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The Trees of the Burns Lake Community Forest

BLCF's Commitment to Sustainable Forestry

The Burns Lake Community Forest (BLCF) is committed to practicing sustainable forestry. This commitment flows through all aspects of BLCF, harvesting, hauling, silviculture, and forest management. But what is sustainability and what does it look like within a community forest. Sustainability is a social goal pertaining to our inhabitation of our Earth. This means fulfilling our needs as of right now, along with looking into the future to fulfill the needs of the next generation. Sustainability is balanced upon three pillars in forestry management: ecological, economical, and socio-cultural. There are many things to consider when building sustainable forest management plans, in forestry ecological sustainability is at the forefront but BLCF is equally committed to all pillars.

BLCF cares so deeply about the forest within the K1A License. This past year BLCF generated approximately 17,653 employment hours in silviculture and 6,812 employment hours in forest management. BLCF continues to put in the hours to undertake ongoing efforts in many stretches of sustainability; incorporating strategies for climate change, considering and incorporating forest health strategies, and designing and incorporating enhanced reforestation activities to support a diverse and more fire-resistant ecosystem and a sustainable forest industry for generations.

BLCF has prioritized the economic pillar to further benefit the Community of Burns Lake. This is done through job creation, fibre utilization and strategic planning, these priorities help manage our dead forests with fibre utilization being the key, this ties into the ecological pillar as dead forests do not create forests for our future. This management flows into our wildfire seasons as BLCF recognizes the benefits of putting fire back onto the land base, while protecting our community and timber supply. Dead timber areas can benefit from the reset that fire brings, and harvested blocks flourish after a burn goes through. BLCF is committed to harvesting dead timber to prevent economical instability and promote ecological growth, while promoting job creation within our logging industry.

“In light of the catastrophic wildfire season upon us, it is important to remember that fire can be a good thing when professionally and strategically prescribed. The First Nations have used intentional fire on the land base since the beginning of time to satisfy medicinal, nutritional, cultural and protective objectives. This is not new information but rather historical information that many current forest management practices have overlooked.” Crystal Fisher, Burns Lake Community Forest President

BLCF is dedicated to increasing knowledge around sustainable resource values and has invested more than \$2,000,000 to ensure the sustainability of the community forest to support the area. This investment will only grow as BLCF undertakes future innovative and environmental value assessments to the land base. BLCF is committed to Implementing First Nations and engagement plans, incorporating

First Nations stewardship principles into forest management, and ensuring land use plan objectives are incorporated. BLCF can do this with a board of directors representing Ts'il Kaz Koh (Burns Lake Band,) Wet'suwet'en First Nation, The office of Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs, and the Public at Large. This pillar of sustainability is crucial to the Burns Lake Community Forest and will continue to grow and develop.

"It is in everyone's best interest to manage our forests from a collaborative approach. The Burns Lake Community Forest continues to prioritize First Nations true and meaningful partnership on the K1A license which provides us with the education required to practice sustainable forestry."
Crystal Fisher, Burns Lake Community Forest President

The Burns Lake Community Forest is held accountable to these sustainability goals by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification held by BLCF since 2009. FSC is guided through 10 principles – to obtain this certification, BLCF has met all ten: Compliance with laws, worker's rights and employment conditions, community relations, benefits from the forest, Indigenous People's rights, environmental values and impact, management planning, monitoring and assessment, high conservation values, and implementation of management activities. This certification pushes BLCF to create sustainable forest management plans and has held BLCF accountable for these plans. The Burns Lake Community Forest is one of two FSC Certified Community Forests in BC.

BLCF wanted to create something symbolizing their continued efforts to practice sustainable forestry. When choosing a symbol, BLCF couldn't imagine a better symbol than the trees of the Burns Lake Community Forest. Each tree represents one of the four trees planted within BLCF annually: the Western Larch, the Hybrid Spruce, the Lodgepole Pine, and the Douglas Fir. Every tree planted represents BLCF's commitment to growing forests for our future, these trees are the embodiment of sustainability and will be the backbone for generations to come. Please join us in representing the #ForestsForOurFuture



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