



# Management Team Report May-June

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## WOODLANDS

After a tough 2019 in forestry, forecasts projected a rebound year for 2020. Following global economic effects of COVID, the forest sector in BC is impacted by turbulences. The largest local mill, Interfor in Castlegar, decided to shut down for a month in May and again for July. Mercer/Celgar pulp mill is following suit in July. While this has a large impact on the economy in the West Kootenays we were able to secure a reliable purchasing contract with Kalesnikoff Lumber, currently our main purchaser. However with the larger mill closing, timber delivery quotas are in effect. We had planned for a reduced harvest in 2020 to focus on wildfire risk reduction work and the provincial WRR grant, which funds this project, is a welcome opportunity to keep contractors working while adding substantial wildfire benefits to the community. Our 2020 operational plan also aims to get ahead on timber developments to be ready for market improvements.

### **CP 41 Cooper Face**

Sicotte's hook trucks have been hauling the remaining loads from Cooper Face since mid-May. Douglas fir, larch and hemlock were sent to Kalesnikoff, cedar has been sold to local mills Boards by George and Waneco, with the pulp going to Celgar. It will take another week to finish hauling all the wood. The roads have seen better days and Sunshine Logging will attend to this as well as harvest trail rehabilitation during the summer. We have also accepted an application for a 10m3 Shake Bolt Salvage permit in this area. The contractor is non-mechanized and has started his work.

### **CP43 / Branch 7 Wildfire Risk Reduction Cutting Permit (2020)**

Our logger, Timber Ridge Contracting has completed roads into blocks 2 and 3 but the harvesting is on hold until fuel management prescription work can be completed. This is a requirement of the Wildfire Risk Reduction (WRR) grant program, and while it has delayed our harvest plans into the fall, we are grateful for the funds to help fire proof this area. Our work on the WRR prescriptions is assisted by Cathro Consulting, aiming for a completion date of August 1<sup>st</sup>. FLNRORD will then use the data to advertise and award the WRR implementation contract work independently from our harvesting. Timber Ridge Contracting meanwhile received an opportunity to give SIFCO, our neighbouring CF in the Slokan Valley a hand, gaining perspective from their forest fuel management work.

The April Douglas fir beetle flight was quiet this year and hopes where up that the population was in decline. The second and later flight in June, which usually has few or no numbers, saw beetles swarming the Branch 7 area last week, infesting trees near and within our permit. A stronger June flight in Kootenay Lake was confirmed by the Selkirk District Stewardship Forester. The upsurge in beetle activity is especially a concern since timber types in this area consist mostly of Douglas-fir. We will monitor the flight and are looking for ways to lower the population. This has resulted in harvest boundary changes, where we attempt to contain heavily infested areas within our cutblocks.

Block 1, which is adjacent to private land in Shutty Bench and Hwy 31, is delayed by talks with MOTI and is under revision to allow treatment of areas improving Branch 7 access safety. Remaining Block 1 WRR funds have been re-allocated to salvage hardest hit fir beetle areas near the the CP 43 blocks. The added field work is now mostly complete but further professional assessments are required. This CP is a case in point for the above-average expense in a Community Forest license to manage to higher levels of environmental risk assessments and social values. Disturbance created on Carlsbad and Turnup trails from road construction has been remedied. Our thanks go out to the trail builders and our logging contractor who worked together to achieve this!

We recently met with BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) Officer Art Westerhaug for our yearly pre-fire season update and received their roster. A BCWS field review of our wildfire risk reduction progress is scheduled for late June/early July.

### **CP44/Nashton**

Development work resumed this spring. The future permit is located past the transfer station on the Nashton road system. Alterations to the road layout have improved economic and environmental forecasts for the 4km long road system. Construction and harvest evaluation is assessing two phases to balance upfront costs. Timber in this area has good marketability and consists of predominately cedar and Douglas fir with lesser amounts of hemlock and spruce.

The early June Kemp Creek debris slide that washed out the community water supply and dam access road has also deeply severed two of our roads, putting further CP development on hold until high water volume in the creek subsides.



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Access restoration will require budget re-allocations and larger culverts.

VOK is waiting for the results of their professional Kemp channel assessment. The source likely originated from log debris deposited into Kemp channel during winter avalanches. Snags left behind along the steep tributary sidewalls by the 2010 True Blue wildfire are deteriorating. Our post event ground reconnaissance in the adjacent Josephine channel showed no changes to debris deposits we had assessed in the fall of 2018 with Geotechnical and Avalanche Specialist Marc Deschenes. The 2018 assessment is on file and our information sharing with VOK is current.

## Forest Stewardship Plan

The FSP was officially approved at the end of May, beginning a new 5 year term.

## Recreation and Safety

We petitioned Recreation Officer Justin Dexter last fall to assist with a danger tree assessment along the gazetted Wardner Fire Access / No Brakes section following our controversial proposal to salvage the large number of root rot and beetle killed timber in this area. R.O. Dexter complied with our request this month, and dispatched a BCWS DTA crew who spent 2 days safety proofing the heavily used trail sections shared between VOK and KDCFS tenure.



## Silviculture

Ten planters of Wildhorse Contracting Ltd, including two planters from Kaslo [Cloe Bayeur (+ Harley) and Robin Birkett] planted 105,000 seedlings that K&C Nursery grew for us in Oliver. Everything went smooth this last week of May/ first week of June, although we needed to move our main cache out of flooding Kaslo River waters. The trees were vibrant and were shipped in different stages of thawing, which minimized planting shock. Cool and moist weather added to a perfect set-up for crop establishment. Altogether we are very happy with our nursery, Sutco reefer deliveries and planting crew.





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## **Internal Operations**

Barely at the half-mark, this year keeps twisting and turning. Further operational adjustments are necessary to balance the unexpected CP43 and CP44 developments. Another update to the 2020 Budget is under way and an overview is presented for Board information at this June Board meeting. Timely decisions are of the essence to keep the mid-season operational flow moving forward and to use funds wisely.

### Updates:

- most of Block 1 budget has been re-allocated to beetle mitigation in new areas.
- we propose to now include Block 2 in 2020 harvest.
- we propose to include Block 7 in 2020 harvest and have expanded to beetle proof adjacent areas.

## **Management Team Recommendations**

1. That the Board:
  - a. approve 2019 Annual Financial Statements for presentation to the members
2. a) That the Board schedule a Finance CTE meeting to bring Budget Amendments #2 recommendations to July 22 Board Meeting.