



British Columbia Community Forest Association Annual General Meeting June 9, 2023

President's Report

Prepared by Jennifer Gunter, Executive Director
Submitted on behalf of the Board of Directors by President, George Brcko

With gratitude and respect, the BC Community Forest Association (BCCFA) would like to acknowledge that we gather for the 2023 Conference and AGM on the T̓kemplúps te Secwépemc territory, situated within the unceded traditional lands of the Secwépemc Nation. This event is co-hosted by the Logan Lake Community Forest, Lower North Thompson Community Forest, Clinton Community Forest and Wells Grey Community Forest.

We last met in Nakusp in October 2022, just 8 short months ago. With the decision to resume holding the annual Conference & Annual General Meeting in the spring, we are happy to have the opportunity to connect in Kamloops with so many old friends and new, to reflect on the past, take stock of where we are today, and plan for the future.

Last year we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the BCCFA, which was formed in 2002. The Association serves as a unified, provincial voice that brings the unique interests and challenges of community forests to decision-makers, while building a network of community forest practitioners to share ideas and experiences with each other. These core purposes continue to guide our work.

We value diversity, inclusion, and respect for the unique approaches, opinions, and values of our members. We agree that resilient forest ecosystems are the basis for social, ecological and economic health. And we promote community forestry both as a tool for community economic development and for ecosystem resilience.

The Association has grown in many ways, including a deepening of our understanding of the role that community forest initiatives can play in advancing reconciliation and the importance of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We are also coming to appreciate more and more the role of active forest management in climate action - in wildfire risk reduction, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

This has led to a partnership between the BCCFA and BC Wildfire Service to advance the work of community forests in wildfire risk reduction. This new and evolving partnership along with the funding we received from BC's pandemic economic recovery effort are described in this report.

With the recent announcement of the Squamish Community Forest, a partnership of the Squamish Nation and the District of Squamish, there are now 61 community forest agreements issued in BC, and three more with an invitation to apply. Among these is the Three Rivers Community Forest in Quesnel, a partnership of the First Nations of Lhtako Dene, Nazko, ʔEsdilagh, and Lhoosk'uz, and the City of Quesnel. Membership in the BCCFA includes forty-seven operating community forests (77%). We also have two members that are working to be invited to apply: The Regional District of Kootenay Boundary in partnership with the Osoyoos Indian Band and The Golden and Area initiative that includes the Shuswap Band, the Town of Golden and the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (Area A) who have selected the name Kenpesq't Community Forest. Kenpesq't is the name for the Shuswap Band and their Traditional Territory in the Shuswap language. We also have seven associate members, and eight supplier members, non-voting membership categories, offered to individuals who support our work and to businesses that provide services to community forests.

The involvement of the BCCFA in provincial policy discussions and alliances with other forest sector organizations continues to grow. We are seeing the influence of our vision and many of our recommendations are being supported.

The 2023 Presidents' Report summarizes the significant forest policy initiatives the BCCFA has been involved in over the past year, the implications for community forests, and the messages that we delivered on behalf of our members. The report also describes important projects and partnerships. The day-to-day activities of the Association are detailed in the monthly Executive Director's Reports that are shared with our membership via the newsletter. Please refer to those reports for details, and feel free to follow up with our Executive Director Jennifer Gunter with any questions you may have.

The forest sector in BC is experiencing great challenges and changes. The BCCFA was founded on the premise that community forests, although diverse in many ways, are stronger together. The BCCFA has always been about people coming together to meet the challenges by working together for the best outcome possible. The Board and staff of the BCCFA are continually inspired by the tenacity and dedication of the people working in community forestry, their drive to find solutions and to create community benefits, however a community defines a benefit. Community forestry is not easy work. So, here's to all of us who have stepped up to make it happen.

As a member driven organization, we thank each member community, as well as our associate and supplier members for your support and contributions to our work.

President's Report 2023

1.	Provincial Forest Policy Engagement	4
1.1	Modernizing Forest Policy: Setting the Intention and Leading the Forest Sector Transition	4
1.2	Community Forest Agreement Pricing	4
1.3	Changes to the Forest Act	6
1.4	Forest and Range Practices Act Improvement Initiative	6
1.5	Old Growth Strategic Review	8
1.6	Watershed Security Strategy	10
1.7	Waste Measurement Procedures for Interior CFAs	12
1.8	Forest Carbon	13
1.9	Coastal Fibre Recovery Zones	13
1.10	Previous Forest Policy Work	13
2	Member Services and Education	14
2.1	Indicators Survey	14
2.2	Partnership with BC Wildfire Service	14
2.3	Fee for Service Extension Services	15
2.4	Forest Investment	15
2.5	South Korean Forest Professional Placement	15
2.6	New BCCFA Resources	16
2.7	BCCFA Safety Publications	16
2.8	Wildland Fire Research Network	16
2.9	Partnership with UBC	16
2.10	Social Media	17
2.11	BCCFA Speaking Engagements, Conferences and Articles	17
3	BCCFA Operations and Governance	18
3.1	Board of Directors	18
3.2	Membership	19
4	BCCFA Workplan Topics	19

1. Provincial Forest Policy Engagement

1.1 Modernizing Forest Policy: Setting the Intention and Leading the Forest Sector Transition

Most of the BCCFA’s advocacy work in the past 2 years has involved ongoing engagement with the Ministry of Forests on a range of topics included in the “Intentions Paper”. The paper describes the Ministry’s policy intentions with respect to the Old Growth Strategic Review, Forest and Range Practices Act, the Forest Act, and numerous topics of importance to community forest. This document, [Modernizing Forest Policy in British Columbia: Setting the Intention and Leading the Forest Sector Transition](#) released in June 2021, is organized into 3 Guiding Principles:

1. Increasing Forest sector participation
2. Enhancing stewardship and sustainability
3. Strengthening the social contract

The key messages the BCCFA delivered in response to the release of the Intentions Paper have been reinforced through our input on many engagement processes. Working with Indigenous Peoples to advance reconciliation, putting people first, and creating a forest sector that is diverse, competitive, and sustainable is a vision that we support. We said:

- *Community forests are one of the best tools we have in BC to increase forest sector participation, enhance stewardship and sustainability and strengthen the social contract.*
- *Paramount to the continued success of the community forest program is the recognition of the unique responsibilities and mandate given to community forest agreement holders by government, and the policies that are needed to support them. These policies include the necessity of a pricing system that acknowledges the unique role of CFAs and reflects the full costs of operating them.*
- *For many years, the BCCFA has amplified the voices of communities, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, who are seeking more control over their futures so they can diversify and become more resilient – both economically and in the face of a changing climate.... A strategic shift in government policy and re-apportionment of AAC is key to achieving this pragmatic and important vision of increased community-based forest management.*
- *The BCCFA is also aligned with shifting the focus from volume to value. Community forests support the value-added economy and create more jobs through their annual harvest via log sales and initiatives such as micro sawmills.*
- *The BCCFA supports greater participation of Indigenous peoples in all aspects of the forest sector. For many years, we have recommended the creation of more community forests that are partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.*
- *Community forests are also partners in the critical effort to reduce the risk of wildfire to communities and support a continued financial investment by the province in this work.*

Please contact Jennifer Gunter for past BCCFA submissions on forest policy, including the BCCFA’s full submission to the Intentions Paper engagement.

1.2 Community Forest Agreement Pricing

One section of the Intentions Paper that caused the greatest concern for the BCCFA and our members was the policy intention to address the disparity between stumpage rates applied to Woodlot Licences

(WLs), Community Forest Agreements (CFAs), and First Nation Woodland Licences (FNWLs) issued to Indigenous communities by harmonizing the rate structures. There is a real desire to improve the pricing situation for FNWLs, and this is the government's focus. Making changes to the current pricing system for community forests is not a priority reform at this time. The BCCFA board and staff are fully aware that the current pricing policy of revenue sharing applied to First Nations woodlands licences is inadequate and provides little to no incentive for First Nations to participate in the program. We continue to recommend the province develop a solution for First Nations Woodlands licences that does not negatively impact community forests.

Since the inception of the BCCFA, the establishment and maintenance of supportive timber pricing has been our top priority. The BCCFA has been working on pricing policy with the provincial government since 2004. We were successful in 2006 in securing the tabular rate structure that community forest agreements work under today. Paramount to the continued success of the community forest program is the recognition of the unique responsibilities and mandate given to community forest agreement holders by government, and the policies that are needed to support them. These policies include the necessity of a pricing system that acknowledges the unique role of community forests and reflects the full costs of operating them. The tabular stumpage rates have achieved this for community forests.

A strong response from the BCCFA and our members to the Intentions Paper has to date been successful in maintaining the existing rate structure. This included direct communications from the BCCFA, as well as several letters to the Premier and Minister of Forests from our members explaining the importance of tab rates to the success of community forests and their communities. Through our network of members, the BCCFA supported the submission of a resolution to the Union of BC Municipalities Convention, which was endorsed by delegates in September 2022. The resolution from the Regional District of Central Kootenay expresses the message that local governments want the Province to hear. Similar resolutions were submitted to the Resolutions Committee by Smithers, Lake Cowichan, Clearwater, Golden, Port Alberni, Burns Lake, Mackenzie, McBride, Valemount, Northern Rockies and Powell River.

The resolution was as follows:

*Community Economic Development EB82
Pricing Policy for Community Forests
Central Kootenay RD*

Whereas the tabular stumpage rate system that currently applies to community forest agreements provides the ability for community forests to innovate and invest in community priorities including climate change adaptation, wildfire risk reduction, ecosystem restoration, old growth management, recreational infrastructure development, with community economic development relying upon the current tabular stumpage system and rates;

And whereas any change in the current tabular stumpage policy that results in an increased stumpage rates and additional administrative burden for community forest tenures will greatly reduce and undermine the capacity of community forests to provide key socio-economic benefits to the communities that they support:

Therefore, be it resolved that UBCM ask the Province of British Columbia to maintain the tabular rate structure for community forest agreements in order to enable community forest agreement holders to implement modernized forest policies and to meet the full range of community objectives while operating viable businesses.

Please contact Jennifer Gunter (jgunter@bccfa.ca) for more information about the BCCFA's work on community forest agreement pricing.

1.3 Changes to the Forest Act

Late in 2021, [Bill 28](#) Forest Amendment Act, 2021, containing amendments to the *Forest Act* was passed introducing the special purpose area, new compensation rules and changes to road administration. The legislation gives government tools to redistribute AAC from volume or area-based tenures to First Nations, communities and BCTS through what is called a "taking." The legislation provides direction on compensation for the taking and has new requirements for forest inventories that will be used to inform compensation. [More information on Bill 28](#)

Regulations are required to finalize the compensation model and bring into effect new provisions under the *Forest Act*. The first step in a taking is the designation of a Special Protected Area (SPA) by Cabinet. The new SPA designation gives a tool for reallocation to First Nations for a range of tenure and ownership opportunities, new and expanded community forest agreements, more BC Timber Sales areas, access, and non-timber production, including old growth protection.

- We understand that government has not made any commitments on how they will use these new powers other than what is in the Intentions Paper, which includes the doubling of replaceable forest tenure held by First Nations from 10% to 20%. Unlike the last Bill 28 (2003) that established clear expectations on what volumes and compensation would be available, this time Government has not specified funding commitments or goals for takings.

Press Release - [Province building a more diverse, inclusive forest sector | BC Gov News](#)

The BCCFA has long advocated for tenure redistribution to First Nations and communities. Bill 28 appears to create a tool to accomplish this important shift.

- [BCCFA Submission to Coastal Forest Sector Revitalization Initiative August 28 2018](#)
- [BCCFA Submission to Interior Forest Sector Renewal October 10, 2019](#)

Bill 28 contains more than a tenure redistribution tool. It also includes provisions to require the holder of an area-based tenure to prepare and maintain a complete and accurate inventory of timber, soils, and range of resources. The inventory is to be made available to the chief forester by Jan. 1, 2026. We will be looking for more information on technical standards required and hope for standards that can stand the test of time.

1.4 Forest and Range Practices Act Improvement Initiative

BC is now 5 years into a process to improve the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA). [Recent changes to FRPA and associated regulations - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#) can be found here. Changes are intended to:

- Advance reconciliation with Indigenous Nations by enhancing their participation in forest and range management.
- Introduce a new Forest Landscape Planning framework.
- Clarify provincial objectives for forest and range resources.

- Improve information sharing in forest planning.
- Provide more frequent and reliable opportunities for communities to engage in forest planning.
- Adapt resource management to changing land base and values.

The BCCFA submitted recommendations to Government concerning FRPA reform. Our overarching messages were as follows:

The Community Forest Agreement (CFA) was developed to give communities the opportunity to manage local forests for the benefit of those communities, in a manner consistent with locally defined objectives and values. Because of the unique characteristics of the tenure, we contend that many of the desired outcomes sought through FRPA reforms are already being achieved by community forests. In the development of regulations to support changes to FRPA, the following key points must be considered so that they do not create undue administrative burden or hinder the success of community forests.

- *CFA holders are long-term, area-based tenures. Incentives for stewardship and improving ecosystem resiliency are built-in through the tenure rights conferred.*
- *CFA holders have gained experience through managing their tenures. They are required to do a high level of public engagement, inventory, and analysis. To this end, significant investments have been made in inventory and landscape analysis. Annual reporting to the community is also an existing requirement.*
- *It is critical that CFAs retain the ability to manage their landbase for community values and priorities, consistent with sound forest stewardship.*

Bill 21 – 2019 FOREST AND RANGE PRACTICES AMENDMENT ACT

Reforms introduced in Bill 21 FOREST AND RANGE PRACTICES AMENDMENT ACT in 2019 include a new requirement for community forest agreement holders and other licensees to produce Forest Operations Maps (FOMs). This new requirement has yet to come into force, however we expect it will be approved later this year. A few of our members participated in the soft launch of the software created to assist licensees meet the new obligations and they found it to be an easy system to use and a good public engagement tool. Please see the 2022 President’s Report for more information.

Bill 23 – 2021: Forest Statutes Amendment Act

In 2021, Bill 23 brought changes to FRPA that include the introduction of a [new forest landscape planning](#) framework aimed to modernize BC’s forest management regime. The BCCFA and our FRPA Working Group continue to work directly with MOF to provide input on how community forests will be part of this new planning framework while maintaining the flexibility and autonomy they require to be successful.

Bill 23 also included the introduction of a wildfire objective in FRPA and a provision enabling the Minister of Forests to designate wildland urban interfaces to provide clarity to practitioners regarding priority areas where the risk of wildfire should be managed and to introduce new requirements for forest activities within them. These two topics may pose challenges to CFAs and are therefore of high importance to the BCCFA and our working group. We are working hard to ensure that the regulations and policies that are developed will continue to support the proactive work that community forests are doing in wildfire risk reduction.

The BCCFA supports greater emphasis on wildfire management across the landscape and the concept of a wildfire objective in FRPA. The challenge is the way that new legal obligations could potentially impact the wildfire risk reduction work that community forests are doing in WUI. The proposal to establish mandatory practices in the WUI has the potential to change the economics of many community forests.

Hansard of the 2nd Session of the 42nd Parliament: <https://www.leg.bc.ca/documents-data/debate-transcripts/42nd-parliament/2nd-session>

“This bill also supports the ability of government to manage and respond to wildfires by creating a new wildfire objective and the ability to establish mandatory forest practices within wildland-urban interface areas to help protect human life, property and reduce the risk of wildfire. Amendments also improve the minister’s authority to ensure timely and effective post-wildfire reforestation by enabling the creation of wildfire reforestation plans and introducing increased flexibility for government to work with Indigenous nations and forest licensees to respond to damage caused by catastrophic events, including wildfire.” – Minister Katrine Conroy.

We understand the need to manage the WUI more intensively to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire to our communities. We also recognize that there is so much more to do. We are fully committed to this work on an ongoing basis, and to continuing to address the urgent need to reduce the risk. We are committed to continued collaboration with the MOF and the BC Wildfire Service to ensure best practices. We understand that only by sharing the responsibility for wildfire risk, and working in partnership, will our communities and the province succeed in meeting critical wildfire management and community protection objectives.

The BCCFA’s FRPA Working Group includes Gord Chipman (Esk’etemc Community Forest), Warren Hansen (Sunshine Coast Community Forest), George Brcko (Wells Gray Community Forest) and Randy Spyksma, (Logan Lake Community Forest). This group has provided input on all phases of the FPRA Improvement Initiative and will continue with regular meetings with the MOF team leading the work.

1.5 Old Growth Strategic Review

Three years since the Independent Panel made [recommendations](#) on BC’s old growth management, the BCCFA and our members continue to navigate the implications for community forests. Please contact Jennifer Gunter to receive a copy of the submission the BCCFA made to the panel.

Norah White, Executive Director, Provincial Old Growth Strategy, Office of the Chief Forester, is leading the development of an Action Plan that aims to describe how the 14 recommendations of the OGSR will be implemented. The Action Plan is targeted for completion by the end of 2023. Since early 2023, MOF has been working to engage with First Nations and stakeholders on the full suite of recommendations, moving beyond the deferrals. This will be discussed at the BCCFA’s Conference in a session: “More Than Just Old Growth: How the Old Growth Strategic Review Positions us for Future Forest Management”

Key dates in the Implementation of the Old Growth Strategic Review (OGSR)

Fall 2021

On November 2nd, 2021, the Province announced its intention to work in partnership with First Nations to defer harvest of ancient, rare and priority large stands of old growth within 2.6 million hectares of

B.C.'s most at-risk old-growth forests. The deferral process is meant to pause harvest pressure temporarily to allow time for developing new approaches to forest management that allow the shift from managing for timber, subject to constraints, to managing for ecosystem health. [Read the Press Release.](#)

Almost 2 years later, we have come to understand that the deferral process, fraught from the outset, is evolving and continues to unfold in consultation and collaboration with First Nations. When the deferral maps were released, many of our members found that the maps were erroneous because they were based on inaccurate VRI data, and that the deferral areas do not match the criteria for high-risk big-treed, remnant and ancient forests. These problems were found to be widespread across the landscape.

In response to the deferral process, the BCCFA struck an Old Growth Working Group with MOF to communicate the unique concerns of CFA holders and gain an understanding of process. The work of this group continues, as the Field Verification Technical Guidance for deferrals was released.

The Field Verification Technical Guidance of TAP deferral areas was released in the summer of 2022 <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/managing-our-forest-resources/old-growth-forests/information-and-analysis/old-growth-deferral-field-verification#guidance>

Winter 2021

The BCCFA made a formal submission to the Modernizing Forest Policy engagement, including the following statement on Old Growth:

We propose an alternative process to the proposed old growth deferrals that emphasizes the 8 goals of the Community Forest Program and the values of the local Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. This process will take into consideration the plans, processes, and relationships already in place to manage for old growth, biodiversity, and ecosystem resilience. We propose that a localized approach on the area-based CFAs will better support the government to achieve its stated intentions.

A successful old growth strategy should be based on the best science and knowledge available. Many CFAs use LiDAR to inform their planning and activities, including strategies to manage old growth. Government should incorporate this work. The BCCFA would like to work collaboratively with FLNRORD to develop this alternative process for CFAs.

Spring 2022

On April 4, 2022, all CFA holders received a letter from Minister Conroy offering them an alternative to the deferral process in cases where their ability to meet their cut control could be impacted. This policy decision was the result of input provided to the government by the BCCFA. Community forests that can voluntarily defer harvesting in the TAP identified old-growth within their tenures are not required to take action. Those that do foresee impacts to their AAC and cut-control requirements may propose their own old-growth strategy for consideration by the DM. Any alternative old-growth strategy will need to align with the old-growth report recommendations.

Excerpt from Minister Conroy letter April 4, 2022:

Dear Community Forest Agreement holders and First Nation Woodland Licensees:

In 2019, the Government of British Columbia embarked on a new approach to old forests, commissioning an independent panel to engage British Columbians and collect their views on the importance and future of old-growth in the province. The panel's report was received in 2020, and the government has taken decisive action to act on the recommendations. In November 2021, the government released a report and mapping from a technical advisory panel (TAP) that identified old-growth at risk of irreversible biodiversity loss that was to be protected over the short-term, while a longer-term strategy is developed. The TAP reports and map information is available on the old growth website.

After further assessment of impacts and the ability for some licensees to efficiently utilize a ministry field verification methodology, I have made a policy decision to provide Community Forest Agreement holders and First Nation Woodland Licensees an opportunity to develop their own old-growth strategy for consideration by the district manager where they can demonstrate that their cut control requirements cannot be achieved because of the proposed TAP deferrals. To be clear, any tenure specific old-growth strategy will need to promote implementation of the old-growth report recommendations.

Please contact local district staff for additional information.

Winter 2023

MOF is engaging First Nations and stakeholders on the full suite of recommendations, moving beyond the deferrals.

The Ministry of Forests and the Ministry of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship are collaborating with First Nations and engaging with stakeholders across British Columbia to develop an action plan and a provincial framework (formerly called a declaration) on ecosystem health and biodiversity and to support the implementation of the Old Growth Strategic Review (OGSR) recommendations.

Several BCCFA members attended the multisectoral forum and regional workshops on British Columbia's Framework on Ecosystem Health and Biodiversity & the Old Growth Action Plan. The facilitators are looking for input on HOW to implement the 14 recommendations of the OGSR. We will learn more about this during workshops to be held in Kamloops at the BCCFA's Conference & AGM.

We encourage all members to review the [TAP technical documents](#), as well as the full set of recommendations in the Old Growth Review Panel's report. [A New Future for Old Forests: A Strategic Review of How British Columbia Manages for Old Forests Within its Ancient Ecosystems](#). We will share more information as soon as it becomes available.

The BCCFA's OG survey results show that 44% of community forests already manage to retain the 3 types of OG prioritized by the TAP, while another 30% are in the process of developing plans. The alternative process outlined by Ministry Conroy for community forests is a direct result of our advocacy and an important step. This localized approach on CFAs will better support government to achieve its stated intentions.

The BCCFA's Old Growth Report is available [here](#).

1.6 Watershed Security Strategy

The BCCFA made a submission to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy's engagement on an Intentions Paper for the Watershed Security Strategy and Fund in the Spring of 2023.

The Intentions Paper was the mid-way point in the development of the Strategy and built on what was heard during the first period of engagement in early 2022.

The purpose of the Strategy is to lead the changes needed to create a future for B.C. where our watersheds are better cared for and stewarded together.

We said:

The BCCFA and our members understand the importance of local decision making and the role of forest management in supporting ecosystem health and climate change mitigation and adaptation. We see the need for active forest management – including within watersheds – rather than creating static reserves. Located primarily in the land surrounding a rural community, community forests operate in sensitive areas, with an average of nearly 50% of their tenure considered sensitive. Community forests operate within consumptive use watersheds, that comprise an average of 19% of their operating area.

For several community forests, the ability to have more control over the management of watersheds was the primary motivation behind the effort to obtain a community forest agreement. Supported by a community driven mandate to protect water, they have developed management approaches that protect water quality, quantity and timing of flow. They invest in hydrological assessments and in stewardship of watersheds that go above and beyond legal requirements. They are working with First Nations, government and local stakeholders to ensure water resources are protected within the legislative framework. They are supporting local water initiatives like monitoring water quality and quantity to ensure water is protected for future generations.

BC's community forest program, operating for over 20 years, has generated numerous examples of successful, collaborative local resource management from which to draw as BC develops a new Watershed Security Strategy.

In response to the Intentions Paper, we offer the following recommendations:

1. The Province must clearly demonstrate how this initiative links with and compliments other significant provincial policy initiatives including Modernized Land Use Plans, the Old Growth Strategic Review and the FRPA Improvement Initiative with its shift to Forest Landscape Plans.
2. Community forest agreement holders must be included in watershed governance. As licensees with a deep connection to the community and the landbase, they must have a central role in the collection and interpretation of data to inform decision making.
3. Greater emphasis should be placed on the critically important and positive role of active forest management in promoting watershed security. This is currently missing from the Intentions Paper. By bringing community forest agreement and other tenure holders to the table, these gaps can be better addressed.
4. The Strategy must recognize that the ecological resiliency of watersheds to disturbance is key to watershed security. This is inextricably linked to stand and landscape level forest resilience. Watershed management in forested ecosystems must account for natural disturbance patterns, climate change and the negative impacts of decades of effective fire suppression. Over 100 years of wildfire exclusion is negatively impacting forest health and resiliency in many parts of BC. Forest management is necessary to restore the health of these areas. An ecosystem restoration approach that includes the intentional use of fire is needed.
5. Continued support is needed for community forests in leading ecosystem restoration and wildfire risk reduction initiatives which will improve watershed health and reduce the risk of

wildfires. It is also important to implement wildfire risk reduction activities in many riparian areas to ensure that these areas do not become wicks for wildfire.

6. Community forests must retain the ability to manage their landbase for community values and priorities, consistent with sound forest stewardship. Furthermore, it is important that any new legislative or regulatory avoid creating undue administrative burden or hinder the success of community forests.
7. Provincial investments are required in better inventory information, and in consumptive watersheds, improved mapping of existing water users along with support for better intake systems.
8. The community forest program should be expanded. The nature of the community-managed, area-based tenure offers unique opportunities for the development of novel solutions to increase resilience and address the challenges faced by the BC. This was recognized in the recommendations by Abbott and Chapman in their report [Addressing the New Normal: 21st Century Disaster Management in British Columbia](#) where they advised the province to “Expand the community forest program to other communities where interest and capacity exist” based on the examples of best practices demonstrated by community forests like Logan Lake.

1.7 Waste Measurement Procedures for Interior CFAs

New waste measurement procedures for Interior CFAs came into effect April 1, 2022. The two significant changes were:

- CFAs are required to do the full measurement procedures as per the Provincial Logging Residue and Waste Measurements Procedures Manual – Interior Version (link below). The previous method of doing ocular surveys is now fully rescinded. CFAs can participate in a sampling plan with other CFAs in their region.
- Dry Grade 4 is now charged to cut control.

The document can also be found on the Timber Pricing Branch website.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/competitive-forest-industry/timber-pricing/forest-residue-waste/provincial-logging-residue-and-waste-measurements-procedure-manual-interior-version>

Back in 2021/2022, the BCCFA advocated for a choice for individual CFAs between full survey and paying district averages, but this proposal was not accepted by the ministry. We were successful in achieving one win for CFAs. In 2022-2023, to create efficiencies and lower survey costs, CFAs and woodlot licenses in a single Natural Resource Region had the option of joining together in a sharing agreement to create an aggregate sample plan.

One year later, the BCCFA’s Pricing Committee is discussing with Timber Pricing Branch the options going forward for interior CFA holders regarding waste assessments. We understand members are facing a very challenging path in completing the full survey with no satisfactory solution. We also understand CFAs are working hard to utilize the fibre within their boundaries and their annual cut levels are vital to maintain economic success.

We now have data from those that completed full surveys and reported into the WASTE database. The results were variable throughout the interior but were not statistically different than the data collected from the major tenures.

Moving forward we are re-evaluating. We have heard from an equal number of members who would like to move to the district average tables and equally heard from members who want to stay doing the full surveys. There is no single option that fits all community forests well.

The BCCFA's Pricing Committee has been reaching out to members to learn more about their experiences and preferences. This topic will be discussed in a breakout session at the BCCFA's conference.

1.8 Forest Carbon

The BCCFA and Federation of BC Woodlot Associations are joining forces to understand potential opportunities for our tenures in carbon offset projects. At present, the path forward for provincial forest tenures like the CFA is not clear. Our committee members will continue to work with the Forest Carbon and Climate Services Branch to learn more.

1.9 Coastal Fibre Recovery Zones

Fibre Recovery Zones were reinstated on the Coast on August 1st, 2022. This policy and the associated waste penalties was rescinded for everyone other than BCTS in April 2021. However, the data collected through BCTS sales gave the Ministry information to support bringing the penalties back for tenures including community forest agreements. The formula used for defining the zones was revised, reducing the size of the zone by approximately 45%.

The Coast Fibre Recovery Zone is described here:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/forest-tenures/forest-tenure-administration/residual-fibre-recovery/residual-fibre-utilization-policy>

The map is here: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/forestry/timber-tenures/fibre-recovery/coast_frz_v4_final.pdf

This will be an ongoing advocacy issue for the BCCFA, as some Coastal community forests have expressed concern about the 3X stumpage penalty because they have difficulty selling fibre to pulp mills, due to long distance shipping costs and logistics. Coastal BCCFA members are working hard on utilization and creating as much value for their communities as possible. The FRZs and their triple stumpage may be unduly punitive.

1.10 Previous Forest Policy Work

Please see the 2021 and 2022 President's Report for information on previous work on forest policy, including:

- BC's Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy
- BCCFA Community Forest Program Expansion Proposal
- Socio-Economic Impacts of British Columbia's Community Forests Program¹
- Community Tenures Regulation Changes
- Coast Forest Sector Revitalization Initiative
- Interior Forest Sector Renewal Initiative
- Coast Cost Survey
- Caribou Recovery

¹ <http://bccfa.ca/socio-economic-impacts-of-british-columbias-community-forests-program/>

- Wildlife Management and Habitat Conservation
- New Provincial Logging Residue and Waste Measurements Procedure Manual
- BCCFA's Key Messages and Recommendations from 2018 & 2019

2 Member Services and Education

2.1 Indicators Survey

One of the BCCFA's most important annual activities is the Community Forest Indicators Survey and Report. Now nine years in, the Community Forest Indicators Report is our most powerful tool for educating the public, our partners and decision-makers about the significant benefits of community forests. The annual report summarizes the wide range of outstanding and innovative things our members are doing, and the noteworthy contributions they are making to their local communities.

The report is based on quantitative and qualitative data gathered in a survey distributed to all members. In 2022, 33 operating CFAs provided the information for 18 indicators, including social, economic, and environmental factors. The BCCFA identified the most common and easy to measure indicators back in 2013, which have continued to be the foundation of data that is collected for the Association's advocacy work.

Susan Mulkey and Carly Dow are in the process of compilation and analysis of the data and comments from the survey respondents for the 2023 Report. The 2023 Report is targeted for publication in September 2023. An online copy of the 2022 report is available at <https://bccfa.ca/indicators-report/>

2.2 Partnership with BC Wildfire Service

One of the outcomes of the BC Government's after-action review of the 2017 fire season, and the subsequent 2018 fire season, was a commitment to improve communication, collaboration and information sharing. Building on the work we did with the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) and the Federation of BC Woodlot Associations (FBCWLA) on an Engagement Agreement, the BCCFA has worked closely with BCWS since 2020 to further develop a lasting partnership.

Recognizing the important role that community forests are playing, in 2020 the BC government invested over \$5 million to help CFA 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. The economic recovery dollars are allocated through the [Crown Land Wildfire Risk Reduction \(CLWRR\)](#) stream of the Community Resiliency Investment (CRI) program, and coordinated by the BCCFA in partnership with the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS). Visit <https://bccfa.ca/wildfire-risk-reduction/> for more information.

Under the Economic Recovery Initiative, funds were allocated to the BCCFA to create or stimulate employment opportunities in 15 rural communities through CL WRR projects. The BCCFA collaborated with BCWS to build and implement this new program. The Economic Recovery Initiative projects will be completed by December 2023. We are pleased that the Forest Enhancement Society of BC is once again able to fund operational fuel treatment projects in community forests.

Looking ahead, we are continuing to develop our partnership with BCWS to support the efforts of community forests in long-term wildfire resiliency activities and expansion of cultural and prescribed fire. A new grant will leverage the work of our partnership so far. The project is designed to develop research-based guidance tools and operational trials to increase our communities' and forests' resiliency to wildfire, capacity to adapt to climate change, and provide opportunities for training and capacity building in intentional use of fire on the land. The first steps in the one-year project will focus on a needs assessment for resources and capacity development over the next 5 years and of the barriers and challenges to fuel management project participation and implementation. Networks will be established that emphasize peer to peer knowledge exchange, mentorship, and capacity building.

2.3 Fee for Service Extension Services

Susan Mulkey, the BCCFA's Manager of Communication and Extension, works with individual community forests on all aspects of governance, strategic planning, policy development and community engagement. Highly skilled in effective community forest governance, Susan draws on her experience of over 25 years in community forestry and can share what is required for a community forest organization to employ best practices in community forest governance. Susan draws on BCCFA publications to support community forests in their unique situations. BCCFA resources include [Guidebook 1](#) and [Guidebook 2](#), and the [Shareholder/Corporation Contract](#).

The BCCFA's fee for service work this past year included governance work with the Golden and Area Community Forest Team to build their case and partnership for a community forest invitation. Susan also worked with The Regional District of Kootenay Boundary as they begin the development of their community forest concept and with the Squamish Community Forest in shaping their governance structure and organizational policy. She also worked with the Tatla Resource Association, one of the two partners in the Eniyud Community Forest, as they navigated reorganization of the community forest.

2.4 Forest Investment

For many years, the BCCFA has coordinated the delivery of Land Based Investment – Forests for Tomorrow funding to CFA holders. With the reorganization within the MOF, funding programs are also shifting and evolving. We are working with a new branch: Forest investment and Reporting Branch (FIRB). At present, the funding available is for reforestation and fertilization. The emphasis is on tree planting and carbon sequestration.

We are now working with FIRB and the BC Federation of Woodlot Associations to gain a better understanding of the future needs/wants with respect to land based investment in general – incremental to legal obligations. Overarching themes of forest health, climate adaptation, wildfire resiliency, biodiversity & species at risk are being discussed. BCCFA is reaching out to our members this month to gauge demand for funding to support a broader array of projects, in addition to soliciting projects for the funding targeted at reforestation and fertilization later in 2023.

2.5 South Korean Forest Professional Placement

As part of an international forest professional placement project, the BCCFA has welcomed Inhyeok Yun, and his family to Victoria. Inhyeok is a Deputy Director with the South Korean Forest Service, with

expertise in public education in forestry and has been responsible for international forest cooperation, recreational forest management, and forest environmental protection. This is a BCCFA volunteer position with a financial contribution made to the BCCFA to support our participation. Inhyeok is here in BC to further his research on forest education in BC and Canada. Susan is his BCCFA contact and has helped to network him with other forest education projects and professionals.

2.6 New BCCFA Resources

In June 2022 the BCCFA published a new extension resource: [Old Growth Management in Community Forests](#). This report presents four case studies of how community forests go above and beyond legal requirements to manage for old growth and biodiversity.

In February 2023, BCCFA Administrative Assistant, Carly Dow, compiled a [Funding Resources Update](#) document with input from Susan and Jennifer. The document contains information and links for a variety of funding opportunities in five main categories: Employment and Transition Support, Indigenous-Led Project Support, Local Government and Community Program Support, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Value-Added/Innovation Support. The document has most recently been updated in April 2023 to include new funding sources.

2.7 BCCFA Safety Publications

The BCCFA is part of the Woodlot Licence and Community Forest Agreement Safety Committee (WLCFASC) of the BC Forest Safety Council. This group develops and publishes resources for community forest agreement holders and woodlot licensees. These resources can be found on the BCCFA's website: <https://bccfa.ca/resources/safety-publications/>

2.8 Wildland Fire Research Network

The BCCFA is a partner in Canada's Wildland Fire Research Network. The network, led by the Canadian Partnership for Wildland Fire Science, based at the University of Alberta, includes numerous provincial government ministries and universities across Canada, as well as the BCCFA. The component of the proposal that involves the BCCFA sees a post-doctoral researcher, under the supervision of Dr Lori Daniels (UBC), full-time for 5-years, to continue research on the efficacy of stand-level fuels mitigation treatments, as well as landscape-level fuel breaks.

In 2019 Dr Daniels' students collected data from 4 community forests (Williams Lake, Esk'etemc, Logan Lake and West Bank FN). This project is enabling the expansion of this research. Ideally, by 2024, the researchers will work with as many of the community forests as have expressed interest in better understanding the efficacy of fuels mitigation treatments. As well, Dr Daniels and her students continue to work on wildfire severity and effects and will continue to collect data from various locations, including community forests, that were affected by the 2017 and 2018 wildfires.

2.9 Partnership with UBC

The BCCFA has an ongoing partnership with the Faculty of Forestry at UBC. Staff are regularly invited to give lectures to students in several different courses, and Susan acts as a liaison with the Master of Sustainable Forest Management class.

The UBC Community Forest Summer Student program, in which 2 community forests each receive 2 students to join them for the summer, has recently been renewed for 3 years. Susan renegotiated the funding agreement to continue the program. This year, students went to Lower North Thompson and Spelkúmtn Community Forests.

2.10 Social Media

Increasing the BCCFA's profile and public education have been big focus areas for us in recent years. With Carly Dow as part of our team, we are making great strides. Building on BCCFA's increased focus on social media over the past year, Carly continues to use social media as a tool to promote the work of community forests and share information. She handles our Twitter, Instagram and Facebook accounts and sees an increase in followers and engagement across all platforms. We also collaborate with colleagues such as FESBC and [Tree Frog Forestry News](#) to share news stories and media relating to community forestry in the province.

Over the winter and spring months, Carly reached out to the 15 community forests that participated in the CLWRR funding program in partnership with the BCCFA and BCWS. Through her efforts, she has collected a useful portfolio of treatment photos, videos, stories, and quotes from these community forests pertaining to their wildfire risk reduction activities. Starting in mid-May 2023, a different community forest will be highlighted each week on BCCFA's social media with 1-2 posts including the content they have shared with Carly. This has been a fruitful social media campaign to not only gather more wildfire-related content, but to specifically draw attention to the important work community forests are doing to protect their communities from wildfire.

We encourage our members to contact Carly directly to share successes and media stories, on any topic, which we can feature online (cdow@bccfa.ca).

2.11 BCCFA Speaking Engagements, Conferences and Articles

Continuing our drive to raise more awareness about community forestry, Jennifer Gunter, BCCFA Executive Director, has devoted significant time to the task by participating in a range of events and educational opportunities in the past year. Examples include:

- Represented the BCCFA at a Forestry Summit in Richmond on April 13th. This daylong event was convened by a steering committee comprised of the ILMA, TLA, USW, NWLA, ILA, IWPA and BC Wood. About 70 representatives of various forest sector organizations and companies attended to discuss issues of common concern and to brainstorm solutions and strategies.
- Panel member at the Truck Loggers Association Convention in Vancouver January 18-20, in the session "Innovative Solutions for Old Growth Management", moderated by Vaughn Palmer, with Cam Brown (Forsite) and Jake Power (Power Wood).

- Convened a panel at the Wildfire Resiliency and Training Summit in Vancouver May 10-12, 2023 about Collaborative Wildfire Management: Lessons from Community Forests. Jennifer was joined by Aurora Lavender (Wetzinkwa Community Forest), Erik Leslie (Harrop-Procter Community Forest) and Garnet Mierau (Logan Lake Community Forest) presented at the. Delegates also heard from managers of the Spelkumtn, Esk’etemc and Logan Lake Community forests in separate sessions.
- Attended the Western Forestry Contractors Association, Forest Professionals, and Council of Forest Industries Conventions.
- Contributed to a CBC Radio featured the positive impacts of community forestry on The Climate Changers program, a popular series about climate change. Erik Leslie of Harrop-Procter and Francis Johnson of Esk’etemc Community Forests, and Dr. Lori Daniels were also all interviewed by Rohit Joseph, Victoria CBC Associate Producer/Technician with All Points West, on the role of community forests in managing for climate resiliency. [Listen here.](#)
- Contributed a chapter to the *Routledge Handbook of Community Forestry*. 86 co-authors and 66 peer-reviewers also contributed. The Handbook is available for purchase [here.](#)
- Contributed to Truck Logger Magazine [Modernizing Forest Policy - The Community Forest Perspective Truck Logger BC Spring 2022 \(bluetoad.com\)](#)
- Contributed to Timber Connect [Podcast | TimberConnect](#)

3 BCCFA Operations and Governance

3.1 Board of Directors

After 3 years of not being able to meet in person, we had a very successful 2022 AGM in Nakusp for the 2022 AGM and celebrated the BCCFA’s 20th Anniversary. Board members are elected from the membership for 2-year terms, up to a maximum of 3 terms.

Heading into the 2023 AGM on June 10th, two directors are in the middle of a 2-year term:

Dan Macmaster (West Boundary Community Forest)

Tania Solonas (MacLeod Lake Mackenzie Community Forest)

Eight directors are at the end of a 2-year term. Colin Macleod (Wetzinkwa Community Forest) has now served 3 consecutive 2-year terms and will be retiring from the board. Frances Swan (Nakusp & Area Community Forest) is ending her term and will not seek re-election.

Six directors have offered to stand again for election:

Daniel Gratton (Creston Community Forest)

Klay Tindall (Spelkúmtn Community Forest)

Warren Hansen (Sunshine Coast Community Forest)

Ken Nielsen (Chinook Community Forest)

George Brcko (Wells Gray Community Forest)

Randy Spyksma (Logan Lake Community Forest)

Aurora Lavender, Manager of the Wetzinkwa Community Forest, has offered to stand for election to the board for a 2-year term. There will also be an opportunity for nominations from the floor. Nominees must have the support of their community forest to stand for election. The Director Application Form is available [here](#).

In electing Directors, the membership shall strive to attain:

- (a) a balance of geographic representation,
- (b) representation from both First Nation and non-First Nation communities,
- (c) representation from existing tenure holders,
- (d) representation from communities seeking to establish community forests, and
- (e) representation from a range of community forest sizes.

The Association owes an immense debt of gratitude to all of our directors who have served the membership with great dedication, wisdom and passion for community forestry. We extend our sincere gratitude to Colin Macleod from the Wetzin'kwa Community Forest for his valuable service since 2018.

According to the BCCFA's bylaws and policies, the BCCFA board of directors is responsible for managing its own affairs, including the selection of the executive. After the 2023 AGM, the new board of directors will meet in person to select the new executive (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer).

3.2 Membership

There are now sixty-one issued community forests in the province, and three with an invitation to apply. Membership in the BCCFA includes forty-seven operating community forests (77%). The BCCFA is proud to support one additional organization in the application process: The Three Rivers Community Forest in Quesnel, a partnership of the First Nations of Lhtako Dene, Nazko, ?Esdilagh, and Lhoosk'uz, and the City of Quesnel. We also have two members that are working to be invited to apply: The Regional District of Kootenay Boundary in partnership with the Osoyoos Indian Band and The Golden and Area initiative that includes the Shuswap Band, the Town of Golden and the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (Area A) who have selected name Kenpesq't Community Forest. Kenpesq't is the name for the Shuswap Band and their Traditional Territory in the Shuswap language.

We also have seven associate members, and eight supplier members, non-voting membership categories, offered to individuals who support our work and to businesses that provide services to community forests.

Membership in the Association is voluntary. Member recruitment & retention is an ongoing challenge, and we continue to make significant efforts to demonstrate the value of our advocacy work and of the network of BCCFA members.

4 BCCFA Workplan Topics

The following is a list of topics that comprise BCCFA's ongoing work.

External Relations and Government Policy

Files in this focus area included:

- Tabular Rates
- CFA Program Expansion

- Wildfire Management
- Forest and Range Practices Act
- Old Growth and Special Trees
- Rural Development
- Community Forest Indicators Survey
- Land Based Investment & funding opportunities including Forest for Tomorrow
- Woodlot and Community Forest Safety Advisory Committee
- Logging Residue and Waste Measurement
- Community Tenures Regulation
- Collaborating with the Forest Enhancement Society of BC
- Liaising with other Forestry Sector Associations including First Nations Forestry Council, Federation of BC Woodlot Associations and the Council of Forest Industries
- Liaison with UBC Faculty of Forestry and student research projects
- BCCFA ED is a member of the Minister's Forest Practices Advisory Council, the Provincial Forestry Forum and the RSTC FRPA Industry Team

Member Services

Files in this focus area include:

- Fee for Service Program
- Webinars
- Annual BCCFA Conference
- Extension services – general member support
- Communications – website & newsletters
- Membership management & recruitment
- UBC Forest Internship Program
- Micro Sawmills Project

Education

Files in this focus area include:

- Union of BC Municipalities Convention
- ABCFP Convention
- First Nations Forestry Council Conference
- Broad dissemination of Indicators Report
- National Forest Week
- Various speaking engagements
- BCCFA website and social media

Operations and Governance

Files in this focus area include:

- Association Financial Sustainability
- Board policy development
- Strategic Plan renewal

For more information, visit www.bccfa.ca