

the Bridge

NEWSLETTER of the BRITISH COLUMBIA
FIRST NATIONS FORESTRY PROGRAM



Expanded silviculture treatment capacity for Secooksin Enterprises

The Canim Lake Band is located in the south central part of British Columbia, 35 km east of the community of 100 Mile House. Close to 75 percent of the Band's 517 members live on the reserve. They are part of the Lake Division of the Shuswap Tribe, within the Interior Salish Nations of British Columbia.

Canim Lake, although great in size, is largely surrounded by private land and long-term lease holders. Secooksin Enterprises Ltd. is a corporation wholly owned by a Canim Lake Band member. Previously it employed three men to do residual stand falling and slashing for Weldwood of Canada Ltd. With support from the First Nations Forestry Program, the company has been able to expand to a six-man crew, plus a supervisor.

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Raymond James stands in front of a treated, regenerated stand.



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Canada



Les Bob falls residual trees in a treated stand.

Secooksin Enterprises Ltd. is now able to take on larger projects of brushing and weeding, mistletoe eradication, snag falling, and spacing. A member of Weldwood's professional forestry staff provided the required on-the-job training and follow-up monitoring of the crew and supervisor. Weldwood will now award them contracts for various areas and projects at rates equal those of an experienced crew. An additional cash contribution towards the FNFP project came from The Cariboo Chilcotin Aboriginal Training and Education Centre, and Weldwood provided work for the six man crew.

A crew of this size must also be proficient in the use of fire equipment. They must have fire-fighting gear, including pumps, available on site while they are working. The First Nations Forestry Program has assisted Secooksin Enterprises in purchasing some fire equipment and in training crew members in its operation. Additional training subjects included falling and bucking safety, basic first aid, WHMIS, and wild-life tree identification.

"I'm happy because the project has meant that the Canim Lake Band now has a trained silviculture crew made up of local First Nation individuals," says Gerry Charley, proprietor of Secooksin Enterprises. The crew is available to bid competitively on contracts from Weldwood and the BC Ministry of Forests. This means that an increased proportion of local silviculture contracts will be going to local First Nation crews as their capacity and abilities increase. The successful completion of the Expanded Silviculture Treatment Capacity project has improved the relationship between the Canim Lake Band and local forestry industry and contributed to the quality of life of the Canim Lake Band.

For more information contact Gerry Charley, Proprietor, Secooksin Enterprises, (250) 397-2932.

Aboriginal Forest Industries Council:

First year update

It is fitting that the Aboriginal Forest Industries Council (AFIC) was launched with the support of the First Nations Forestry Program. The purposes of both endeavours are closely aligned – sustainable, resource-based economic development for First Nations.

During the first year of operations, AFIC set out to fill some of the gaps in information which exist with respect to the present and future role of First Nations in British Columbia's forest economy. AFIC soon discovered some of the data were scattered, out of date, or in many cases unavailable. AFIC started with basic questions such as:

- How many First Nations people are employed in forestry?
- How many First Nations-owned forest enterprises are there in the province?
- What percentage of the annual allowable cut is under active, commercially viable management by First Nations, as opposed to dormant awards?
- How many jobs result from joint ventures with First Nations?

AFIC sought to discover the consensus among First Nations, if one exists, with respect to needs and expectations for participation in BC's forest economy. "First Nations have diverse objectives for developing their forests," says Earl Smith, AFIC Chair. "In terms of government support, their needs cannot be based on a narrow model."

In AFIC's view, the absence of such basic and fundamental information makes it challenging for governments to develop support programs for First Nations forestry, or for industry to craft the types of partnerships to which First Nations aspire. First Nations therefore have an interest in helping to keep information current.



Representatives from 18 Bands gathered at a Forest Opportunity Roundtable, February 2003.

In response to this need for information, AFIC has spent the past eight months in an energetic outreach program with First Nations in the province. The purpose of this program was to acquire the baseline understanding of First Nations' needs and expectations for developing their respective forest enterprises. Only with this comprehensive understanding can AFIC move to the second phase of its long-term goal, which is to facilitate the types of support arrangements that First Nations truly need.

As a first step in this outreach program, a comprehensive Forest Opportunities Survey was sent to all Bands in the province to determine their views, concerns, and expectations regarding forest development. The results of this survey are to be published soon.

Based on a strong response to the survey, AFIC then went into the field to hold a series of roundtables in the province. These roundtable discussions, attended by First Nations communities either involved in forestry or aspiring to become involved, provided in-depth context for the findings in the Forest Opportunities Survey.



'Namgis First Nation builds on Aboriginal traditions to create opportunities for growth



A group of students from the mushroom harvesting workshop held in October 2002.

Like many Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia and elsewhere in Canada, the 'Namgis First Nation has experienced the massive impact of economic decline in the forestry sector and the collapse of local coastal fisheries. Composed of eight reserves with a population of 1,513 living off and on reserve, the heart of the community rests in the town of Alert Bay, Cormorant Island, off the northeast coast of Vancouver Island. Although seasonal work in the tourism industry and with off-island logging companies has helped somewhat, few forest-based business opportunities exist in the long term for this small community. However residents are hopeful that increased economic and social stability are in the community's future.

The 'Namgis First Nation is developing a sustainable non-timber forest products (NTFP) initiative. Their main objective is to create one new First Nations business each year over the next two to five years. Over the same time period they expect to train 10 to 15 First Nations community members in one or more aspects of NTFP harvesting, processing, or marketing. The 'Namgis First Nation is the lead proponent – along with the Kwakiutl, Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw, Da'naxda'xw, Quatsino First Nations, and the Musgamagw Tsawataineuk Tribal Council (MTTC) – in a Royal Roads University-directed North Island Non-Timber

Forest Products demonstration project. First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP) funds for the 'Namgis First Nation initiative will cover about two-thirds of the 'Namgis project costs, while Royal Roads University will provide \$5,000 (other sources are covering the full Royal Roads project).

The growing industry that is the focus of the project incorporates non-timber forest products and services into forest management. The January 2003 issue of *Beneath the Trees*, a Royal Roads University newsletter, explains that NTFPs are botanical products and associated services of the forest other than timber, pulpwood, shakes or other wood products. Examples include medicinal and herbal plants, floral greenery, wild mushrooms, craft products, ethno-botanical workshops, and forest tours.

A goal of the community project is to explore ways to manage non-timber forest resources that are environmentally sustainable, economically feasible, and socially and culturally equitable. "It is vital to inhibit the tendency to characterize NTFPs as a new 'gold rush' whereby the first person in will make the most money," says Harry Alfred, Forestry Technician. Project organizers look toward building long-term capacity for First Nations participation in NTFP development, either as enterprises owned and operated by First Nations, or through partnerships or other cooperative ventures with regional stakeholders. In February of 2003, the North Island First Nations NTFP Committee developed a strategy to identify opportunities and capacity requirements in resource management, business development, and educational and cultural aspects of NTFP use by First Nations. Establishing a long-term strategic direction will help ensure that the development of NTFPs on the North Island fully incorporates and supports First Nations interests and aspirations.

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Ditidaht Cedar Salvage Ltd. integration into Ditidaht Forest Products Ltd. operations

“The Ditidaht First Nation has access to timber and the license to cut it,” says representative Bryan Cofsky. The Band is looking forward to putting their new sawmill into operation in February, 2003 with assistance from the First Nations Forestry Program, (FNFP).

The Ditidaht, pronounced Dee-tee-daht, are located in a small isolated community on the west coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, at the north end of Nitinaht Lake. They are associated with the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council and, until 1984, were called the Nitinaht Band. The Ditidaht First Nation includes 727 hectares and services 17 reserves. It is accessible by logging roads and is the home of 180 First Nation people. Another 500 Ditidaht people live off the reserve.

Ditidaht Forest Products Ltd. was formed in 1997 as a wholly owned company of the Ditidaht First Nation. At that time, funding from the FNFP assisted the Ditidaht First Nation establish a medium-sized sawmill on the reserve, at the north end of Nitinaht Lake.

Ditidaht Cedar Salvage Ltd. is also a company wholly owned by the Ditidaht First Nation. In 2002 the FNFP matched \$25,000 for this project with \$25,000 from Ditidaht Forest Products to help Ditidaht Cedar Salvage prepare a detailed business plan. Then the company will purchase, install, and operate a mobile dimension mill on the Ditidaht Forest Products mill site. “The new mill will do hemlock up to 44 feet, if required. We could not do this before,” says Cofsky. The mill will be designed to handle 32- to 44-foot hemlock and Douglas-fir timber and beams. “But the main purpose is to make use of cedar salvage and produce special cuts for niche markets,” he says. The existing sawmill is unsuitable for producing small volumes of custom-cut cedar.

Ditidaht Cedar Salvage will be close to the main sawmill to take advantage of shared equipment, such as a front-end loader, edgers, mill-yard buckers, and waste management. The mills will

have the same administration and supervision, and they will share technical and maintenance expertise. All of these measures add value to both the cedar salvage and forest products operations.

The Dimensional Cedar Sawmill will be a joint venture with Dwayne Nichols from Lake Cowichan. Timber supply agreements are in place, and the agreement will see the Ditidaht obtain full ownership within 5 to 7 years. Greg Van Snick, Summit Quality Wood Ventures President, is the current head sawyer at the Ditidaht Forest Products mill. He will supervise on-the-job training for nine new personnel. Ditidaht Forest Products will cover the training and supervision expenses.

The new mill will increase the profitability of the Ditidaht mill site. Band members will be employed in the new positions and new niche markets will open up to the Ditidaht sales force. As work gets underway many people will benefit, directly and indirectly, from the new Ditidaht sawmill.

For more information contact Bryan Cofsky, (250) 746-8380.



Mill manager Pat Moore stands along side mill foreman and sign maker Jerry Peter

Forestry Continuing Studies Network offers continuing education for First Nations in forestry



Archaeology inventory students at a field site gather evidence for the archaeological record.

As British Columbia's First Nations become more and more involved in, and responsible for, natural resource management, skill and knowledge gaps must be addressed at the worker, technician, and professional levels. Education and work experience at all three levels helps to ensure the resource is managed in a sustainable manner, while at the same time builds capacity within FN communities and businesses. The added confidence of a highly skilled Aboriginal workforce, knowledgeable in traditional and non-traditional uses of the resource, will open up opportunities for First Nations and the resource sector to work cooperatively through partnerships and joint ventures that enhance the social, cultural and economic climate in the province.

The Forestry Continuing Studies Network (the Network) is the leading provider of natural resource related continuing studies and training in BC. The Network is mandated to respond to the evolving and complex needs of its clients – BC's natural resource professionals, technicians, and field practitioners. Recently the Network has taken a new approach with respect to servicing the natural resource management needs of the

First Nations of BC. One of the Network's strategic objectives is to promote, provide access, and deliver natural resource continuing and formal education to First Nations.

Working with its partners, the Network is offering extension services designed to assist in increasing First Nation skills, knowledge, and leadership through the delivery of educational programs that support sustainable natural resource management. One of these extension services will be the development of a pool of First Nation instructors through focused teacher training and job shadowing.

The Network is extremely pleased to be working with the Secwepemc Natural Resource Board and the Native Brotherhood of BC to help implement their plan. "Through working cooperatively with these organizations we feel the Network will be able to connect more First Nations to the wide variety of natural resource curriculum and training available," says Don Whiteside, Director of New Business for the Forestry Continuing Studies Network. In

this regard mutually beneficial Memorandums of Understanding have been negotiated.

The Network's goal is to operate as an effective point of first (and continuing) contact. An important function of the extension service will be direct contact with the Nations, Tribal Councils, Bands, development corporations, and businesses that are involved in natural resource work. The Network will work with key contacts from these organizations to conduct a comprehensive training needs analysis that determines specific natural resource management goals of the group. This process will include reviewing the existing skill sets of the natural resource workforce, identifying gaps, and developing a tailored training plan that meets the resource management goals of the client. This training plan will link to other institutions and extension providers as fits the situation. The development of a training plan is a formative component in funding proposals and could be as simple as one course or as complex as a number of programs. Each situation will be unique.

The Network will also work with its partners to identify and develop leading edge curriculum that responds to cross-cultural sensitivity between First Nations, the public service, industry, and the workforce as it relates to natural resource management. In this respect, the Network is developing two three-day training programs that respond to both First Nation involvement in natural resource management and the educational requirements of natural resource practitioners who are working with First Nations. "First Nations and other resource practitioners have been asking for these courses. We're excited to be able to offer them in the Fall of 2003," says Whiteside.

The first course, *Effective First Nation Involvement in Forest Management*, targets Aboriginal participants and intends to provide a background of the forest industry, relevant legislation, tenures and other management systems, business protocols, planning etc. This course will be of interest to First Nation participants already working in the forest industry or wishing to become involved.

The second course, *Cross Cultural Sensitivity Training for Natural Resource Practitioners*,

is designed for a mixed audience and focuses on providing participants with First Nation cultural perspectives. These include an overview of the Indian Act, Tribal and other political structures/governments, relevant legislation (Cultural Heritage Act, Delgamuukw Decision), Aboriginal protocols, trust and relationship building, and specific-issue problem solving and consensus building.

Other Network courses that have a unique First Nations focus include the *Archaeology Inventory* and *Culturally Modified Tree Inventory* programs. These courses carry provincial certification and can empower First Nations graduates to record archaeological evidence crucial to land use planning and traditional use study. This information, especially when compiled by First Nations people, is a powerful tool for use in modern treaty negotiations and land use decisions.

The Network's *Goods from the Woods Program – Developing Your Non-Timber Forest Products Business* is another program that has a strong First Nation capacity-building component.

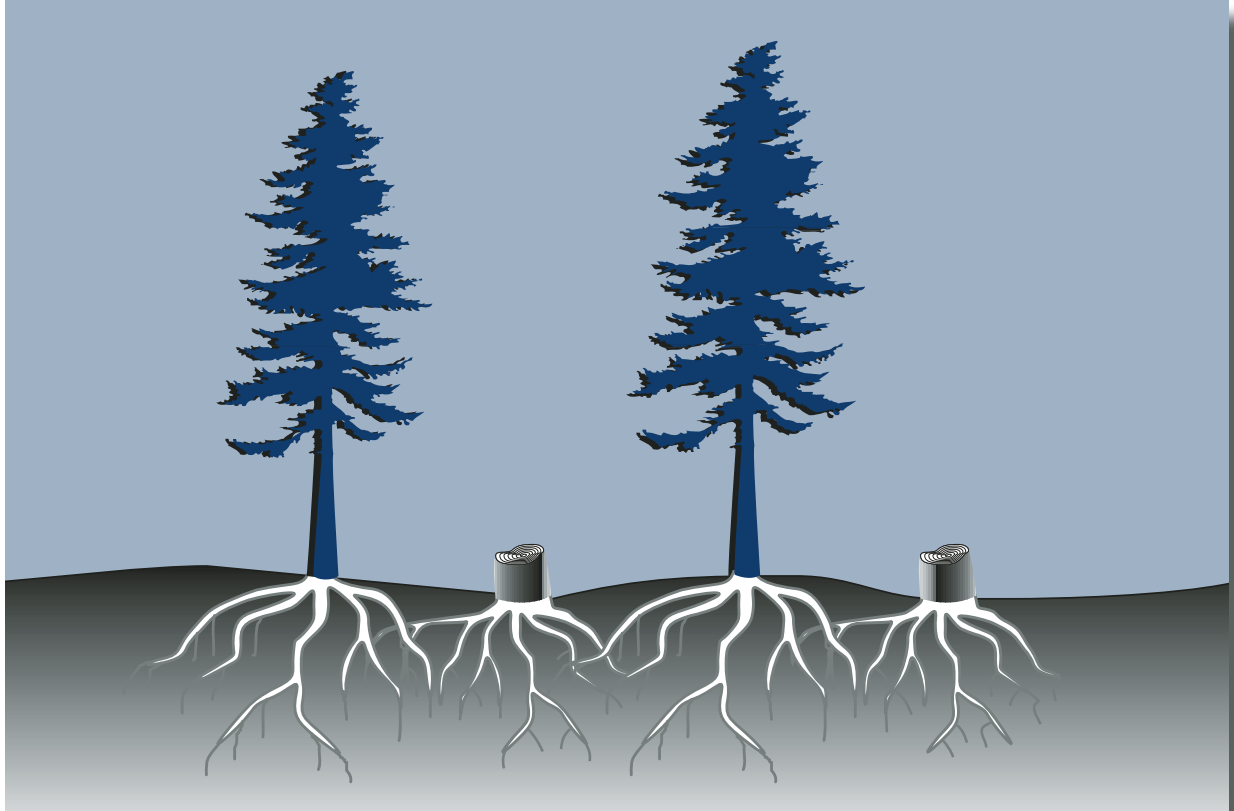
The Network believes that the development and delivery of these courses will serve the First Nations of BC and the natural resource practitioners that work with them to practice sustainable, culturally sensitive natural resource management. The Network anticipates these courses will be ready for delivery in the summer of 2003.

The Forestry Continuing Studies Network is incorporated as a non-profit society and is a registered charity. Founded in 1992 the Network has a head office located on the campus of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver and has regional offices in Victoria, Kamloops, and Nelson.

To arrange a training needs analysis or to find out more about Network products and services please contact: Don Whiteside, Director of New Business, (604) 222-1740, or donwhiteside@direct.ca. For general course information please visit the Network's website at www@fcsn.bc.ca.



Root Rot Tracker: A realistic simulator for the spread of forest root diseases



Forest root diseases are an increasingly significant forest management problem associated with second-growth forests. Following a harvest in a site with root disease, the land manager is left with infected stumps, a source of infection for the subsequent crop of new trees. Disease spreads when a seedling's healthy root crosses an infected root of an old stump and the fungus transfers from one to the other. The fungus can then move along the root back from the point of infection towards the root collar. It can girdle the root collar and move out into other roots. In later years the healthy roots of new crop trees can cross the already-infected roots of new crop trees. Thus, the disease can spread not only from the infected stumps to trees but also from infected trees to trees.

A mathematical representation of disease spread implemented on a computer, called a simulator, can help with the management of sites with root diseases problems. For example, with a simulator a First Nations land manager could study the effect of changing seedling spacing on the resultant crop.

Root Rot Tracker is just this kind of tool. "Root Rot Tracker is very educational for illustrating how root disease is spread," says Dr. Fred Peet, Research Scientist at the Canadian Forest Service Pacific Forestry Centre in Victoria, BC. He developed the simulator, and says, "This is a tool through which people can grasp the biological mechanism behind the spread of root diseases."

The simulator is straightforward and easy to use as it works with the elements associated with field work and uses everyday terminology. Root Rot Tracker simulates the scenario of a new crop of seedlings planted after clear-cutting. Root Rot Tracker incorporates basic biological processes for disease spread. It is based on the fundamental variables (or parameters) associated with the old stumps left over from harvesting, the new crop of trees, and the fungus. For the old stump component the fundamental variables include: number of infected stumps in the site, number of infected stumps in a clump, distance between stumps in a clump, number of infected roots per stump, length of stump roots, and number of years a stump is infectious. The values of all variables are under user control.

Similar basic variables exist for both the new crop of trees and the fungus. The user can also change simulator control variables, including the number of iterations for the simulation (to average results over several runs), site size, and the number of years to grow. A simple growth and yield model has been added onto the simulator to give an initial estimate of losses due to infection and death. The program starts off reading a default value file. Users can create their own default value file, and through the specification of variable values can tailor Root Rot Tracker for particular situations. The values for particular situations can be stored on disk and retrieved at a later date for additional runs if desired.

With these variables Root Rot Tracker distributes the infected stumps and their roots throughout

the site either randomly or by importing actual stump coordinates, if the person using the system has measured them. It then plants seedlings at a selected density and grows both roots and stems. When the root of a healthy seedling crosses the root of an infected stump, the pathogen can transfer from the infected root into the healthy root. In subsequent years, secondary infections can occur when other roots of healthy trees cross and become infected from the diseased roots of infected saplings or trees. Part of the output is a dynamic display in which the user can actually watch the roots grow and fungus move along roots.

The simulator keeps track of the radial and longitudinal growth of individual roots, the state of all the roots (healthy or diseased) along their lengths, and root contacts. With this information it keeps track of healthy, infected, and dead trees. Root Rot Tracker produces tabular or graphical reports of infected trees, trees with infected root collars, dead trees, root volumes and volume losses, bole volumes and volume losses, basal areas and basal area losses.

Root Rot Tracker is PC (personal computer) and Windows®-based and is available on CD. A “help” system is included which describes the simulator’s operation and provides variable definitions.

For information on workshops and presentations on the simulator contact Dr. Fred Peet, Canadian Forest Service, Pacific Forestry Centre, 250-363-0780, fpeet@pfc.cfs.nrcan.gc.ca.

Tobacco Plains Band develops integrated resource management plan

Nature will take care of itself. It's a statement that lends itself well to the 4259-hectare land base of the Tobacco Plains Band. Located southeast of Cranbrook, British Columbia, above the Lake Kootcanusa Reservoir (also known as the Kootenay River) in the southern Rocky Mountain Trench, this gently rolling terrain is dominated by ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir. In its natural state, this ecosystem maintains itself with frequent, low-intensity fires which prevent the in-growth of closely spaced trees and help rejuvenate open grasslands. However, over the last 60 years fire suppression has prevented natural forest stand thinning and reduced natural fire occurrences. This has dramatically affected the ecosystem creating unnatural forest stand conditions and grassland.

In an effort to create long-term sustainable management of the forest and grasslands, the Tobacco Plains Band is developing an Integrated Resource Management Plan. The objective is to support a healthy ecosystem while decreasing the threat of large wildfire damage to the communities.

"With a \$20,000 contribution from the First Nations Forestry Program, we've been able to prepare an Integrated Resource Management Plan that will assist us in the management of resources on the Reserve," says Denise Birdstone, Tobacco Plains Band Administrator. "This plan brings everything together so we don't have to be managing our lands and forests on a piecemeal basis any longer."

Successful resource management on a sustained yield basis is dependant upon a solid understanding of the current state of the forest. The Band completed a natural resource forest inventory. As well, a silvicultural assessment will provide forest stand prescriptions for treatments that are needed to improve forest productivity. Also a range assessment will help to ensure that better rangeland rotation and management occurs in the future.

In the spirit of nature taking care of itself, the Tobacco Plains Band is incorporating traditional knowledge and fire ecology into its resource management plan. "Our goal is to restore the grassland ecosystem and thereby enhance wildlife habitat," Birdstone explains. The project will be compatible with the BC Ministry of Forests Regional Fire Protection Plan for the Rocky Mountain Trench.

The Tobacco Plains Band's FNFP project is expected to provide economic benefits through sustainable harvesting, providing revenue to the Band as well as training and employment opportunities. "While the plan integrates the various interests of the community members, it allows for the potential to improve the economic situation on the Reserve," says Birdstone.

For more information contact Denise Birdstone, Tobacco Plains Band Administrator, (250) 887-3461.



East side of Shottanana Lake on the Tobacco Plains Reserve.

Cayoose Creek Band integrates forest-based resources with traditional knowledge



Enterprise Creek, Mount Brew, an area high in culturally modified cedar.

Enhancing the capacity of First Nations communities to manage forests is a standard that the First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP) strives to uphold. This standard is key for members of Cayoose Creek Band as they start a community-based natural resource company called Redlands Resources with strong backing from FNFP. Redlands Resources, which will be doing contract block layout and archeological inventories, focuses on increasing employment opportunities and strengthening working ties with the local forest industry, while protecting local forests. “The Cayoose Creek Band’s decision to implement this project will lead to our community being involved in the operational and management planning that takes place in our forests,” says Michelle Edwards, Project Manager and Band member.

The Cayoose Creek Band is made up of 165 people. Many reside on three reserves located on the Fraser River just south of the village of Lillooet. The small community operates a store and gas station on reserve, along with several tourist service operations. In the past, community members have also been employed with the Ainsworth/West Fraser mill in Lillooet and seasonal logging operations. However these operations have been sporadic for quite some time.

A \$19,752 contribution from the FNFP for this pilot project will go toward employing up to 20 members within five years. Some local

residents will work as forest technicians in Global Positioning System (GPS), Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and as part of archaeology field crews. Funding will also go toward paying trainee costs, a portion of on-the-job training labour costs, technology upgrades, administration, and other necessary supplies and equipment. The financial backing for this project will allow Redlands Resources to hire a professional logging consultant to offer training in boundary location, wildlife trees, no-machine work zones, and riparian management zone layout.

One of the challenges that project organizers have faced is helping community members see the importance of doing both archeological inventories and block layout. “Some view doing the two together as a conflict of interest,” says Edwards. “However, with the help from FNFP in the block layout training and contract experience, our community has the opportunity to become involved in forest management decisions.”

Archaeology inventories refer to what a First Nations culture and heritage crew does before development can take place in a traditional territory. This important step determines whether there are any traditional values or traditionally used sites that need to be documented or protected. The crew’s assignment is to locate these sites and make the proper recommendations for how to manage around them. “This process works very well,” says Edwards. “I hope that other communities take the same approach to any developing proponents in their territories.”

One aim of the project is to forge a working relationship with the local forest industry. Ainsworth Lumber Co. Ltd. – a 50-year-old enterprise with operations in BC and Alberta – will work with the new company by allowing community members access to contracts for cable logging layout. Prior to this phase, the lumber company will also support workers through the one-year training period.

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For more information about the First Nations Forestry Program in British Columbia contact the Canadian Forest Service, Pacific Forestry Centre at (250) 363-0600.

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AFIC – update

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Over the next two months AFIC will be completing its first year program by establishing a Best Practices in Forestry network among First Nations in BC. This network will help First Nations overcome the special challenges of distance and economies of scale, where small Bands producing low volumes of timber have a hard time being price competitive when they sell their products. The result will be a cooperative exchange of expertise between First Nations, for First Nations.

AFIC hopes to be an agent for growth in First Nations forestry. The advice and enthusiastic participation of First Nations throughout the province during its first year forms a solid foundation from which AFIC is well positioned to move on its long-term goal.

For more information contact Victor Godin, AFIC Acting Executive Director, (604) 619-7455 or vg3@smartt.com.

'Namgis First Nation

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"Not only do First Nations peoples have a traditional linkage to NTFPs and their management, but commercial opportunities in the industry are growing," says Alfred. By creating sustainable outcomes that include this traditional knowledge, organizers hope to build further employment prospects for First Nations throughout the region. The 'Namgis First Nation, along with other North Island Nations, has begun to investigate opportunities within the non-timber forest product sector such as cultural tourism, ethno-botanical educational services, and manufacturing cedar oil, medicinal, and personal care products. Recent floral greens and mushroom workshops led to the creation of 10 part-time jobs, seven of which were in the floral greens industry. Alfred says the financial benefit of these and other related ventures is difficult to gauge at this point because they are tied to creating new products, developing markets, and managing NTFPs in a sustainable way. But he has this to say of the future: "If these business initiatives are done effectively, the opportunities could be limitless."

Contact: Edward Jackson, RPF, Forestry Coordinator, 'Namgis First Nation and North Island Organization Team, (250) 974-5556, EdwardJ@namgis.bc.ca.

Cayoose Creek

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Michelle Edwards is confident that the on-the-job training and experience that community members acquire from this new company will prepare the Cayoose Creek Band for contracts in the future. This competitive edge in forest-based business includes safeguarding the Band's cultural values, which start with the land. "We are creating a company that looks at our land as our first priority. The positive attributes of our community become clearer when looking at our values hands-on in the forest and making sure they are protected first."

For more information contact Michelle Edwards, Project Manager and Cayoose Creek Band member, (250) 256-4136.

In partnership with First Nations