2019 Year in Review
Forest Improvement and Research Management Branch
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

From the Director

In this brief, informal publication, the staff of Forest Improvement and Research Management (FIRM) branch share a few highlights from 2019. We are not aiming for a comprehensive review of branch operations - but rather a few highlights from each section that may interest our clients, colleagues, and stakeholders.

FIRM is structured into six sections with the following key functions:
1. **Orchards** – Produce improved seed for reforestation in BC
2. **Research Management and Contract Services** – Coordinate the ministry's provincial forest research program and provide contract services for the Office of the Chief Forester and Resource Stewardship Divisions
3. **Tree Seed Center** – Process, store, and distribute the tree seed used for reforestation of all Crown lands in BC
4. **Forest Genetics** – Conduct forest genetics research and tree breeding
5. **Policy and Planning** – Manage the policy framework for BC's forest tree genetic resources
6. **Business Operations** – Provide a wide range of administrative support for FIRM branch

This year again staff turnover was high. In 2019, several colleagues retired or resigned (including Bonnie Hooge, Barry Jaquish, Sarah Leroux, Debbie Picard, Margot Spence, Haley Walsh and Susan Zedel), many new staff joined the branch (including Kevin Astridge, Lauren Harrison, Katelyn Hengel, Omnia Gamal, and Justin Whitehill) and many staff went on temporary assignment (including Jarrett Columbus, Ann Eastman, Shane Ford, Laura Klade, Keith Thomas, and Nick Ukrainetz) as we juggled to sustain operations amid the changes.

2019 was a very difficult year in BC's forest harvesting and milling sectors. However, in the silviculture sector planting approached record levels, resulting in strong seed sales and processing revenues for FIRM.
From the Director

At the Tree Seed Center, processing of the massive 2018 cone crop continued into the summer of 2019. The 2019 cone crop was much smaller than the 2018 crop so by the fall, workloads and processing times had returned to normal.

In 2019 we expanded our work on tree improvement projects focussed on increasing carbon capture (and avoiding carbon losses) in plantations. This work was funded by the federal Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund (LCELF) and the provincial Forest Carbon Initiative (FCI).

In the orchards, light crops are generally expected the year following a bumper crop, and that was the case in 2019. This year we harvested 666 hectolitres of cones, 40% the size of our 2018 crop.

During the year, ministry scientists received numerous awards. The ministry’s research program received the Canadian Forest Management Group Achievement Award from the Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF). The CIF noted that “the Research Program’s long history of high-quality research to inform forestry policies/practices that support sustainable forest management in British Columbia made it truly deserving of this honour.”

Only one-third of the lodgepole pine seedlings planted in BC derive from improved orchard-grown seed. In 2019 we grafted the first 5,000 plants for three new, 5000 ramet, advanced generation lodgepole pine seed orchards.

In 2020, FIRM will continue to strive for excellence in the delivery of our key services, operate as a well-organized team, and provide a healthy work environment. FIRM staff work at nine different locations around the province. As I visit our sites, I am struck by the pride FIRM staff take in their work and the care we take with the valuable public assets entrusted to us.

I hope you enjoy the brief, informal articles in our third Year in Review publication.

Patrick Martin
Director, FIRM

Processing the 2018 bumper crop (Michael Postma at Tree Seed Center)

High-gain Douglas-fir orchard trees planted at Saanich Seed Orchard
In 2019, most orchard species and sites produced an average crop, although larger than expected after last year’s record. From ministry orchards, 666 hectolitres (HL) of cones were collected. This will yield approx. 300 kg of seed and produce about 28 million seedlings.

Pest pressure was high in most crops due to insect populations that had built up in the large 2018 crops. This resulted in more pest management, and greater efforts to remove pest affected cones prior to harvest. Several crops in ponderosa pine (Py), western white pine (Pw), coastal Douglas-fir (Fdc) and western redcedar (Cw) were shipped for priority processing due to insect activity in the cones.

Several new replacement orchards were planned, laid out, grafted, or planted. This represents an exciting new progression to next-generation seed orchards. We initiated work to establish a disease-free replacement Pw orchard at Cobble Hill, given the high level of root disease in the Pw orchard at Saanich.

Sadly, Jim Corrigan, our friend and seed orchard entomologist, passed away early in the year from cancer. Also, we lost long term auxiliary Sage Shikaze.

Cones

Cones were harvested at all seed orchard sites this year. Kalamalka and Bailey produced lodgepole pine (Pli), Py, Pw, and birch crops. Skimikin produced Pli and interior spruce (Sx) crops, with Pli seed yields 90% higher than expected. Prince George produced from all 3 Pli orchards. The Prince George
pick included cones from both 2018 and 2019. Volumes were up by 30% over the last 2-year pick. These orchards will produce 120 HL every two years, and seed yield continues to be very good. Saanich produced Cw, Fdc, Pw and red alder crops. It was a busy year at Saanich starting in early January with the largest yellow cypress cutting harvest to-date.

Other
A lighter crop year provided the opportunity to catch up on orchard maintenance activities such as crown management, identity maintenance, site maintenance, and irrigation system overhauls. Maintenance of electronic records of activities helped new staff hit the ground running. Although cone picking crews were smaller overall, a 55 person crew was hired to harvest cones at Skimikin.

All three Pli orchards in Prince George were pruned; a huge job for one person. Pruning made it much easier to move lifts through the orchards. Skimikin and Bailey completed crown maintenance on over 10,000 mature grafts. Two very old chipmunk manlifts were retrofitted from gas and brake fluid to diesel and hydraulic. Infrastructure improvements included installing WiFi at most sites, road dust control at Skimikin, and re-roofing several outbuildings at Saanich. In early August, 1100 ramets were planted in the new Prince George Pli clone bank. In addition, most staff wrote either a technical report or standard operating procedure, addressing operational needs of the business.

New Orchards
Layout began on the first of two next generation (NextGen) Pli orchards in Prince George. The 5,000-tree orchard is laid out in six planned blocks and staked out on the ground. These six 900-tree blocks will be planted starting in spring 2020. The orchard is planned for a systematic thinning to remove every 2nd tree after 16 years for a final size of 3,600 trees at 5x8m final spacing. Kalamalka staff were kept busy helping with the NextGen Pli orchard grafting program. Also, field grafting was completed in Sx Nelson-High SO#306 and in Fdi TO-Low expansion.

At Skimikin, the NextGen Sx BV orchard #250 was site-prepared, new irrigation laid out and planted with 1,500 root-stock for field grafting next spring. As well, the new Pw MGR pollen orchard was planted.

A new LCELF-funded high gain coastal Douglas-fir sector of SO#199 was laid out and planted at Saanich with recently released selections. Newly released Douglas-fir clones were also planted into both the Fdc SO#199 maritime and SO#181 sub-maritime orchards. The work on the new white pine orchard in Cobble Hill has commenced, as well as converting a sub-alpine fir provenance test into a seed orchard.

Pests
Work conducted in 2018 identified root rot caused by Phytophthora and Pythium spp. as responsible for substantial mortality at orchards across the province. In 2019, control measures were

Orchard staff visiting Agriculture Canada’s R&D Center in Summerland
implemented for this disease. This included chemical treatment as well as a trial of alternative control measures. There was a dramatic reduction in mortality at most of our sites in 2019. Sampling for disease was conducted at Cobble Hill and no detections were found.

At Saanich, several studies were conducted in 2019, including Movento effectiveness trials in redcedar and Douglas-fir. Studies were also done on pheromone trap placement for Contarinia in Douglas-fir, and graft incompatibility.

Pest management in our seed orchards took a big step forward technologically in 2019 as the use of tablets was tested. Pest monitoring information was collected using the Survey123 platform. This platform proved popular with staff and showed a lot of promise for future use. The roll-out was conducted as a trial at limited sites in 2019 and feedback from this year will be used to improve and expand upon this tool for 2020.

**Stephen Joyce**

Manager, Seed Production
Research Management and Contract Services

**Research Management**

In 2019, we continued to manage and coordinate the ministry’s Research Program. Led by the Chief Forester, the Research Program includes over 70 scientists and technicians working in branches and regions across the province. FIRM branch supports Research Program management, coordination, outreach and knowledge transfer. Our key functions include strategic planning, improving research business processes, overseeing the program budget, research installation protection, internal communications and engagement, and liaison with external partners.

Significant achievements in 2019 in communications and outreach include:

- Launch of a [new intranet site](#) with research scientist profiles and launch of an external site with up-to-date information on research publications.
- Initiation of a regular article series in the bimonthly Association of BC Forest Professional’s magazine.
- Two more rounds of Research Talks were held in May and November 2019. Videos from all three sessions are available on the [BC Public Service YouTube](#) site.
- Publication of an [Annual Report](#) for the Research Program.
- Special recognition of the long-standing contributions by ministry researchers as the winners of the 2019 Canadian Forest Management Group Achievement Award from the Canadian Institute of Forestry.

Work continued on enhancing the use of research results in decision-making. The 2018/19 MITAC Research Fellow, Felicitas Egunyu, completed her fellowship and now is Land and Resource Specialist, Omineca Natural Resource Region, FLNRORD. The Science Policy Integration Plan that Felicitas developed is being implemented by a new MITAC Research Fellow, Luisa Ramirez. Luisa brings strong expertise and enthusiasm for science and policy communications.

We are looking forward to another exciting year with a focus on outreach and engagement and renewed support for research infrastructure management.

**Contract Services**

The Contract Management Unit had another successful year serving 13 branches in two divisions - the Office of the Chief Forester and the Resource Stewardship Division. For staff in these Divisions, this unit is the one-stop shop for contract support. Staff connect with the Unit at [RSTEWDCR@gov.bc.ca](mailto:RSTEWDCR@gov.bc.ca) with their procurement needs.

With over 20 years of contract management experience and a strong service focus, the Unit works to understand client’s business needs, and provide excellent procurement support following best practices and current ministry and core procurement policies. This year was another busy one. We:
Research Management and Contract Services

- Supported divisional staff with over 300 contracts.
- Welcomed Lauren Harrison permanently to our team to replace Deanna Foster who moved to a new role as Branch Operations Coordinator in FIRM.

We are looking forward to another great year of service.

*Ann Eastman*
A/Director, Operations

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Joint FLNRORD-NRCan Science Policy Forum held
November 19-20, 2019 at Pacific Forestry Centre
In 2019, the Tree Seed Centre saw a continuation of staff change and team building. Cone and Seed Processing Supervisor Debbie Picard retired in April and Laura Klade stepped into the role. Laura’s former position as Testing Supervisor was filled by Testing Technician Victoria Lei.

The Seed Centre hosted various tours in 2019 including visits from:

- Ravi Kahlon, Parliamentary Secretary for FLNRORD and MLA for North Delta
- Chief Forester Diane Nicholls
- Several student groups from UBC (silviculture, Master Sustainable Forest Management and International Forestry Student Association)
- The forestry class from the College of New Caledonia
- Various international groups including staff from a Norwegian Tree Nursery

All Seed Centre staff participated in a Lumina team building session that was facilitated by Strategic HR Advisors Alicia Matthews and Seana van der Valk. The session provided a forum for staff to engage in open and frank discussions that provided insights into the overall team makeup and communication styles used at the Seed Centre.

In 2019 Tree Seed Centre staff presented at, and participated in, a variety of conferences and technical workshops including the 2019 Canadian Forest Genetics Association Conference in Quebec, the Forest Nursery Association conference in Sidney BC, and the Inland Empire Tree Improvement Cooperative annual meeting in Coeur d’Alene Idaho.

The Cone and Seed processing team was very busy with the 2018 record crop of orchard cones and very large collections of wild stand fir and cedar cones. They worked until September getting the 2018 seed collections ready for long term storage.

Seed Centre staff worked with FLNRORD’s IT service provider Information, Innovation and Technology Division to ensure continued operation of Seed Planning and Registry (SPAR) and Cone and Seed Processing (CONSEP) systems while the underlying technology platforms for these systems were upgraded. Upgrades were also completed on the Kiln Burner Management System, Bevco Process Control System, Argus Kiln Environmental Control System and the Baghouse/Dust Management System.

**Annual Business Cycle**

The Tree Seed Centre operates with a steady and predictable annual business cycle, below are some highlights from 2019.

- Withdrawal, preparation and shipping of more than 2,500 sowing requests representing 307 million requested seedlings.
- Processing, testing and long-term storage of BC cone collections with more than 100 seedlots
Forest Genetics

The forest genetics section has had a very successful year, although it seems we have seen more than our fair-share of change this past year, especially in the leadership and delivery of our programs. After 30+ years, Barry Jaquish decided to retire. Fortunately, we have been able to retain access to his vast wealth of knowledge as he currently has emeritus status. Bonnie Hooge, a long-time technician, also decided it was time to retire. Her expertise will be sorely missed. Sarah Leroux, who was part of the lodgepole pine breeding program, said good bye to pursue an excellent opportunity with the Federal Government. By the end of this calendar year we will have filled five technical positions in response to retirements and parental leave. Business continuity is a primary focus and so far, we have managed to deliver.

In order to achieve near- and long-term program objectives we welcomed two new research scientists into the section - Omnia Gamal El-Dien and Justin Whitehill. Omnia’s specialty is in quantitative genetics and she has focused on our western redcedar genomic selection project which is part of the Genomic Applications Partnership Program (GAPP). Omnia’s expertise is also helping us with analyses of other back-log data sets. Justin is our coastal forest health research scientist with expertise in forest health issues. Justin has been able to provide another perspective and insight into deer browse resistance mechanisms in young western redcedar seedlings as part of the current
In April, we honoured our dear friend and colleague Dr. John Russell. John was our senior research scientist at Cowichan Lake Research Station. He was recognised as one of the world’s foremost authorities on western redcedar and was greatly admired for his knowledge, scientific excellence and enthusiasm. His celebration of life was well-attended which spoke volumes about his significant contribution to the field and the positive impact he had on the community. We miss John very much.

In 2019, the talent within the Forest Genetics section was again recognised. Michael Stoehr, our coastal research team lead, was the recipient of the Canadian Institute of Forestry/Institut forestier du Canada (CIF-IFC) prestigious Canadian Forestry Achievement Award. This award recognizes individuals who have made unique and outstanding achievements in the field of forestry. Michael was recognized for dedication to innovative research and strong scientific contributions to advance the field of forest genetics, including leading the Coastal Douglas-Fir Tree Breeding program in British Columbia, a well-deserved award.

Charlie Cartwright and Ward Strong successfully organised and hosted the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) Joint Meeting on “Genetics and Breeding of 5-needle pines and Rusts of Forest Trees”. The meeting was an overwhelming success. Stay-tuned for the proceedings.

In September Michael Stoehr organised a reunion of the old Ministry Research Branch. The get-together was well-attended, and it brought together multiple generations of tree breeders (see photo below). It was great to see all the familiar faces...past and present and a great time was had by all.

The creativity and resourcefulness of the Section in the face of challenges never ceases to amaze. Despite staffing challenges, we are still on track to meet our branch business plan objectives. We have achieved this by utilising a more integrated approach to planning and resource allocation across programs, and emphasizing ‘team’, all of which has resulted in a more coordinated delivery of our goals. A sampling of our successes includes:

- estimated new Breeding Values (BV) for height, diameter, and cedar leaf blight in western redcedar
- assigned BV’s to Series 4 advanced
Forest Genetics

• initiated the grafting of 5000 ramets for next generation lodgepole pine orchards
• released forward selected interior spruce Bulkley Valley parents to seed orchards
• expanded the Barnes Creek clone bank
• continued analyses and refinement of the transfer functions for Climate Based Seed Transfer (CBST).

We also assembled a high-level schedule for all species in the program estimating when new BVs and new material will be available. The intent is to help inform our stakeholders so they can better prepare for potential orchard development. This schedule will improve the overall integration and efficiency of forest genetics and orchard management for the province.

This year we embarked on new breeding programs for interior western redcedar and ponderosa pine led by Marie Vance. This is a strategic initiative to provide species diversity and better position the province in its response to climate change. In addition to moving her breeding programs forward, Marie successfully defended her PhD. Congratulations Marie!!

On the conservation side of our mandate, Charlie Cartwright and Ward Strong have been instrumental in whitebark pine conservation and have drafted a breeding plan for the species. We are hoping for the final version within the year.

The coming year will undoubtedly bring more change, this seems inevitable and appears to be the new normal. I think the steps we have taken this year and those we will continue to take will position us to manage this change and continue to be a strong and resourceful program. We look forward to the challenges the New Year brings.

Keith Thomas
A/Manager, Forest Genetics

Kelsey and Lise

Douglas-fir breeders of the past, present and future
2019 was a year of transition for the Policy and Planning Group. The year was marked by the retirement of the Seed Policy Officer, Margot Spence and the Seed Resource Specialist, Susan Zedel. Fortunately, the Branch was able to hire Sabina Donnelly in late 2018 to replace Susan and provide for a 3 month overlap to allow for some of Susan’s expertise, knowledge and institutional memory to be transferred before she left. 2019 was the beginning of Sabina’s first sowing season flying solo and she has earned her wings!

In the summer of 2019, the Branch hired Kevin Astridge as the new Seed Policy Officer. Kevin brings with him a wealth of expertise and experience working with BC’s forest management policy framework with an emphasis on silviculture, forest stewardship planning, tree species management, and stocking standards. Kevin has been enjoying switching gears from a previous focus on “what happens after the boxes of seedlings arrive at the cutblock,” to learning all that goes into “collecting (selecting), producing, registering, and deploying” those trees to their planting sites.

Leslie McAuley, the section’s Decision Support Officer, has been diligently sharing her expertise and knowledge with the “rookies” in the new lineup, and keeping a firm hand on the implementation of Climate-Based Seed Transfer (CBST), new and emerging policy issues, and what may lie ahead as we transition to CBST from Geographic-Based Seed Transfer (GBST).

Genetic Resource Access and Use Agreements
Policy development, analysis, and oversight of the ministry’s Genetic Resource Access and Use agreements for the transfer and use of forest tree genetic material continued in 2019. A CBST lens is now being applied in the development of recommendations to the Chief Forester for seed use Alternatives. Interest in BC’s genetic resources by applicants (proponents/agencies) in jurisdictions located outside BC continues (cones, seed, data sharing, and, genomic information).

Climate Based Seed Transfer
It was another busy year for CBST policy and implementation work. In April 2019, the Chief Foresters Standards for Seed Use were amended to refine CBST areas of use and to address orphans. Plantation orphans are BEC variants without a seed procurement area. Seed Source orphans are seedlots without a seed deployment area. The option remains to use either the existing GBST standards or the new CBST standards. The 2019 amendments came into effect on August 12, at the start of the 2020 Sowing Year. Revisions to SPAR were undertaken to reflect the changes to seed and vegetative lot areas of use. Further changes are planned in April 2020 to update CBST baseline data sets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Seedling Use</th>
<th>Million seedlings requested as of Dec 4, 2019</th>
<th>Percent using CBST</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCT</td>
<td>BCTS Reforestation</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTM</td>
<td>FFT Reforestation</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>81%</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTM</td>
<td>FES Carbon</td>
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<td>92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>LFP</td>
<td>Licensee Reforestation</td>
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<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Other Reforestation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The uptake of CBST continues to be strong. As of December 4 2019, 61% of the 2019 Seedling Requests (Sowing Year = 2020) were ordered using CBST (data from SPAR, below).
Monitoring, Assessment, Impact and Gap Analysis
The latter half of 2019 has seen a move towards monitoring (e.g. updating provincial seed use and genetic gain estimates) and the development of new reporting protocols (based on RESULTS) to support the Timber Supply Review process. However, assessing potential impacts and gaps under CBST remains a primary focus. Species-level summaries and Assessment Workbooks were made available on the new CBST Impacts and Gaps web page. These summaries together with seed demand projections currently being completed through the Forest Genetics Council, and ongoing analyses of seed use and orchard coverage for the Chief Forester, will inform further policy development as we transition to full implementation of CBST over the next few years.

CBST Tools, Support and Maintenance
We are developing a CBST Maintenance and Support Plan to document existing and new protocols for the custodianship of data and change management processes under CBST. This will include a schedule for planning and managing changes to CBST including updates to baseline data sets such as BEC, climate data, provenance data (parent trees, transfer functions), and updates to Seed BEC Variants and Areas of Use.

Communications, Extension and Training
Getting the word out on CBST this year included delivery of:

- Webinars and tutorials on CBST, and CBST in SPAR
- CBST project team interviews with the University of British Columbia, Faculty of Forestry, Social-Ecological Systems Research Group
- CBST project team interviews with University of British Columbia, Faculty of Forestry, post-doctoral fellow Guillaume Peterson St-Laurent
- Presentations to the Forest Genetics Council, ITAC and CTAC.

Other important work of the section in 2019 included successful drafting and bringing into force of the Tree Seeds and Services Regulation. This regulation included new fee schedules for seeds and cone and seed services.

Kevin Astridge
Tree Seed Policy Officer
Sabina Donnelly, Seed Resource Specialist, has been busy filling Susan Zedel’s shoes, overseeing her first full sowing season, looking after SPAR, and providing support for CBST implementation.

Leslie McAuley, Decision Support Officer, has been pouring her energy into the implementation, maintenance and support of CBST. Leslie is also the Branch representative on the ministry’s Climate Action Planning Team and provides input on seed use and genetic gain assumptions to Integrated Silviculture Strategies and the provincial Timber Supply Review.

Kevin Astridge, Seed Policy Officer, has been overseeing the great work of the Policy and Planning Group while gaining an understanding of the myriad of details that go into the seed policy framework.

Susan Zedel retired March 31, 2019, after 35 years of exemplary service to tree improvement, forest seedling nurseries, Tree Seed Centre staff, FLNRORD and Licensee foresters.

Margot Spence retired at the end of May 2019. After 30+ years with the BC government including 3.5 years in FIRM where she was instrumental in getting CBST into policy.
The Business Operations Unit is the motor that keeps FIRM running. Overall, the mission of the Business Operations Team is to develop and help implement measures to improve efficiencies in business and management practices in the Branch, with a focus on:

a) identifying financial and human resource requirements  
b) ensuring payroll is properly managed  
c) records management  
d) providing assessment of potential program risks and opportunities  
e) tracking and reporting progress and accomplishments

Financial and Human Resources
There were many new hires at all branch locations this year. In large part it was the Business Operations group that helped ensure that new staff were set up in Time and Pay, pay was correctly administered, computers and IDIRs were set up and operational objectives were being met.

In the financial tracking realm, we strengthened the Unit’s ability to track invoices, confirm they were paid, and ensure that the information coming from CSNR matches our records. Pam Luebker continued to provide excellent financial assistance to the Branch and keep up with demands at the Tree Seed Centre. Special thanks to Sue Wilkie for keeping the tracking and invoice payments for the orchards up to date and providing timely assistance so that we can be confident that the bills have been paid and staff have the information needed to carefully manage budgets.

Payroll
Special recognition is due for the fantastic work around payroll this year. Diana Thornton kept things at the Tree Seed Centre running like a well-oiled machine. In the other areas of the Branch, with Tanisha Hett away on maternity leave, it was up to Denielle Weatherill to stay on top of the revved up hiring processes this year and ensure new staff were in Time and Pay. With over 100 auxiliary employees and about 60 regular staff to track, provide hire and layoff letters, check payroll and benefits, and submit corrections, it wasn’t easy to make sure everyone got paid correctly and that any mistakes were caught and corrected. So, a special thanks from FIRM staff to this important duo who keep the paycheques coming.

Records Management
Records Management was three steps forward and only two steps back this year. There was some good momentum from the various groups to develop plans that will work for them. A special thanks to Katherine Spencer and the Skimikin team for really pushing things along for the orchard group this year.

At headquarters, with an office move scheduled for October, we did a lot of work to get the information stored there into EDRMS and properly transferred to the records management centre. Over 100 boxes of files were completed, labeled and moved; it was no small task. Acknowledgement to Chris Munkacsi and Georgina Webber who came as short-term hires for a few months to help us get things cleaned out. We could not have done it without them.
Risks and Opportunities
During the many staffing changes at Cowichan over the past few years, one critical constant was Kathy Theobald. Kathy quietly and efficiently managed the operations and administrative functions not only of the Cowichan Lake Research Station but also the Conference Centre. She made sure that order was maintained in both areas and helped keep the site well organized. Kathy retired on December 13, 2019. Retirement will provide Kathy the opportunity to do many other things and we wish her all the best. Karen Harrison, a new employee to government, has been hired to replace Kathy.

Tracking and reporting progress and accomplishments
Deanna Foster came over from the contract team to fill Alana Phillips’ Branch Coordinator position. Deanna has assisted Branch staff with contract development training for those items not covered by the contract management team. She also worked with offices to conclude business continuity plans this year and has taken on safety tracking and helping to produce the quarterly report document for the orchards.

Stephanie Gillis at headquarters kept things moving with a smile and a sense of humour. One major accomplishment by Stephanie in 2019 was ensuring the office move to Capital Park went smoothly while keeping the day-to-day operations of headquarters motoring along. Job well done, Steph.

Overall, I am very pleased with the progress and accomplishments of the Business Operations Unit in 2019. We got into gear and were the generators of many key results this year. We look forward to being a driving force helping power the Branch effectively into the next decade.

Darrell Wood
Manager, Business Operations

Kathy (left) with friends and colleagues at CLRS
The office at Cowichan Lake Research Station
Epilogue

Bags of seed stratifying at the Tree Seed Center

Our emeritus scientists continue to contribute in their areas of speciality (Barry Jaquish at Kalamalka)

The Victoria office move kept admin staff very busy (Stephanie Gillis at 727 Fisgard, Victoria)

Extension is critical (Charlie Cartwright at the Forest Genetics Council tour).

Michael Stoehr ready for Christmas

Highball planting crew (Amy, Marie, & Greg)
Epilogue

A common sight in our workplace in 2019

Culturing Armillaria (Trevor Doerksen at Kalamalka)

Newly grafted parent trees for lodgepole pine seed orchards

Nancy, Katelyn and Gary at Kalamalka

Stephen, Katie and Charlie at CLRS

Picking white pine at Bailey Seed Orchard