

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Sustainably Managed Forests for the Benefit of British Columbia

BC Timber Sales (BCTS) is responsible for sustainable forest resource management on approximately 20 percent of B.C.'s public lands.

Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) is an overarching principle for BCTS; it ensures that our actions go beyond just meeting legal obligations. SFM involves managing the forests within our operating areas to maintain healthy forest ecosystems and the associated environmental, economic, cultural, and social values and benefits over the long term.

Practicing SFM is a complex process that begins long before and continues long after a tree is harvested. The key components of the BCTS SFM program are as follows:



Planning — Begins with preparation of Forest Stewardship Plans (FSPs) that describe how BCTS, its contractors and licensees will undertake road construction, harvesting, reforestation and other activities while managing, maintaining and enhancing a variety of important resource values (e.g. water, wildlife, fish, biodiversity, cultural heritage, recreation, soils, visual quality and timber). Following approval of the FSP by the Ministry of Forests, BCTS staff and third-party resource experts complete a variety of inventories, surveys and assessments to identify potential harvest areas, site specific values and management strategies for these values. Forest Operations Maps and Operating Plans are then prepared, showing where proposed harvest areas and roads will be located for a period of up to five years.



Consultation and Public Engagement — BCTS FSPs are subject to consultation with First Nations as well as public review and comment. First Nations consultation also occurs on operating plans. These plans are then reviewed with interested parties and are made available to the public. BCTS FSPs are available for viewing at [BC Timber Sales - forest stewardship plans](#) and operating plans are available through local Business Area offices. Forest Operations Maps are available for public review and comment at: [Forest Operations Map](#).



Road Construction — BCTS contractors and licensees build and maintain a vast network of roads, bridges and water crossings throughout the province. Long-term roads are known as Forest Service Roads and not only provide access for timber harvesting, but for silviculture, recreation, hunting and emergency management (e.g., wildfire response).



Reforestation and Forest Stewardship – BCTS ensures every area we harvest is reforested with an ecologically and climatically suitable mix of tree species. We manage the growth and delivery of over 100 million seedlings on behalf of the entire Ministry of Forests, including programs like the Forest Investment Program, as well as our own program’s needs. Each year BCTS plants over 40 million seedlings - But our responsibility as forest stewards doesn’t end there. We continue to monitor the health of these young stands until they are determined to be “free growing”. Where necessary, additional stand tending may occur, including removal of brush competition or invasive plant species. Herbicide use is extremely limited and occurs only when manual techniques would not be effective and after completing consultation with First Nations and a rigorous approval process led by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy.



Forest Certification – SFM is fundamental to each and every phase of our operations. Our [Environmental Management System \(EMS\) and SFM](#) set out clear roles and responsibilities and provides detailed procedures and guidance for our staff, licensees and contractors. Independent third-party verification provides First Nations, the public, stakeholders, customers, and staff with the assurance that BCTS is meeting its responsibilities and expectations for SFM. BCTS maintains SFM certification on 100% of our operations, which are regularly examined by external parties, following internationally accepted SFM standards. BCTS is additionally monitored by the Ministry’s Compliance and Enforcement Branch and the BC Forest Practices Board to ensure compliance with legal requirements.



Climate Change Action – Taking action to manage risk in a changing climate supports the sustainability of BCTS’ operations and the ecosystems in which we operate. In 2014, BCTS developed a provincial [Climate Change Action Plan](#). The purpose of the BCTS CCAP is to foster the adoption of climate change mitigation and adaptation actions into BCTS’ business processes while ensuring consistency with Provincial climate change action plans. A key principle in developing and implementing the BCTS CCAP is to embed climate change action in our business. For this reason, climate change actions are aligned closely with our Environmental Management System and Sustainable Forest Management framework. BCTS manages risk as a part of its day-to-day business. Climate change represents an urgent and escalating risk, altering the magnitude and likelihood of challenges we face. Amidst these challenges BCTS is identifying solutions to address climate change, including fostering new markets for bioenergy. BCTS is currently conducting a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, this will be used to inform an update to the BCTS CCAP to meet new SFM certification climate related requirements.



Learn more about BCTS
Environmental Stewardship
& Sustainability



Ministry of
Forests