

## *Resilient, Thriving Forests*

*A vision for our forests in BC*

### Overview:

The BC Greens are committed to ensuring our forests are healthy and resilient, and that local communities - both Indigenous and non-Indigenous - have a say in how forests are managed. We are announcing a series of measures aimed at expanding community forest programs, protecting our old growth and primary forests, and introducing sustainable forestry practices that protect ecosystems and create long-term economic prosperity.

### Current Conditions:

British Columbia's forests are some of the most unique and biodiverse in the world, but a century of extractive logging practices and increasingly destructive wildfires have degraded these ecosystems. These pressures are only intensifying as climate change and biodiversity loss accelerate, threatening the critical services and economic resources our forests provide.

For decades, Indigenous communities, scientists and environmental advocates have called for a fundamental change in how we manage our forests. While the BC NDP government has promised a new direction, old-growth forests continue to fall, and communities—both Indigenous and non-Indigenous—are left facing mill closures and job losses.

We must prioritize the health of our forests and the well-being of the communities that depend on them by embracing sustainable practices that protect ecosystems and create long-term prosperity.

### What the BC Greens will do:

- 1. Expand the community forests program:** To promote rural development, wildfire protection, biodiversity and ecosystem resilience, we will expand the community

forest program by increasing the number and size of community forests. We will ensure 20% of the Annual Allowable Cut is dedicated to community forests. It's time the benefits of logging stayed in communities: community forests boost local economic activity, keep profits in the community and create twice as many jobs as the industry average.

- 2. Stop logging primary/old growth forests:** Our old growth forests are some of the most unique and biodiverse in the world. Protecting British Columbia's old-growth and primary forests is crucial to securing a resilient future for our environment, economy and communities. We will fully fund the protection of old forests and compensate First Nations for any lost revenues due to deferrals.
- 3. Prioritize ecosystem health and biodiversity:** Our forests are much more than resources to exploit. That's why we will immediately establish conservation of ecosystem health and biodiversity of BC's forests as an overarching priority, with timber supply being one benefit.
- 4. Implement sustainable forestry practices:** Stop clearcut industrial logging and adopt logging practices that emulate natural disturbance regimes, such as selective logging, commercial thinning, and longer stand rotations.

## Q&A

**Q: Haven't the BC NDP protected old growth forests?**

A: Between 50,000-100,000 hectares (123,000-247,000 acres) of at-risk forests have been logged or approved for logging in British Columbia since 2020.

**Q: What are community forests?**

A: a community forest is a type of forest tenure in BC. The licence gives communities, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, the right to manage local forests for local benefit. It started as a pilot program about 25 years ago. We now have 61 in the province. Half are held by a First Nation or a partnership. Collectively, over 100 communities are involved,

because of these partnerships. But they make up only about 3 or 4 % of the provincial Annual Allowable Cut (AAC).

**Q: How will you expand the CFA Program?**

A: Make CFAs widely available to communities and First Nations, particularly in a proposed 10 km zone around communities for wildfire mitigation and rural development . This pragmatic and important vision can be realized through a strategy to re-apportion AAC to create new community forests and to expand existing ones. Recent legislative changes support this path if coupled with upfront government investment. This expansion will significantly contribute to reducing wildfire risks and fostering local economic growth.

**Q: Why community forests?**

A: Expansion of the CFA program will empower local forest stewardship and support the development of vibrant rural communities. Creating access for more rural and Indigenous communities to have a community forest will:

- Strengthen the Social Contract: Local resource control and benefits reinforce community connections
- Boost Partnerships: More Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaborations
- Diversify Tenure: Stabilize local economies and attract manufacturing
- Increase Domestic Log Supply: Contribute to a steady supply for local processing.

**Q: What kind of jobs do community forests create?**

A: Community forests create jobs across sectors like forestry, tourism, agriculture, education, and business, through sustainable forest management and local enterprise.

Sustainable forest management creates diverse job opportunities, including forest rangers, carpenters, sawmill workers, and wood processors. Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) like honey and herbs support local economies, while ecotourism offers roles in guiding and hospitality. Agroforestry integrates farming with tree cultivation, and carbon credits incentivize environmental stewardship. Education, renewable energy projects,

wildlife conservation, and community enterprises further enhance livelihoods and protect biodiversity.

## Sources/Resources:

- Conservation North's [Seeing Red map](#) of logging in primary forests in BC
- Stand.Earth's [Forest Eye](#) tool for logging deferrals
- British Columbia Community Forest Association's [key recommendations and priorities](#)