

INFO BULLETIN

Provincial Forest Advisory Council

Oct. 24, 2025

Provincial Forest Advisory Council Releases Interim Status Report, Launches Phase 2 Engagement

VICTORIA – The Provincial Forest Advisory Council ('PFAC' or 'the council') is dedicated to developing independent recommendations for a new, stable forest system that supports resilient communities, economies, and ecosystems across British Columbia.

The council has completed its [interim report](#) which analyzed core challenges, recurring barriers, and persistent structural issues within BC's forest sector. The interim report was provided to the Cooperation and Responsible Government Accord 2025 (CARGA) sponsors: CARGA Sponsors – Honourable Ravi Parmar, Minister of Forests & MLA Rob Botterell, BC Green Caucus.

It is clear to the Council that BC's land management systems, processes, policy, and legislation were not built for our current reality and are not designed to achieve all three components of our objective in unison.

Instead, we appear stuck in a forestry model that:

1. Favours quota-based wood extraction ahead of land management,
2. Drives indecision, red tape and favours a drawn-out, and sometimes confusing, process versus definitive and reliable outcomes, and
3. Is unresponsive to changing circumstances, fostering conflict as opposed to collaboration and innovation.

So, how do we get unstuck?

The Council believes the answer lies in systemic change that creates a new model with land care and a viable economy that supports people and communities at its centre, recognizing the deep connection between the two. This vision must be built in partnership with Indigenous Peoples, grounded in an understanding that we are stronger together and that meaningful progress requires facing our shared history with courage and respect.

The ultimate goal is to develop a forestry system that creates conditions for a stable, predictable, and reliable basis to underpin innovation and investment. Over the next two months, the council will be moving into Phase 2 of its engagement, looking at mechanisms to address the key drivers of instability.

The following themes, in conjunction with a series of enabling conditions to support an effective transition to a new more stable system, will be looked at:

1. **Transitioning to Area-Based Management:** What are the necessary steps, policies, and supports required to successfully shift from current volume-driven systems to a comprehensive, area-

based management model?

2. **Effective Decision-Making:** As we move toward greater regional autonomy, what should new decision-making models look like? Who must be at the table, and what governance structures will ensure accountability, transparency and predictability?
3. **Supporting Climate Resilient Forestry:** In the face of a changing climate, how must our approach to forestry evolve to address increased concerns from pests, disease and catastrophic fire? How can we plan and incorporate forest management activities that reduce the risk of consequences of these events to forests, communities and the economy?

The council will provide its final report with recommendations to the Province by the end of 2025.

For more information on PFAC's engagement process, how to share your perspectives, [visit here](#).

Learn More:

PFAC website: <https://pfac.ca/>

Contact:

Provincial Forest Advisory Council
Media Relations
info@pfac.ca

BACKGROUNDER

Basis for Assertion of Outdated Systems and Processes

- **Outdated Foundations:** BC's Forest Act, established in 1912, was designed for a vastly different era, **prioritizing timber extraction over long-term ecological and community resilience.**
- **Tenure System Legacy:** The 1945 Sloan Commission was the foundation for BC's tenure system that was predicated on long-term tenure security, granting licenses in exchange for such things as reforestation and investment in mills. While this system supported economic growth, it now **struggles to incent innovation and adapt to current imperatives.**
- **Legal Shifts in Indigenous Rights:** Landmark Supreme Court decisions, including and not limited to **Delgamuukw (1997)**, **Haida Decision (2004)** and **Tsilhqot'in (2014)**, affirmed Aboriginal title and emphasized the need for consultation and accommodation, challenging the certainty of tenure rights and calling for shared decision-making in forest management. These rulings align with Canada's adoption of the **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)** and BC's **Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (2019)**, which commit to recognizing and upholding Indigenous rights, including shared decision-making and land stewardship.
- **Beetle Crisis:** The early 2000s saw the peak of the mountain pine beetle infestation, impacting over **18 million hectares** of BC's forests. Spruce beetle impacts have exceeded **1.7 million hectares** of BC's forests, and ongoing disturbance from pests and disease can be expected. These changes to our forests highlight the need to understand the basis and

timelines for our decision-making and the structures and transparency in which those decisions are made.

- **Wildfire Escalation**: In 2023, BC experienced its worst wildfire season on record, with **2.8 million hectares burned** and over **\$1 billion spent on suppression**, underscoring the urgent need for proactive, climate-resilient strategies.
- **Heightening and Prolonged Conflict**: The **transition from reliance on old-growth forests to second-growth harvesting** has been fraught with conflict as communities, environmental groups, and industry clash over healthy ecosystems versus a healthy economy; emphasizing the need for new mechanisms and approaches to support our forest management approach.
- **Unprecedented Trade Dynamics and Market Shifts**: The long-standing **Canada-US softwood lumber dispute**, dating back to the 1980s, has escalated. In 2025, combined duties and tariffs exceeding 45%, in conjunction with shifting global demand, have created significant economic barriers and heightened the uncertainty for BC's forestry sector.