



Community Forest News

Fall 2021

The Community Forest is comprised of two organizations, the Harrop Procter Community Co-operative, which manages the forest tenure and mill, and the Harrop Procter Watershed Protection Society, a stewardship body that undertakes monitoring of HPCC plans and activities, water monitoring, education and outreach.

Minister Responsible for Forestry Visits Community Forest

Tuesday, October 19th was a lovely, sunny fall day. It was perfect weather for a visit from Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD). Joining her was Nelson-Creston MLA Brittny Anderson, as well as a number of representatives from various organizations.

Organized by the Forest Enhancement Society of British Columbia (FESBC), the informal meeting and discussion took place in a fuel treatment area about two kilometres up Kosma Road in Harrop. This is one of the locations where FESBC funding has enabled HPCC to do wildfire risk reduction work over the past several years.

The minister first visited the nursery at PRT Harrop. Following a brown bag lunch, participants hiked a short distance to the site for an informal discussion on how a diverse, multi-participant partnership is successfully utilizing provincial funding administered by FESBC here in the West Kootenay. Harrop Procter Community Cooperative (HPCC) is one of a number of organizations using FESBC funding on local projects.

FESBC Board Chair Jim Snetsinger noted that up to July 2020 the society has funded over 250 projects across the province valued at over \$233 million.

HPCC Forest Manager Erik Leslie provided background on the site specific work and facilitated the hour long idea-sharing discussion with FESBC representatives Gord Pratt and Steve



Minister Conroy (l) speaking with Mercer Celgar staff Charlene Strelaef and Stan Hadikin at the end of the meeting

Kozuki. Also represented were Mercer Celgar, BC Timber Sales, RDCK, HPCC, the BC Community Forest Association and local FLNRORD staff.

Minister Conroy was pleased to view on the ground results and reiterated the importance of FESBC to the many community forests like ours, and other organizations throughout the province. She also expressed a desire to visit our mill (Harrop Procter Forest Products) when time would permit her to do so.

Notice to readers

In future, the quarterly newsletter is going to be distributed electronically. HPCC and HPWPS members will receive it by email. The newsletter is always posted to our website and will be posted on the community e-mail too. A limited number of paper copies will be available at the boxes at the ferry and in the office.

Strategic Planning and Governance Initiative

As everyone knows, change is a constant. Since its inception twenty plus years ago, the Harrop Procter Community Cooperative (HPCC) has evolved and adapted. The rapidly changing environment around us, together with a period of growth over the past several years, has facilitated a thorough review of our activities and actions.

Over the past eight months, the Board of Directors has undertaken a revitalization of strategic priorities, governance and work plans. Many hours have been spent analyzing past planning outcomes, rethinking priorities, structures and actions. This has enabled us to develop our best collective interpretations of the risks and opportunities that lie ahead. The process should be completed by year's end. The approach and priorities will be shared with members in early 2022.

Guiding the development of the strategic plan are opportunities that adhere to the key principles and mandate of HPCC. Strengthening the connection to watershed protection activities in the area, increasing our capacity to educate and consult, maximizing the value-added utilization of our wood products and continue to provide local employment in a safe, collaborative working atmosphere are key.

Certainly there are many challenges facing the organization in the coming years. Climate change and the risk of wildfire constitute an enormous threat to the forest ecosystem. Homes, businesses, agriculture and water supply in the community are subsequently at risk.

The current political and economic environment impacting forestry and lumber production means constant fluidity. Fluctuations in pricing and costs make even short term planning difficult. Timber harvesting and sawmill operations are inherently risky activities; a robust approach to safety and best practices is a key priority for HPCC.

Organizationally, we recognize the need to remain current and connected with the community as it



Strategic Planning Committee members (l to r): Diane Gamble, Katie Hill (chair), Michele Dupas, Erik Leslie, Russell Precious, Eric Martin

grows and changes. As senior staff and long-time volunteers move on and new families come into our community, it is vital that opportunities to learn about, and be part of, HPCC are encouraged and fostered.

To continue to meet the vision and mission of the organization for the future, the next generation of leaders must be supported as they take the reins.

The challenge of the next few years requires the Board and staff to develop specific work plans intended to achieve organizational priorities:

1. Strengthen our adaptation and risk mitigation responses to the effects of climate change;
2. Actively engage the community and beyond to build knowledge and resilience in managing watersheds;
3. Continue to strengthen the organization, its sustainability and relevance.

We believe HPCC is well positioned to remain a leader in community forestry in the province - and as a cornerstone for the continued economic, social and environmental well being of the community. We look forward to sharing the new strategic plan with you soon, and encourage everyone to be involved in the ongoing evolution of the cooperative.

Harrop Procter Forest Products

Busy times at the mill, both in day-to-day operations and changes/improvements. Sales have been strong all year; the old kiln is being converted into a break room for staff and should be finished within three weeks. Several new additions have eased the staffing pressures from the summer (see below). The mill will be closed over the holidays from **Friday, December 17 at 2:00 pm until Monday, January 3rd, 2022.**

Scott Philips - Tailer/Yardworker

Scott recently joined the team at the mill, starting in late October. He's a Kootenay lad through and through - born and raised in the Six Mile area where his family still lives. Scott completed Selkirk College's Millwright/Machinist program after graduating from LV Rogers Secondary School. He and his partner Jennifer moved to Procter six years ago.



Scott Philips



Travis Gill

Travis Gill - Tailer/Yardworker

Another recent start, Travis has just moved to the Kootenays. For now, living in Longbeach right across the ferry lets him walk to work. From Hamilton, Travis worked part-time in a lumberyard during high school. He completed the Heavy Equipment Operator program at Conestoga College in nearby Brantford before coming west. An avid snowboarder, he's looking forward to the upcoming season at Whittewater.

Bernie Love - Tailer/Yardworker

Bernie is familiar with the mill, he lives right beside it and has worked here previously. Originally from Edson, Bernie first came to the area in 1981 to help his dad build the house on Ogilvie Road, and returned in 2011 full-time to care for him. Both his Mom and Dad worked in forestry; right now he's part-time at the mill while fulfilling a six month contract coordinating basketball initiatives for the Coaches Association of BC.



Bernie Love



The old kiln is being retrofitted as a staff break room

In the Community

Mill Lake Shelter Completed

The efforts of a number of community volunteers, along with grant funding and donations from local businesses, means there is a covered shelter at Mill Lake once again.

The project was initiated by HPCC's Recreation Committee chair Cecilia Hobson a year and a half after the area was severely impacted by the 2017 Harrop Creek wildfire. The fire burned over almost the entire lake, destroying the existing cabin and other structures.

In the fall of 2019, initial structural construction was done by a work crew of volunteers headed by Joern Wingender. He is the owner of the Traditional Timber Framing Company and at the time was serving as president of HPCC. Cecilia, as project manager, coordinated the logistics of the weekend build.

Materials were flown in by Jeff Parker, Kootenay Valley Helicopters, Ltd. The helicopter was donated by Justin Dexter, Recreation Sites and Trails BC Nelson.

The Covid-19 pandemic then intervened, delaying the completion of the shelter until the end of September of this year. Once again, Cecilia and Joern were joined by community volunteers to complete the job by putting a roof on the shelter.

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The chosen date of September 25th resulted in a full day of carrying materials and hard physical labour. It left the crew tired but pleased and proud of their efforts.

All involved deserve a huge thank you for their accomplishment. Also very deserving of thanks are the Regional District of Central Kootenay's Recreation 10 Community Grant funding, Bob Marsh of Home Hardware for donating all the roofing materials, Harrop Procter Forest Products for donating the wood materials and Debbie Crichton for supplying baked goods that kept the workers energized.

When you hike the Mill Lake Trail and arrive at the lake, you'll appreciate the time and effort involved in this project - please use the shelter with respect and gratitude.



Volunteers at the end of a long day's work!

HPCC members get a 10% discount, so send us your email address if you would like to be informed of upcoming specials!



To request a donation, not-for-profit groups simply need to provide details of the project and community benefits on their letterhead and submit to: office@hpcommunityforest.org