

Spring 2014

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## Contact Information

P.O. Box 48092  
Victoria, BC V8Z 7H5

Tel: 250 381 7565  
Fax: 250 381 7409

[www.pfla.bc.ca](http://www.pfla.bc.ca)

Rod Bealing - Executive Director  
[rod.bealing@pfla.bc.ca](mailto:rod.bealing@pfla.bc.ca)

Ina Shah - Office Manager  
[ina@pfla.bc.ca](mailto:ina@pfla.bc.ca)

Lisa Weeks - Communications Manager  
[lisa@pfla.bc.ca](mailto:lisa@pfla.bc.ca)

# Private Forest Matters



July 2010 workshop for managed forest owners at PRT Nursery near Vernon, BC.

## Save the Date!

### PFLA's 2014 Annual Conference and Field Tour

The two-day 19th annual private forestry conference, field tour and AGM event is planned for June 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> in Parksville, B.C. at the Tigh-Na-Mara Resort and Conference Centre.

A popular event year after year, it's a chance to:

- Network with other forest owners
- Stay abreast of important policy developments
- See inspiring hands-on examples of innovative forest stewardship
- Provide important feedback to help guide the organization

We're still polishing the details — mapping tour routes, picking menu items and inviting guest speakers. In the mean time, here are a few highlights to look forward to.

#### Forestry Field Tour, June 4<sup>th</sup> 2014

Steve Lackey is hard at work organizing another line-up of interesting, relevant and thought provoking stops for this year's field tour. The day promises to be informative and engaging as we explore and review, hands-on, a range of topics relevant to forest owners and operations managers.

#### PFLA BBQ Banquet, June 4<sup>th</sup> 2014

The evening banquet is an excellent opportunity to relax after a busy day in the field — catch up with old friends, make new acquaintances, enjoy great food and refreshments, along with the annual Private Forest Stewardship Award presentations.

#### Private Forestry Forum and AGM, June 5<sup>th</sup> 2014

This year's private forestry forum and luncheon is brimming with timely and insightful presentations important to private forest management. You can anticipate topics and discussions ranging from:

- Log markets and log marketing
- Fire fighting cost sharing agreements
- Estate planning and taxation
- Critical wildlife habitat (MoU with FLNRO)
- Update from the Canadian Association of Forest Owners
- Update from the Private Managed Forest Land Council
- Ever-popular BC political scan and crystal ball session
- AGM session (for PFLA members only)

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The AGM session is an opportunity for PFLA members to have a detailed look into the management of the association and provide input about PFLA's programs and priorities for the coming year.

Here's what one participant had to say about last year's event:

"I have to say that today's line up of speakers kept me thoroughly engaged and entertained. I left with lots of great 'takeaways' and I feel like it was a great investment in time as a private forest owner.

As individual business owners we are often so busy with day-to-day management that we don't take the necessary time to stay abreast of new opportunities, innovations and just some time to think strategically and laterally. I feel the conference provided me with all of this.

The networking with fellow forest owners was, as always, enjoyable and beneficial. I will immediately take some of what I learned today and apply it to our business and forests to help in risk management and hopefully add to our bottom line. Already looking forward to next year."

To take advantage of the special room rates, please book your accommodations before **May 4<sup>th</sup> 2014**. To make your reservation, call **1-800-663-7373** and quote code **#10F532**. If you forget the code, just let them know you're with the Private Forest Landowners Association.

We'll have more detailed schedule and pricing information posted on the website soon. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about the event: [info@pfla.bc.ca](mailto:info@pfla.bc.ca) or **250-381-7565**.

## From Planning to Planting: Reforestation Basics for Forest Owners

Each year, somewhere in the neighbourhood of 200 million trees are planted across British Columbia.

Reforestation is an ongoing activity that requires knowledge of the forest site and the species involved, as well as an understanding of the risks, constraints and establishment techniques available. To be successful, reforestation also requires advance planning, follow-up monitoring and tending.

Because reforestation is such an important part of managing your woodland, we've collaborated with our favourite resource again (Managing Your Woodlands: A Non-forester's Guide to Small-scale Forestry in British Columbia) to highlight some important points to consider when putting together a reforestation plan for your operation.

There are a number of ways to approach reforestation:

1. Let nature handle it (natural regeneration)
2. Assist nature (seed tree selection, site preparation)
3. Shortcut nature (artificial regeneration)
4. A combination of the above methods

The method you choose will depend on:

- Your management goals
- The presence of a seed source
- The site capability and characteristics

- Your ability to finance reforestation
- The time period in which you want to establish a new crop

Because B.C.'s Private Managed Forest Land Act requires forest owners to reforest with commercial species, we focus on artificial regeneration here. Check out *Managing Your Woodlands: A Non-forester's Guide to Small-scale Forestry in British Columbia* for more detailed information on the different approaches to reforestation.

Regardless of your approach, you need to think about your reforestation plan long before you harvest. Here are a few tips to help you get started.

### Start with a Site Assessment

Site assessment looks at the physical and productive characteristics of the site, including:

- Soil characteristics
- Drainage and moisture regime
- Nutrient status and capability

The site assessment also looks at what species are currently growing on the site, as well as any potential constraints to reforestation, including:

- Brush hazard
- Excessively moist or dry areas
- Thin soils, rocky or talus areas
- Forest health issues
- Wildlife concerns



If you don't feel comfortable handling the project yourself, this is a good point to have a conversation with a forester, or a forest tech, who can help you formulate your reforestation strategy. Knowledgeable and competent consultants are available to give advice, lend guidance or manage the project for you.

### **Think about Reforestation Species Selection**

Species selection for reforestation depends on a number of factors:

- Your personal goals
- The moisture and nutrient capability of your site
- The silvics (shade tolerance, growth rates, elevation range, site preferences) of the species
- What is currently growing on site?

A quick survey of any stumps on-site, as well as the mature forest in neighbouring stands, will give you an idea of nature's choice of species for the area.

Nature does a pretty good job of figuring out what grows best where. Take time to study the site before you harvest. Look at the trees that thrive there and local variability — wet areas, dry areas, steep areas, flat areas. By looking at the trees that thrive in the different areas, nature can help guide you to know what seedlings to plant where.

### **Have a Site Preparation Plan**

In general, site preparation is carried out in the late summer or fall of the year before planting. The decisions you'll make about the appropriate site preparation will depend on the site conditions, silvicultural system and management objectives for the area.

Remember: weigh the costs of site preparation against the potential delay in regeneration if no preparation is done.

During harvesting be sure to maintain the fertility of the site. Ensure machinery doesn't interfere with the ground, compact your soil, impede natural drainage patterns, increase the risk of landslides or otherwise complicate reforestation efforts. Have a plan for how you'll handle harvesting debris — branches and tops can make reforestation challenging.

### **Choosing Your Seedling Stock**

The type and size of planting stock you choose will depend on the amount of brush competition, soil characteristics, and potential for browse by domestic livestock or wildlife on the site. The choice of stock should be based on the best performance at the least cost.

In general, where competition from other plants is a problem, larger stock outperforms smaller stock. Where site conditions are severe, choosing the "right" plug stock can improve the seedlings' odds of having the nutrients and protection they need to survive.

Talk to your tree nursery experts. They specialize in growing seedlings and can offer advice on:

- When to plant
- The size, age and height of seedlings to plant
- What species work well on dry sites, brushy sites etc.
- Finding contractors who can do the planting for you

We're fortunate to know a number of excellent companies who offer quality reforestation stock, expert knowledge and great service. In alphabetical order, we're happy to recommend:

- Arbutus Grove Nurseries
- Pacific Reforestation Technologies (PRT)
- Sylvan Vale Nursery

### **Planning Ahead for Your Seedlings**

If you're buying seedlings, you need plenty of lead-time to make arrangements. Seedlings take a year or more to produce, so it's necessary to register a sowing request with the nursery in advance, usually before harvesting begins, and at minimum, about a year and a half prior to planting.

Surplus seedlings may be available once all orders are filled in the spring, but in general, it's not worth the risk. Sometimes seedlings are in demand, sometimes they're in surplus — don't make any assumptions.

### **Planting Your Seedlings**

Planting is carried out with the best success between fall and spring, when temperatures are moderate and soil moisture is up. The number of seedlings planted depends on your management objectives. Less trees per hectare provides more room and nutrients for each tree but will result in larger branch size.

Quality means everything in planting. The quality of your reforestation plan, from the choice of species and stock to the selection of individual planting sites, will influence the cost-effectiveness and final success of your reforestation program. The condition of the seedling when it goes into the ground, and how well it is planted are the final keys to survival.

### **Monitor Your New Crop**

Of course, reforestation means more than putting trees back in the ground. It means reestablishing a forest. After artificial regeneration, a number of check-ups must be carried out on a stand to make sure it's properly established, and to monitor how it is progressing.

Many factors can affect the success of the regenerated site, and it is important to identify any problems as early as possible in order to protect your investment and save you time and money down the road.

### **Last, but not least: Browse Protection**

In many parts of the province, browsing by ungulates (deer, elk and moose), or even beaver, hares, mice or voles, can destroy overnight the planning, expense and labour invested in reforestation. If there's a significant risk of animal damage to your plantation, you need to consider protective measures during the reforestation process. Essentially, you have three options:

1. Fencing
2. Individual seedling protectors/ physical barriers
3. Treating the seedling with discouraging scents

Though expensive, physical barriers are often considered the most worthwhile. These can take the form of solid plastic cones (Sinocast), plastic mesh (Vexar), wire mesh (stucco wire) cages, net tubes or plastic tubes.



# The Charles' Decision: Managed Forest Classification Appeal

A recent decision by the Property Assessment Appeal Board confirms the Managed Forest Program is an option for landowners, irrespective of size and ownership of individual lots, provided contiguous parcels of land, together, meet the minimum 25-hectare requirement set out by the Private Managed Forest Land Act.

In his decision, panel chair, Robert A. Kasting wrote:

"There is nothing in the Regulation which requires common ownership of the contiguous parcels. Whether the word "owner" is ascribed a singular or plural meaning by the effect of s. 28(3) of the Interpretation Act, makes no difference. Every owner must submit a form established by the assessment authority by May 31 of each year. If an owner does not submit a form, the land will not be classified as managed forest for assessment purposes. If the owner of the managed forest land, whether individually or collectively with another owner submits a form, the Assessor is required to do the further analysis required by the Regulation. Nothing in the Regulation prevents the owner of each of the contiguous parcels from making separate submissions or requires the owner of each parcel to make a joint submission. From the Appellant's documentation, the assessment

authority has historically been able to determine the value of the managed forest on Section 36 and Parcel A separately. If the Assessor's form does not accommodate a joint submission about a managed forest, or separate submissions about different but contiguous parcels, that is an operational issue for the Assessor and not an implied restriction in the legislation."

Prior to this decision, BC Assessment took the position that each lot in a managed forest had to be larger than the minimum 25-hectare requirement, unless the same owner owned all lots in the managed forest. This appeal decision clearly states this is not the case, and will necessitate a new interpretation and change of policy.

It is also our understanding, at this time, that managed forest parcels smaller than 25-hectares, and grandfathered into the Managed Forest Program, will continue to qualify for Assessment Class 7.

PFLA continues to work with BC Assessment and the Private Managed Forest Land Council and we'll endeavor to keep you updated as new policies resulting from this decision are clarified.

Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or comments.

## PFLA Hometown Meeting Tour 2014

That's right, we're hitting the road again for our annual Hometown Meeting Tour. We look forward to the chance to connect, listen and learn, firsthand, about the issues, concerns and experiences that matter most to private forest landowners.

We're keenly interested in any topics, issues or concerns you'd like to discuss so please let us know ahead of time if there's an item you'd like added to the agenda.

Meetings are scheduled for Nanaimo, Castlegar, Victoria, Courtenay, Galiano Island and Vancouver. Please check the website ([pfla.bc.ca/events](http://pfla.bc.ca/events)) for time and location details.

PFLA members and non-member managed forest owners are warmly welcome. Let us know if you can make it email: [info@pfla.bc.ca](mailto:info@pfla.bc.ca) or give us a call: 250-381-7565.

The agenda includes updates on some of the key policy files we keep a watchful eye on:

- Firefighting Cost Sharing Agreements
- Species at Risk Act — Northern Goshawk
- Migratory Birds Convention Act — Incidental Take
- Water Sustainability Act
- Market Access
- Critical Wildlife Habitat

Hope to see you there!

## The PMFLC Has a New Executive Director

In a December 2013 press release the Chair of the Private Managed Forest Land Council (PMFLC) announced the appointment of a new Executive Director, Phil O'Connor, to replace retiring Executive Director, Stuart MacPherson.

The Private Managed Forest Land Council is the independent regulatory body, established under the authority of the Private Managed Forest Land Act, to ensure forest owners in the Managed Forest Program comply with provincially mandated forest practices regulations for soil conservation, water quality, fish and critical wildlife habitat and reforestation.

Rod Davis, Chair of the PMFLC, explains:

"With the retirement of Stuart Macpherson — who ably guided the Council from its inception — we were seeking an experienced leader with extensive experience and a deep understanding of the forest sector in B.C. from both the government perspective and that of private sector forest operators. Phil O'Connor's career has touched on many aspects of forestry and sustainable forest management and he will provide a steady hand for the Council as we work to continue to protect environmental values on private managed forest lands."

For more information, please visit the PMFLC website: [www.pmflc.ca](http://www.pmflc.ca)

To avoid any confusion, please be reminded: Rod Bealing is the Executive Director of the Private Forest Landowners Association (that's us) and he will continue as the Executive Director of the PFLA. The PFLA is an advocacy organization that represents forest owners, and the PMFLC is a regulatory agency that regulates forest management practices on private managed forest land in British Columbia.

