



## NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

April 12, 2017

VICTORIA – The BC Community Forest Association released the report of their 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Community Forest Indicators Survey today. The survey collects data on the economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits that community forests bring to their communities and to the province.

The survey results show how important community forests are to their local communities and regions. They generated an average of \$1.9 million of economic activity in the reporting year. They contributed \$257,000 on average in cash and in-kind donations, a significant boost to rural communities, most with populations of 3,000 or less.

The report describes how community forest organizations are investing in the future productivity of their forest lands by making investments that go above and beyond legal requirements. In the reporting year, survey respondents spent on average \$77,000 of their own funds on intensive silviculture, and another \$ 108,000 on forest stewardship. To date, they have collectively invested \$1.8 million to reduce the threat of wildfire in wildfire and managed an additional \$4.6 million from outside sources.

Thirty-eight community forests participated in the survey, representing 93% of the operating community forests in the BCCFA. Most are small rural communities; nearly half of which are held by First Nations or a partnership between an Indigenous and non-Indigenous community.

### **Erik Leslie, President, BCCFA Community Forest Association –**

“The BCCFA Indicators report includes not just statistics and quantitative measures. The report is also filled with dozens of stories that demonstrate the creative energy and innovation that we see in community forests across the province. For example, the Esk’etemc Community Forest near Williams Lake is designing a community heating system that will heat 10 local buildings. They also provide 100 cords of firewood annually to Elders and people that require social assistance. The Nakusp and Area Community Forest understands the importance of the pine mushroom harvest to the local economy and has worked with local mushroom pickers and ecologists to protect mushroom habitat.”

### **Jim Atkinson, General Manager, McLeod Lake Mackenzie Community Forest –**

“The Indicators Survey shows the spectrum of what community forests can accomplish. Profitability for a community forest is measured by different metrics than used by industry. While profitability for a community forest can be measured in cash, no less important are more intangible benefits such as the long-term health and sustainability of our forest; recreation, employment and development opportunities for community members and harmony with all the other users of the forest.”

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[www.bccfa.ca](http://www.bccfa.ca)

130 Government St. Victoria BC  
V0G 1M0 Canada

[info@bccfa.ca](mailto:info@bccfa.ca)  
250 384 4110

The full report can be found at [www.bccfa.ca](http://www.bccfa.ca)

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For more information contact:  
Jennifer Gunter, Executive Director  
jgunter@bccfa.ca  
250 384 4110