
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2017FLNR0041-000812
March 24, 2017

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource
Operations

Partnership lands invitation for community forest near Fort Nelson

FORT NELSON – Opportunities for greater input into local forest management are expanding near Fort Nelson following an invitation from Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Steve Thomson to the Fort Nelson First Nation and Northern Rockies Regional Municipality to apply for a community forest agreement.

Fort Nelson First Nation and the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality now have 365 days to formalize their intended partnership and submit an application for approval.

The invitation to apply is for approximately 185,000 cubic metres of allowable annual cut over a 25-year term.

The partnership will need to submit a management plan to the ministry's district manager for approval prior to submitting the application for a community forest. The management plan will help the district manager determine details of the community forest, including its boundaries and allowable annual cut. The land-base selection will reflect each community's values while targeting a timber profile of coniferous and deciduous volumes reflective of the Fort Nelson Timber Supply Area.

As part of the community forest application, the Fort Nelson First Nation and the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality will need to demonstrate community awareness and support for the community forest, including building relationships and sharing information with neighbouring First Nations and area communities.

The invitation to apply for a community forest supports the Province's goals in the forest sector competitiveness agenda to support rural, resource-dependent communities and to build economic capacity, community opportunities and develop partnerships with First Nations in the forest sector.

Community forest agreements are long-term, area-based tenures designed to encourage community involvement in the management of local forests. A community forest is managed by a local government, community group or First Nation for the benefit of the entire community.

Quotes:

Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations –

"I am pleased to invite the Fort Nelson First Nation and Northern Rockies Regional Municipality to jointly apply for a community forest agreement. I am impressed with the progress they have made in developing their partnership and believe there is a greater chance of success under the partnership than working in isolation. I expect both communities to benefit from an economic

boost witnessed in other community forests.”

Sharleen Gale, councillor and acting Chief, Fort Nelson First Nation –

“Forestry is an integral component to the economic health of our community. This is an excellent opportunity for us to apply a local and cultural lens on forest management in the area. We look forward to partnering with the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality and seeing the benefits flow into our communities.”

Bill Streeper, mayor, Northern Rockies Regional Municipality –

“We appreciate the Province extending an invitation to apply for a community forest agreement. We are also thankful to the Fort Nelson First Nation for being such willing partners and we have confidence that our partnership will result in a successful application that reinvigorates the local forest sector and employment opportunities for our community members.”

Erik Leslie, president, British Columbia Community Forest Association –

“Community forests drive local community economic development and enable the kind of community engagement and local decision making that leads to sustainable forest management. The BC Community Forest Association is pleased to support the Fort Nelson First Nation and Northern Rockies Regional Municipality in successfully completing their application for a community forest.”

Learn More:

Fort Nelson First Nation: <http://www.fortnelsonfirstnation.org>

Northern Rockies Regional Municipality: <http://www.northernrockies.ca>

Strong Past, Bright Future: A Competitiveness Agenda for British Columbia’s Forest Sector, along with the Value Added Sector Action Plan, British Columbia Pulp and Paper Sustainability: Sector Challenges and Future Opportunities, and other supporting documents, can be found at: www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/competitive-forest-industry

BC Community Forest Association: <http://bccfa.ca>

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