Chinook Business Area News

APRIL 2025
VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1

BRITISH COLUMBIA
BCTS
BC Timber Sales

The BCTS Chinook Business Area acknowledges the territories of First Nations around B.C. and is grateful to carry out our work on these lands. We acknowledge the rights, interests, priorities and concerns of all Indigenous Peoples – First Nations, Métis and Inuit - respecting and acknowledging their distinct cultures, histories, rights, laws and governments.

BCTS Review: Taking Action to Evolve BC Timber Sales & Shape B.C.'s Forestry Future

In January, the Minister of Forests, Ravi Parmar launched a review of BC Timber Sales (BCTS) to deliver recommendations on improved access to public timber, support for jobs in forestry-dependent communities and the achievement of broader forest management goals. The recommendations will address how BCTS will deliver on the following seven specific goals:

- Create forest sector growth, competition and diversification;
- Provide predictable and reliable market access to fibre;
- Diversify access to fibre for the manufacturing sector, including value-added facilities and new entrants;
- Strengthen partnerships with First Nations and communities;
- Provide more jobs for contractors, workers and communities;
- Lead in innovative, sustainable forest management and silviculture practices; and
- Generate more profit for the Province and its partners.

The review is the next step in a set of actions that puts people and communities back at the heart of forestry.

Already, this January government doubled the amount of dedicated BCTS volume for value-added manufacturers within the Value-Added Manufacturing Program from 10% to 20%. Value-added manufacturers will begin to see increased sales in this category this April. The increased volume comes out of volume already held by BCTS and will not affect other tenure holders. To further support manufacturers, the eligibility criteria is changing to enable groups of value-added manufacturers to bid together.

The review isn't intended to reduce BCTS' operations in any way. The intent is to evolve and improve BCTS. It is an exciting and positive step that will empower us to move forward with a shared understanding of how we can better meet the needs of our forests, and of the people who count on B.C.'s forest sector.

Questions, comments, ideas and perspectives about the BCTS review are encouraged and can be sent to: BCTS.Review@gov.bc.ca

Learn more: Province launches BC Timber Sales review

The BC Timber Sales Chinook business area newsletter highlights for industry, contractors, Indigenous communities and stakeholders the work we are doing in the forest sector.

It's an opportunity to draw attention to important topics and keep you informed of any updates or changes over the last several months.

Should you have any questions, our team is always available. Please contact us at:

P: 604-702-5700
E: Forests.ChinookTimberSalesOffice@gov.bc.ca

New Workplace BC First Aid Regulations in Effect

Amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR) administered by WorkSafe BC (WSBC) took effect on November 1, 2024. The updates resulted in changes to the health and safety requirements for many workplaces and focuses on higher-risk and remote industries.

Key changes in effect include:

- Updated first aid assessments and the development of emergency response plans and procedures for all Workplaces including field work and required emergency transport for injured workers in remote areas.
- Changes to the levels/classification names of first aid training and the required level of First Aid Attendant for the worksite based on the activity hazard risk assessment for the work being performed.
- Enhanced first aid kit/supply requirements.

As the regulations are now in full effect, WSBC will be conducting inspections of worksites across a broad range of high-risk industry sectors including those operating in remote locations to ensure compliance with the new regulations. Through these inspections WSBC will be striving to ensure that all workers and their employers are providing safe workplaces where people can work in safe, low risk environments and limited their exposure to hazardous work activities.

More information about occupational first aid requirements and the changes now in effect are available to all employers at the following webpage:

First aid requirements - WorkSafeBC.

WSBC also has a frequently asked questions page that answers many of the questions around the regulatory changes:

Changes to occupational first aid requirements: Frequently asked questions | WorkSafeBC

Chinook Field Day with Imagine High

BCTS' Chinook Business Area practices forester Kathryn Shaw and operations technologist Colton Govorchin hosted an educational day at Chilliwack Lake for 35 students from Imagine High this past December.

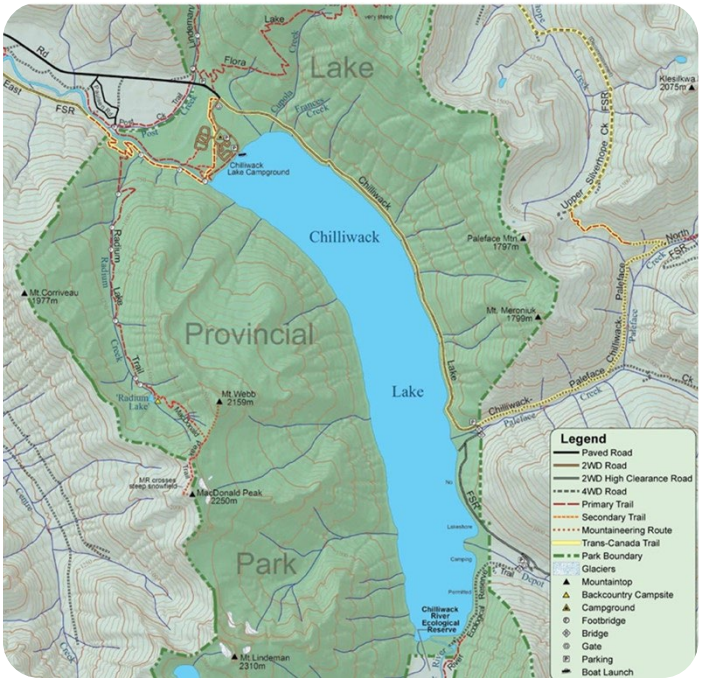
Heading out from the Sx̱ótsaqel/Chilliwack Lake Park parking lot and onto a section of the Trans Canada Trail that runs within the park, Kathryn and Colton shared with the group what had led them into a forestry career, their educational backgrounds, work histories and what "forest management" entails. Students were keen to learn how long they had to go to school to become a forester (four years), and how many hours foresters typically work in a day.

Where the trail cuts through an old wildfire site with veteran Douglas-fir and pole-sized Lodgepole pine, the group witnessed a real-world example of the scientific and technical aspects of forest management. Students compared the age of a Douglas-fir and a Pine, practiced tree species identification and the wildfire effected area provided an opportunity to discuss forest disturbances and successional stages, tree aging and stand initiation events.

Throughout the day, students practiced plant identification and learned about the legal and stewardship obligations in place to manage and conserve specific species, ecosystems and habitats that might occur within BCTS operating areas. A highlight for

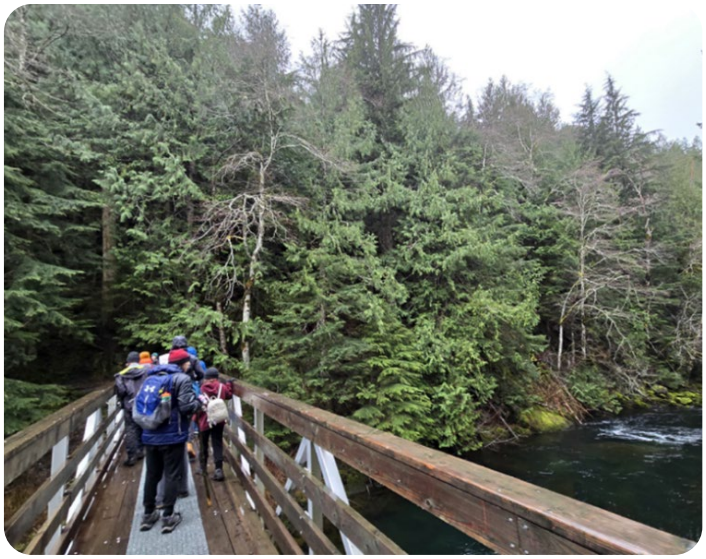
students was looking at the printouts Kathryn and Colton brought of the Coastal Giant Salamander (restricted in B.C. to only the Chilliwack River Valley and a few small nearby tributaries of the Fraser River), the Northern Goshawk (a species of conservation concern in B.C. due to its need for large areas of mature and old forest for breeding and foraging) and the spotted owl (one of Canada's most endangered animal species).

Top of mind for the students was: Who decides if a species is added to the list of concern species, and why are those species protected?



At the park's campground, Kathryn and Colton discussed how different recreation values and visual quality objectives are managed in the forest. Students gave several examples of recreation values – hiking, biking, camping and sightseeing – which led to a broader discussion of BCTS' stakeholder engagement practices and the various clubs and community organizations with shared interests in the areas we manage.

The students practiced using a prism (a timber cruising tool), d-tapes and guessing tree diameters of several different trees within the park. They had numerous questions about using the prisms, timber cruising procedures and how foresters sample the forest to determine overall timber quality.



At the bridge that crosses the Chilliwack River, Kathryn and Colton held a session on riparian management, water quality, road building and methods used to protect fish from sedimentation. As the group reached the end of the trail, students noticed changes to the forest – the presence of old stumps from past harvesting activity, as well as a change in forest type to Western Cedar and Red Alder – and were able to identify that the stand was older than the fire-origin stand at the beginning of the field visit.

Everyone had a lot of fun, and we look forward to hosting more outreach opportunities and educational sessions like this in the future.

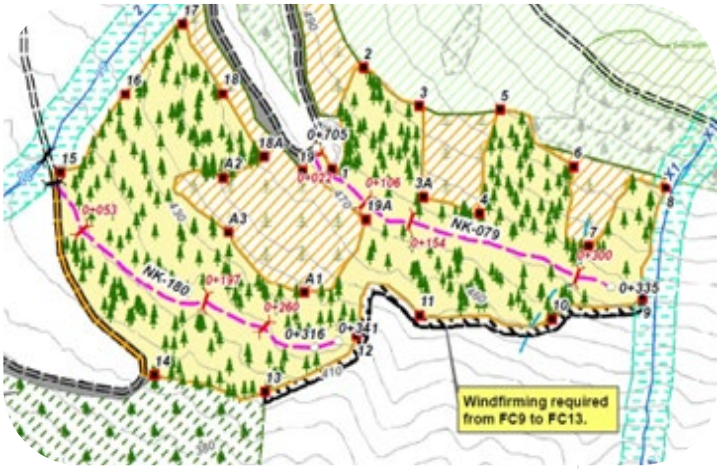
High-Retention Harvesting Techniques: Partial Cutting & Commercial Thinning

Forest management in B.C. is rapidly changing due to the environmental effects of climate change and an increasing emphasis on forest sector ecological and social goals, including reconciliation objectives and the management of non-timber resources such as visual quality, recreation values and wildlife habitat. The use of alternative harvest methods such as partial cutting and commercial thinning are increasingly being considered to meet these goals and objectives, while also allowing for and supporting sustainable timber extraction.

Costs of high-retention harvesting techniques are often higher than typical clearcutting practices. However, over

the long-term, partial cutting and commercial thinning methods are proving to be an effective approach for growing high-value forest products and achieving forest land-use objectives. These methods support silviculture practices with the natural regeneration that can occur over a series of harvests, and the inherent overstorey cover and protections they provide to next generation trees.

Partial cutting is a harvesting method in which only selected trees are harvested and mature forest cover is maintained at varying densities. It differs from a clear-cut by the increased amount of retention left post-harvest. This retention can be dispersed or clumped and follow a variety of patterns. Partial cutting plans combine all the essentials of forestry such as management objectives, ecology, visual quality, biodiversity and habitat values. As a tool, partial cutting can also allow for timber extraction in areas that may otherwise be unavailable under a clearcut operation.



Site Planning Sample

There are different types of partial cutting methods in B.C., including shelterwood, retention, selection, commercial thinning etc., which are defined in the Silvicultural Systems Handbook. Commercial thinning is the removal of the poorest quality trees from an immature stand of trees and can have a variety of different prescriptions but is generally thinned from below. The purpose of this treatment is typically to improve the growing conditions of the remaining trees.

In the Sunshine Coast region of the Chinook Business Area, several partial cutting developments are planned:

- A94817 (Roberts Creek) - This development is a partial cutting harvest that will utilize a mix of dispersed high retention and small opening sizes. The 288 leave trees marked across two blocks will be individually spiral pruned to increase their windfirmness.

- TA0519 (Mt. Elphinstone) - This development is a partial harvest system, similar to a commercial thinning harvest that will see 33% removal, 66% retention spread across range of species, with most of the thinning occurring from below. The five-metre-wide yarding corridors will be spaced 50-75 metres apart, and the upper spur road in-block will be debuilt once harvesting operations are completed.

- TA0521 (Joe Smith Creek) - This development will utilize a partial cut harvest method. The small harvest openings will have an average of 40 trees left standing per each hectare of harvest, in addition to significant retention patches. There will be 516 dispersed leave trees across two blocks; mostly dominant Douglas Fir, which will be individually windfirmed. Due to the unique partial cut harvest system being employed, TA0521 will be added to the Roberts Creek high retention research trial, a Roberts Creek Study Forest project led by Ministry of Forests Research Branch and supported by BC Timber Sales.

In the Squamish region of the Chinook Business Area our partial harvest and/or commercial thinning plans are in preliminary stages. The team is in talks with First Nations partners on high retention harvesting methods for areas within our co-managed chart with them, as well as talks for partial harvest of a woodlot that BCTS would sell as a disposition agreement.

Roberts Creek Study Forest

The Roberts Creek Study Forest was established in the Sunshine Coast Forest District to demonstrate, describe and compare a wide range of approaches for harvesting

and managing lower elevation Douglas-fir dominated ecosystems. The Study Forest is currently made up of a demonstration block with phase 1 blocks established in 1996/97 and phase 2 blocks established primarily for hydrology research. Designed as a set of adaptive management case studies, research and monitoring within the study blocks provides information to assist the development of methods to harvest and manage Douglas-fir-dominated ecosystems to meet a range of biological, social and economic objectives. B.C. Ministry of Forests. 2001. Roberts Creek Study Forest – general information pamphlet (PDF, 477KB)

White Dots = Take

The concept of dispersed retention harvesting was introduced to the Roberts Creek Study Forest in 1994. As part of a collaborative project, the Ministry of Forests and the Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada (FERIC) produced a video to demonstrate what is involved in planning and implementing a "shelterwood" harvesting method.

Shelterwood harvesting removes trees in a series of cuts designed to achieve a new stand under the shelter of remaining trees. In contrast to clear-cutting, it avoids having time periods where there are no trees to give shelter and protect the soil. Click here to view the video (15 minutes long; 77mb)

BC Timber Sales Partial Harvest Guidance Document

With careful planning and collaboration, high-retention harvesting techniques can enhance forest health, support local markets and contribute to sustainable forest management in the Chinook Business Area. BCTS' Partial Harvest Guidance Document provides practical guidance for staff, partners and license holders interested in utilizing partial cutting techniques. The document is intended to provide baseline information and is a collection of lessons learned for various alternative harvest strategies.

Industry professionals can contact Chelsea McLean, MSc, RPF, BIT, Stewardship Officer, BC Timber Sales Provincial Operations at: Chelsea.McLean@gov.bc.ca

BCTS DID YOU KNOW...

BCTS supports community initiatives and non-profit organisations across the province through a grant and sponsorship program.

In 2023/24 (FY24), BCTS contributed $136,950 to the program – 26 grants ($113,300.00) and 9 sponsorships ($23,650.00). As part of this program, the Chinook business area contributed:

- $5,000 to the Stitó:s Lá:lém Totí:lt Elementary / Middle School breakfast program,
- $5,000 to the CMBTA (Coast Mountain Bike Trail Association), and
- $1000 to the Powell River Salmon Society.

The Forest Operations Map (FOM) online portal is an online tool that allows the public to find, view and comment on planned forestry operations. Between April 2024 and February 2025, BCTS received over 500 public comment submissions via the portal. Close to 300 of those comments were related to BCTS' Chinook business area FOMs.

Notice something different about our newsletter? This issue (Vol 7, Issue 1) marks our seventh year of publication. To celebrate this achievement, we've given the newsletter a makeover with a new look and design!

Introducing the Chinook Planning Team

Stephan Bernhard, RPF, moved to Canada with his wife in 2012 from Switzerland. What he thought to be a two-year adventure has become a 13-year long commitment. Stephan holds a master's degree in forestry from the Swiss Institute of Technology in Zurich and a master's degree in GIS from the University of Salzburg, Austria. His work life has brought him to Switzerland, Senegal, Gabon, Kyrgyzstan and finally Canada. As the planning forester in Squamish for the past seven years, Stephan is the longest serving member of the Chinook planning team. Outside of work, Stephan enjoys the outdoors with family and friends, kayaking the west coast, rock climbing, mountain biking in the summer and ski touring in the winter.

Sydney Goward, RPF, has been with BCTS since 2023. As Chinook's Planning Officer, she supports our stewardship and planning initiatives, while supervising our team of wonderful planning foresters. Her areas of expertise are species at-risk, technical stakeholder engagement, collaborative landscape-level planning, research & monitoring, and invasive species. Sydney is originally from the B.C. Interior, where she got her start in the forest industry working at a sawmill before going on to pursue a Natural Resource Science degree. She also holds a Master of Science in Environmental Studies, where her work focused on Indigenous community-based monitoring of wildlife in the Arctic.

Zhu Feng Li (aka Rachel), RPF, the planning forester for the Sunshine Coast, joined us in October. Originally from Toronto, she moved to Vancouver for her master's in forestry and decided to stay since, in her own words, it's much more beautiful than Toronto. After she garduated, she was a forest technologist in Mackenzie and moved to the lower mainland to escape the cold and work as a First Nations advisor, before joining our planning team. She loves taking tons of photos, good manga, paddle boarding and playing with her two lovely cats until they get mad.

Kyle Wang, RPF, has been the planning forester for Chilliwack since July 2023. He is originally from Southern Ontario, where he obtained a Environmental Studies degree and Environmental Assessment diploma from the University of Waterloo. After graduation, Kyle moved to Mackenzie to work as a forest technologist for BCTS. New to B.C., he planned on staying for two years but is still here, ten years later. He moved from Mackenzie to Chilliwack in search of 24/7 fast food. When not working, he tries to stay out of trouble. He enjoys basking in the sun with his dog, Willow and is a big fan of the Green Bay Packers, Atlanta Falcons and Chicago Blackhawks.