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Red Rock Research Station

The facility

The Research Branch of the British Columbia Forest Service (BCFS), supports an integrated research station at Red Rock, 25 kilometres south of the city of Prince George.

There are currently seven permanent staff at the station, including research scientists, horticulturists and support personnel. Facilities at the Red Rock Research Station (RRRS) include a research laboratory, seedling quality testing equipment, growth chambers, computer controlled greenhouses and farm field testing sites. All these facilities play an important role in the production and testing of conifer seedlings for northern reforestation programs.

Funds from the federal-provincial Forest Resource Development Agreement (FRDA) have enabled the station to meet the increasing demands for backlog reforestation.

The programs

Research at RRRS is targeted at northern interior reforestation issues identified by industry and BCFS foresters. They range from nursery research, aimed at improving nursery cost efficiencies and seedling early growth, to studies of optimum site-preparation techniques in the field, which result in free-growing plantations as early as possible.

The results

One feature of special interest at RRRS is a computerized blackout curtain system, the first of its kind in northern B.C. The movable curtain allows scientists to alter the day-length available to growing conifer seedlings. Changing the day-length makes the seedlings think it is August, when it is really July. This technique produces trees better adapted to harsh northern field environments.

Besides the growth and survival benefits being tested, researchers have shown that significant nursery greenhouse cost-savings are possible by using the blackout curtains as thermal insulating blankets during the cold nights. Use of this technology and others under study at RRRS help to improve seedling quality and reforestation success in northern B.C.

**B.C. Forest Service;
investing in research for our future forests**

For more information on research projects and research opportunities at RRRS contact:

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RED ROCK RESEARCH STATION

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