



West Boundary Community Forest Annual Report

2020 In Review

This past year presented us all with many challenges and uncertainties and the forest industry was no exception. Covid-19 concerns cancelled meetings, postponed conferences and conventions, limited gatherings with Ministry and government officials, and forced us to add a certain layer of safety and restrictions we had not seen before. But in the end, the West Boundary Community Forest continued to stay true to its foundation and principles: Local employment, First Nations partnerships, local decision making on the land, revenue to our local communities, educational and recreational opportunities, and proper sustainable forest management.

WBCF Background

- Shareholders: Village of Midway & City of Greenwood
- 17,761 hectares spread out over 21 different parcels in the West Boundary
- 23,000m³ Annual Allowable Cut
- Management agreement with Vaagen Fibre Canada
- \$50,000 in donations to local groups and organizations; \$5,000 scholarships; dividends
- Finalist for Robin Hood Memorial Community Forest of the Year 2019 and 2020



FOREST MANAGEMENT

COMMUNITY REVENUE

RECREATION & EDUCATION

 **SUPPORTING LOCAL MILLS**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:
The Village of Midway
and City of Greenwood

Why Community Forests?

A community forest is a forestry operation managed by a local government, First Nation, or community-held organization for the benefit of the entire community. At its core, community forestry is about local control over the benefits offered by local forests.

Communities practice sustainable forestry that provides local forest employment. This innovative form of forest management generates economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits for local communities, the province, and the environment.

Midway Trails Fuel Mitigation Project



This past year we treated an area for excess fuels and forest health concerns south of Midway, adjacent to the US border. This popular recreational destination required detailed planning, cooperation from neighbouring landowners and local groups, as well as strong communication with the residents and trail users. We contracted an innovative harvester/forwarder operation to limit the ground disturbance and move between the retention trees without damaging them.

Objectives were to decrease surface and ladder fuels, remove blowdown and danger trees, decrease canopy fuels and reduce crown closure, improve fire resistance of existing stand, and improve operability and

safety for fire suppression crews in the event of a wildfire.

After harvesting was complete, Greenpeaks from Midway worked to prune lower branches and slash any small residual trees. Mr. Tom Steer and his class from BDSS made numerous visits to help with manual piling of leftover brush to leave the recreational site looking spectacular!



“Dan and the forest professionals at Vaagen have involved the local residents of Jewel Lake in the development of their plans right from the start. They listened to our concerns, implemented many of our ideas, and led field trips when requested. The partial cutting treatment has reduced the fuel load in the forest and we expect the treatment will improve the safety of our homes should a wildfire take place in the future”.

Randy Trerise, RPF and resident of Jewel Lake

WBCF Team

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

John Bolt
Ross Elliott
Heinz Kreuzer
Darrin Metcalf
Ed Smith

WBCF MANAGEMENT TEAM:

Peter Flett (RPF, Planning Forester)
Dean Demchuk (Operations Supervisor)
Kristin Svendsen (Quality Control)
Emily Beavan (Forester)
Dan Macmaster (RPF, Manager)

WEBSITE:

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Jewel Lake Wildfire Risk Reduction Project

Our community forest tenure runs along both shores of beautiful Jewel Lake north of Greenwood. A very popular camping and recreation destination, this area is also home to many permanent residents, who enjoy the trail system and unique ecosystems of Jewel Lake.

The excessive amount of blowdown and fuels throughout the area was a concern for the local residents and Southeast Fire Centre officers. We began the collaboration discussions in 2018 and started treatment in October of 2020. Balancing multiple objectives including recreation, fuel mitigation, hydrology, and ecological diversity required extensive planning and commitment from the management team and local residents. The Forest Enhancement Society of BC recognized the critical urgency of wildfire risk reduction at Jewel Lake and contributed over \$250,000 to the project. The Osoyoos Indian Band provided guidance in our prescription development and have been working on the manual treatment of bucking and piling fuels.



Phase One of our project is complete (harvesting and removal of pulp logs and ladder fuels). Once the snow has melted in the spring of 2021, we will begin Phase Two, which includes mechanical and manual piling, pruning, and skid trail rehabilitation.

Thanks to everyone involved in our collaborative plans and for making this project a real success!

BC Community Forest Association (BCCFA) Membership

“The West Boundary Community Forest deserves recognition for its close relationship with the Osoyoos Indian Band and partnerships with local range holders, private landowners, recreational groups, woodlot owners and major licenses. Fibre harvested supports their local sawmill (Vaagen Fibre Canada) and 95% of all jobs in all phases of community forest operations are locally sourced.”

Jennifer Gunter, Executive Director, BC Community Forest Association

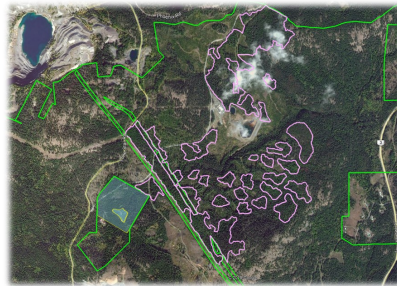
WEST BOUNDARY COMMUNITY FOREST



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:
The Village of Midway
and City of Greenwood

Athelston Permit K4E011

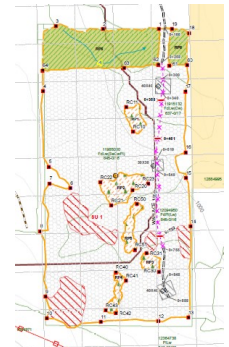
Located in the Phoenix area, north of Grand Forks, this permit focuses on the cleanup of downed timber and removal of insect-damaged trees, understory suppressed cedar, and intermediate and mature stems to open up the canopy and provide suitable conditions to regenerate the forest. Operations will begin in January 2021. Retention of large diameter, large canopy trees, and healthy



patches of advanced regeneration will contribute to stand biodiversity, wildlife habitat, and stocking levels. Harvesting in these stands will reduce long-term wildfire risk by removing surface, ladder, and canopy fuels while retaining the most fire-resistant species, and improving the operability and safety for fire suppression crews in the event of a wildfire.

Wallace Permit K4E015

This permit is located up Boundary Creek Rd, north of Greenwood, within Williamson's Sapsucker suitable habitat area. Retention of large diameter Douglas-fir, western larch, and snags with high wildlife value will be retained throughout the opening. This retention will also provide shade and thermal cover for the regenerating forest consisting of naturals and climate resilient seedlings. Removal of intermediate stems, downed and dead timber, and disease/insect susceptible trees will increase productivity and growing space for residual vegetation, reduce long-term wildfire risk, and improve forest health.



Wilgress/BC Mines Fuel Mitigation Treatment

Wilgress Lake has long been an area for fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, ATVing, and mountain biking. The history here includes old railway grades, mines and old structures, and First Nations culture and history. But the absence of any fuel management over decades has resulted in an abundance of dense stands and downed trees.

With the support of BCTS, we have developed a Community Wildfire Fuel Reduction Licence to Cut permit that will address these stands and improve the overall health of the forest. Our treatment will begin in the winter of 2021 and be completed with the mitigation of ground fuels in the Summer/Fall.



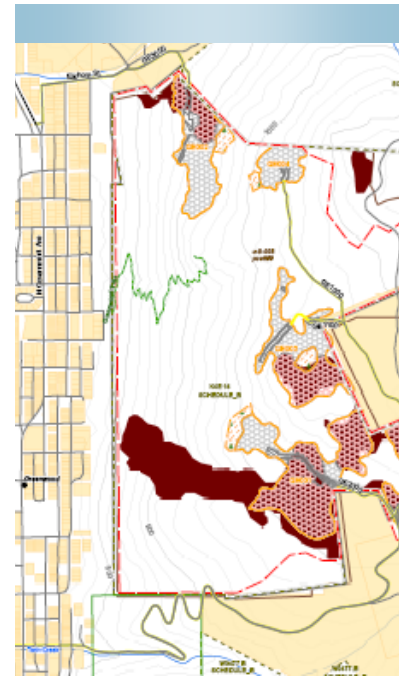
This easily accessible site, in close proximity to our Education Centre, will provide an educational experience for local school students and residents to learn wildfire risk reduction techniques.

Greenwood Wildfire Risk Reduction Project

The Greenwood East Wildfire Risk Reduction project was developed to create an effective landscape level fuel break on the east hillside of Greenwood. In cooperation with the City of Greenwood, Village of Midway, Osoyoos Indian Band, private landowners, woodlot licencees, local biologists, and Ministry of Forests, West Boundary Community Forest will complete mechanical forest thinning and reduce fuel loading to decrease the rate of spread and mitigate hazards if a wildfire were to occur near Greenwood. This project, along the mid and upper slopes of the hillside east of Greenwood, will be partnered with a Community Resiliency Investment project for a 2020



FireSmart Community Funding and Support project, which will treat the municipal land along the eastern edge of Greenwood. In conjunction, these projects will employ local people to help improve the operability and safety of fire suppression efforts, while cleaning up a forest that provides recreation, high value wildlife habitat, and First Nations history, augmented by small-scale, local forest management efforts.



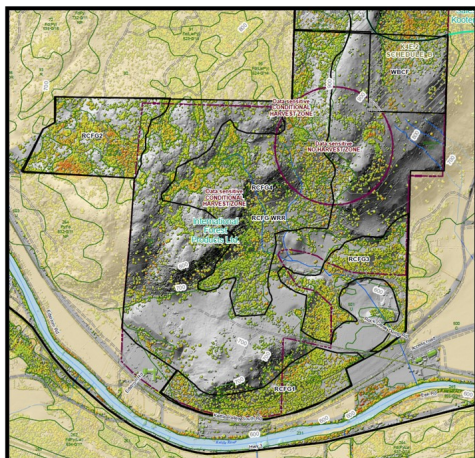
*The development and implementation of the community forest is a local asset that has provided much needed community funding and local economic development. This partnership has been very productive since it's conception, from additional community revenue funding, to the purchase and development of a Outdoor Education Centre at Wilgress Lake, and the fuel mitigation for fire protection program helping to protect our communities. The West Boundary Community Forest has proven how valuable partnerships are, and I look forward to continued success for many years. **Barry Noll, Mayor of Greenwood.***

Rock Creek Fairgrounds Fuel Management

This project includes a fuel management prescription with the overarching goal of reducing wildfire risks by thinning the forest and reducing fuel loads.

In coordination with the Osoyoos Indian Band, Rock Creek and Boundary Fair Association, private landowners, range stakeholders, local biologists, Kettle Wildlife Association, and Ministry of Forests, the West Boundary Community Forest will be looking to complete fuel treatments near West

Boundary Elementary School, high value utility infrastructure, residential areas, and high wildlife value areas.



The fuel treatments will include mechanical forest thinning, pruning, and raking, piling, and burning of excess slash. This project will employ local people to help protect the important resource values that are unique to the Boundary.





Vaagen Fibre Canada, Midway BC.

Community Forest - Community Sawmill

Vaagen Fibre Canada is located in the village of Midway, BC, and directly employs 90 local workers, along with another 105 local contractors. Our dimensional lumber mill prides itself on running small logs and salvage wood to produce high quality lumber. With no forest tenure or secure fibre sources, Vaagen relies on partnerships and strong relationship with other licencees and private land owners to procure enough logs to keep everyone employed. Vaagen manages the West Boundary Community Forest and purchases the small log volume at market price to supply our community mill. The forestry department at Vaagen focuses on First Nations involvement, public consultation, enhanced riparian protection, forest health, fuel mitigation projects, environmental stewardship, education, and recreational opportunities.



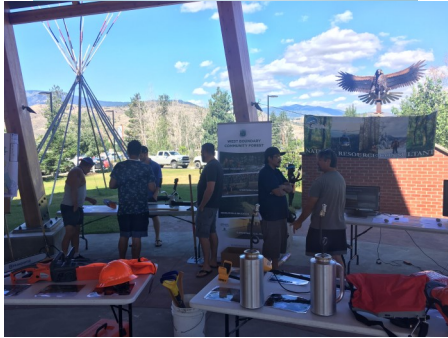
Vaagen Fibre Canada

“Vaagen Fibre continues to be the economic pillar of the community. Vaagen supports our community through donations of lumber to community projects, including contributions to the development of the Wilgress Outdoor Education Centre. Through purchasing fibre from our community forest, Vaagen enables the shareholders, The City of Greenwood and Village of Midway, to undertake major development projects.



The owners and managers of Vaagen Fibre Canada make themselves available to discuss their operations and to outline their needs and plans going forward. Vaagen has proven themselves to be a community-building industry partner for the Boundary.”

**Martin Fromme, Mayor
Village of Midway**



Osoyoos Indian Band Partnership

The West Boundary Community Forest and Osoyoos Indian Band (OIB) work together on all projects and plans throughout the tenure. The OIB provides traditional knowledge in potential areas of harvest, becomes engaged during the preliminary development of logging permits, and assists with many forestry phases including layout, road building, archeological assessments, brushing, and pile burning.

Last summer in Oliver, Vaagen and the WBCF hosted a Forestry Day at the Band



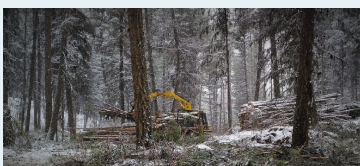
office to meet with members of the OIB community and discuss ideas and plans for the upcoming year. We look forward to building on this excellent partnership and working together for many years to come!



“The Osoyoos Indian Band continues to build a strong relationship and working partnership with the West Boundary Community Forest and Vaagen Fibre Canada. We have similar visions of proper stewardship, local employment, and collective decision making on our lands.” Vern Louie, Osoyoos Indian Band

Protecting Beaverdell

During the writing of this report, BCTS and the BC Wildfire Service have given their support for us to develop a Fuel Mitigation Licence to Cut in the high wildfire risk zones around Beaverdell. We look forward to creating a prescription and plan that will protect the local residents from a catastrophic fire while maintaining the multitude of other objectives our communities want to see in our forest management.



Forest Enhancement Society of BC

Many of our projects would not be possible without the incredible support from the Forest Enhancement Society of BC (FESBC). Our community forest has received over **\$474,657** in funding to advance environmental and resource stewardship of British Columbia’s forests and advocate for the stewardship of BC forests. Specifically, FESBC supported our projects that focus on preventing and mitigating the impact of wildfires, improving damaged or low value forests, improving habitat for wildlife, supporting the use of fibre from damaged and low value forests and treating forests to improve the management of greenhouse gases.

Jewel Lake Wildfire Risk Reduction Project: \$254,100

Midway Trails Fuel Mitigation Project: \$94,200

May Creek Stand Improvement Project: \$126,357



Wildfire Risk Reduction Funding: BC Wildfire Service

The BC Wildfire Service has provided funding for fuel management planning and treatment activities in the Selkirk Forest District. WBCF has been the recipient of four different post-harvest contracts to rake and pile leftover fuels, prune low branches, and conduct a final treatment on certain cut-blocks to ensure the risk of future wildfires has been minimized. We look forward to applying for more funding opportunities in 2021.



Grant Recipients in 2020:

BCSS French Student Exchange
Boundary Metis Association
Midway Community Association
Midway Road Rescue
Greenwood Museum
Greenwood Senior Citizens
Midway Community Garden
Borderline 4-H
Greenwood Community
Kettle Valley Racing Association
Greenwood Public Library
Boundary Central Secondary
Parkview Manor
Beaverdell Elementary
Greenwood Elementary
Mt Baldy Alpine Club
Midway Ladies Hockey
Phoenix Mtn Alpine Society
Greenwood Food Bank
RC Food Share Society
The Bridge
Beaverdell Community Club
Midway Trails
Wilgress Outdoor Ed Centre

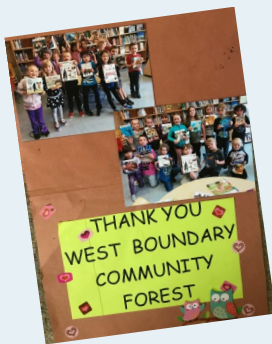
Bursary Recipients in 2020

Antonia Bergendahl: \$2,500
Colin Grob: \$2,500

Grant and Student Bursary Application and Eligibility:

Access on our website under the Community Engagement tab:

www.westboundarycommunityforest.com/grants



Iron Clad Restoration: Forests for Tomorrow

The Iron Clad area is located on the west side of Hwy #3, just north of Grand Forks. This area in the Community Forest has not responded to natural regeneration from decades earlier and was declared Not Sufficiently Restocked (NSR). Numerous small-scale salvage logging permits have occurred before this tenure was a community forest (small scale salvage permits do not require planting after harvest), and a lack of site prep and planting of seedlings has resulted in much of the area being declared NSR. Consequently, the area lacks any kind of productive forest, is riddled with root rot, and shows serious signs of Douglas fir beetle infestation. Currently, there are only dead standing snags throughout the area, unhealthy fir beetle infested trees and very little natural regeneration.

WBCF has been approved for funding from Forests For Tomorrow (FFT) to work in this forest stand for the next few years focusing on restoring healthy forests and mitigating the impacts of wild-fire and insect outbreaks while also creating economic opportunities for forestry and bioenergy production. These actions will help keep carbon out of the atmosphere and store more carbon in B.C.'s forests.

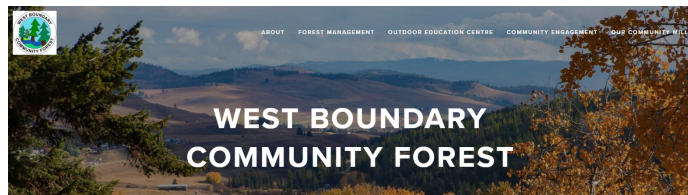


Not Sufficiently Restocked Crown Land

Website & Social Media

We work hard to connect and inform the public on our forest activities, accomplishments, and directions we are taking in the Community Forest. Our webpage, www.westboundarycommunityforest.com, and our Facebook page are regularly updated and posted with pictures and maps to engage, inform, and educate the public and respond to questions or concerns that management and staff can address. Public consultation is a priority for the WBCF and Vaagen, and we strongly believe that engagement with local residents is critical for development.

www.westboundarycommunityforest.com



COMPLETED PERMITS
Review permits completed by WBCF

ACTIVE OPERATIONS
Review permits currently in operation

PLANNED DEVELOPMENT
Review future development and upcoming permits.



Wilgress Outdoor Education Centre



Outdoor Education

"The outdoor education centre is a perfect place for students and teachers to learn and teach in a beautiful and diverse natural setting. It provides learning opportunities for forest and aquatic ecology, local indigenous culture, forest stewardship as well as local mining history. The location is convenient to both the west and east side of our school district, so students from across the district will receive the opportunity to spend more time outside surrounded by nature."

**Jamie Stewart, Teacher
Hutton Elementary**



2020 marks the inauguration of the WBCF Outdoor Education Centre.

Planning began in February in consultation with teachers from across the district about what they are currently doing, both in, and outside their classrooms, and what learning opportunities and recreational activities they anticipate for the Outdoor Education Centre.

September 27th marked the very first class visit to the Centre. Over the next 2 months, the Centre hosted 14 classes and more than 250 students from elementary to secondary schools across the district. They learned about forestry, helped create trails, and utilized the extensive recreational network throughout the area.

Class trips to the Centre focused on nature labs and games, interpretive hikes, scavenger hunts, aquatic studies, and keeping warm by the campfire. We hiked to the historic BC Mine and worked with local foresters to learn about careers and post secondary education in Forestry. In the spring of 2021, we will be constructing a covered shelter to expand our outdoor learning and instruction.

Educational Focuses at the OEC:

- Sustainable Forest Management
- First Nations History and Culture
- Boundary History & Heritage
- Outdoor Recreation



"The outdoor education centre provides us with the opportunity to work with, learn from, and be a part of nature in our own backyard." Tom Steer, Teacher, BDSS

Professional Development Day at Wilgress



In October, the Education Centre hosted a Professional Development day for teachers and staff from all across SD51. The event was very well-attended, particularly in light of covid restrictions, and the desire from teachers and students to take their classrooms outdoors. Teachers who are already incorporating outdoor teaching

days in their curriculum were a great resource for teachers who are new to outdoor learning. Vaagen foresters and WBCF Board members shared their own experiences in Forestry, sustainable management, and ecological connections.

We are continuing to build our educational supplies and equipment in preparation for hosting classrooms this upcoming May & June. Teaching resources will be made available on the WBCF website for teachers and community groups. To book a visit to the Outdoor Education Centre, please contact us by completing a Request Form on our website.

Topics and Teaching Units include:

FOREST RESOURCES, FIRST NATIONS, AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Forest Management practices used by WBCF and Vaagen Fibre
- Importance of forest resources to our First Nations and local communities
- Outdoor activities including hiking, biking, disc golf, and leadership games

FOREST & AQUATIC ECOLOGY

- Components of forest ecosystems and the interactions found within a forest
- Attributes of riparian ecosystems; how forestry works with our water systems
- Terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and how they interact with each other

FOREST WOODLAND OPERATIONS

- Building and interpreting forestry maps
- Skills of timber cruising, cut block layout, and collection of field data
- Post-harvest practices of a managed forest; spacing, pruning and planting

FORESTRY PRODUCTS

- Economic benefits derived from forest products
- Follow up a site visit with a tour of the Vaagen Fibre sawmill

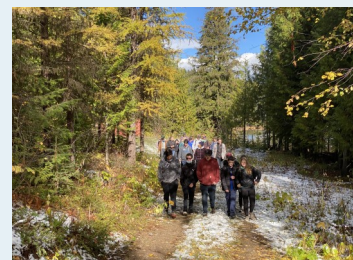
SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

- Careers and job opportunities in the forestry sector in the Boundary
- Current local and regional issues in forest management
- Safety practices related to the forest industry

High School Field Trips

“The Outdoor Education Centre is a wonderful place for students and teachers to learn about forest ecology and the history behind the area while being submerged in nature. The Centre is located only 20 minutes from Grand Forks and offers a variety of outdoor activities that help promote a healthy, active lifestyle for all who visit.”

Jamey Johnson, Teacher
Grand Forks Secondary School



BC Community Forest Association

"Dan is a highly respected professional who brings unparalleled enthusiasm to the BCCFA. He is a valued member of the board of directors and we are grateful for his contributions. He is humble in how he shares his experience, opinions and insights yet his input significantly influences our decisions and direction. Dan has made an immense contribution to the BCCFA's highest priority forest policy files, including pricing and wildfire risk reduction. He is a great guy to work with and we look forward to his continued service on the BCCFA board."

Susan Mulkey,
Manager of Communications

2021 Shaping Up to be a Great Year!

As we look forward into 2021, the West Boundary Community Forest has many exciting and innovative projects on deck. Our plans and development will continue to focus on forest health, fuel mitigation, First nations partnerships, recreational improvements, educational outreach, and sustainable forest management. When we recognize and prioritize the social, cultural, environmental and economic implications that result from all our forest activity, then we can create a plan that all shareholders can support. Communication, collaboration, and addressing multiple objectives on the landscape is not only important, but also critical to the foundation of proper Forest Management.

Our community forest keeps jobs local. Our community forest collaborates and relies on local and traditional knowledge. Our community forest depends on the support and input from our communities. Our community forest puts the profits from our forests back into the communities that depend on them.

Stay safe, stay healthy, and please, keep in touch!

www.westboundarycommunityforest.com



BCCFA Board of Directors

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WBCF Board of Directors

