortunately, the FBCWA has, on a few occasions, put together the costs associated with a woodlot operation.

We want to demonstrate the cost and benefit of managing a small tenure.

By focusing on AAC, the compensation formula has the effect of penalising the conservative forest stewards.

4. Engage your local public and First Nations about the issues facing your small-scale forest management area.

Forest Act changes, and others coming in the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA), have enabled dramatic and impactful consequences on small licensees, and First Nations forest enterprises. However, political or policy levers at a regional level have yet to be developed and can be used to manage the impact of such changes.

Our Executive Director (formerly GM for the Federation) and Regional Representatives are reaching out to be connected to the policy work. The woodlot licensee needs to attend meetings, speak with their District staff to influence, and understand what can be done collectively.

5. Engage your forest district (MOF).

As always, the local Ministry of Forests staff share similar goals for the health and use of local forests. The staff will need to be the implementers of any policy that is directed by the government. And this will not be an easy task. We can all help each other by providing support to the district staff to ensure intended government changes are implemented with respect.

6. Engage Woodlots BC and your Regional Representatives.

A woodlot strength at the regional level is in sharing information and ideas within the woodlot community. Our recent organisational changes have created a new ‘power of us.’ We have knowledgeable people to gather and distribute essential information. We have resources to exert the interests of woodlot licensees. We have influence that can address the pace and impact of change. If you would like more

information, then please contact us.

7. Legal Advice.

There are options for payouts, variations of the terms and conditions of documents and obligations, woodlot relocations and other things that can be negotiated over time. Each situation is unique. Once there has been a formal notification the options are rigid and at this point untested through new legislation. There are many issues that are problematic with this process. There are factors that are best described as legal, and it would be best if you sought your own legal advice if you are negotiating compensation for your investment and your licence to operate your Woodlot.

Conclusion

It turns out that there is a lot that the Woodlotter can do. The important aspects are being informed, being current with obligations and costs, being engaged with local First Nations, the public, the Ministry of Forests and Woodlots BC. We will all need to work together to ensure the intentions of the government are achieved, and implemented to ensure that forest stewardship and woodlot licensees are not harmed.

There is a prior understanding that area-based tenures in BC are “evergreen” and are in place to maintain a social licence for all British Columbia residents. This concept is challenged with this latest legislation as well as other objectives of the Government with modernization initiatives. Rights and Titles are being tested and the Government has the role to respect the rights of all Canadians.

Today Woodlots BC is committed to “No Net Loss of Woodlots.” There once were 860 woodlot tenures now there are 841. There are a variety of reasons for the

reduced number. Not all woodlot tenure holders have the same long-term plans. External forces such as wildfires, markets or social expectations have been problematic for some. The successional planning or estate plans on the woodlots are subject to the plans of each individual licensee. Woodlots and the business sustaining the forest have been a long-term investment for many and were part of their retirement plans. Some Woodlotter are tired of the bureaucratic process and are focusing on greener pastures.

Once the modernization process is over, I hope we maintain our Woodlot Program in BC, and move on to talking about stewardship concerns, forest improvements and woodlot expansion again. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us. ♦



UNBC Grad, ForesTrust Scholarship Winner 'Swimming' Along as FIT

By Mike Hall

This article was first published in the Fall 2023 edition of BC Forest Professional. Online at www.fpbc.ca/practice-resources/bc-forest-professional-magazine. Mike Hall is a senior communications specialist with Forest Professionals British Columbia and is a former journalist and editor. Tom Younger was one of the 2018 scholarship recipients of the Federation of BC Woodlot Associations.

Tom Younger knew he wanted to apply his passions as a professional forester, and that he wanted an adventure. Raised on ecologically and culturally diverse West Coast islands, he figured where better to learn and explore than the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), with its campus embedded in the emerald forest above Prince George and outdoor labs at the nearby Aleza Lake and John Prince research forests.

"These are the specialties of the UNBC forestry program," says Younger, a forester in training (FIT) and former ForesTrust scholarship winner. "On top of that, the thought of learning forestry in downtown Vancouver, as rural BC guy, didn't call me."

Younger grew up on Haida Gwaii and Quadra Island; his father, a forester, owns woodlots on both.

Younger recalls taking guide books to the beach at low tide with his dad and brother to inspect moss — step and electrified cat's tail. They would take their books to the forests as well.

"I was very lucky, growing up like that. You get exposed to a lot of forestry enforcement law. Quadra's all about small-scale forestry," says Younger, who now works there for Huock Resource Consultants, managing woodlots throughout northern and southern Vancouver Island.



Tom with his dad Dave at the Quadra Island Woodlot Sign in 2023.

"Ecology and biology have been a passion of mine since I was very young, and I wanted to find a way to make it my career," he adds. "Registration as a forest professional allowed me to find a niche where I can use my skills. Everyone I work with today is just as passionate as I am."

Younger graduated from UNBC in 2022 and received the Forest Professionals British Columbia Award for Excellence, a \$2,000 scholarship from ForesTrust given annually to a full-time undergraduate student in the Natural Resources and Environmental Studies program.

ForesTrust is the registered charity of Forest Professionals British Columbia (FPBC). It provides scholarships and bursaries to forestry students through 13 awards at nine accredited, post-secondary institutions in BC.

"I am very thankful to have been selected for the scholarship as it helped relieve the financial burden that comes with university," Younger says. "It provided me the opportunity to focus on my studies and pursue my

passions."

His experience as an FIT, so far, has come with expected challenges, but support and supervision have helped.

"Adjusting to life as a professional is a big one. Performing quality work was a change from being a summer student," Younger says. "The sheer volume of new concepts has been challenging. Seven months later, though, I feel as though I am starting to swim instead of sink."

He still has a way to go.

Forestry at UNBC

UNBC forestry has come a long way.

Dr. Kathy Lewis, RPF, was one of the first 40 faculty members hired by UNBC before it opened in 1994, and is now interim dean for the school's faculty of environment, as well as interim vice-president of research and innovation, and a professor. Lewis is also former chair of the accredited Forest Ecology and Management degree program.

"At the time, it was probably the only program in the world that only had women in it because there were just two of us," says Lewis — her and Winifred "Wini" Kessler, the first program chair.

"I think, right from the start, we had a strong interest in the management aspects of natural resources. Our focus was less on the harvesting and processing of forest products and more on the ecology of the forest and how to sustainably manage it. There's much more in a forest than just the trees we want to harvest for wood products," Lewis adds.

"At the time we were first designing the degree, climate change was known, but it certainly wasn't

at the tip of everyone's tongue like it is now. And we weren't seeing the tremendous ramifications of the climate change problems like the pine beetle outbreaks and the wildfires right now."

UNBC had to adapt, teaching more about disturbance ecology and forest health, with a focus on issues such as climate change, wildfires, and insect infestation.

The changes are also reflected in the students who want to study forestry.

"The profession itself has gone through some ups and downs, which is kind of typical of a resource-based profession," Lewis adds. "I think, probably, our earlier students were thinking about forestry in a traditional way, and that was managing the forest sustainably for the goal of producing products."

Forestry students today are more interested in understanding the role of forest ecosystems in carbon sequestration and helping with climate change mitigation, says Lewis.

"They're recognizing that forestry isn't just a terminal degree to a specific career path. It actually opens doors to many other types of careers in graduate education. So I think that's one of the reasons we're maintaining relatively strong enrolment."

Lewis stresses, however, that staying in forestry is as important as ever.

"I would say it's a critically important profession right now. I would also say that forests can provide so much more than wood products, and we're really starting to understand that now and many start-up companies and other companies are getting into producing things other than commodity wood and pulp products... we need folks who really understand that so we can get some of those wood products."

In Forests We Trust

Lewis helped select ForesTrust winners as a chair of the forestry program, and maintains that scholarships and bursaries are vital.

"We have students coming into university degrees from all walks of life and many of them don't have the resources they may need to get through an entire degree without having scholarships and bursaries available to them. Especially now. Housing costs are just going through the roof and inflation is affecting our students. We don't want to have the only people who can afford to come to university being those that have the privilege of having more income available to them. We want to make sure that university is accessible to everyone. And that really is a huge role for the scholarships and bursaries."

Faculty members are consulted on scholarship and bursary winners.

"One of the primary criteria we use is the performance of the students in their classes," says Dr. Ken Otter, a UNBC professor, chair of the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management, and chair of the Forest Ecology and Management Curriculum Committee.

All Forest Ecology and Management students have to complete either a professional report or an undergraduate thesis, usually undertaken in their final year. Younger opted for the thesis. He earned A+ grades in his independent studies was considered exceptional by his respective supervisors, says Otter.

"I recall that Tom was also very active in our Forestry Club."

Younger has about 18 months remaining to get his RPF accreditation. Afterwards, he plans to pursue small-scale forestry. "Quadra really pushed me in that direction." Quadra has 11 woodlots, all of which are unique.

"The topography and elevation changes are just incredible," Younger says. "We've got lots of western hemlock, but you don't have Douglas-fir or western redcedar or anything. And so what we're doing in converting it back to what the stumps were previously, before they were logged, and dealing with some of the forest health issues, as well."

He has found his calling. ♦

Forest Carbon Management

By Mike Simpson

I recently completed a project on forest carbon management opportunities for woodlots, the summary report can be found on the FBCWA website. The summary of key points that I presented at the Woodlot Conference in Cranbrook are as follows.

1. Carbon credits come from carbon projects: there is a lot of carbon on a woodlot licence, in your trees, dead wood and the soil, but not everything you do counts. To count as a carbon project, the things that count have to be beyond business as usual or additional to your regular management. There are standards, methodologies and protocols that determine what counts.

2. Carbon markets are in their infancy: as carbon prices increase, there will be more opportunities evolving. Best case scenario that I modelled, based on conservative carbon market prices, could yield \$245/ha/year in revenue.

3. Private land opportunities are currently the best opportunity: you can choose from a variety of standards, methodologies and protocols. Crown land tenures have only the provincial government protocol, no real mechanism to manage carbon, and are complicated by the nature of unceded Indigenous territory in BC.

Forest carbon management, carbon projects and carbon credits are a unique opportunity for woodlot licensees to mitigate climate change and have a new revenue stream. I recommend that Woodlots BC advocate to the ministry of Forests (MOF) to enable forest carbon management on woodlots, and that woodlots collaborate with other area-based tenures such as community forests. Please reach out to me with any further questions or if there's anything I can do to support these opportunities. ♦

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"No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn."

HAL BORLAND

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