
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Forests and Range

COMMUNITY FOREST AGREEMENT ISSUED IN FRASER VALLEY

HOPE – The Yale First Nation, the District of Hope and the Fraser Valley Regional District have been issued a five-year probationary community forest agreement, through their joint operation of the Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest Corporation, Forests and Range Minister Rich Coleman announced today.

“Community forest agreements diversify and stimulate local economies,” said Coleman. “Our agreement with the Cascade Lower Canyon Community Forest Corporation will increase recreation opportunities throughout the region, and encourage residents to make stewardship a priority.”

The community forest agreement carries an initial five-year term, and grants the right to harvest up to 34,300 cubic metres of timber per year on public forest lands within the Chilliwack Forest District. The community forest corporation plans to reinvest their profits in silviculture projects as well as community programs and will have an advisory committee focused on recreation and education.

“The Yale First Nation is pleased this Community Forest Agreement will allow the three partners to have input into forest management decisions on the local landbase,” said Doug Hansen, forestry manager for the Yale First Nation. “We have always maintained a positive working relationship with surrounding communities and this partnership is a good example of what happens when First Nation and local governments work together. We are all keen to actively manage the landbase for all resource values, including recreation, heritage, education, botanical forest products and timber.”

“The community forest is the result of the dedication and teamwork of all involved, and the enthusiasm and support of many of the region’s residents,” said Arne Zabell, Electoral Area “B” director, Fraser Valley Regional District. “In addition to creating economic and recreation opportunities and preserving heritage sites, this agreement is a building block in restoring our sense of community in the region.”

“This agreement will stimulate the local forestry sector and offer Hope and region residents increased economic opportunities,” said Hope Mayor Wilfried Vicktor. “We look forward to continuing to work with the Province, the Yale First Nation and FVRD to benefit many of our families and workers from our community.”

Community forest tenures are area-based, and give communities exclusive rights to harvest timber, as well as the opportunity to manage forest resources – such as timber and plant products, recreation, wildlife, water and scenic viewscapes – to meet local needs, in accordance with the Province’s forestry legislation and regulations.

Probationary community forest agreements are a form of legal tenure by which the Province grants the rights to manage the forest resources within a specified area to communities that wish to more fully participate in the stewardship of local Crown forest resources. They are intended to stimulate long-term employment, forest-related education and skills training as well as other social, environmental and economic benefits while meeting environmental stewardship standards. After an initial term of five years, the agreements may be replaced with a long-term agreement for not less than 25 years.

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