

The Robson-North Thompson Forestry Coalition Approach: Strengthening the Local Forestry and Wood Products Sector

BCCFA Conference and Annual General Meeting

Breakout Session

May 27th 2025

Panel

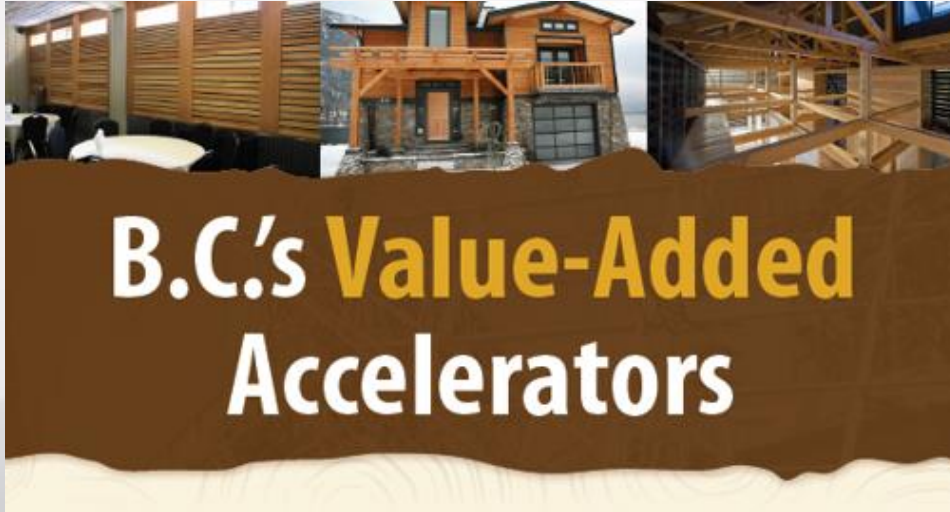
- *Melissa Sanderson – Assistant Deputy Minister Timber Range and Economics Division, Ministry of Forests*
- *David Patton - Operations Manager, BCTS Kamloops*
- *George Brcko - General Manager, Wells Gray Community Forest*
- *Paul Rasmussen –Project Manager, Robson-North Thompson Forestry Coalition, Owner, Magnus Natural Resource Services Ltd*

Ministry of Forests-Growing Value Over Volume

Mandate item: Work to increase value from BC's forests by supporting value-added and innovative forest products, creating good local jobs and diversifying BC's wood products for local and international markets.

*Vision: A **diversified, integrated, competitive** and **sustainable** forest sector, grounded in **reconciliation** with First Nations.*

Value-Added Accelerators



The purpose of the Value-Added Accelerators (VAA) is to develop solutions for BC's value-added manufacturing sector, as a critical element of an integrated, competitive forest industry ecosystem.

- Hosted 11 sessions over a one year period
- 600+ participants
- 52+ pages of summarized feedback on challenges facing value-added manufacturers

Value-Added Accelerators - Key Themes

- Small-medium value-added manufacturers feel like they're 'doing it alone'
- Relationships are seen as a competitive advantage and people are very protective of their relationships
- Small businesses don't know how to connect with First Nations regarding opportunities to partners
- The 'right log to the right mill' approach isn't happening
- There is an interest in making connections between manufacturers but that isn't happening formally

Value-Added Accelerators – A Lesson Learned

- There is an opportunity to support local level discussion regarding fibre flow and partnership opportunities
 - Example: 'Roots in the Koots' - a facilitated fibre flow discussion in the Kootenays – co-led by the Value-Added Wood Coalition and the Province
 - Keen interest in participating
 - Varying feedback on content – many felt that major tenure holders shouldn't be part of the discussion
 - Lots of interest in doing more, but little interest in leaning into the work

Key message: These types of events are best when lead by local First Nations, small business and communities – grassroots movements have more traction and momentum to continue.

Community Forests play a key role in these discussions!

The Robson-North Thompson Forestry Coalition- History

- Creation of BCTS-Simpcw working group in 2022 to collaborate on forestry and stewardship matters
- 2023 discussions between BCTS and Simpcw on the BCTS Category 4 Value-Added Program
- Simpcw concerns that Category 4 Value-Added Program was not broad enough to support the diversity of manufacturers and businesses in the North Thompson and Robson Valleys
- Worked towards creation of a field tour involving BCTS, Simpcw First Nation, Ministry of Forests, local government, and industry representatives
- Aim was to discuss how to work collaboratively to improve local fibre flow and support a robust local forestry sector in the Robson and North Thompson Valleys



The Robson-North Thompson Forestry Coalition-Field Tour April 2024



The Robson-North Thompson Forestry Coalition- A "Grass Roots" Initiative!

- **Governance**

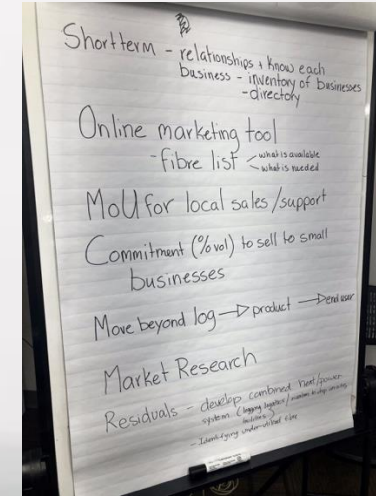
- Terms of Reference
- Bi-weekly calls
- Coalition membership: Simpcw Resources Group and Simpcw First Nation leadership, five community forests and associated municipality representatives, value-added manufacturers, industry representatives

- **Strategic Planning**

- *Mission: to enable and support local processing of harvested logs within the region, foster local capacity building, community employment and sustainable development through cooperation and partnerships among members. The Coalition is dedicated to supporting and promoting small and medium value-added specialty forest products manufacturers in the region.*

The Robson-North Thompson Forestry Coalition-Face to Face Meeting in Clearwater March 2025

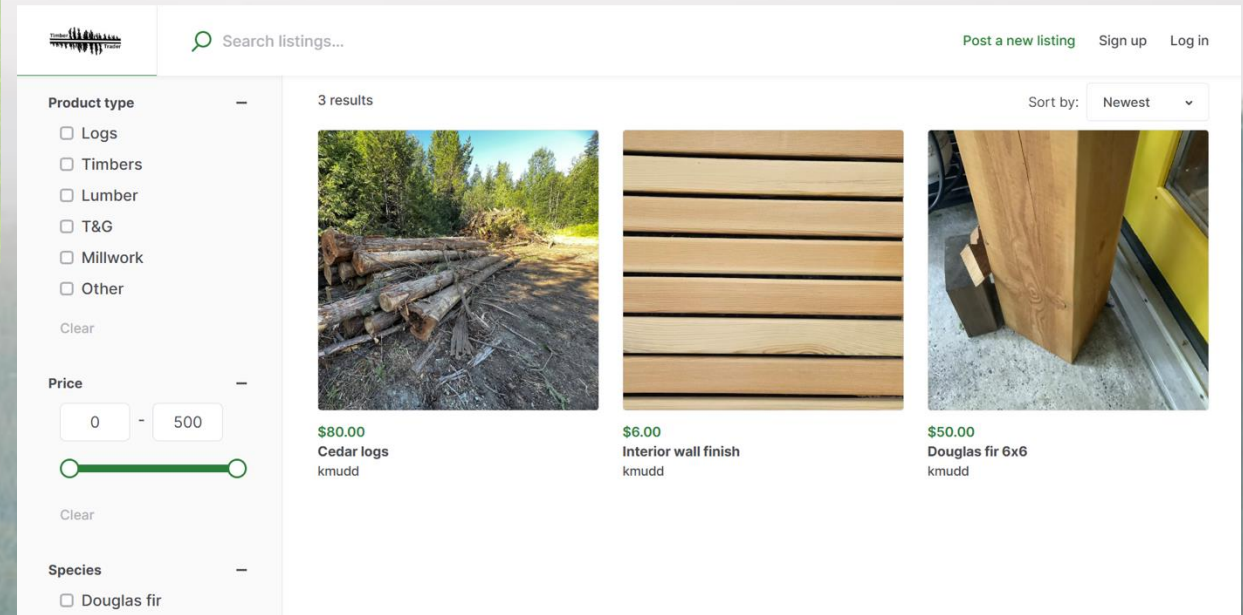
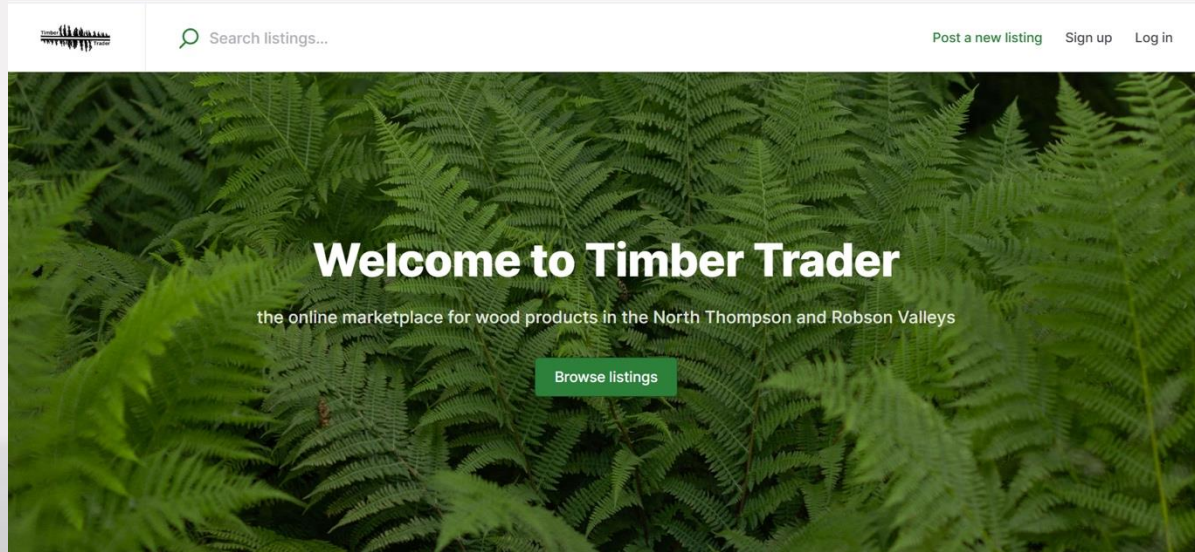
- Focus on developing actions to guide future direction
- Hosted deeper discussions on topics related to improving fibre flow and forest economy at local scale



The Robson-North Thompson Forestry Coalition-Face to Face Meeting in Clearwater March 2025

- **Improve / optimize fibre flow**
 - Build and maintain a business directory, including basic inventory of fibre needs and availability
 - Create an online fibre marketing platform / tool
 - Facilitate regular connection opportunities and build communications mechanisms
- **Stabilize local fibre supply (access and volume)**
 - Develop framework / scope for potential improvements (ie: STI)
 - Review referral / approvals process, review current constraints – are they applicable to current community values / considerations? (eg: VQO's versus Wildfire Risk Reduction)
 - Recommend / implement local "pilot" opportunities
- **Foster Collaboration**
 - Increase local Coalition participation and support, improve strategy / governance
 - Ensure the Coalition is a "worthwhile" investment for participants, Action Oriented
- **BCTS Review**
 - Support BCTS to establish local opportunities, enabling 2025 BCTS Review findings (expected late summer 2025)

The Robson-North Thompson Forestry Coalition- EXAMPLE: Online Wood Marketing Platform



Online Wood Marketing Platform Demonstration: Timber Trader (Kim Muddiman Co-Owner of NEST Timberhome and Design)

The Robson-North Thompson Forestry Coalition

- *Why is this work important?*

- Prioritizes local manufacturing, optimizes fibre use and utilization
- Promotes local employment
- Facilitates the exchange of local fibre and resources
- Fosters collaboration, innovation and diversity in the local forest sector
- Attracts investment and promotes economic stability
- Empowers local solutions, forest policy advocacy
- Aligns with Simpcw directives re: long-term sustainability and well-being for both forests AND people

The Robson-North Thompson Forestry Coalition-Key Ingredients

- Key ingredients for success:
 - Indigenous leadership and partnership
 - Funding
 - Effective project management, facilitation
 - Grassroots perspective-Engagement and value for participants
 - Volunteerism



Questions?



Regional Discussions

Break into groups based on fibre flow in your respective regions:

- Coast
 - Island, South Coast
- South
 - Kamloops, Merritt, Cariboo
- North
 - Highway 16 Corridor
 - Central/Northeast

Questions for Regional Discussions

1. Do you have a good understanding of the small-to medium-sized forestry-based businesses operating in your area, the products or services they provide and their customer-base?
2. Are these businesses currently facing challenges in securing a reliable supply of fibre? If so, what are the main issues (e.g., cost, competition, logistics, policy)?
3. What local fibre sources or supply chain partnerships—such as underutilized wood, community forests, Indigenous tenures, or BCTS—are currently underused, and what supports (e.g., policy changes, coordination, incentives) could enhance their role in supporting businesses?
4. Is there a need for improved coordination or information-sharing to better understand and respond to the needs of small forestry businesses in your area?
5. What specific actions could CFAs take to support local fibre access, optimize fibre flow, and strengthen the small-business forestry partnerships in your region? What actions could change the dial to provide fibre to local manufacturers?
6. Do all the key ingredients for a successful coalition exist in your area? What's missing?
7. Of all the opportunities discussed, which ones feel most actionable? What one or two challenges need urgent attention?

The background of the slide is a photograph of a vast, misty mountain landscape. In the foreground and middle ground, there are dense, rolling hills covered in evergreen forests. The trees appear in shades of green and blue due to the atmospheric haze. In the far distance, more mountain peaks are visible, shrouded in thick white mist or fog. The overall lighting is soft and diffused, creating a serene and somewhat somber atmosphere. Centered over this landscape is the title text in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Regional Discussions Debrief

The background image is a landscape photograph with a teal or cyan color grade. It shows a dense forest of evergreen trees in the foreground, leading up to a range of mountains in the distance. The atmosphere is misty or foggy, particularly around the mountain peaks. The text 'Final Q&A and Wrap Up' is centered over the middle of the image.

Final Q&A and Wrap Up

Thank you!

