
FACTSHEET

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Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural
Resource Operations

BC Timber Sales and harvesting in the Mark Creek community watershed

BC Timber Sales (BCTS) was established in 2003 to provide benchmark costs and prices from the harvest of Crown timber in British Columbia. Auctioning timber to the highest bidder allows BCTS to set long-term rates for tenure holders that ensure British Columbians receive a fair return for harvested timber. BCTS manages about 20% of the province's allowable annual cut through 12 business areas. In 2015-16, BCTS generated \$305 million in gross revenue for the Province, including \$35 million from the Kootenay business area alone.

- Community watersheds require special management to conserve the quantity, quality and timing of water flow, and to prevent cumulative hydrological effects on water. There are currently 466 designated community watersheds in B.C.
- Mark Creek, a community watershed of roughly 95 square kilometers, supplies most of the freshwater needs to the residents of Kimberley
- Natural resources in the watershed include: fish, water, wildlife, mineral, recreation, timber and cultural heritage. Forestry activities are managed according to legal objectives for natural resource values such as water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and by the Kootenay Boundary Higher Level Plan Order.
- The City of Kimberley and BCTS are signatories to a memorandum of understanding and a jointly developed integrated watershed management plan, which guide forestry activities in the watershed.
- All proposed BCTS activities in the watershed is referred to the Mark Creek Watershed Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations to city council.
- The Mark Creek Watershed Advisory Committee was formed in 1988, with representation from the City of Kimberley (staff and council), Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, BCTS, Ministry of Environment, Interior Health Authority, Ministry of Energy and Mines, Canfor, Wildsight, Friends of Mark Creek, a licenced trapper and consultants.
- The integrated watershed management plan recommends a maximum amount of area that can be in a denuded state at any given time.
- BCTS has committed to harvesting no more than 63 hectares (less than 1% of the forested area) in the watershed annually. Other commitments include increased riparian management measures, and enhanced road building, road maintenance and road inspection measures.
- All BCTS operations are certified to the ISO 14001 and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative standards, which require operations to follow an environmental management system

and sustainable forest management system. Both certifications require third-party auditing of BCTS operations.

- Primarily through responsible harvesting operations, mountain pine beetle populations have been kept at a stable level within the watershed. A hydrologically sound road network is now in place that can be used to respond to future fires or emergencies in the watershed.
- A 2012 audit by the independent Forest Practices Board found BCTS' activities in the Mark Creek Community Watershed to be "well done". The board observed that "care was taken on the management of operations within the watershed, as roads and bridges were well constructed and potential sediment sources were well managed, and the Board would like to acknowledge that effort." For more on the audit, please visit: https://www.bcfpb.ca/sites/default/files/reports/ARC147_BCTS_Rocky_Mountain.pdf
- BCTS contributes funds to water quality monitoring for the watershed. Independent reporting from Aqua-Tex indicates that both Mark and Matthew Creek continue to be of very good quality and that their water meets B.C. Drinking Water Protection Regulation standards.

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