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# NOTES FROM THE FIELD

## Ntityix Leading The Way



NTITYIX  
RESOURCES LP

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Well before the provincial government's old growth strategy and subsequent deferral program Ntityix was in the process of completing an innovative Seven Generation Stewardship Plan which reflects the values and goals of Westbank First Nation. This plan is a specialized plan that has two zones, and Old Forest Zone and a Forest Operations Zone (link to the SGP for more detail). An inherent principle of the Syilx people is to understand the inter-connectedness of life as it relates to decisions they make on the land. The goal is to understand the forested landscape as a complex ecological system that will sustain all living things. Specifically that the forested land will always provide food, water, cultural resources, spiritual values and economic benefit for the people of Westbank First Nation. Historically the Syilx people have used hundreds of different plants for food, medicine, materials and in cultural rituals. Many of these species remain important to the Syilx people today.

Westbank people recognize that human activities have and will continue to impact their forests. They also know that to have and keep functioning old forests, they must have an in-depth knowledge of their land base. Ntityix has recently undertaken a large scale forest inventory project and coupled with traditional knowledge they will have a more complete understanding of the values that their old forests provide and where they are on the landscape. With this knowledge they can more likely meet the objectives of the Seven Generations Stewardship plan. Of key importance is the re-introduction of fire to the landscape. The cultural use of fire is not new to the Syilx people and was used to tend the forest, enhancing wildfire resiliency and forest health. It is clear from the events of this past summer that these forests are at very high risk from the effects of climate change especially wildfire. The re-introduction of fire is essential to keep the old forests on the landscape in perpetuity. There are plans to burn some areas within the Old Forest Zone this fall and re-introduce prescribed burning as a post-harvest treatment in the Forest Operations Zone. Prescribed fire monitoring plots have been installed in the area in the OFZ in order to document the effects of the fire treatment. We will continue to update you on the burning and its outcome with subsequent Notes from the Field.

The Ministry of Forests recently made the policy decision to offer Community Forest Agreement holders and First Nation Woodland Licensees an opportunity to develop their own old-growth strategy where they can demonstrate that their plan promotes implementation of the old-growth report recommendations. The implementation of the Seven Generations Plan will arguably easily protect values as described in the provincial Old-growth report.



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**If your Community Forest would like to be included in the next "Notes From The Field" series, please reach out to:**

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<sup>1</sup> Ntityix Resources LP, a forest and resource management company, owned by Westbank First Nation, manages the forest tenures held by Westbank First Nation.