



BURNS LAKE COMMUNITY FOREST LTD.

General Manager *Christmas Message*

As we close this calendar year, I'd like to reflect on the accomplishments of our Community Forest and review our successes and challenges that lie ahead.

We have all been challenged in the last year beyond our wildest imaginations. As we turn the page, I acknowledged that these challenges bring opportunities, opportunities bring growth, and the only certainty is constant changes. If we can accept that change is a means to achieving our goals, we will be successful.

Even with all the challenges in 2021, your community forest brought continued accomplishments. We continue our efforts in maintaining our Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) forest certification. We commenced implementation of our new approved management plan. We continued our investment in sound stewardship of forested land- completing detailed grizzly bear habitat modeling, finalizing year 3 of our stream assessment, commenced implementation of our access management plan, commenced road deactivation and rehabilitation works, continue to focus our operational activities to utilize the dead fiber, completing close to 70% of our prescribed activities for phase 1 of our landscape fire mitigation plan, and started a Marten, Fisher habitat assessment project, just to name a few. It is important to re-emphasize that these efforts are for more than just the opportunity to harvest dead pine! It is about actions that bring about community safety, ecosystem restoration, and long-term community forest sustainability. At the core, it is a delicate balancing act between providing social and economic opportunities while ensuring we maintain and enhance ecosystem values.

For another year, our communication efforts have been severely impacted limiting our ability for community engagement. As we have pivoted to some online medium, it is by no means a replacement for the social interaction and communication that I feel is warranted and so throughout the year, we made every effort to hold key information sessions to promote and enhance

our social licence. Our 8th Annual Public Information Open House/Community BBQ following all provincial health orders, had one of the largest turns out since inception. Thank you to everyone who attended and brought community spirit to the event. If you did not get the chance to attend, I want to encourage you to attend in future years. Our annual development and harvest planning continue to support our local milling facilities; Babine, Decker, Tahta Timber and Pinnacle Pellet by providing fibre for utilization. My goal is to continue emphasizing and demonstrating the important social fabric that BLCF has in our communities.

We will continue our presence at future community events and activities to offer the opportunity to ask questions and get informed about the activities of the community forest. There is a wealth of information available, and I really encourage everyone to ask the questions and get informed! We are ever increasing the utilization of innovative solutions in the resource sector, making our activities at BLCF exemplary. Most recently we have commenced utilizing spatial software to support our communication and engagement efforts and landscape planning activities. I hope to be providing demonstration in the coming year.

After the 2021 fire season, there is no doubt a renewed interest in fuel management on the landscape. BLCF has been instrumental in leading the charge, as we have not forgotten that Burns Lake is #5 out of top 20 small communities in British Columbia, at extreme risk due to hazardous fuels in around us. The recent approval of our Visual exception request by Nadina District, continues to support our focus of dead pine recovery, community safety and ecosystem restoration. As I noted last year, these dead forests surrounding our communities, once standing, are now falling down. Perhaps the best characterization is to imagine you dropped a box of matches that empty out on the floor. Now take 100 boxes and empty them out the same way. This is what our forest floor around our community looks like. Collectively we need to recognize that we live in a fire-based ecosystem, and as such our

day-to-day life, and our forest management must reflect strategies that support this frequent landscape disturbance. I want to acknowledge that local First Nation, local forest district leadership, Nadina District licences and of course your community forests are collaboratively engaging in a project (Landscape Resilience Project) that is examining extent of the aspiration of the Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs) of the late 90s. It is my hope that this project will bring to fruition change that reflects the unprecedented landscape changes we have endured as a result of the mountain pine beetle epidemic.

There is a dedicated team of volunteers; your Board of Directors, coming from diverse backgrounds that represent all aspects of our community. I encourage you to meet them and discuss the strategic direction of BLCF. I continue to emphasize our efforts towards focused long-term strategic goals "beyond the beetle". These goals are meant to support the long-term prosperity of Burns Lake Community Forest and all the benefits it brings to our communities.

I want you all to join me in celebrating our successes and in helping to manage the upcoming challenges. I encourage all community members to explore all that BLCF does in our community and support BLCF stay on the path of success. I believe as a community forest; we are a top performing community forest in the province.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us via info@blcomfor.com or via phone (250) 692-7724 to schedule a specific time to discuss matters that are important to you.

On behalf of the Board and staff of Comfor Management Services Ltd. and Burns Lake Community Forest Ltd., I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Frank Varga RPF, General Manager
Burns Lake Community Forest Ltd
COMFOR Management Services Ltd