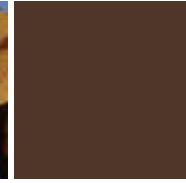
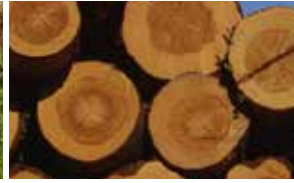




**Woodlots BC**  
Forests in Good Hands

# THE WOODLAND ALMANAC



[www.woodlotsbc.ca](http://www.woodlotsbc.ca)

Spring 2026

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## The Ins and Outs of Gates

*By Chris Cole, Woodlots BC South Region Representative*

Access restricting gates on woodlot roads in BC are used inconsistently across the province and this has created questions. I have collected information from stakeholders and have summarized the results for you here.

Gates are used on less than 10% of the woodlots in BC. They are more common in highly populated urban interface woodlots, or if there is a specific land management objective the Crown wants to support through restricting public access, such as a GAR order.

A woodlot licensee may install and lock a gate on a crown land woodlot access road, but must have permission from the Ministry of Forests' district manager. Examples of situations where the DM has supported restricting access are: if public access will cause significant damage to the road, cause sediment delivery to nearby streams, cause environmental damage, compromise wildlife health/life, cause property damage or theft, results in public health or safety issues, or in order to comply with WorksafeBC regulations/worker safety.

1. Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) covers use and closure of forestry roads on Crown land. Less than 10% of woodlots use gates to restrict access.



2. FRPA section 22.2 gives the public the right to use forestry roads, including those on woodlots, unless the woodlot licence holder satisfies criteria and obtains consent to restrict access.
3. A woodlot licence holder may install and lock a gate if the restriction has been authorized by the Minister to protect the road, avoid damage, or ensure safety.
4. Ministerial consent/conditions are central — unauthorized locking is generally not lawful.
5. Road tenure (woodlot licence or road permit) does not itself create exclusive private access rights — the statutory rights of others to use the road must be respected.

cont'd on page 3 ...



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## WOODLOTS BC

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### THE WOODLAND ALMANAC

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## FROM THE EDITOR

- You are
- probably as
- busy as the rest
- of us. Spring
- tends to do that
- to us. There is
- lots going on
- at Woodlots BC
- this spring so be sure to check
- out Gord's Executive Director
- report to get an overview and
- for some important updates.
- A highlight of this issue is the
- announcement of our 2026
- Foundational Woodlot icons, Mark
- Clark and Tom Bradley. If you've
- been around for even a minute,
- you'll recognize these woodlot
- icons. Learn more on Page 8.
- One big thing on our minds
- is the annual Woodlots BC
- Conference and AGM. This
- October 1-3 we are heading
- to Vancouver Island to Tigh-
- Na-Mara Seaside Resort at
- Parksville. We'd love to see
- you there and will provide
- registration details in the
- Summer 2026 issue of the
- Almanac, and through our email
- newsletter, Woodlots Weekly,
- and on the website.
- A request: Please keep us in the
- loop if your contact information
- has changed. Thanks!



*Sarah*

Editor, *The Woodland Almanac*

**Regional findings based on email responses and phone calls:**

Location	Estimate of gates on woodlot roads
South Vancouver Island	Most woodlots have gates, usually locked
North Vancouver Island	A few woodlots have gates, not usually locked
Lower Mainland	Many woodlots have gates, usually locked
Coast outside Fraser valley	A few woodlots have gates, but they are uncommon
Okanagan	Gates are uncommon, unrestricted access is normal
Kootenays	Gates are uncommon, unrestricted access is normal
Central Interior	Gates are rare, unrestricted access is normal
Northern Interior	Gates are rare, unrestricted access is normal



**Statutory Framework that Regulates Gates and Road Access on Crown Forestry Roads**

- a) Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA), SBC 2002, c. 69  
This is the primary statute governing use of forestry roads, including roads constructed or maintained under a woodlot licence or a road permit.
  - Section 22.2 — Non-industrial use of a road
    - o A road that is a forest service road or a road constructed or maintained by a holder of a road permit or a woodlot licence may be used by any person for non-industrial purposes without charge.
    - o However, the holder (road permit or woodlot licence)

may take action to restrict use if:

- the use would likely cause significant damage to the road,
- would cause significant sediment delivery, or
- would endanger property, public health or safety.
  - o In these circumstances, the holder can close the road or restrict its use (which typically includes gates) — but only with prior consent of the Minister.
- The power to restrict access applies to both
  - o Forest service roads administered by government, and
  - o Roads constructed/ maintained by private holders under a permit or

licence (including woodlot licences).

- Charging for use of a road is generally prohibited except where expressly authorized by regulation or ministerial decision.

This section confirms there is a strong sense of entitlement the public has to forestry roads, and that any restriction must be justified under the statutory criteria and, typically, ministerial approval. This has been the experience of many woodlot licensees.

b) Forest Act, RSBC 1996, c 157

The Forest Act is the enabling statute for tenure agreements such as woodlot licences:

- Authority for woodlot licences is provided under the Forest Act. The Act defines a woodlot licence and authorizes the holder to manage and harvest Crown timber within the license area.
- Under this regime, the woodlot licence itself includes authorization to construct and maintain roads, but the rights over public access are governed by FRPA rather than the Forest Act alone.

c) Regulations and Plans

- Woodlot Licence Planning and Practices Regulation and related woodlot licence plans focus on forest practices, road construction, and maintenance standards within the woodlot area. These plans are approved by the Minister and form part of the regulatory obligations of the licence holder.
- Road construction and use must be consistent with approved woodlot licence plans and comply with FRPA and associated standards/ regulations.

cont'd on page 4 ...

### Can a Woodlot Licence Holder Install a Gate on an Access Road?

(Yes, but with conditions or rationale documented by an approval letter from the DM)

1. Woodlot Licence Roads Are Not Fully Private Roads
  - Roads built or maintained by a licence holder remain forest resource roads, which are subject to FRPA access rules and thus are not automatically private or non-public roads.
2. Default Public Access
  - Under FRPA section 22.2, non-industrial access by the public to such roads is permitted without charge unless the conditions for restricting use are met.
3. Restricting access (including gates) requires justification
  - A woodlot licence holder may close or restrict use of the road (e.g., by installing a gate and locking it) if:
    - o Use would likely significantly damage the road,
    - o Use would cause significant sediment delivery, or
    - o Use would endanger property, public health or safety.
  - Crucially, this action requires prior consent from the minister (which is usually delegated to a District Manager).

This is confirmed by Forest Practices Board cases where access restrictions (gates) were found legal where ministerial consent was obtained on safety or property protection grounds.

### Can a Woodlot Licensee Lock the Gate?

Yes, but only in limited circumstances

- If a gate has been legally authorized under FRPA section 22.2 consent, the licence holder may lock the gate to enforce the



restriction.

- Locking a gate simply to exclude the public without a statutory basis or without ministerial authorization would likely be unlawful, since FRPA gives the public the right to use the road by default.
- Authorized, justified closures with ministry consent → locking is legal.
- Unauthorized closures or locks installed unilaterally → likely not lawful but some woodlot licensees may do this regardless.

### What Standards Apply to Gates and Access Restrictions?

Ministerial discretion and conditions when consent is given to restrict access:

- The District Manager or minister can impose conditions on the restriction (e.g., signage, safety measures, limited hours).
- These conditions become part of the legal authorization for restricting access.

### Public Duty and Notice

Licence holders are typically expected to provide:

- Clear signage indicating restricted access,
- Reasonable notice of the restriction criteria,
- Evidence that conditions for restriction are met, and
- Compliance with the woodlot licence plan and FRPA practices.

### Private Land Gates

Gating and restricting access to any road accessing private land is lawful and may be done at the discretion of the land owner without DM or Ministry consent or approval.

### In Summary

1. Public access to forestry roads (including those built/maintained by woodlot holders) is statutory by default, not assumed private.
2. Restricting access, installing a gate, and locking it is lawful only if:
  - o The statutory conditions are met (e.g., safety/property damage risk), and
  - o Prior consent from the minister (usually via district manager) has been obtained.
3. Case law and administrative decisions (e.g., the Crown land access case) show that courts/boards uphold restrictions when properly authorized and conditional.
4. Unilateral gating without consent risks legal challenge for violating FRPA's right of access.

The use of gates on roads accessing woodlots in BC is highly variable at a Province wide overview.

The authorized use of gates is discretionary and is implemented at a local or regional level based on a wide variety of inputs. This is generally a good approach and allows for the flexibility to address

## ► From page 4

localized and changing conditions such as:

- Land use strategies and orders
- First Nations land access considerations
- Seasonal road conditions and safety
- Garbage dumping, illegal tree cutting and theft, equipment/property vandalism
- Access to lands beyond the woodlot boundary if the road continues through rather than ending within the woodlot
- Access to recreation sites and other resource values
- Seasonal wildfire prevention strategies or fire suppression access
- Access to private property

### **A practical option to consider:**

Managing crown land forest tenures presents never ending challenges in a changing world of public expectations. One practical solution that has provided results needed to help manage public access is the use of portable gates. Portable gates allow flexible access management during forest operations or seasonal access restrictions as needed to protect road infrastructure. These gates are typically constructed with a metal frame and ballast such as a concrete block, and are easily moved with small equipment. The photos show an example of this type of portable gate I used on the VIU Woodlot 0020 near Nanaimo, where public pressure for access is extremely high. Considering the information I have presented above, the question of whether or not the use of portable gates is legal comes into question. When locking a gate and restricting public access, communication with your local district manager or woodlot forester is always in your best interest. ♦

## ■ Executive Director's Report

# Focusing on what we can control, and acknowledging what we cannot control

*By Gord Chipman*

Starting from where I left off from the Winter 2026 ED report, we have continued to focus on what we can control. We have struck up a few Task Forces that were recommendations from our conference in Osoyoos.

1. Signs Task Force
2. No Net Loss Task Force
3. Private Land / Agriculture Land Task Force
4. Levy Task Force.

All four fit with our Strategic Plan and are works in progress. We expect to make recommendations by the end of May. The Levy Task Force will result in a plebiscite vote in the fall that I hope all woodlotters will participate in.

In April and May, we conducted a levy survey with our membership to find out what are some of the priorities in membership minds. We are planning ahead and trying to figure out what the future could look like if the levy amount stays the same or if it is indexed with inflation. This will help us form the questions for the plebiscite vote in the fall. If you did not receive the survey, it likely means that we do not have your email address. Please reach out to Woodlots BC to ensure that we have your accurate contact information so you can receive updated information about the vote.

Funding programs. We were successful in being awarded a few grants from the Silviculture Innovation Program with a grant to work with the Lil'wat First Nation on their Woodlot, and another grant to monitor climate



conditions in 3 different regions where woodlots have conducted partial cutting.

In 2025 we completed over \$400,000 of Forest Investment projects on woodlots. In 2026 we plan on 35 different

projects that are up to \$490,000 of funding. Hopefully all goes according to plan. On the Forest Enhancement projects we plan to implement \$1,000,000 of Wildfire Risk Reduction projects spread across 6 different woodlots. Please note that there is a new opportunity for hauling differential funding to get low value fiber to market utilization. If you are interested please contact your Regional Representative. We have completed WRR prescriptions on 5 woodlots in the past year with 5 more in the works.

Foundational members acknowledged. Shout out to two new Foundational Members of Woodlots BC. We want to recognize Mark Clark and Tom Bradley that have been awarded the Foundation Woodlotter award. See the information in the Almanac about the nominations to these two deserving Woodlotters.

Staffing going forward. We are continuing to evolve with Woodlots BC. On the administration side we will see some more change in the future. Cathy McClary has announced that she will retire from Woodlots BC in the fall after the conference. Many of you know her and the various roles that she served in the woodlot program. Over the next few months

cont'd on page 6 ...

please make sure to reach out and support her on this latest chapter of change. Our administration assistant Jessica Dodd had to resign due to health challenges. Jessica was looking forward to planning the next conference and did not want to let that go. Her health recovery is more important. We wish her well in the future and hopefully she can recover from the various conditions.

The Canadian Forest Owners Association is offering insurance for woodlot holders. I am seeking approval to join Woodlots BC with this Association. This insurance is a Canada wide opportunity to insure woodlots against fire and insects. Stay tuned for possibilities on this opportunity on the Website or links through the Woodlot Weekly.

Conferences. I have attended a number of conferences in the past couple of months and there are a couple others on the horizon. Staying in touch with representatives from other organizations helps to determine the state of forestry today and where the major bottlenecks are. The fact that the various Governments are in a deficit position is obvious to all. The various Ministries have a hiring freeze and strict travel restrictions. The number of government representatives at the various conferences has reduced and is usually limited to local government employees or Assistant Deputy Level positions.

**Uncontrolled situations.**

Politics - DRIPA - Komox treaty, Kitselas treaty. The continuous flip flopping of the provincial government's handling of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) has added to uncertainty in business in British Columbia. It was announced at COFI that BC will probably lose 1 billion board feet of sawmill production in 2026 and probably

two more pulp mills in BC. Some colleagues have compared this to watching a dumpster fire. The government introduced Bill 20 and 21 into the legislature which impacts 6 woodlots, 5 in the Comox area and one in the Terrace area. At the time of writing this these two bills might be postponed to a fall sitting in the legislature, but with all the flip flopping going on that could change too.

We have received many reports of delays in transfers of Woodlot tenures. I have heard of some that took 150 days and some that are over 700 days. Many are due to the death of one of the tenure holders. I have brought this issue to the attention of the Tenures Branch and they are looking into this. So count this as a work in progress. I will report out in the future what the government has to say about this.

One initiative that the government has been very slow to engage in is on the reduction of Red Tape. In May 2025, the government said they were committed to this initiative. Since then a restructuring at the Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Minister levels occurred which was a major interruption. We have had a Joint Working Group since 2008 but it did not operate in 2025. We could not discuss policy issues with the tenures branch as a result. We were denied any legislative changes by the new Deputy Minister so the Red Tape Reduction initiative was not productive at all. This is clearly an issue we have had little control of. Going forward we hope to engage through a new Joint Working Group with a fresh Terms of Reference focused on action, instead of talking about the things we have no control over like DRIPA. ♦

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**Share Your Story**

# Meet A Woodlotter

Woodlots BC is looking for woodlot licensees from all areas of BC. Will you be our next 'Meet a Woodlotter?' Reach out or refer someone.



**CONTACT US**

[communications@woodlotsbc.ca](mailto:communications@woodlotsbc.ca)

# NIWA Tour of the Coastland Nanaimo Veneer Mill

By Chantal Blumel, RPF

The Coastland Mill produces veneer to sell to other production facilities. We saw all parts of the operation, from scaling and sorting to the veneer production on three specialized lathes, to the final veneer bundles.

The Coastland mill produces Fd and Hw veneer for other production facilities to turn into plywood, laminated veneer lumber (LVL), and Parallam. They use smaller diameter logs than traditional mills. The Fd veneer is their main product, with the Hw veneer being produced as core veneer for plywood. The residuals

become chips for the Harmac pulp mill, and hog for their own power. They sell some roundwood as well.

The veneer process involves sorting the logs and cutting them to the right length. The logs then get scanned to ensure there is no rot or other defect that might create a safety hazard or damage the lathes. The logs then get a hot water bath to loosen the rings, and are fed into the lathes for “unrolling” into veneer. It is a mesmerising process! The veneer is then stacked by moisture content for drying and/or shipping.

There is 100% utilization of each

log – the bark goes to energy production for the mill; residual chips go to Harmad or their own energy production; veneer for plywood, LVL, and parallam; and the cores for other uses (eg untreated landscape ties).

Coastland uses second growth Fd (and some Hw) sourced from coastal BC and Vancouver Island on the open log market. They do not hold any tenure or private timberlands.

However, they maintain a supply of logs through positive relationships with crown licensees (including woodlot licensees), private landowners, and First Nations. ♦



## Purpose of Woodlots BC: 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 ♦



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# Introducing the 2026 Foundational Woodlotters

Woodlots BC wants to recognize two important contributors to the Woodlot Program as we know it today and that everyone benefits from. Congratulations to Mark Clark and Tom Bradley, the newest foundational woodlot members of Woodlots BC. Both are well known in the woodlot world.

## Mark Clark's achievements and contributions:

- Mark was the longest serving President in the Federation's history – from 2009 to 2017 (8 years),
- Then again from 2021 to 2024. In addition, he served another 5 years as a director.
- Mark presided over the Federation during what was the period of growth and achievement for the Federation.
- FRPA implementation
- Expansion of the WL Program by ~135,000 m
- Change in regulation to:
  - allow WL licensees to hold 2 WLs
  - change in regulation to allow WL licensees consolidate 2 WLs
  - ability for a WL licensee to remove private land from their WL
  - 1 CP over an entire WL area
- FBCWA and Associations accessing government program funding (Forests for Tomorrow and Forest Enhancement Funding) for silviculture, post wildfire rehabilitation and fuel reduction.
- Getting RESULTS – a province-wide, FBCWA driven initiative to help WL licensees meet their reporting obligations.
- FBCWA involvement with the BC Forest Safety Council; including the Safe Certification Program
- Log and wood marketing initiatives such as BRIDGES and WoodSourceBC;
- Investigated the opportunity for WLs to sell carbon credits and be remunerated for providing environmental goods and services
- Minister's annual WL Awards
- Resolution to the late annual rent billing issue that arose in the Nadina and PG areas post mountain pine beetle.



representative from the Prince George WL Association (PGWA) for many years.

Most recently, in 2020, he became the PGWA President while still serving as a director to the Federation. As long and impressive as the list of Mark's achievements is, those are just the highlights. There are countless other 'smaller' accomplishments that made profound differences to WL management and administration.

## Tom Bradley's achievements and contributions:

- FBCWA Director for 13 years from 2008 to 2021
- President of the West Kootenay Woodlot Association and director to the FBCWA from 2008 to 2017 and then from 2019 to present.
- FBCWA e-Business contractor from 2010 to 2022.
- FBCWA Woodlot for Windows Support contractor from Jan 2022 to 2025
- Tom raised awareness and knowledge regarding e-business applications for WLs. He provided consistently good advice and was always available to assist licensees and provide guidance.
- Tom represented WLs on the Joint Working Group with Forest Tenures Branch over 10 years, providing valuable insights and practical knowledge on which to address issues and concerns.
- A key contributor to Getting RESULTS – a joint effort between the FBCWA and MoF Office of the Chief Forester to improve WL reporting.
- Tom provided many analyses to support FBCWA efforts including the old growth on WLs, commercial thinning opportunities, annual assessment of wildfires on WLs, overlap of smoke sensitivity zones with WLs, etc.
- Member of the Constitution & Bylaws Committee during the transition to the new Societies Act. Instrumental in drafting the Federation's bylaws.
- Co-chaired the 2009 AGM (Kaslo) organizing committee.



Please join us in celebrating the achievements of these two Foundational Woodlotters. ♦

# Join the Board of Directors

## Who are we looking for:

People who are passionate about the woodlot program in BC, and have a keen interest in guiding it into the future as a Woodlots BC Board Director. The Board consists of: Seven (7) voting Directors who are all woodlot licence holders and One (1) government appointed non-voting representative (from BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food).

## Why is this important:

The forest industry in BC is under more pressure than ever before. The Woodlots BC Board aims to: advocate for and ensure the woodlots of BC have a voice and are able to promote themselves; ensure woodlots in BC are able to continue to keep up to date on rapidly changing issues and respond to these as they come about;

and, guide and govern the Woodlots BC operations team to work for the needs of woodlots in BC.

## Who qualifies:

Any woodlot licensee in BC, or in the case of a woodlot licence that is held by a corporation or group (ie: First Nation Bands, communities, school district, non-profit society), a single person approved/appointed by the group representing that woodlot. This person can only represent one woodlot at a time.



**Woodlots BC**  
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## You are:

- able to commit the time needed to fulfill board duties.
- interested in being involved on a governance Board and a part of the greater BC woodlot program moving forward.
- willing to learn and become involved in the Board's duties (governance training required and provided)

Is your interest growing? Ready to put your hand up? Complete the form on Woodlots BC website ([www.woodlotsbc.ca](http://www.woodlotsbc.ca)) under About Us > Mission and Board and return by **July 15, 2026**. You can also email [cathy@woodlotsbc.ca](mailto:cathy@woodlotsbc.ca) to request the form or if you have any questions. ♦

**SAVE  
-THE-  
DATE**

**2026 WOODLOTS BC  
Conference & AGM**

**PARKSVILLE, BC**  
**OCTOBER 1-3**

Look for registration details  
in the Summer 2026 Almanac!

**Roll Up Your  
Sleeves...  
We Need Board  
Directors!**

 Woodlots BC

**Are you as  
passionate about  
your woodlot as you  
are about plaid?**

Apply today to become a  
board director and help lead  
our crew through the woods!

# Meet A Woodlotter: Maxime Lépine W1606

By John McClary

Maxime Lépine is a professional forester with a strong interest in the woodlot program, emphasizing multi-generational planning focused on sustainable forest management beyond economic or wood-centric goals. Maxime purchased Woodlot 1606 in the Thompson Rivers Forest District, near Stump Lake Ranch between Merritt and Kamloops, in November 2016. He currently resides in Kelowna.

Maxime is Metis and Status Huron Wendat (Iroquois) First Nation from Quebec, and his family has a deep Indigenous connection with ties to the St'uxwte'ws (Bonaparte) First Nation in BC, which inspires his sustainable and cultural approach to land management.

Maxime values a holistic, multi-generational approach focusing on balancing nature, forest health, wildlife, and community benefits. He integrates Indigenous traditions and teachings, emphasizing spiritual respect for “Gitche Manitou” of all living things and the interconnectedness of life on Mother Earth. His main goal is to create a sustainable pathway that passes knowledge and stewardship responsibilities seamlessly to future generations. Maxime currently runs Indigenous Resource Solutions, a company that focuses on solutions for forest management through to manufacturing.

The woodlot suffered devastation by pine beetle and was harvested before Maxime acquired it; currently, the stands consist mainly of regenerating Lodgepole pine trees about 35 feet tall with a 6-inch diameter breast height and scattered Douglas fir vets. Ongoing management practices include infill planting, pruning for clear



*Maxime spends as much time as he can on the woodlot with friends and family*

wood production, pest (spruce weevil) monitoring and control, and planning for long-term growth (potential harvest when trees reach merchantable size). Maxime highlighted the value of small-scale, intensive management to create resilience against pests, diseases, and wildfire under changing climate conditions.

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“Maxime highlighted the value of small-scale, intensive management to create resilience against pests, diseases, and wildfire under changing climate conditions.”

---

The woodlot is located at approximately 1,395 meters elevation and includes healthy Lodgepole pine that grows 2-3 feet per year and other species like White Spruce, Douglas fir and Larix larch. Nearby Palmer Meadows Lake and Dardanelles Lakes provide excellent recreational opportunities (fishing, camping, bird watching) contributing to the non-timber values of the land. The land

features diverse flora and fauna, with ongoing efforts to maintain ecological balance and explore alternative economic uses such as bio-products, eco-tourism, Indigenous land-based healing and wellness business initiatives.

Recent regional wildfire activity raised concerns though the woodlot was spared. Spruce Weevil infestation on some trees requires careful management. Other challenges include limited immediate harvest opportunities due to the young age of the forest stand. Balancing the economic aspect of timber production against long-term environmental and cultural values is a continuous challenge.

Early successes include seeing the healthy regrowth of trees under careful management and connecting family and community to the land through activities like tree planting and hunting.

Memorable moments involve planting trees with family in 2020 and using the woodlot as a place for healing and recreation (e.g., taking a grieving

cont'd on page 13 ...

family member out to nature). Using the woodlot to teach children and others about nature, forestry, and Indigenous culture is seen as a major achievement.

Maxime aims to promote long-term stewardship through ongoing forest restoration, multi-species planting, and maintaining biodiversity. He envisions expanding land-based cultural teachings, wellness and education programs, and incorporating bio-economy products

such as essential oils from forest materials. He encourages active involvement of younger generations

“Maxime values a holistic, multi-generational approach focusing on balancing nature, forest health, wildlife, and community benefits.”

knowledge to promote sustainable forestry practices. Ownership is more than monetization; it carries responsibility for the land, community, and future generations. He stresses the importance of promoting woodlot programs and increasing the number of woodlot owners actively managing the land sustainably.



Pointing out weevil damage

and the wider community in woodlot management to ensure continuity and adaptation. He supports multi-generational, non-exploitative forest use that includes ecological and cultural benefits beyond timber extraction. He emphasizes the importance of small-scale, local woodlot management playing a key role in BC's forestry future by enabling more intensive adaptive practices.

Maxime recommends that new or aspiring woodlot owners be committed to learning and outdoor engagement with a multi-generational perspective. Understand that forest management is a long-term commitment that involves balancing economic, ecological, cultural, and social goals. Participate actively in community and share



In October 2023, Maxime brought his twins out to the woodlot to see how the trees were growing

Maxime provides insight into a progressive, culturally rooted approach to woodlot management that combines Indigenous traditions, long-term forest stewardship, environmental resilience, and community engagement. Maxime's vision demonstrates the potential benefits of local, small-scale forestry as a key element of BC's sustainable forest future. ♦

Note: If you are interested in or know of a Woodlotter interested in being interviewed for a future Meet a Woodlotter article contact Sarah Sutton at [communications@woodlotsbc.ca](mailto:communications@woodlotsbc.ca)



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# Meet A Woodlotter: John Gregson W1475

By John McClary

John Gregson is a dedicated and successful Woodlotter who lives in Nanaimo, BC. John is the holder of Woodlot 1475 in partnership with his brother Dave on the Eastern side of the Vancouver Island highway across from Lantzville in the South Island Resource District. They bid on many woodlots until being awarded Woodlot 1475 in 2006. John has subsequently added Farm Woodlot W0021, originally owned by the Evans family, near Cobble Hill north of Victoria into W1475.

John is a Forest Technician who became an RPF in 1999. He worked for some large forest companies on the Coast until joining the family logging and road building business which started in 1979 on Vancouver Island. John and Dave have turned it into a multi-dimensional construction company that employs many local people.

John values doing a good job of managing the woodlot on Crown land for a variety of uses. The allowable annual cut on W1475 is 1449 cubic meters which is about a three-four hectare opening. W1475 has a variety of high value Coastal forest stands. John encourages his family to participate in the woodlot and hopes to pass it on to them in the future.

The woodlot area is heavily used for recreation and includes lots of bike and hiking trails. The District of Lantzville has tenure on a hiking trail which runs throughout the woodlot. John noted that while most community members support the woodlot, there is a vocal minority that opposes logging, particularly during



*A timeline of woodlot activities*

harvest times. The road building during harvesting has helped in constructing access for mountain biking and there have been races organised in the woodlot. Human-caused fires have occurred but have been successfully controlled.

One challenge is that some public members are against logging and have attempted to convert the woodlot into a park, especially during harvest periods. The District and Regional Forest Ministry staff have been very supportive, helping to maintain the woodlot's status against this public pressure. There is a Heron rookery in one corner of the woodlot which coexists with the other uses.

A significant portion of the woodlot is in the Coastal Douglas Fir BGC Zone and is mostly second growth. It is characterized by its close community ties and significant recreational use. John feels that it is a good "working forest" with lots of third generation

reforestation which is an excellent example for the public to learn about forestry. John emphasized the importance of educating the public about forestry and the benefits of sustainable woodlot management. He wants to continue educating the public and maintain a positive relationship with the community.

His favourite memories are including his three daughters in the woodlot visits and working with the public to show how forestry can coexist with other uses.

John has a good relationship with the local Snaw-Naw-As First Nation band who have been very supportive of the woodlot operations. Recently, the band joined John and Dave in a minor shareholder partnership on W1475. They work on economic development opportunities with John and Dave's other companies also.

John advises new woodlot owners to focus on public education and engagement. He emphasizes the importance of patience and perseverance in managing public relations and forestry practices. ♦



*John Gregson (left) and Shawn Flynn at a woodlot conference*

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**Note: If you are interested in or know of a Woodlotter interested in being interviewed for a future Meet a Woodlotter article contact Sarah Sutton at [communications@woodlotsbc.ca](mailto:communications@woodlotsbc.ca)**

# Checklist of Requirements for FIP Submissions

By Shelley Desautels

Submitting to RESULTS for FIP projects requires more information than what woodlot licensees are typically required to provide. At Woodlots BC, we ensure that all reporting for FIP-funded projects is completed correctly. Through our reviews, we are seeing the same common errors across many submissions, so we've put together a simple checklist of the mandatory requirements identified in the **RESULTS Information Submissions Specification – Government Funded Activities (RISS-gf)**.



## Stocking Standards:

- Stocking Standards ID with an obligation to regrow selected
- Spatial data for all SU boundaries

## Completed Activities:

- Base / Technique / Method must meet the requirements of the **FIP Activity Code Guide**
- Funding source identified as FIP
- Inter-agency number (must match your FIP project number)
- Activity spatial data included
- Survey documents attached
- Forest cover attribute and spatial data submitted

## Planned Activities:

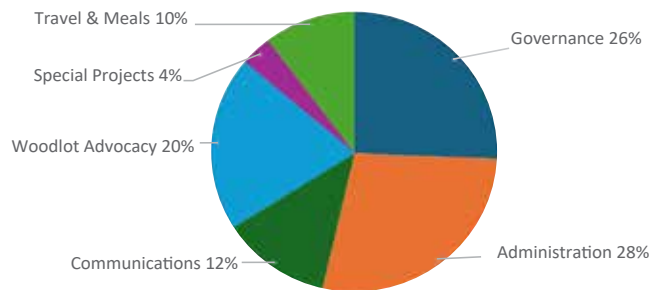
- Funding source identified
- Activity spatial data included

Getting these pieces right up front will save time and prevent rejected submissions or follow-up requests. FIP reporting has a higher bar than standard woodlot submissions, so it's worth double-checking everything before you send it in. If you're unsure or want a quick review, Woodlots BC can help make sure your submission meets RISS-gf requirements the first time.

You can reach Shelley at [shelley@woodlotsbc.ca](mailto:shelley@woodlotsbc.ca). ♦

## Where your 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. ♦



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[woodlotsbc.ca/kindling](http://woodlotsbc.ca/kindling)

## Flagging Tape Takedown



*My friend Smokey the Bear*

*By Brian McNaughton*

Hi everyone, it's me, Brian McNaughton, the 'old' Federation General Manager. Yup, I'm still hanging around, trying to pay attention to things.

I've got a suggestion, an idea, maybe even a pet peeve that you might want to help with. I went for a drive and a walk in the woods the other day and was blown away by the amount of old, no longer needed, flagging tape left hanging around. Quite frankly, it was everywhere. All different colours, some faded - some not.

I asked myself - why so much? The answer was pretty straightforward - there is so much more activity today compared to yesteryear. It

used to be just roads and cutblock boundaries, now there's wildfire/fuel reduction projects, fire suppression activities, insect and disease projects, recreation trails, etc. Many of these projects are along roads and concentrated near communities meaning that old, unsightly flagging tape is more readily seen by the public.

I think most of us would agree, we don't like to see litter left in the forest. Well, isn't old flagging tape a form of litter?

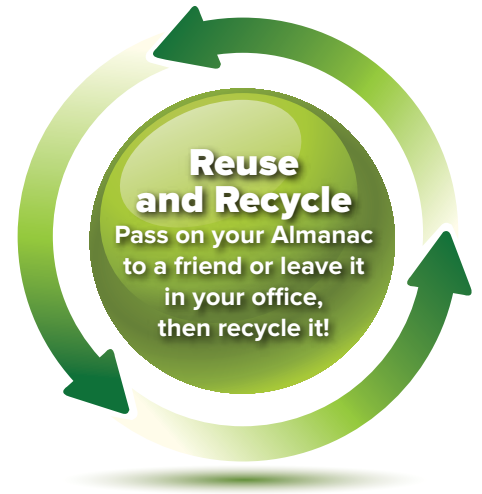
So my request is - please take down flagging tape when a project is finished. Maybe get your kids or grandkids to help.

I realize that this topic may seem pretty petty in the big scheme of things, but if the public starts complaining sure as heck the government will create a regulation with fines for contraventions.

This is a chance to show the public that woodlotters really do care... you know, like the Woodlots BC tagline says - FORESTS IN GOOD HANDS!

And if that isn't enough, my friend Smokey agrees with me!!

I hope everyone has a wonderful summer! ♦



## Links of Interest

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

### **Please note:**

*The opinions expressed in the Almanac do not necessarily reflect those of Woodlots BC, the Board, or its members.*



# Planting with Commercial Thinning Objectives

By Melissa Steidle, Woodlots BC  
North Region Rep



The Prince George Woodlot Association released Version 2.0 of the Woodlot Commercial Thinning Guide this year. It now includes information on reforestation and stand tending with a commercial thinning objective. Although this guide is written with Northern BC in mind, there are sections that apply to all parts of this vast province.

Since this is the Spring Almanac issue, let's discuss spring things that are in the new Guide: Planting.

Regardless of future stand tending treatments, you should plant harvested areas in your woodlot (with the exception of partial cuts, intermediate cuts and commercial thinning). Natural ingress will happen, but planting gives you four management advantages.

1. The first is that planting usually consists of stock that is bred for growth. Class A seed has a genetic gain that equates to a higher growth, which increases annual allowable cut (AAC) in inventory calculations. Even if your planting stock isn't Class A seed, planting results in a higher AAC than naturally restocked stands. Remember you are legally required to plant using the best seed available. If Class A is available, you must sow with that seed.

2. The second advantage is that the planted trees have a more even spacing. This means each tree gets similar resources to grow and have more space to grow into before they start competing with their neighbours.

3. Third, the trees are a year old (or older) when planted, giving them a head start over brush and natural ingress.

4. Fourth, management choice. Planting means that you have a wider selection of choices as the stand

ages. A well spaced stand allows for more stand tending opportunities and likely an earlier rotation than a patchy natural stand.

As Finland and Sweden have well documented commercial thinning

research, we use their examples often in the Commercial Thinning conversation. The same strategy applies in our Nordic neighbours as it would in BC; therefore, target planting between 1600 and 2200 stems per ha. More trees mean branches won't develop into large knots and if there is disease there are more spacing options when or if the stand is tended.

The premise is to create a stand that has small calibre branches, straight boles with very little defect in the conifers. To achieve this, the plantation needs to start with high quantity conifers and deciduous trees.

Deciduous is an important component of the stand. It increases forage and diversity. Let them grow. They also keep conifers reaching for the light which keeps the lower branches small and if the conifer species self prunes, encourages branch loss in the lower canopy. As time passes, the stand is managed to meet the end objective of straight boles with little or no branches, a product that can be sold at a premium.

It might seem a bit counter intuitive to plant at a high stocking and then space, but there are some well established reasons. Commercial thinning is about improving log quality and size.

When the stand reaches 6-8 metres in height, you want to space down to around 2000 stems per hectare. In order to achieve this, regeneration will rely on planted stems, natural ingress and just as importantly broadleaf stems within the stand.

Focus planting out the correct spot, choose the best microsite and spaced off of other choice microsites. The minimum tree distance still needs to be adhered to as the stand still needs to meet free growing guidelines; however, tightening up the target distance to hit all the best microsites. Allow naturals to germinate and broadleaf stems to grow. The denser stand forces the conifers to grow straight and encourages self-pruning on species that self-prune and discourages large branches on those that don't. The broadleaf species also increase biodiversity and forage on your site.

Let's step back a bit and look at forestry in my crystal ball. I see a global economy with all sorts of fast-growing plantations that can grow a tree in my dogs' lifetime. We cannot compete with that. But we have really high-quality logs with tight rings that make those southern plantations envious. I know, I can hear some of you arguing that thinning increases growth and reduces strength.

We aren't increasing growth that fast to reduce quality. We need to work with what we've always been known for and not compete with the fast-growing plantations in the south. Let's grow high quality logs, focusing on clear wide boards. A product that is displayed with awe in building materials. Let's start managing our plantations so we are producing clear 2x10's and larger. I think forestry will survive and flourish if we focus on quality and begin tending past free growing to achieve that outcome.

We are wise; we plant trees whose shade we will never sit under. And perhaps we will tend those trees for boards that will hold up floors of homes and offices with strength and style. Floors on which we will never walk.

*Note: You can find the Commercial Thinning Guide on the Woodlots BC website under Resources > Guides and Tools. ♦*

### Safety Considerations for Forest Windthrow Salvage Operations

There has been a marked increase in damaging storm winds in British Columbia in the past few years. Fall and winter months are peak times for forest stand damage to occur. Storm winds and saturated soil conditions along with rain, snow and ice loading the forest canopy can lead to widespread forest damage including broken branches and tops, destabilized trees, and intermittent or catastrophic windthrow.

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In order to preserve the economics of the stand, rehabilitate and reforest the site, and prevent insect and disease outbreaks, forest salvage operations become a key forest management priority.

The primary focus must be on human safety and stabilizing the site before, during, and after timber recovery. Catastrophic windthrow salvage operations present unique hazards and require specific operational and safety considerations that may differ significantly from “normal” logging processes.

#### Pre-Planning and Safety Hazard Assessment

##### Site Assessment and planning:

Utilize the best planning tools available to assess and plan a salvage project. Drone imagery can help to assess windthrow configuration and direction, best access points and skid directions, and, to initially identify risks such as unstable groups of trees, rock formations, and challenging terrain



Drone plan view of catastrophic windstorm damage

issues before crews enter the site. Terrain hazards must be assessed by qualified professionals. Known and unknown terrain hazards can be created or affected by lack of root strength, more easily erodible soils due to windthrow site disturbance, and altered drainage patterns from windthrown trees and root wads. In many cases, accessing the site on foot for field work activities is extremely difficult and may not be recommended due to stand instabilities, physical tree barriers and elevated windthrow. All of these challenges increase the value of remote drone work. If drones aren't available, aerial reconnaissance with a helicopter may be used.

**Early collaboration:** Engage with

First Nations and other agencies early in the planning process to ensure important values are considered in the salvage plan, to determine any no-go areas and thus minimize major changes to the overall plan during salvage operations.

**LIDAR:** Use Lidar technology if available to develop accurate contours. Coupled with recent drone imagery this becomes a powerful tool in planning, as the density and direction of windthrow, and ground slope can easily be assessed.

**Georeferenced digital plans:** These markedly improve operations and safety. Workers and supervisors can more easily track progress and

cont'd on page 19 ...

identify hazards ahead of time, and communicate more effectively and efficiently.

**Access and Disturbance:** A good mapping base will help to optimize access planning and minimize overall ground disturbance.

**Retention Areas:** Be conservative when planning retention levels and areas as actual stand conditions can be more damaged and unstable than initial indications. If possible, strategically optimize retention patches on terrain types and areas that will not limit access to the stand. This will leave more options open to workers, improve safety, and may limit further damage to standing trees from operations.

### **Hazard Recognition and Training:**

**Trained Crews:** Ensure all personnel working in windthrown areas are properly trained and equipped for the inherent high-risk conditions. Training should include danger tree recognition, working with compression and tension wood, specialized machine operation, minimizing post logging hazards and other working techniques that will allow salvage while minimizing further stand damage and hazards.

**Reliable Communication:** Maintain reliable communication systems and increase check-in frequency in hazardous conditions.

**Danger Trees:** Actively assess and

reassess the stability of all potentially dangerous trees (snags, hung-up trees, those with suspect stability) in the work area. Remove danger trees concurrent with operations, or adjust the work plan to avoid them.

### **Fatigue and Complacency:**

Supervisors must closely monitor worker fatigue and complacency, as the unpredictable nature of windthrow increases critical decision making and risk. Effectively untangling and salvaging windthrow and trying to maintain reasonable merchantability of a damaged stand demands a lot of focus and patience.

**Overhead Hazards:** Constantly watch for overhead hazards such as loose limbs, tops, and danger trees.

**Stable Footing and PPE:** Elevated windthrow trees and loose bark will increase the chance of slips, trips and falls. Make sure cork boots are sharp and consider chin straps on hard hats in case of falls. Proper high visibility clothing is critical.

**Maintain Distance:** If you enter into a work area, never assume an equipment operator or ground worker is aware of your presence. Maintain a safe distance (at least two tree lengths) until definite contact is made and permission granted to proceed.

### **Machinery and Procedures:**

**Mechanized Salvage Priority:** Machine felling and bucking should be the first choice for removing



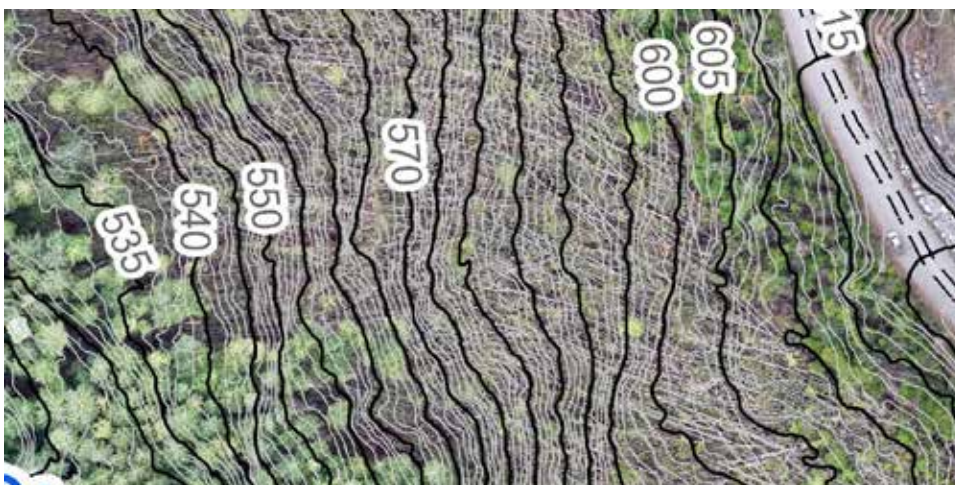
*Typical windthrown stand – a puzzle to solve safely*

windthrown trees. This can include using a feller buncher, teamed with a forestry excavator, or a forestry excavator with power grapple and blowdown saw. Having a grapple skidder or forwarder close at hand is usually necessary to skid away and eliminate snarls and hazards as they develop.

**Choose larger machine sizes** due to obstacles such as root wads, high stumps, broken logs, interlocked stems, and interspersed windthrown trees in standing timber. Heavy duty, well maintained, properly guarded equipment is required.

**Root wads:** Bucked off root wads and unsalvageable logs and debris needs to be placed in a stable orientation concurrent with salvage operations to keep site workers safe afterwards. Stand root wads back up if possible. The goal is to stabilize the site and reduce hazards for those that follow, many of whom will be on foot.

**Manual falling and bucking** in windthrown stands is a much higher risk activity and must be done by specifically trained & assessed personnel with a qualified supervisor. The majority of the trees are loaded with compression or tension and will react suddenly and with extreme force when cut – unless these



*1 metre contours derived from LIDAR*

cont'd on page 20 ...

forces are reduced or removed by mechanized means first.

**Butt skidding:** Try to set a work direction from the butt ends of the windthrown trees if possible. This may require establishing new work headings as windthrow orientation changes across the stand.

**Processing Location:** Do only the absolute necessary work in the windthrow area; any further processing is probably safer out of the windthrow sites, such as at the landing or roadside.

**Potential for phase congestion**

**issues:** This potential is higher in windthrow salvage as they typically demand more team work to untangle and harvest.

**Payment method:** Consider switching to an hourly rate instead of piece work to avoid a strict production mentality and to encourage safe practices.

**On-going Weather Considerations:**

**Wind Conditions:** Suspend operations and evacuate crews if wind speeds exceed safe thresholds or if stand stability is further compromised. There are various

guidelines available however, if wind conditions are causing any further instability (blowing small limbs, any stand movement) it is a sign that operations should be suspended until conditions change.

**Rain and Snow:** Both further increase instabilities and must be considered in daily hazard assessment.

**Post-Storm Assessment:** After any significant wind event, reassess the area to determine if the wind has destabilized any remaining trees before resuming work. ♦

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*UBC Faculty of Forestry, Forestry 557* <https://frst557.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2012/10/Operations-5c-Windthrow.pdf>

*Introduction to Dangerous Trees on Forestry Worksites - The BC Forest Safety Council*

*Part 26 - Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*

*Faller Training and Certification, BC Forest Safety Council*

*Faller Training and Certification – The BC Forest Safety Council*



After a year of screenings across British Columbia, including 15 public screenings and numerous conferences and industry events across the province, the film BC is Burning is now available on YouTube for anyone to watch free online.

The documentary examines wildfire risk, forest management, and the growing impacts on communities across British Columbia.

**[bcisburning.ca](http://bcisburning.ca)**

**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 Woodlots BC. Also, if you wish to remain on the Almanac’s mailing list let us know. ♦**

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## Woodlot Licensees

### Did you receive the Levy Survey?

If you didn't, Woodlots BC likely doesn't have your email address on file.

---

Please ensure that Woodlots BC has your most recent contact information (email, mailing address, phone number) since more important details will be coming out this summer regarding the Woodlot Levy Plebiscite.

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hello@woodlotsbc.ca



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*Flynn, 4, is a firewood delivery driver with two years experience. Delivers locally (to his grandpa Shawn) up to 1/20th of a cord at a time. Air-dried Douglas fir from blowdown on Woodlot 1479 near Nanoose Bay, BC. Photo submitted.*

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## Thank you to our contributors for this issue:



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