

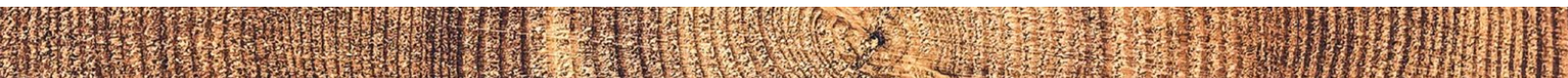


British Columbia
**Community
Forest**
Association
local people, local forests, local decisions

COMMUNITY FOREST INDICATORS 2021

MEASURING THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY FORESTRY

SEPTEMBER 2021



WE ARE GRATEFUL to all those who dedicated time and effort to respond to the survey and provide thoughtful answers and anecdotes. The Community Forest Indicators Project is made possible by the generous participation of our members. Thank you also to the British Columbia Community Forest Association Board of Directors for their guidance and support.

This report is based on the last fiscal year for our members, primarily 2019-2020. Throughout this time and ongoing into 2021, community forests have faced a number of challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite increased logistical and administrative burdens in addition to market and workforce changes, community forests have demonstrated a remarkable resiliency and adaptability to the ever-evolving circumstances. The information presented in this report is reflective of this unique time in history as we all continue to navigate the path forward. Community forests have continuously proven their innovative and inspiring spirit, which is ultimately driven by the perseverance of the local communities and their connections to the landscapes in which they live.

Throughout the Indicators Survey, our members shared illuminating stories and comments that summarized their experiences over the past year. We have included many in this report and look forward to sharing more on our social media accounts. Follow us to learn more about our members and their achievements!

— Jennifer Gunter, BCCFA Executive Director; Susan Mulkey, BCCFA Manager of Communication & Extension; and Carly Dow, Administrative Assistant



@BC_CFA



@bccommunityforests



@bc_cfa

Community Forest Indicators 2021: Measuring the Benefits of Community Forestry

September 2021

Cover photos, clockwise from top: Aerial view of logging at Spring Lake, where the community forest is managed by Ntityix Resources LP, a natural resource company owned by Westbank First Nation, photo by Dave Gill; Seb Lutz and Paige Mansveld working on fuel treatment at Harrop-Procter, photo by Erik Leslie; Split tree with sun, by YiSeung Photographie; and Mary Mack from the Nuxalk Nation with woven cedar headbands from the community forest in Bella Coola, photo Hans Granander.

Graphic design by Nadene Rehnby, Hands on Publications



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PHOTO: CHRIS LAING

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COMMUNITY FORESTS IN BC

■ = Contributed to the *Community Forest Indicators 2021* report

100 Mile Development Corporation

Alberni Valley Community Forest Corporation

Babine Lake Community Forest Society

Bamfield Huu-ay-aht Community Forest Society

Barkley Community Forest Corporation

Bella Coola Resource Society

Burns Lake Community Forest Ltd.

Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest Corporation

Cheakamus Community Forest Ltd. Partnership

Cherry Ridge Management Committee

Cheslatta Community Forest

Chinook Comfor Ltd.

Clinton & District Community Forest of BC Ltd.

Cortes Forestry General Partnership

Creston Valley Forest Corporation

District of Fort St James

District of Vanderhoof

Dungate Community Forest

Dunster Community Forest

Eniyud Community Forest

Esk'etemc Community Forest

Fort Nelson First Nation/Northern Rockies Regional Municipality

Harrop-Procter Community Co-operative

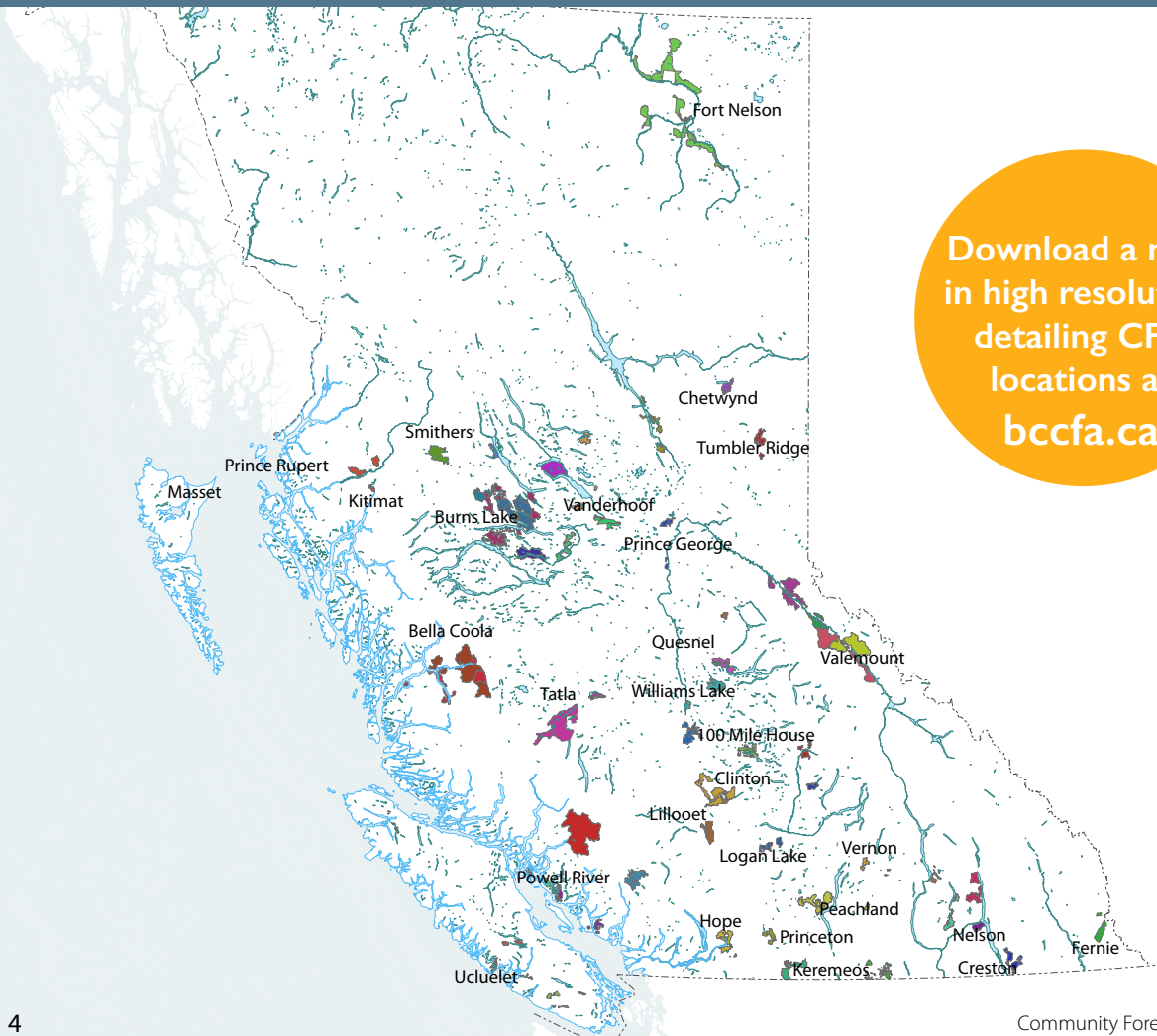
Huu-ay-aht First Nation Forestry Ltd. Partnership

Kaslo & District Community Forest Society

Khowutzun Community Forest

Klahoose Forestry Ltd. Partnership

Likely Xat'súll Community Forest Ltd.



Little Prairie Community Forest Inc.
 Logan Lake Community Forest Corporation
 Lower North Thompson
 Community Forest Society
 Lower Similkameen Community
 Forest Ltd. Partnership
 McBride Community Forest
 McLeod Lake Mackenzie Community Forest Ltd.
 Monashee Community Forest
 Nakusp and Area Community Forest, Inc.
 North Island Community Forest Ltd. Partnership
 Nupqu Development Corporation
 Nuxalk Forestry Ltd. Partnership
 Powell River Community Forest Ltd.
 Qala:yit Forestry Ltd. Partnership
 Sechelt Community Projects Inc.
 Slocan Integral Forestry Cooperative (SIFCo)

Spel'kumtn Community Forestry Ltd. Partnership
 Tanizul Timber Ltd.
 Tano T'enneh Ltd. Partnership
 Terrace Community Forest Ltd. Partnership
 Tla'amin Timber Products Ltd.
 Tumbler Ridge Community Forest Corporation
 Valemount Community Forest Company Ltd.
 Vermillion Forks Community Forest Corporation
 Village of Fraser Lake
 Wells Gray Community Forest Corporation
 Wells-Barkerville Community Forest Ltd.
 West Boundary Community Forest Inc.
 Westbank First Nation Community Forest
 Wetzin'Kwa Community Forest Corporation
 Williams Lake Community Forest Ltd.
 Xaxli'p Community Forest Corporation

PROFILE: Nakusp and Area Community Forest (NACFOR)

“Despite the sudden uncertainty and ‘new order’ resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, NACFOR was busy throughout spring and summer in 2020. We worked closely with our contractors to ensure they had the up to date COVID-19 health and safety and financial assistance information during the early days of the pandemic, and continued to support them to ensure requirements were being met under the new normal operations. We are thankful to the local contractors for their cooperation and diligence throughout the pandemic. NACFOR’s operations provided much needed work for contractors. In June 2020 we had a good news story from a local trucker who was able to keep driving because NACFOR was able to keep a couple of logging contractors busy. He really appreciated getting the work, but also the commitment NACFOR showed to provide employment during difficult times. He was aware that a lot of other operations found it easier to shut down at the beginning of the pandemic and acknowledged the extra effort NACFOR took to keep operating. In appreciation of NACFOR’s commitment to the community he wanted to “pay it forward” and share some of the benefits he received with cash donations to a couple of local organizations that he felt were providing positive benefits to the community.” — Frances Swan, Manager, Nakusp and Area Community Forest (NACFOR)



“During the pandemic, a local trucker able to keep driving appreciated the work, and the commitment NACFOR showed to provide employment during difficult times.” PHOTO FRANCES SWAN

Executive Summary

ACROSS BRITISH COLUMBIA, community forests provide rural communities with a rare opportunity to manage local forests in ways that generate economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits for their residents and the land on which they live. In fact, BC leads the way in Canada in community-based forest management. Operating on public forest land, community forest tenures are an innovation. The wide-spread benefits include creating local jobs and boosting the local economy, wildfire management and mitigation, inspiring forest education and recreational activities, contributing to local service organizations, enhancing ecosystem restoration, and more.

As the forest sector shifts focus to an increase in Indigenous-lead forestry, community forests are playing an active role in the movement towards reconciliation with a growing Indigenous representation in ownership, partnership, employment, and board member involvement in their organizations. Community forests demonstrate how challenges can be identified and overcome when local people make local decisions about local forests.

This report shares the results of the BC Community Forest Association's 7th Community Forest Indicators Survey and provides insight into the measurable value of community forestry. Eighteen indicators provide tangible, quantitative information on the wide range of benefits that community forests generate. Thirty community forests participated in the 2020/2021 survey, providing data from their last reporting year, specific to their operations. This sample represents 70 per cent of the operating community forests in the BC

Community Forest Association. Most are small rural communities with an average population of 3,031.

Operating during the COVID-19 pandemic has presented a number of challenges for community forests, in addition to the impacts of mill curtailments and closures across BC. The most notable issues arose in the form of incremental costs from administration, operating with smaller work crews, and training for new planting crews; decreased productivity due to restrictions and crew size; and decreases in the amount of public programming and events that were offered. Despite these difficulties, reporting community forests displayed their commitment to maintaining local em-

ployment and contributing to economic, ecological, and social benefits for their communities. We will see these impacts continue into future years. Indicators reporting because of the range of year-end timeframes for survey respondents.

Community forestry promotes ecosystem stewardship and local economic

development. Communities need healthy forests and healthy economies to adapt to change and plan for future generations.

The combined results of the 18 indicators are evidence of the success and promise of community forestry. Themes that emerged in the survey included First Nations involvement in all aspects of community forest management and operations; innovation to create more value and jobs through utilization; the importance of investing in education and recreation to build stronger connections between people and forests; and stewardship that goes above and beyond legal requirements to support healthy ecosystems.



The pandemic presented a number of challenges for community forests. PHOTO WELLS GRAY CF

Total harvest in the reporting year: 800,652 m³
Average: 26,688 m³

Taking a leadership role in wildfire risk reduction and community safety also continues to be a growing priority for community forests and is critically important work as we learn to adapt and prepare for a changing climate.

Jobs and Economic Contributions

This year's results show that community forests are creating more than twice as many (109%) jobs/m³ than the industry average in their forestry, logging and support services. On average, they generated \$2.2 million in economic activity, up from \$1.8 million last year, and contributed an average of \$583,005 cash and in-kind to local projects. Community forests are meeting their cut control and reliably supplying logs to both major processing facilities and small manufacturers, while also seeking value-added operations to support.

First Nations Involvement

Half of the operating community forests in BC are held by First Nations or are partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. In addition to community forests where First Nations are owners or partners, many community forest organizations include First Nations representation on their boards. Nearly 70% of the reporting community forests this year have employment contracts with Indigenous community members. In many cases, First Nations are engaged in cooperative planning, share profits, have MOUs and employment contracts, and work with community forest organizations in capacity building activities such as training and education.

Healthy and Resilient Communities

Increasingly, British Columbians understand the urgent need to manage the areas surrounding their communities to adapt to climate change and mitigate the risk of catastrophic wildfire. The survey results demonstrate that many community forests are leaders in the proactive management of wildfire hazard. To date, reporting community forests have treated 7,571 ha of land to prepare for wildfire. Other social benefits include a \$123,852 investment in education this year, as well as the creation and maintenance of over 1,200 kms of recreational trails to date.

Environmental Stewardship

Community forests not only provide direct benefit to their local communities, but also invest in the future by managing for ecosystem resilience. The long-term, area-based tenure is a means to motivate this forward thinking stewardship of the land. Community Forest organizations are invested in a range of objectives including enhanced forest stewardship and the conservation of ecologically and culturally significant areas and values. In addition to the \$535,988 that community forests put into forest stewardship this year above and beyond legal requirements, they also managed over \$1.4 million from external sources.

Background information on the Community Forest Indicators survey questions and methodology as well as an electronic copy of this report can be found on our website at: bccfa.ca/category/indicators/.

PROFILE: Bella Coola “\$32,500 was donated to local non-profit organizations that were not able to hold revenue-generating events due to COVID-19. These organizations still had fixed overhead costs such as insurance, utilities, maintenance and upkeep but with no revenue stream were in financial difficulty. This included our local Lobelco Hall, Moose Hall, Royal Canadian Legion, museums, tourist association to name a few.” — Hans Granander, Community Forest Manager, Bella Coola Resource Society

The Context

THE COMMUNITY FOREST AGREEMENT (CFA) is an area-based licence between the provincial government and the agreement holder that provides the exclusive right to harvest timber within the community forest area, and the right to manage forest products. Licences are long-term, 25 years, and replaceable every 10. Since the development of the community forest tenure in 1998, BC has issued 59 community forests with another five formally in the application process. These licences are held by a variety of community-based legal entities, including limited partnerships, societies, co-ops, Indigenous and local governments.

Collectively, over 100 Indigenous and rural communities are involved in community forestry in BC. Half of the operating community forests are held by First Nations or a partnership between an Indigenous and non-Indigenous community. Most public land, known as Crown land, in BC is unceded traditional lands and territories. Aligned with the BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, the BCCFA is committed to prioritizing forest management that respects First Nation rights and cultural values, and fosters understanding and cooperation between rural communities and First Nations. Active inclusion and incorporation of Indigenous knowledge and values into forest management will help lead the way to innovative, forward-thinking stewardship of the land base.

The community forest tenure was developed to give local communities the opportunity to manage local forests for the benefit of those communities, in a manner consistent with locally defined objectives and values.

The community forest tenure is unique in the province for several reasons:

1. The organization that holds the licence must be locally based and represent the whole community. Profits do not leave the community to benefit distant shareholders.
2. There is a comprehensive application process that includes the requirement to demonstrate local community engagement and support.

A field tour was organized with Westbank First Nation elders. It was meant to get them out onto the land and to learn from their stories and experiences. PHOTOS DAVE GILL



The sap of the balsam has both antiseptic and analgesic properties and is traditionally used for burns, sores and wounds.



Labrador or trappers tea has medicinal properties and is picked in the fall. The leaves are dried and crushed then steeped like regular tea.

The community forest tenure was developed to give local communities the opportunity to manage local forests for the benefit of those communities, in a manner consistent with locally defined objectives and values.

3. The Licence Document and Management Plan must:

- Contain the broad social, economic and resource management goals proposed for the community forest;
- Identify the linkage between the community forest goals and the provincial Community Forest Program goals (below); and
- Include a plan for annual reporting out to the community.

The provincial government's goals for the Community Forest Program further set the tenure apart. The goals are to:

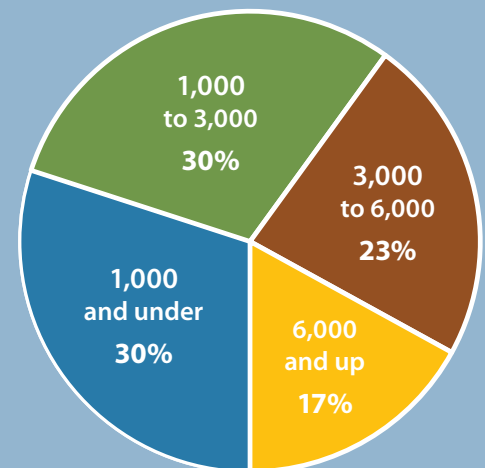
1. Provide long-term opportunities for achieving a range of community objectives, values and priorities.
2. Diversify the use of and benefits derived from the community forest agreement area.
3. Provide social and economic benefits to British Columbia.
4. Undertake community forestry consistent with sound principles of environmental stewardship that reflect a broad spectrum of values.
5. Promote community involvement and participation.
6. Promote communication and strengthen relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and persons.
7. Foster innovation.
8. Advocate forest worker safety.

Community forests in BC reflect the ecological and cultural diversity of our province. They exist in many types of forests and terrain. They range in size from 361 to 160,122 hectares, with a current annual harvest from 860 m³ to 225,000 m³. The majority, 67%, are under 60,000 m³/year, with only 5% harvesting 100,000 m³/year or more. The average AAC is 35,048 m³/year.

Community forests work under the same rules as the rest of the forest industry in BC. They are governed by the Forest Act and the Forest and Range Practices Act, and all other applicable statutes and regulations. They pay stumpage (fees paid for harvesting timber from Crown land in BC) based on a tabular rate system that recognizes the Community Forest Program goals and the unique conditions under which they operate.

POPULATION OF REPORTING COMMUNITIES

What is the population directly served by your community forest?



Minimum population: 220

Maximum population: 32,000

Average population: 3,031

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

AAC = Allowable Annual Cut

CF = Community forest*

CFA = Community forest agreement

Ha = Hectares

PY = Person Year of Employment.
One PY, considered 1 full time job = 1,750 hours.

M³ = cubic metres of wood

*Note: We often use the term "community forest" to refer to the organization that holds a community forest agreement.



A Stewardship Approach to Utilization

As BC looks for ways to increase utilization of fibre, we see community forests working to innovate through local partnerships. Often these projects have multiple benefits — local jobs, wildfire risk reduction, stand rehabilitation and reduced need for slash burning resulting in a lower carbon footprint.



PHOTO CHRIS LAING

POWELL RIVER COMMUNITY FOREST HOGGING IN THE BLOCK

"We hog most of our cut blocks instead of burning piles. FP Innovations did a study on this block using drones to fly the cut blocks post-harvest to determine potential biomass volumes and therefore feasibility of hogging operations. They weighed each truck as it left the block to determine volumes and calibrate their model.

— Chris Liang, Manager, Powell River Community Forest



PHOTO FRANCES SWAN

NAKUSP AND AREA COMMUNITY FOREST (NACFOR) MERCER FIBRE PROJECT

In 2020 NACFOR partnered with Mercer to enable the utilization of low-grade fibre. They set up a log scaling, log handling, storage, accumulation, and chipping facility in Nakusp. The chipping facility extends the economic fibre reach for Mercer's pulp mill in Castlegar, increases utilization and reduces waste resulting in less slash burning. Other benefits include increased local employment, synergies with wildfire risk reduction activities and providing weight scaling services for the Nakusp area.



PHOTO GEORGE BRCKO

WELLS GRAY COMMUNITY FOREST CORPORATION (WGFC) GRINDING WASTE

"In 2020 the WGFC targeted four low value pulp stands for timber harvesting and fibre utilization. The blocks and roads were designed to allow for onsite chipping and grinding and transportation of chip trucks. This project, pulp harvesting and fibre utilization, was only feasible due to significant WGFC investments, and funding from the Forest Enhancement Society of BC (FESBC) that Arrow Transport Ltd had secured to help cover their costs. For the WGFC this project is an investment in enhancing the landscape with valuable resilient, fire resistant stands, reducing carbon emissions, and creating an opportunity to supply pulp and fibre to the market at a time of critical demand. We were able to demonstrate that in block chipping can be done with commitment and investment from the community forest and with extra funding from FESBC. We are proud to have contributed to our economy during the time of a provincial health state of emergency due to the COVID 19 pandemic." — George Brcko, Manager WGFC

Indicator

1

Number of Jobs

COMMUNITY FORESTS CREATE LOCAL JOBS in rural communities. This indicator measures the total direct employment and contract labour generated by community forests. By determining the number of person years of employment per 1,000 m³ of timber harvested we can see the value, in terms of jobs, of the harvest volume allocated to community forests. Person year is a commonly used metric; however, not all jobs are full-time, so respondents also reported the total number of workers that derived all or part of their income from the community forest.

Number of Person Year (PY) ^a based on reported harvest of 800,652 m ³				
Employment	Forestry, logging and support ^b	Trail building, firefighting, research etc.	Milling ^c	All activities ^d
Person years /1,000 m ³	0.51	0.03	0.38	0.92
Average person years per community forest	13.71	0.66	10.06	24.43
Total person years	411.39	19.91	301.80	733.10
<div>Notes: Analysis completed by Peak Solutions Consulting Inc. ^a In accordance with BC Stats, one Person Year (PY) is 1,750 hours. This replaces Full Time Equivalent (FTE) of 1,820 hours used in previous BCCFA reports. ^b Includes forest management, logging, hauling, road building, silviculture (planting, spacing pruning etc.), administration and accounting. ^c Milling employment is based on jobs with one job representing one person year in this report. According to Statistics Canada the average number of hours worked in 2018 for wood product manufacturing (BS321) workers in BC was 1,894 hours. ^d Sum of Person Years for forestry, logging, support services, trail building etc., and milling.</div>				



“We and our contractors make a concerted effort to hire community members to undertake various aspects of our forest management program. Our intent is to provide the community with opportunities, and this often leads to extra costs. We also direct award many contracts to local contractors and don’t use the low bid system in most of our work.” — Dave Gill, Manager, **Ntityix Resources, wholly owned by the Westbank First Nation**

Number of people who derived all or part of their income from the community forests:

Total: 1,707

Average: 57

Community forests created 0.51 full time local jobs/1,000 m³ in forestry, logging, and support services. This is more than double (109%) the industry average.¹ When employment in trail building, firefighting, and scientific study are included, the coefficient goes up to 0.54 jobs/1,000 cubic metres.

The higher employment numbers in logging and forest management may be attributed to the large amount of community forest harvesting taking place in the interface. These are generally smaller blocks that are more labour intensive, and not as production oriented as the methods of conventional industry harvesting. Other factors likely include sorting in the bush for value. Intensive silviculture and other land-based investments. However, the milling jobs are declining as more CFA wood goes to large facilities. This will continue until there is truly more diversity and value added in manufacturing.



“We committed work for at least one year to a young logger so he was able to purchase additional equipment (feller buncher, processor). Shane McKinnon is now the most sought-after wildfire risk reduction/selective harvesting operator in our area.” — Sabrina Mutterer, Co-Manager, **Kaslo and District Community Forest**



The higher employment numbers in logging and forest management may be attributed to the large amount of community forest harvesting taking place in the interface. These are generally smaller blocks that are more labour intensive, and not as production oriented as the methods of conventional industry harvesting.

¹ Jiali Leng, FLNRORD, personal communication July 8, 2020; FLNRORD, 2020, BC Major Primary Timber Processing BC 2018, www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/forestry/fibre-mills/2018_mill_list_report_final.pdf; Natural Resources Canada, 2019, Secondary manufacturing of solid wood products in British Columbia, cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/authors/read/15709

Indicator
2

Total Economic Activity

The total annual cost of sales and expenditures is an indicator of the total economic activity generated by the community forests in the reporting year.

POWELL RIVER CF, PHOTO: CHRIS LAING



HELPING TO BUILD THE RESILIENCY and local economy of rural communities is one of the most compelling attributes of community forests. As economic development enterprises, community forests contribute to the self-reliance and stability that is needed in many rural locations across the province. This indicator calculates the total annual value of sales and expenditures, which are reflective of the total economic activity generated by community forests in the reporting year.

Value of sales	\$54,149,494
Average	\$2,256,229
Minimum	\$0
Maximum	\$6,653,531

Value of expenditures	\$50,757,066
Average	\$2,206,829
Minimum	\$27,882
Maximum	\$8,500,000

The average population of the reporting communities in British Columbia is approximately 3,031. When considering these values in relation to population size and an average harvest of only 26,688 m³, it is apparent that community forests have a significant role to play in generating local economic activity.

PARTNERSHIPS AND PROFITABILITY “Even with 2019 log sales much lower than the previous year, WBCF recorded excellent profits and invested heavily back into the forest and the communities. Much of this can be attributed to the strong partnership between the Community Forest and the Community Sawmill – Vaagen Fibre Canada. Through transparency, communication, and a level of trust not seen in our industry much anymore, these two entities are able to work together to make sure that local people are working, profits are being re-invested, and a consistent flow of fibre is maintained through the good times and the hard times. The local residents and contractors rely on the mill, and the mill relies on them — and the West Boundary Community Forest is the strength within that bond.” — Dan Macmaster, Manager, **West Boundary Community Forest**



WEST BOUNDARY CF PUBLIC SITE VISIT, PHOTO: DAN MACMASTER

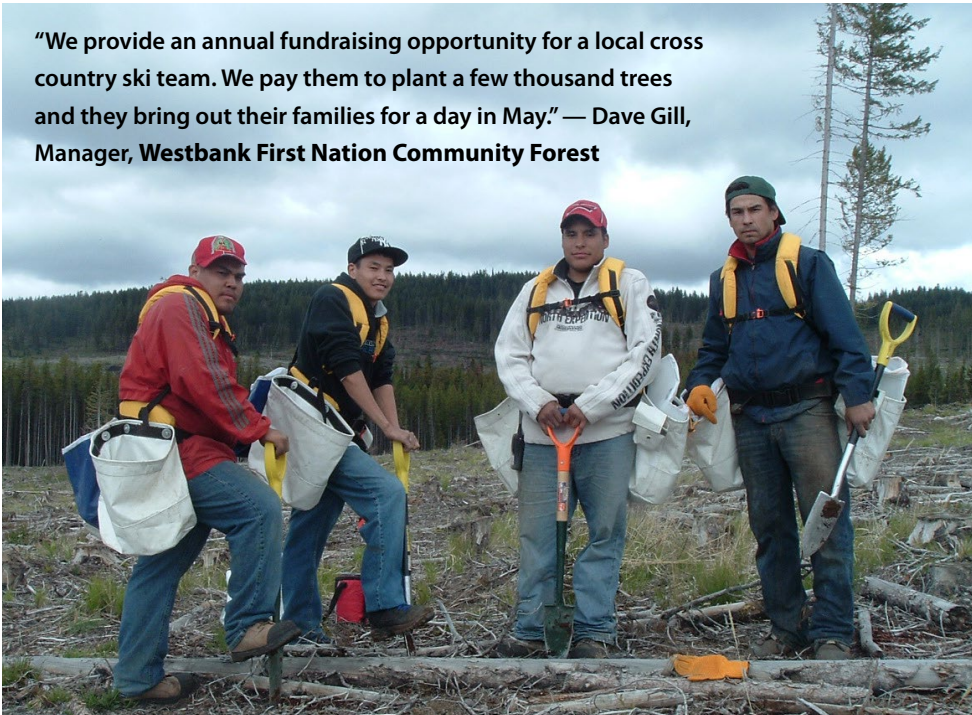
Indicator
3

Community Contributions

THE PROFITS GENERATED by community forests accrue directly to the Indigenous and rural communities in which they are located, resulting in varied benefits for local people. Many community forest organizations make cash and in-kind contributions including dividends, grants, infrastructure improvements, special projects and more. Often, these contributions extend beyond economic objectives to also meet social, cultural and environmental goals. In giving back to the communities that support them year-round, community forests are capable of having a positive impact on sustainable growth and inspire connections between local people and forest management.

Total cash contributed to the community	
Total	\$14,493,401
Average	\$536,792

In the reporting year, 93% of respondents made cash and/or in-kind contributions in their communities. On average, they provided \$536,792 with an additional \$46,212 in in-kind contributions. The total in-kind contribution of the respondents was over \$1 million, an increase from just under \$700,000 the year prior. The total in-kind contribution of the respondents was nearly \$700,000.



“We provide an annual fundraising opportunity for a local cross country ski team. We pay them to plant a few thousand trees and they bring out their families for a day in May.” — Dave Gill, Manager, Westbank First Nation Community Forest

WESTBANK FIRST NATION CF, PHOTO: DAVE GILL

Average cash and in-kind contributions: **\$583,004**, increased by nearly 25,000 from last year.

Sample contributions:

- Barkley Community Forest:** \$20,000 provided to the Central West Coast Society to repair the Lost Shoe Walk in the Forest Trail, which is an educational trail used by many locals, school kids, National Forestry Week and others to demonstrate different aspects of the trees and forest floor.
- Cherryville Community Forest:** Park rehabilitation contribution of \$16,000 to Cherryville Community Club to assist in flood damages.
- McLeod Lake Mackenzie Community Forest:** \$120,992 cash and \$157,524 in-kind towards wildfire project coordination and fuel treatment administration.
- Powell River Community Forest:** Provided funding to the Salmon Society for water quality monitoring; \$3,000 annually for scholarships; firewood and log donations to non-profit groups.

Indicator 4

Funds Leveraged

Total \$ raised for projects from outside sources: **\$4,713,089** – up from \$3.3 million last year – for an average of \$392,757 for those that leveraged



CRESTON CF SUMMER STUDENTS,
PHOTO: DANIEL GRATTON

“We received \$7,756 from the Government of Canada for the Canadian Summer Jobs Grant. This contributed to the wages of our two forestry summer students.” — Daniel Gratton, Manager, Creston Community Forest

COMMUNITY FORESTS CAN USE their revenue to attract more benefits for their communities, through the process of leveraging their profits as seed money to grow larger projects from outside sources. This indicator shows the community forest funds that were used to leverage additional funds for a wide range of community priorities, including employment, recreation and wildfire risk reduction.

For example:

- **Lower North Thompson Community Forest** leveraged a total of \$451,979 toward the Job Creation Project; providing employment for summer students; creating and maintaining 64 km of recreational trails; and purchasing an OS log splitter for community use.
- **Westbank First Nation Community Forest** leveraged \$535,618 through the Forest Enhancement Society of BC (FESBC) for wildfire mitigation and rehabilitation projects.



LNTCF SKULL MOUNTAIN TRAIL RESTORATION, PHOTO: MIKE FRANCIS

Lower North Thompson Community Forest partnered with the BC Back Country Horsemen – North Thompson Chapter (BCHBC) for a Skull Mountain Trails Restoration Project. Through this project, LNTCFS who served as the management of the project, used \$8,500 in funding from the BCHBC to leverage an additional \$64,621 in funding through the BC Rural Dividend Fund. The project saw clearing and restoration work completed for approximately 60 km of multi-use trails in the Skull Mountain area as well as repairs and upgrades to the Fishtrap Creek Recreation Site. This project provided training and four months employment for a three-person crew.

Cut Control

COMMUNITY FORESTS PLAY an active role in the forest sector through timber harvesting. This indicator measures their success at meeting cut control requirements and keeping the supply of logs flowing into the market.

Seventy-seven per cent of community forests reported being on track to meet their cut control, up from 75 per cent the year before.

This means that the majority are successfully harvesting the volume of timber allocated, and they are contributing logs to the market. Some of the main challenges faced by those that are not on track are a lack of economically viable timber, a change in landscape priorities (for example, management of pine beetle infestation), poor markets and controversial operating areas.



NACFOR, BUNCHER HEAD, PHOTO: FRANCES SWAN

77% of community forests reported being on track to meet their cut control, up from 75% the year before.

WESTBANK FIRST NATION HAS IDENTIFIED A FOREST CONSERVATION ZONE

"At the stand level we have a policy to retain the five largest Douglas-fir trees per hectare in cut blocks that fall within the Interior Douglas Fir Biogeoclimatic Zone (IDF). Outside of the IDF this policy provides direction at retaining large trees of other species and measures to protect them, similarly but with smaller diameters than those in regulation. At the landscape level we have spatially identified a Forest Conservation Zone which consists of approximately 40% of the CFA landbase (includes OGMA's). The objective with this zone is to manage it for the values that old growth forests provide."

— Dave Gill, Manager

Indicator 6

Distribution of Log Sales

Of the community forests that participated in the survey:

52% have markets for waste and residue

41% are actively seeking markets for waste and residue

53% are shipping pulp or other low value fibre at a loss that would otherwise be waste, in order to achieve environmental or social benefits.

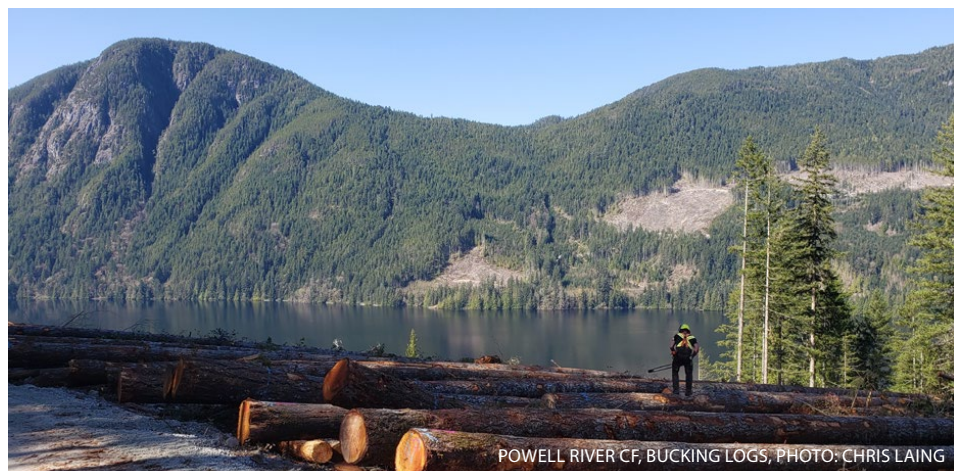
Only 40% of respondents have accessed external funding to help pay for shipping residual fibre.

We would like to acknowledge the Forest Enhancement Society of BC (FESBC) for support to community forests to reduce forest fuels and the risk of wildfire and to move uneconomic wood to the appropriate facility to reduce the need to burn slash piles.

COMMUNITY FORESTS PARTICIPATE in the open market by supplying logs and striving to support the full spectrum of milling and manufacturing facilities. This indicator reveals the total percentage of sales to a variety of buyers. Where markets are diverse, community forests are able to maintain a diverse buyer profile.

Distribution of log sales	
Sales to very large mills > 850,000 m ³ /year	11 %
Sales to large mills 295,000 m ³ – 850,000 m ³ /year	45.6 %
Sales to medium mills 95,000 m ³ – 295,000 m ³ /year	8.2 %
Sales to small mills < 95,000 m ³ /year	3.9 %
Sales to mill owned by the community forest	0.3 %
Sales to value-added mills	0.4 %
Sales to pole, veneer, plywood & OSB	3.9 %
Sales to facilities that use low quality fibre (chip, pellet, pulp & paper)	12.3 %
Sales to shake and shingle mills	0.01 %
Sales to firewood	0.81 %
Logs exported	0.55 %
Broker	13.1 %

The last reporting period saw a significant drop in sales to very large mills and an increase in sales to large and medium sized mills from the previous year. The average number of bidders invited was 4.2, and on average, community forests sold logs to 3.75 different buyers, a slight increase from last year. These figures vary greatly between community forests, with one respondent selling to 20 different entities in the reporting year. Sixty-four per cent of respondents consider 100% of their sales to mills to be local.



POWELL RIVER CF, BUCKING LOGS, PHOTO: CHRIS LAING

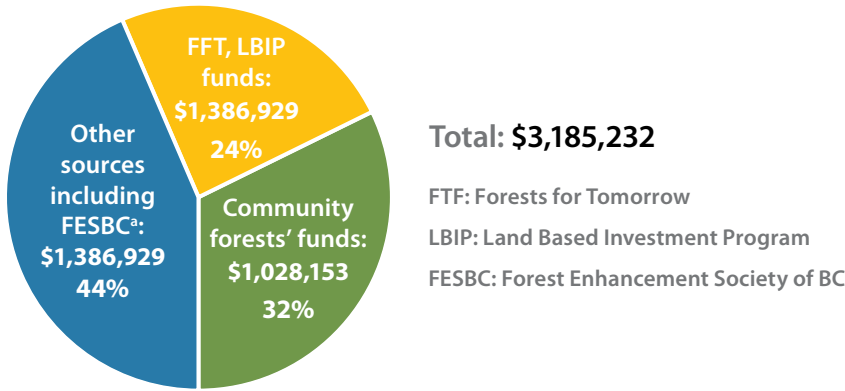
Indicator
7

Investments in Intensive Silviculture

COMMUNITY FORESTS are invested in longevity and the future productivity of forests because they are long-term, area-based tenures with a focus on community values. By measuring the incremental investments in intensive silviculture that are above legal requirements, this indicator demonstrates the efforts made to increase the growing capacity in a community forest to increase the quality and quantity of timber over time. Respondents reported the total treatment cost, including planning, development, and administration of these projects.

CFA investment in intensive silviculture	
Total	\$1,028,153
Average of those that invested	\$128,519

Value and source of investment in intensive silviculture



Community forests are going above and beyond legal requirements: 40 per cent make investments in incremental silviculture past the *free to grow* stage.

Examples of investments made in the last fiscal include pre-commercial thinning, brushing, pruning and spacing and regeneration with high genetic gain seed lots and tea bag fertilization of all seedlings planted to enhance growth and establishment.

“We are in the process of ramping up our Pre-Commercial Thinning and Pruning program and assisting a community member’s company to develop capacity to do the work. The objectives with this work are to: improve timber values, open stands up for wildlife, and reduce wildfire hazard.”— Dave Gill, Manager, Westbank First Nation Community Forest

Respondents that made investments in incremental silviculture in the reporting year: **33%**

Total investment: **\$3.1 million**, an increase from \$2.8 million the year before.

Area treated: **1,484**, averaging 135 hectares per respondent.

Collectively treated to date: **3,305** hectares.



Yellow pine planted on the Harrop-Procter CF as part of a Climate Based Seed Transfer strategy to promote healthy, resilient and productive forests through the matching of seedlings to future (projected) planting site climates. For more information go to “Climate-Based Seed Transfer (CBST) Project” at gov.bc.ca.

Indicator 8

Economic Diversification

Total value of diversified sales:
\$2,424,434
an average of \$484,887 for those that had revenue from diversified sales.



FIREWOOD PROCESSOR, PHOTO: MIKE FRANCES

“Lower North Thompson Community Forest Society (LNTCFS) launched a firewood processing facility to complement their small mill and utilize waste material from our mill as well as low value logs that would have been wasted and burned in slash-piles.” — Mike Frances, Manager, LNTCFS

AS MANDATED BY THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT, an important goal for the Community Forest Program is to diversify the sales and benefits derived from the community forest agreement area. This diversification can include the development of goods such as Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs)² including medicinal plants, berries or mushrooms, value-added products from micro sawmills, as well as the development of services like wildfire mitigation and rehabilitation work.

Increasingly, community forests are using their expertise and equipment to diversify the revenue stream and provide local employment. Forty per cent of the community forests who had revenue from diversified sales participated in wildfire hazard mitigation work, including prescribed burns, habitat restoration, development of prescriptions, mapping, and vegetation surveys outside the boundaries of their tenures.



PHOTO: URSULA HELLER

The Wood-Mizer LT-70 at Harrop-Procter Forest Products. The mill annually produces eight person-years of employment. In simpler terms, they put eight people to work full time with 2,000 cubic metres/year. Mill revenue in 2020 was \$1,114,123.³

- 2 When it comes to NTFPs, to date community forests are generally not involved in commercial activity, beyond services. Instead, they have taken on the role of facilitating access to resources such as berries, mushrooms and medicinal plants for the community and adapting the timber harvesting approach to protect the non-timber resources.
- 3 *Micro Sawmills in British Columbia: Insights for Community Forests*, bccfa.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/BCCFA-micro-mill-report-2021.pdf.

Indicator

9

Community Accountability

COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY is a forest tenure requirement unique to community forest agreements in BC. This indicator measures whether the community forest reports out annually to its community and which methods are used as outreach tools.

Every community forest is required to develop a Management Plan that contains the social, economic and resource management goals proposed for the tenure. Setting



POWELL RIVER COMMUNITY FOREST
BOARD FIELD TOUR, PHOTO: CHRIS LAING

them apart from other forest tenures, they must hold an annual meeting where they report to local residents on the commitments made in the Management Plan. Going beyond this requirement, many community forests are committed to using additional means of connecting with their communities with a variety of engagement tools and events.

Over 30 per cent of the respondents made specific comments regarding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and how the related restrictions made their usual community interactions more difficult to fulfill. Annual General Meetings, open houses and field trips were converted to virtual formats or cancelled altogether. Eighty per cent of the respondents rely on annual meetings to connect with their communities, but a shift in focus to online resources such as websites, social media and virtual newsletters has become more prominent.

Tools used by CF to communicate	Percent of Total
Website	83%
Annual meeting	80%
Meeting minutes	60%
Financial statements	57%
Facebook/social media	53%
Field trips	53%
Local newspaper	50%
Open house	47%
Meetings Open to Public	40%
Newsletter	40%
Other	23%

100% of survey respondents report annually to their community, with **97%** reporting specifically to performance on their Management Plan.



PREMIER HORGAN TAKING PART IN
THE CELEBRATION OF THE NEW CFA,
PHOTO: STEVE LORIMER

“Annual reporting to Pacheedaht First Nation and Lake Cowichan Community are a part of Qala:yit’s efforts to maintain social licence in our operating area. As a new CFA holder, we held a celebration at the Pacheedaht health centre that included representatives from both Lake Cowichan and Port Renfrew including the local MLAs, Premier John Horgan and Sonia Furstenau.” — Steve Lorimer, RPF, **Qala:yit Community Forest**

Indicator 10

Public Engagement

During the COVID-19 pandemic, **100%** of reporting community forests have made an effort to connect with their communities, through a variety of methods.

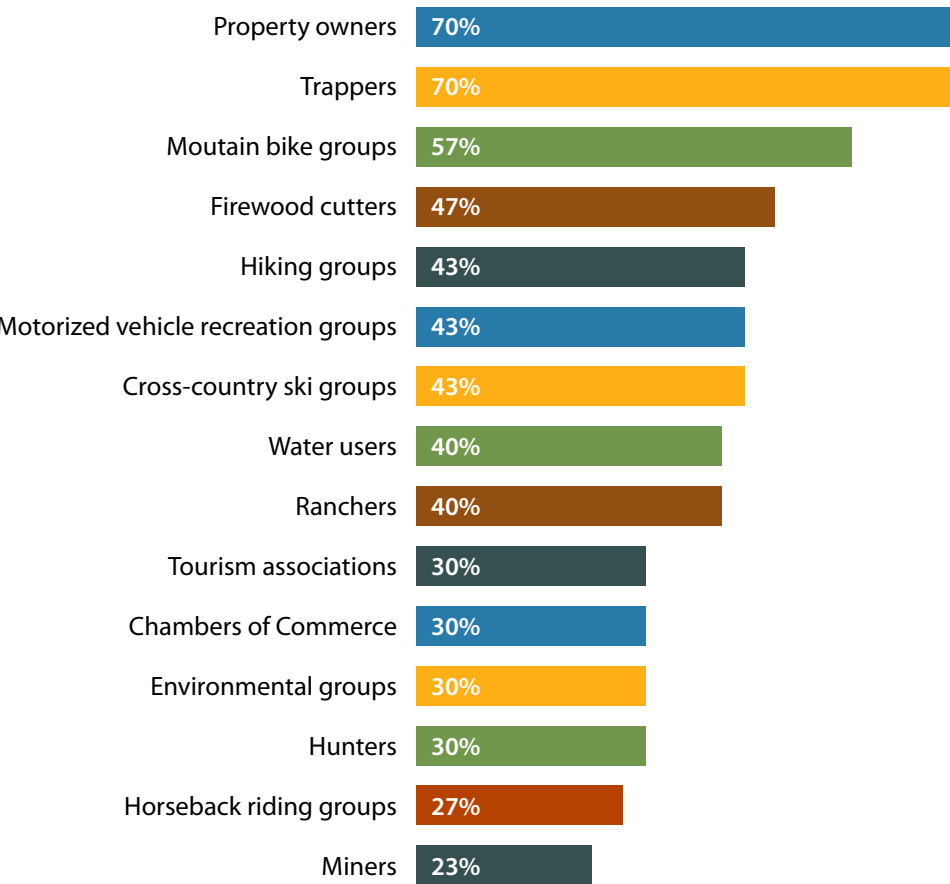
“We pivoted to all our board meetings going virtual. We continued to allow anyone from the public to attend these meetings. We also increased our social media presence and posted more frequently with updates. We also conducted several targeted, socially distanced meetings in the field where we were able to view current and proposed projects. These interactions were very fruitful in establishing meaningful engagement and better understanding of the values we are all looking to manage and protect.” — Garnet Mierau, Management, **Logan Lake Community Forest**

IN ADDITION TO WORKING WITH FIRST NATIONS rights and title holders, community forests make an effort to engage with the wide array of forest users. Rural communities contain a diversity of people, stakeholder groups and invested parties. Outreach leads to an improved awareness of forest management among the public and increases potential to resolve conflicts over timber harvesting in watersheds and other sensitive areas.

Forty-seven percent of reporting community forests develop formal agreements with one or more of their forest user groups, making for a total of 26 formal agreements drafted during the reporting period.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, 100% of reporting community forests have made an effort to connect with their communities, through a variety of methods including online conferencing/meetings, socially distanced meetings, and socially distanced field trips.

Engagement with Community Sectors



Indicator 11

Investments in Community Education

COMMUNITY FORESTS PLAY a valuable role in helping to educate and inspire community members by increasing the understanding of forest ecosystems and forest management, as well as providing a sense of connectivity to local habitats and surroundings. Investments in education and capacity building include school presentations, field trips, public events, as well as training supported by the community forest (such as first aid, faller certification, etc.).

Investment in education	
Total	\$123,852
Average	\$6,193
Total number of hours invested	2,428 hours
Average	135 hours

Forty per cent of respondents commented that the majority of their usual educational activities were scaled down or postponed due to COVID-19. As a result, the total number of dollars and hours invested into community education were lower than last year. Despite the pandemic-related challenges of gathering with residents, community forests were still able to use their creativity to engage youth, seniors and the community at large in numerous educational activities.

Training young people for work on the tenure is a major focus for many CFAs. Many organizations had programs targeting their local K-12 schools and getting kids out into the forest.



NACFOR, COUNTING RINGS, PHOTO: FRANCES SWAN

40% of respondents commented that the majority of their usual educational activities were scaled down or postponed due to COVID-19.

“Nakusp and Area Community Forest (NACFOR) and School District 10 work collaboratively through a partnership agreement that strives to improve hands on learning experiences. Each year we host students and teachers in a variety of outdoor classroom activities on the community forest, including fun and interactive events for National Forest Week. We also work with Selkirk College to support forest worker training and technical programs.” — Frances Swan, Management Team, NACFOR

Indicator 12

Investments in Recreation



NACFOR, X-C TRAIL MAINTENANCE, PHOTO: ERIC MCLEOD

“NACFOR’s harvest planning and development in the Wensley Creek recreation area near Nakusp is a great example of how the community forest can gain social licence in the community. We have found that taking a cautious, comprehensive approach and spending time to work with the stakeholders to understand their concerns builds public trust. Thorough forest development planning, followed by clear, open communication before starting operations builds good relationships with stakeholders and the broader community. The outcome at Wensley Creek has been positive for the ski club, residents and NACFOR and we look forward to continued successful management of values in this area.” — Frances Swan, Management Team, NACFOR

RECREATING IN COMMUNITY FORESTS presents a world of opportunity for increased mental and physical health, a greater sense of connectivity, and good old-fashioned fun. Community forests make significant investments in building, improving and maintaining local recreational infrastructure and opportunities. This indicator measures investments in recreation features, on and off the community forest, including trails for hiking, biking, skiing, horseback riding, information kiosks, cabins and warming huts, and viewpoints.

Investment in recreation	
Total	\$360,885
Average of those that invested	\$18,044

In addition, respondents managed another \$815,129 this year from outside funding sources. To date, community forests have invested a total of \$3,950,295 in recreation.

Number of kilometres of trail	
Total	254
Average km of those that built & maintained trails	14

The reporting community forests have collectively developed and maintained a total of 1,284 km of trails to date.



WELLS-BARKERVILLE CF, LEARNING FOREST TRAIL CONSTRUCTION, PHOTO: CAMERON BECK

“The School to Forest Trail will enable the local school’s teachers and students to use The Learning Forest as a living classroom. The boardwalk creates the first, all season trail connection between the community and the trail system on Cornish Mountain.” — Cameron Beck, Coordinator, Wells-Barkerville Community Forest

Indicator 13

Proactive Management of Wildfire Hazard

MOST COMMUNITY FORESTS are located in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), the area of transition between wilderness and settlements. As such, community forests are in a unique position to serve as leaders in the coordination and management of the WUI to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in their communities.

Investment to reduce wildfire hazard	
Total	\$2,422,921
Average of those that invested	\$115,377

Number of hectares treated	
Total	7,571
Average # of ha treated	421

As the risk of wildfire becomes an increasingly critical issue for rural communities, community forests have stepped up their investment and treatment prescriptions to do their part in mitigation activities. Over \$2 million was invested in wildfire risk reduction activities during the reporting period, with an additional \$4.4 million managed from outside sources.

To date, the reporting community forests have collectively treated 7,571 ha and invested over \$16.3 million in wildfire risk reduction.

Seventy per cent of respondents collaborated with their local government on wildfire planning and preparedness. Funding from external sources, such as the Forest Enhancement Society of BC and the Community Resilience Initiative is crucial given the urgency to reduce wildfire hazards. Community forests are taking on a leadership role in the planning and implementation of these activities.

“The Macleod Lake Mackenzie Community Forest Corporation (MLMCF) continues to lead wildfire risk reduction activities in and around the community with the funding of a full time Wildfire Project Coordinator and support of the Mackenzie Wildfire Advisory committee. In 2020, coupled with the in-kind support from the General Manager and Directors this support amounted to \$157,524. Community forests are the ideal vehicle for the delivery of wildfire hazard mitigation efforts around communities. The result has been overwhelmingly positive in terms of community approval and support.” — Dan Boulianne, General Manager, Macleod Lake Mackenzie Community Forest



CRESO CF PRESCRIBED BURN,
PHOTO: DANIEL GRATTON

In an exciting and timely new initiative, the BCCFA has recently partnered with the Province of BC and BC Wildfire Service to invest over \$5 million to help Community Forest Agreement holders complete wildfire risk reduction projects as part of the Province's economic recovery plan to create jobs and help communities deal with the impacts of COVID-19. We are proud to be collaborating with the BC Wildfire Service to implement this program and stimulate new opportunities in 15 rural communities across the province. The results of this work will be reported in future years. For more information on this program please visit bccfa.ca/wildfire-risk-reduction.

Indicator 14

Forest Worker Safety

“Thankfully all incidents this year were minor in nature. Our Safety Plan allows us to report and track incidents, no matter how minor, to help us identify trends or recurring problems.” — Dave Gill, Manager, Westbank Community Forest



WESTBANK CF, PLANTERS, PHOTO: DAVE GILL

THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING of workers is one of the main operational objectives for community forests. Survey respondents reported on whether the community forest holder requires its employees and/or contractors to be Safe Certified with the BC Forest Safety Council or an equivalent program, as well as information on the number and severity of incidents. Contractors not required to be certified are risk managed, and typically local, very small and only doing occasional work on the community forest.

Percent requiring Safe Certification	
Percent yes	80%
Percent no	20%

Number and severity of recordable incidents	
Minor	11
Serious (requiring attention)	1
Fatality	0
Total	12



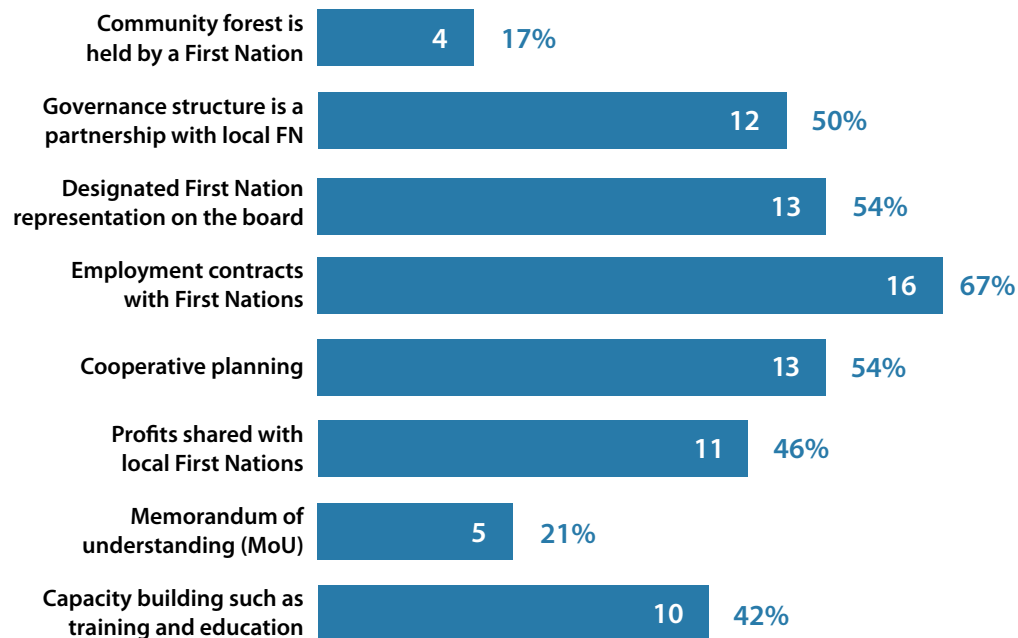
FILING A SAW, PHOTO: SUSAN MULKEY

Indicator 15

First Nations Involvement

OVER HALF of the reporting community forests in BC are held by First Nations or are partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. The BCCFA promotes forest management that respects First Nation rights and cultural values, and fosters understanding and cooperation between rural communities and First Nations. Along with many other Canadian organizations and individuals who are undertaking the challenging and rewarding process of working towards reconciliation, the BCCFA promotes the application of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and its principles in community forest management.

By measuring the types of involvement beyond legal requirements, this indicator serves to demonstrate how community forests organizations are working with the First Nations within whose traditional territory the community forest exists.



"We purchased 60 acres of private land east of Greenwood to establish a learning centre and working research forest for local students and community groups. We partnered with the Osoyoos Indian Band and developed the Nk'Mip Learning Area where students can read about the cultural background of the OIB, learn traditional knowledge from our visiting elders, and create crafts and hands-on activities attributed to our Aboriginal ancestors." — Dan Macmaster, Manager, West Boundary Community Forest

54% had cooperative planning with First Nations



SIMPCW CABINS, PHOTO: MIKE FRANCES

"Our 2019 Simpcw Cultural Education Centre – Cabins Milling & Carpentry Job Creation Project (JCP) involved a partnership with the Simpcw First Nation for milling and prefab construction of five 16'x22' post-and-beam timber-frame guest cabins. This 12-month project provided training and work experience for four participants in milling and carpentry work. The construction of these cabins support Simpcw in their work to establish and develop a Cultural Education Centre at Dunn Lake." — Mike Frances, Manager, Lower North Thompson Community Forest Society

Indicator 16

Management of Sensitive Areas

Percentage of
total area that is
sensitive: **36%**

Nakusp and Area Community Forest (NACFOR) is supporting the Arrow Lakes Caribou Society with construction of the Central Selkirk caribou maternity pen near Nakusp Hot Springs. NACFOR has also been helping to coordinate collection of arboreal lichens for the maternity pen project. Approximately 175 kg of dried lichen will be required to transition 12 caribou to eating pellets over 10 days! Lichen collection is a great opportunity for stakeholders and the public to get involved in the maternity pen project.



LICHEN COLLECTION, CENTRAL SELKIRK CARIBOU MATERNITY PEN PROJECT, PHOTO: FRANCES SWAN

COMMUNITY FORESTS CONTAIN an array of habitats and other areas that are deemed sensitive. These tenures are managed by communities, for communities; often allowing forest managers the social licence to prescribe and conduct management activities in sensitive areas. The careful stewardship and management of these areas is increasingly important in a changing climate. Survey respondents were asked to report on the area within their boundaries that is sensitive.

Sensitive areas are defined as any of the following:

- Domestic and community watersheds;
- Riparian areas;
- Visually sensitive areas;
- Potentially unstable and unstable terrain;
- Areas with archaeological values or cultural heritage;
- Identified and critical wildlife habitat;
- Fisheries sensitive watersheds;
- Recreation trails and sites; and
- Areas identified as sensitive by the community.

Thirty-six per cent of the combined tenure area of survey respondents is considered sensitive, and 53% of those sensitive areas is operable. Three community forests reported that 100% of their land base is sensitive. Fifty-three per cent of the responding community forests have community watersheds and five of the reporting community forests have 25% or more of their area set aside in reserves such as Old Growth Management Areas.



SELKIRK COLLEGE LICHEN COLLECTION, PHOTO: FRANCES SWAN

Indicator 17

Investments in Forest Stewardship

HEALTHY FOREST ECOSYSTEMS are the foundation of local economies. Rural communities require forward-thinking, innovative and holistic approaches to achieve resiliency and a positive legacy to pass on to future generations. With this understanding, community forests make significant contributions to the ecological integrity of the forests they manage. This indicator measures the investments community forests make in forest stewardship, incremental to legal requirements. Activities include enhanced management of sensitive areas (as listed in Indicator 16), data compilation and planning, and monitoring and research that extends above and beyond what is required by law.

Investment in enhanced or modified management for ecological or social reasons	
Total	\$535,988
Average of those who invested	\$53,599

Number of hectares treated within and outside the CF boundary	
Total hectares	9,331
Average number of hectares treated	1,166

In addition to the \$535,988 that CFs invested incrementally, they also managed over \$1.4 million from external sources such as the Forest Enhancement Society of BC.

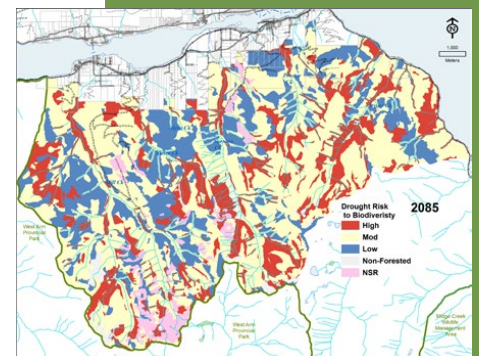
Examples of stewardship activities cited in the survey include:

- Hydrogeomorphic assessments for community and domestic watersheds.
- Using LiDAR to locate pit houses and other relevant cultural/historical features prior to conducting management activities.
- Wildlife monitoring studies for moose and their critical forage species.
- Setting aside areas of old growth for cultural and biodiversity values.



Community forests are taking initiative to increase their geospatial technology and data inventory capacities by using LiDAR, in which **76%** of respondents have now invested.

"Our community forest is engaged in a climate change adaptation and mitigation project. This involves the creation of fuel breaks as well as the utilization of low value 'waste' fibre generated from mechanical fuel treatment operations.



We have incurred large costs to do this work, including needing to pay significantly higher 'logging' rates to pay for the extra time to harvest, process, sort, and load small diameter trees." — Erik Leslie, Manager, **Harrop-Procter Community Coop**

Indicator 18

Compliance with Environmental Standards

Compliance determinations issued against the community forests surveyed: **2**



PHOTO: ERIK LESLIE

Diane Miller from Selkirk District doing surveys on the Harrop Procter Community Forest 2020.

THIS INDICATOR REPORTS on the number of Compliance and Enforcement inspections conducted, as well as the number of determinations issued against the community forest for potential environmental damage. The survey also included inquiries regarding the results of any applicable Forest Practices Board audits or investigations by other provincial or federal agencies. Two determinations were issued against reporting community forests this year, one being an administrative permit issue not related to environmental concerns.

Number of Compliance & Enforcement inspections conducted & determinations	
Total inspections	20
Determinations issued against the CF	2

CFA management practices met, exceeded, or significantly exceeded requirements outlined in legislation.

Management practices met or exceeded legislative requirements	
Met requirements	18%
Exceeded requirements	57%
Significantly exceeded requirements	25%

We asked community forests if their management practices meet, exceed, or significantly exceed requirements outlined in legislation. We found that 82% reported they exceed or significantly exceed standard BC requirements. Examples include:

- Development of a spatialized Landscape Level Plan which identifies where, when and what types of stewardship practices will occur in the CFA, including stand level retention, special areas, rate of cut, age, structure and density management, road density management, old growth management, etc.
- Development of an old growth strategy along with a full watershed and restoration plan.
- When harvesting in VQO polygons, leave tree requirements are exceeded.
- Riparian management areas that exceed requirements specified in FRPA.
- Retention rate is on average twice the minimum required.
- Considerable public outreach on proposed wildfire mitigation plans. The tapestry of ideas is woven into prescriptions and long-term thinking, all in an attempt to strike a balance between timber development, recreational use (now and in the future), habitat protection.



BEFORE



AFTER

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK. Top: Ponderosa prescribed burn in the Slocan Valley, photo Rachel Bone. Left: before and after wildfire risk reduction by operator Shane McKinnon at Kaslo, photo Sabrina Mutterer. Bottom left: Harrop-Procter firewood event for the community, photo Erik Leslie. Bottom right: Cedar rolls at Bella Coola, photo Hans Granander.





PHOTO: YISEUNG PHOTOGRAPHIE

The BC Community Forest Association is a network of rural community-based organizations engaged in community forest management, and those seeking to establish new community forests. We represent over 90 rural and Indigenous communities across our province. We share a vision of a network of diverse community forest initiatives, where local people practice ecologically responsible forest management in perpetuity, fostering and supporting healthy and vibrant rural communities and economies.



British Columbia
**Community
Forest**
Association

local people, local forests, local decisions

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