



Ministry of Forests, Range



Wildlife Tree Committee of British Columbia

Managing Wildlife/Dangerous Trees

The Wildlife Tree Committee of British Columbia (WTC) is responsible for providing a training program that will certify Wildlife/Dangerous Tree (WDT) assessors in the management of Wildlife/Dangerous Trees. There are three modules of the Wildlife/Dangerous Tree Assessors' Course (WDTAC) specifically designed for areas of practice. The WDTAC is recognized as training that is acceptable to the Worker's Compensation Board (the Board) for assessing dangerous trees in Forestry Operations and Similar Activities in BC. The modules are:

- Harvesting/Silviculture Operations
- Parks/Recreation Sites
- Wildland Fire Safety (for fire suppression operations)

The WDTAC modules are delivered provincially by qualified and certified instructors. Registration to attend a WDTAC module is made with the Continuing Studies Department of the University of Northern BC (UNBC). The modules can be taken by attending an advertised session, or by arranging with UNBC for an "in-house" delivery.

Each module is 2 days in length and combines classroom instruction and field practice, as well as the certifying exam. Successful candidates receive a 4-year certificate upon successful completion of the course. Renewal is the responsibility of the candidates and requires attending a WDTAC module exam. If an assessor can prove sufficient practical experience, then a challenge exam process can be arranged.

Qualified Person Training Module

In planning and conducting forestry operations, it is imperative that a qualified person performs pre-work risk assessments of the work site. Where the level of disturbance is LOW (e.g., tree planting, landscaping, hiking, road travel), the recognition and management of wildlife/dangerous trees can be undertaken by a qualified person. If the level of disturbance is MODERATE to VERY HIGH, then tree assessments must be performed by a certified WDT assessor.

In 2008, the WTC developed a training module for Qualified Persons (QP). The goals of this ½ day module are to provide training to persons working in LOW levels of disturbance to:

1. Recognize existing and potential wildlife trees, and
2. Determine tree hazards and related safe work procedures appropriate for dealing with wildlife/dangerous trees.

The intention of the WTC is to make the workshop materials available (free of charge) to responsible, certified and experienced WDT assessors who could deliver in-house training to their workers as part of pre-field season training and job safety orientation. UNBC will also arrange QP training sessions using the provincial WDTAC instructors on an "as needed" basis.

The QP is not recognized as a certified assessor, but they are able to recognize and evaluate tree hazards with due regard for the anticipated work activity. The QP is therefore able to diligently develop safety plans and management strategies to protect valuable wildlife trees for work activities considered to have a LOW level of disturbance. Where there are complex issues, activities of moderate to very high levels of disturbance, or trees with inconclusive hazard indicators the QP refers to the expertise of a certified WDT assessor.

For further information, call Dean McGeough, WTC coordinator at 250-642-2666 or contact the WTC at: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/values/wildlife/WLT/index.htm>.