



Woodlots BC

Forests in Good Hands

Resilient Ecosystems

INTEGRATING ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCE AND OLD FOREST ATTRIBUTES

ABSTRACT

The Resilient Ecosystems Committee is a space in which woodlot licensees can meet to discuss a *New Future for Old Forests Summary Report* as well as other Old Growth Mandates established throughout the province. The primary focus is to provide guidance to licensees on how to navigate Old Forest requirements while increasing sustainable Old Forest attributes within their tenure area.

This guidance will be in the form of a literature review, website resources, articles in Woodlots BC publications and other publications as required.



AN EXPLANATION

Last year, Gord Chipman, Woodlots BC Executive Director, set up a number of committees full of interested, passionate woodlot licensees. One of them was the Resilient, Sustainable Old Forests Committee. -Or maybe it was the Sustainable, Resilient Old Forests Committee? -We could never really remember so we rebranded as the Resilient Ecosystems Committee. The objective is: how do we manage our woodlots to be resilient so that they can sustain forests with old forest attributes? To be sustainable, those forest attributes must be available within the woodlot at every point in time. -To be either sustainable or resilient, the ecosystem must be healthy.

Some woodlots have lots of old forests to choose from, and others have very little due to fire, pests or pathogens.

It's a big, heavy topic and as diverse as BC's forests.

So why create the committee?

BACKGROUND

Do you remember the Old Growth Strategic Review report (OGSR) that was released in 2020? The review document is called *A New Future for Old Forests*. The Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) identified several types of forests that should be deferred from harvest to protect their ecological values. These forest types include:

- **Big-Treed Old Growth:** Forests with large, old trees.
- **Priority Big-Treed Old Growth:** A subset of Big-Treed Old Growth with exceptional ecological values.
- **Ancient Forest:** Forests with trees that are over 400 years old.
- **Remnant Old Ecosystems:** Forests that have survived past disturbances and have unique ecological features.
- **Intact Watersheds:** Forests within watersheds that have not been significantly altered by human activities.
- **Big-Treed Recruitment Forest:** Forests that have the potential to develop into Big-Treed Old Growth in the future.

Implementation is varied throughout the province, depending on local support and policy.

The road is not clear and straight and nothing in the OGSR is set in stone. Since the OGSR, two more documents have been written: The *Draft BC Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework* (November 2023) and the *OGSR Action Plan (From Review to Action)* (May 2024). Both with the goal of moving forestry towards managing for healthy diverse ecosystems rather than just timber objectives. But then a forest has always been more than just timber for woodlot licensees.

“Innovation: Try something new, or try something old again with new objectives and technology.”

GIVING CONSIDERATION

As woodlot holders we need to consider the intent of the OGSR (*A New Future for Old Forests*), the *Draft BC Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework*, and the *OGSR Action Plan*. Within those documents there are recommendations. They are meant to guide government, but as a tenure group, there are pieces that we can achieve on our landbases without waiting for government. One such recommendation is: *Create a silviculture innovation program aimed at developing harvesting alternatives to clearcutting that maintain old [forest] values.*

And that is where we, as woodlot holders, can flourish. Innovation, trying something new, or trying something old again with new objectives and technology – that’s what many of us do.

So, in order to put you, the licensee, in the driver’s seat and showcase a licence that is about healthy, diverse ecosystems with the added benefit of supporting your local economy with logs and other forest products (mushrooms, berries, salal), we’ve done a literature review and are going to share that with you this year in order to up your game.

Throughout 2025, we are going to publish articles focusing on topics that will help you create and develop Old Forest Attributes throughout your woodlot licence to increase biodiversity, strengthen ecosystem resilience, and help meet recommendations in the OGSR as well as legislation. We hope you find it valuable and try some of the tools.

THE COMMITTEE

Thank you to our woodlot licensees who have spent time on the committee offering perspectives, information and research links. In no particular order: Chantel Blumel, George Delisle, Chris Elden, Chris Hawkins, Chris Maundrell, Kathy Mayes and Mark Tamas.

Woodlots depend on healthy, vibrant ecosystems to meet many objectives including timber production. This does not mean preservation - it means acknowledging the woodlots’ ecosystem health and working towards resiliency through climate change, wildfire, drought, forest pest and pathogens.

RESOURCES

Website: <https://woodlotsbc.ca/>

Facebook: Woodlots BC

Instagram: woodlotsbc

YouTube: @WoodlotsBC

Information of the Old Growth Strategic Review:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/managing-our-forest-resources/old-growth-forests/strategic-review-of-old-growth-forest-management>

A New Future for Old Forests: A Strategic Review of How British Columbia Manages for Old Forests Within its Ancient Ecosystems:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/forestry/stewardship/old-growth-forests/strategic-review-20200430.pdf>

B.C.'s Draft Biodiversity and Ecosystem Health Framework:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/biodiversity/bc-s-draft-biodiversity-and-ecosystem-health-framework>

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/biodiversity-habitat-management/draft_biodiversity_and_ecosystem_health_framework.pdf

From Review to Action:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/managing-our-forest-resources/old-growth-forests/from-action-to-review>

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/forestry/stewardship/old-growth-forests/from_review_to_action.pdf

Not subscribed to our communications? Email communications@woodlotsbc.ca to be included in our digital weekly newsletter or our quarterly publication: The Woodland Almanac. Or reach out to your Woodlots BC Regional Representative:

Melissa Steidle, RPF


Woodlots BC | Northern Woodlot Representative

778-675-6616

Prince George, BC

www.woodlotsbc.ca | northregion@woodlotsbc.ca | [@woodlotsbc](https://www.instagram.com/woodlotsbc)



A close-up photograph of a tree trunk's cross-section, showing concentric growth rings in various shades of brown, tan, and dark blue. The rings are slightly wavy and uneven, creating a textured, organic pattern. A white rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text.

***Woodlot forestry is an
alternative approach to
managing B.C.'s crown forest
lands. And it includes you.***