

*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.*

## **BC Timber Sales Chinook Business Area**

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## **BCTS CELEBRATES REFORESTATION AT UBCM**

The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) conference was held September 18-21, 2023 at Canada Place in Vancouver. This annual Convention brings together local government and First Nations members to identify key policy issues and engage with other orders of government.

Stacey Gould, Timber Sales Manager for the Chinook region, Kyla Preto, Communication and Engagement Specialist for Provincial Operations, and Taylor Wallace, Coordinator of Business Excellence for Provincial Operations were all present at the BC Timber Sales booth to answer questions and engage with conference delegates. In celebration of the [recent announcement](#) to eliminate single use plastics from tree planting in British Columbia, and in anticipation of BCTS' billionth tree which will be planted next spring, seedlings were handed out as gifts to all attendees. This celebrated the incredible reforestation work done by our Seedling Services team, who contribute to initiatives across the Ministry. For more information on the work they do, you can watch this [video](#).

Thank you to everyone who stopped by our booth to say hello, ask questions, and strike up interesting conversation. We appreciate your engagement and will see you there again next year!



## Mt. Elphinstone South Watershed Assessment

Mount Elphinstone, located near the Town of Gibsons, has been a primary contributor to the local economy for over a century. The area is a predominantly Douglas-fir, second-growth forest currently shared between the Sunshine Coast Community Forest, Private Managed Forest Land, Mount Elphinstone Provincial Park, and a BC Timber Sales operating area. These managed forests overlap with the Town of Gibsons water supply, and well-appreciated local recreation sites and trails.

As the population of Gibsons continues to grow, there have been increasing concerns about the impacts of forestry and urbanization on the area's hydrology. In response to these concerns, BCTS commissioned a third party, multi-watershed study on the hydrologic condition of Mount Elphinstone watersheds associated with the BCTS operating area. The report produced from this study is one of the first major assessments guided by BCTS TCH/TSG's Watershed Risk Management Framework based on professional practices guidelines from both Engineers and Geoscientists BC and Forest Professionals BC.

A diverse team of professionals specializing in forest hydrology, fluvial geomorphology, terrain and soil science, imagery analysis, and GIS brought a wide range of expertise to the study supplemented by an independent review from Dr. William Floyd, the Ministry of Forests research hydrologist. While traditional forest hydrology studies focus solely on peak flow risks, this study significantly broadened its scope to also examine risks related to low flows, aquifer recharge, sediment yield, channel stability, and water contamination. The report was completed in 3 phases.

**Phase 1:** An exhaustive literature review ensured all determinations and recommendations were guided by the best available science. A seamless LiDAR dataset was compiled to accurately define relevant streams and catchment areas and confirmed through ground-truthing.

**Phase 2:** Owners of downstream water licenses were consulted to understand individual histories and potential risks of each license. Ground assessments of the urbanized sections of each watershed further revealed potential elements-at-risk. A draft report was presented for comment at several BCTS facilitated meetings with First Nations, the Town of Gibsons, Sunshine Coast Regional District, community groups, and the public. Feedback from this engagement was implemented in the final recommendations.

**Phase 3:** Site specific reports generated for each proposed timber sales license applying background, recommendations, and public feedback from phase 1 and 2.

This report is one of the most comprehensive produced for the industry due to the innovative methodologies implemented, some of which include:

- exhaustive assessment of watershed integrity, considering risks from urban and commercial development;
- increased number of points of evaluation resulting in a high resolution of data and increased accuracy;
- the rain-on-snow recovery curve was applied to all elevations, yielding a more conservative estimate for equivalent clearcut area; and

- adoption of a newly developed approach to low flows in relation to historic forest disturbance, and recommendations to minimize future impacts of harvesting.

These new methodologies improve our capability to assess watershed sensitivity in relation to forest development. By commissioning and publishing this study, BCTS is advancing our capacity for risk mitigation, increasing transparency of our forest management practices, and reinforcing our continued commitment to sustainable forest management.

The Mt. Elphinstone South Watershed Assessment can be found at - [Mt Elphinstone South Watershed Assessment Ph1&2 Vol1 Final.pdf \(gov.bc.ca\)](#).





## BCTS Partners with the Indigenous Forest Bio-Economy Program to Obtain Funding for N'Quatqua and Squamish Nations

As BCTS Chinook's relationships with the First Nations in the business area evolve, BCTS becomes aware of a broad spectrum of funding needs within individual Nations. While BCTS contributes to the economic benefit of Nations through mechanisms such as brushing contracts, archaeology work, and disposition agreements, there are needs that are beyond BCTS's ability to fund directly. Increasingly, BCTS is building relationships with other agencies and funding programs to help align Nations with funding opportunities that benefit Nations and help streamline forest development activities.

BCTS has begun working closely with the Indigenous Forest Bioeconomy Program (IFBP) that is managed by the Office of the Chief Forester. The IFBP collaborates with Indigenous partners across the province to promote community resilience within an increasingly competitive global forest sector. The program offers funding that supports Indigenous partners to lead the development of a forest bioeconomy. The goal of the program, to grow B.C.'s forest bioeconomy with an aim to provide economic, social and environmental benefits for Indigenous communities across the province aligns with one of BCTS' overarching principles - reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

Working with IFBP staff, BCTS has identified potential funding opportunities with Nations in the Chinook business area that align the program funding objectives with projects that unlock capacity within the Nation to better participate in forest development activities.

IFBP and Chinook have presented the program in person to Haida, N'Quatqua, shíshálh, and Squamish Nations. Additionally, the team facilitated a presentation to the provincial Indigenous Relations Working Group with the goal of extending the funding opportunities to other business areas. The above presentations have resulted in funding being provided to both N'Quatqua and Squamish

Nations. The grant issued to N'Quatqua provided funding for the Nation to purchase chainsaws, wood splitters, and safety gear. N'Quatqua has used the equipment to provide firewood to its members and sell firewood to businesses and individuals in the broader D'Arcy area. Additionally, BCTS has provided wood to the Nation from timber sales in N'Quatqua territory, enabling the Nation to obtain some of the wood used for the project free of charge.



*Wood delivered to N'Quatqua from the Phelix Creek sale. These logs were bucked up and delivered/sold using equipment from the bio-economy grant.*

In addition to working with N'Quatqua Nation, Squamish Nation was also provided funding through IFBP to obtain field equipment that will be used by their archaeology department during field surveys. Thus, with Squamish Nation's newly acquired Multi-Assessment Permit that authorizes their team to perform full Archaeology Impact Assessments, and the new field equipment, the Nation is now able to perform a wide range of cultural surveys in their territory for all proponents. The next article in this Newsletter provides more information about this work.

For more information on IFBP, please visit their [website](#).

Questions related to the program can be directed to Qingcen (QC) Cai (former Planning Forester with BCTS Chinook!) at [Qingcen.Cai@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Qingcen.Cai@gov.bc.ca).

## BCTS Chinook and Squamish Nation Collaborate on Improving the Archaeology Approval Process for Timber Development

As outlined in Principle 2 of the BCTS Business Plan, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples is integral to BCTS' long-term success. This is recognized by the Ministry's larger objective to "Strengthen partnerships and increase engagement with Indigenous peoples in the management of B.C.'s natural resources". Increasingly, BCTS Chinook has worked to integrate the resource management objectives of the Nations with whom we work into our operational planning.

Traditionally, the archaeology work performed on BCTS blocks, a key assessment for timber development, has been performed by contracted archaeology consultants. Starting in 2022, this began to change at the request of Squamish Nation for timber developments in their territory. Moving away from contracted archaeologists, Squamish Nation communicated the desire to have their members perform cultural surveys on BCTS timber developments.

In an effort to build upon Principle 2 and strengthen the partnership with Squamish Nation, BCTS has field surveyed every approved timber sale with Squamish Nation. Working together, a process was developed through which Squamish Nation would perform the rough equivalent of a Preliminary Field Reconnaissance (PFR) Survey. If no features of cultural significance were found, Squamish Nation provides preliminary approval on the spot, with a follow-up report confirming non-opposition to the block.

If a feature of cultural significance is identified, the vision is for the Squamish Nation team to convert the PFR to a more fulsome Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) while still in the field. This process reduces the cost of the survey, provides rapid response to findings, and enables BCTS to continue block development immediately.

The initial PFR surveys completed using this methodology did not find features of cultural significance. However, if features were found, activities performed under an AIA require a special permit from the Archaeology Branch, which Squamish Nation did not have. Recognizing this, BCTS Chinook approached the Squamish Nation and suggested that the Nation apply for the required Multi-Assessment Permit (MAP) through BCTS' archeology permitting Service Agreement with the Archaeology Branch.



*BCTS and Squamish Nation working together to complete cultural surveys within approved timber sale areas.*

The Service Agreement fast-tracks archeology permits for BCTS developments. The Service Agreement reduces permit processing time from nine to three months, and in some cases could be processed in a matter of weeks. With BCTS support, Squamish Nation was issued a two-year MAP that covers their territory. As an added benefit to the



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Nation, the MAP is not limited to BCTS and can be utilized on AIAs for internal cultural purposes or on surveys for other proponents.

The survey methodology discussed in this article has been implemented on six timber sales to date, with three more surveys planned for the fall of 2023. The intention is for BCTS and Squamish Nation to continue to work together to improve and refine the archeology review process for timber developments in the Chinook Business Area.



*A member of Squamish nation showing how bark is stripped and what to look for while completing cultural surveys in the field.*



# Licensee and Contractor Information

## Guide to Wildfire Hazard Assessment and Abatement

Fire hazard assessments and hazard abatement are key activities in reducing the potential threat of wildfires arising from fuels left on the land base following industrial activities. Under the *Wildfire Act* a person carrying out an industrial activity or prescribed activity is required to assess and abate fire hazards as necessary.

A BCTS [April 30, 2019 advisory bulletin](#) outlines the expectations for BCTS Timber Sale Licence (TSL) holders regarding fire hazard assessment and abatement requirements. The information and links provided in the advisory bulletin, specifically the link to the Guide to Fuel Hazard Assessment and Abatement in British Columbia, are intended to assist those carrying out industrial activities determine whether fuel hazard abatement is necessary, and if so, the threshold necessary to comply with the legislated obligations. The Guide to Fuel Hazard Assessment and Abatement in British Columbia provides straightforward step-by-step instruction to enable a person to determine when fuel hazard abatement is needed.



It is the TSL holder's responsibility to be familiar with required fire hazard assessments and abatements, to engage support from a forest professional, to complete fire hazard assessments at prescribed intervals, to document and retain records, to provide copies to BCTS and to conduct abatement activities. Please contact us if you have questions about fire hazard assessments and abatement requirements.

## Road Maintenance Obligations: Seasonal Deactivation

Over the life cycle of a Timber Sale Licence (TSL), the licensee is legally responsible for managing any negative effects of soil exposure and water. This responsibility may have to be considered daily, seasonally during road maintenance, or at the termination of the TSL.

With winter approaching, increased precipitation and water flow can be expected. Contractors and licensees are being reminded of the obligation to complete road maintenance in accordance with forest legislation ([Forest Planning and Practices Regulation \(Section 79\)](#)). Please review your operations and plans to ensure an appropriate level of maintenance is achieved prior to seasonal shutdown.