

"This executive summary has been reproduced in its exact format from the original proposal received from the proponent."
For contact information regarding this proposal and other community forest pilot proposals, please visit to the [Community Forest Pilot Program Home Page](#)

Harrop-Proctor Watershed Protection Society Community Forest Pilot Agreement Proposal

Executive Summary

The Honourable David Zirnhelt's personal invitation (CBC Radio, November 1997) to submit this proposal triggered excitement in the Harrop-Proctor community. Finally, after 22 years of public involvement, there appeared to be the potential for a win-win situation. The Harrop Proctor Watershed Protection Society (HPWPS) sees this as a great opportunity to implement our ecosystem-based land use plan. Submitting this proposal is the culmination of months of hard work by the community. The majority of local residents support this plan. It protects a broad range of values important to us, and pro-actively addresses sustainable forestry practices and long-range economic development. Due to a change in licensees and a longstanding history of public involvement, there have been no forest-related activities in the area for 20 years. If the HPWPS is successful in obtaining tenure over this land base, we are confident that there will be an expansion of a variety of economic activities in the community of Harrop-Proctor which will expand into the surrounding Kootenay Lake-area. While it has been difficult for prospective business interests to make firm commitments for the future until a community forest agreement is signed, the HPWPS has been encouraged by the range of local and regional companies' interested in the economic opportunities which would flow from the creation of a community forest (see Appendices D5, E2 and E3).

The HPWPS chose an ecosystem-based planning approach to help us evaluate our land base, and to determine present and future uses available to us (see Appendix G). Our approach was based on many considerations.

- It answers community sentiment expressed repeatedly in three separate surveys (1976¹, 1992², 1995) (See Appendix DI).
- It follows the principles of the BC Land Use Charter.
- It embraces the principles guiding the Forest Practices Code (FPC), as stated in the preamble to the FPC Act.
- It recognizes and builds on the work of Kootenay-Boundary Commission on Resources and the Environment (CORE) Table and the resulting Kootenay Boundary Land Use Plan (KBLUP) (Oct. 1994) recommendations.

It is fully substantiated by the planning approach recommended by the-Clayoquot Sound Scientific Panel which "differs from current planning methods." A similar scientific panel was recommended for the Harrop area (see KB LUP recommendation #62 Appendix C5).

This proposal lays out how the HPWPS will move forward into the 21st century with an innovative and visionary approach to forest management.

The Community Forest land base encompasses approximately 10,600 ha of Provincial Forest Crown land on the South Shore of the West Arm of Kootenay Lake. The area is almost surrounded by Kootenay Lake and the newly established West Arm (Wilderness) Park. The majority of the forestland was burned in 1901 (leaving a few scattered pockets of old growth), and its main use has been as water supply sheds for irrigating a thriving orchard industry in the 1930's. There has been reduced farm use and increased domestic use since then. Mill Lake (in the westerly portion) and an old logging road (toward the east) have been popular areas for hiking, fishing, berry picking and other recreational activities.

The HPWPS met with the District Manager of the Kootenay Lake Forest District to secure the portion of the Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) needed for the operation of our community forest. A letter from the District Manager states that there is 5000 m³ of AAC available from the forest service reserve to allocate towards our community forest proposal (see Appendix C3). The land base in question is under the Small Business Program, and it does not have a five-year plan or any active operation. This fact is in our favour as granting our community forest licence will not displace any licensee or small business operator.

The community forest will operate as a cooperative. The Harrop-Procter Community Cooperative (HPCC) has applied to be registered under the Cooperative Association Act of British Columbia (see Appendix B2). This is the best corporate structure for conducting community business as it allows for meaningful public participation while maintaining accountability and creating an appropriate vehicle to undertake business operations.

Since 1976, residents of the Harrop-Procter area have voiced their concern about logging in domestic watersheds: they have also repeatedly stated what changes they would like to see in logging practices.

"Small operators, with good performance histories, selective logging or small clearcuts, good field supervision, careful road location, reduced logging waste, low soil disturbance, yarding systems and good liaison with the public were among the many suggestions that were put forward. " (MOF Survey, 1976)³

While the above suggestions came from small "kitchen meetings" organized by local residents who took an active interest in forest management, a second Ministry of Forests (MOF) survey in 1992⁴ intentionally focussed on randomly selected residents with hopes of reaching the normally silent majority. The executive summary based on the results of this survey states

"The resident's message to the MOF is: 'reduce the cut', 'don't clear-cut', 'manage for water and viewscape' and 'stay well back from creeks and wet areas, unless using single-tree selection systems with very light equipment or horses'. Above all, listen to the people, they hold the ultimate veto"

Community support for this project has grown over the past few years in a powerful, inclusive way. The HPWPS has 276 members in the community, and membership has grown steadily since the Society was founded. The HPWPS members have taken great care to reach, and include, all segments of the local population. Recommendations obtained from water users, local business and professional people, community groups, and First Nations have been included in this plan. The HPWPS has the strong foundation of support required to make this community forest a model for local decision-making and resident participation.

The following list identifies the various ways in which the Harrop-Procter Community Forest could be used by the citizens of BC:

- an example of partnership management with the MOF;
- an example of ecosystem-based forest management which can be used to obtain Forest Stewardship Council certification (many European buyers insist on this certification and BC will want to capture this business opportunity); and
- an example of job creation through more labour-intensive logging systems, agroforestry projects, and value-added manufacturing.

Much thought and a tremendous amount of research has gone into preparing our proposal. The HPWPS has a viable proposal utilizing a variety of harvesting systems, which respects other less profitable values such as biodiversity and viewsapes, as well as wildlife habitat and movement corridors. Our business plan considers expansion of a small, local sawmill providing customized material to value-added operations, with plans to establish our own value-added manufacturing facility. As an added bonus, the HPWPS is planning to produce 'eco-certified' wood, which is generally not available in BC at this time. Botanical forest products and craft tree licences will also increase revenue from the land base. As well, the business plan looks at tourism potential with trails to some of the numerous scenic mountain lakes. By such diversification, the HPWPS will be less dependent on a high volume of timber, as each tree cut will create higher than average revenue for the community and the province of BC. For the purposes of this application, the HPWPS has conservatively estimated the number of jobs which will be created as a result of obtaining a Community Pilot agreement. It is believed that as the community and region become confident in the long-range security of the tenure; this will attract a diverse range of business interests and thereby provide more jobs.

The management of our community forest focuses on the future. Our long-term goals include the continued health of our local environment, the growth and harvest of high quality wood, and the assurance of local employment. The HPWPS is using a conservative, precautionary

approach, treading lightly on a fragile land base that is steep and not easily accessible. Our planning process has been taken to the stand level, and indications are that these are productive sites with a healthy diverse mix of merchantable timber.

Neither community forests nor ecosystem-based plans are new concepts. A combination of both can be found in the 1945 Royal Commission Report, where the Hon. G. McG. Sloan discusses them:

*"These community forests, apart from the timber production therefrom, have proven to be of considerable value in the United States as a means of acquainting the public with the benefits to be secured from the practice of sustained yield forestry, the necessity of fire protection, and related subjects. I refer, for instance, to watershed protection and other multiple forest uses. A tree is a plant and to secure an economic return from the soil producing its growth, the tree must be harvested. At the same time it must be kept in mind that a tree may be of more real value in place in the forest than when converted into lumber. The difficulty lies in striking a balance between these two values. "*⁵ (emphasis added)

The members believe that our ecosystem plan strikes this balance.

In closing, the HPWPS thinks that our sentiments are best expressed with a quote from our MLA, Corky Evans, in response to the throne speech (March 25, 1992).

*"Lastly, we don't want any Coquihalla. We don't want any presents in a box, any northeast coal or any steel mill. We don't want this government, or any government, or Murray Pezim, or a bank... We do not want any bag of money, pot of power, or ideologically-driven decision-making process to solve our problems. We want to let the communities decide what is good for the communities. We want to let the patient heal itself. Thank you so much."*⁶

¹ D. Ailman, J. Baron, B. Fraser. *Forest Planning for the West Arm of Kootenay Lake - Planning Unit 3 – South Shore, Selkirk College* 1976

² Appropriate Forestry Services & Associates, *Survey of Community Forest Values in the Vicinity of the West Arm Demonstration Forest (Kootenay Lake Forest District)* - March 1992

³ D. Ailman, J. Baron, B. Fraser. *Forest Planning for the West Arm of Kootenay Lake - Planning- Unit 3 – South Shore. Selkirk College* 1976

⁴ Appropriate Forestry Services & Associates. *Survey of Community Forest Values in the Vicinity of the West Arm Demonstration Forest (Kootenay Lake Forest District)* - March 1992

⁵Hon. Gordon McG Sloan, Chief Justice of British Columbia. *The Forest Resources of British Columbia - Report of the Commissioner* - 1945 (p. Q. 147)

⁶ Corky Evans, M.L.A. (Nelson-Creston), Province of British Columbia. *1st session, 35th Parliament, Official Report of Response to the Throne Speech* (Excerpt) - March 25, 1992