

# Vancouver Paralympic Centre – Wheelchair Curling

## The Paper Birch Podium Clearwater *Wells Gray Community Forest*

The podiums of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games  
18 wood types. 23 podiums. Hundreds of stories.

The Paper Birch podium is used at the Vancouver Paralympic Centre for wheelchair curling events. It is 15 metres long, 5 m deep, about 30 centimetres at its tallest point and assembled from about 200 pieces.

### Clearwater – The Best Place to Live, Work and Play

The Paper Birch came from Clearwater, a community of 4,900 that serves as the gateway to Wells Gray Provincial Park and 5,000 square kilometres of pristine wilderness. Spectacular waterfalls, old-growth forest, alpine flower meadows, and thrilling white-water rafting attract visitors from around the world. In addition to adventure tourism, forestry is a major activity with the production of lumber, birch flooring and cabinetry, and cedar posts and railings.

### Wells Gray Community Forest

The birch was donated by the Wells Gray Community Forest, which covers more than 13,000 hectares. Profits from forestry operations support community services and projects. In addition to sustainable logging, Clearwater strives to diversify the use of its community forest with non-timber products such as berries and birch syrup.

Sharon Neufeld, director, Wells Gray Community Forest Corp, herbalist, involved with a wild berry and birch syrup enterprise, runs a cabinet and furniture-making business with her husband.

*“Our community has thrived on forestry and the land. Our family and everyone in Clearwater is linked in some way to the forest’s resources, be it logging, hunting, firewood, trapping, berry-picking or recreation.”*

### Paper Birch

One of British Columbia’s more prolific hardwoods, Paper Birch finishes with a bright lustre and shine. Found throughout the province, Paper Birch is used for lumber, veneer, plywood, as well as furniture, cabinets, flooring and other millworks. Paper Birch can also be an important winter food for many forest animals including deer and moose, snowshoe hare, porcupine, and beaver.



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Jean Nelson, Rotarian responsible for youth exchange program, trail committee member, Brownies and Sparks leader, swimming teacher for more than 25 years, and an active athlete.

*"Clearwater has been blessed with a diverse forest and a climate that grows perfect timber. The birch that the podium is constructed from is one of Canada's finest hardwoods."*



Robert Beaudry, Clearwater businessman. Operates a rafting charter, ski guide, fitness centre and yoga studio with his wife. His father Gabriel competed in rowing at the 1948 Olympic Summer Games in London. The oars he used are proudly displayed in Robert's gym.

*"A Birch podium! What a great opportunity to showcase our local wood products at the 2010 Winter Olympics. By providing some of the best wood available, Clearwater's forest industry will be at the forefront of this world event."*

### Podium Production

British Columbia's Ministry of Forests and Range sourced the wood and co-ordinated podium production. The rough lumber was converted to panels at Metro Vancouver's Bayview Millworks, a high-end wood product manufacturer and distributor, and cut into complex shapes using sophisticated computer controlled machinery at the University of British Columbia's state-of-the-art Centre for Advanced Wood Processing. They were assembled at Canadian hardware retail leader RONA's Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop, a community-based training centre that teaches carpentry skills to new Canadians and at-risk youth.

### British Columbia's Forest Sector

The wood podiums highlight the importance of forestry in British Columbia. The province is a global leader in sustainable forest management and the world's largest exporter of softwood lumber, paper and bio-energy products that help mitigate climate change and provide innovative solutions to green building and energy needs.

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All 23 podium profiles, high definition video, and more information about British Columbia's forest sector are available at [www.gov.bc.ca/for](http://www.gov.bc.ca/for) and [www.naturallywood.com](http://www.naturallywood.com)

