



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **ABCFP honours five forest professionals for outstanding work in sustainably managing BC's forests**

**(Vancouver)**—The Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABCFP) presented awards to five forest professionals who made significant contributions to the profession and study of forestry, ensuring BC's forests are managed to the highest environmental standards. The awards were presented Thursday in Prince George during a ceremony at the ABCFP's annual conference.

"These awards recognize the dedication, expertise and achievements of forest professionals. Congratulations to the award winners; their achievements serve as an inspiration to all our members who diligently and passionately work day in and day out to ensure BC's forests are sustainably managed for future generations," said Christopher Stagg, ABCFP president.

The winners are:

### **Distinguished Forest Professional Award:**

#### **John Armstrong, RFT, ATE, Infinity Forest Solutions, Kamloops**

John is the first forest technologist to win this award. He began his cruising career in 1978 and established his own consulting firm, Coastfor Enterprises Inc., now called Infinite Forestry Solutions Ltd, in 1985. In addition to cruising tens of thousands of cruise plots, he specializes in timber cruiser training, auditing, and software development.

In 2000 John designed and developed software for handheld devices called CruiseMate, which represented a major leap forward in cruise data collection and is now widely used throughout BC. This was quickly followed by check-cruising software, CheckMate, which is used by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resources, and CompMate, which integrates CruiseMate and CheckMate into compilations. John also designed the GPS cruise plot location procedures which are implemented as the current standard in the Provincial Cruising Manual.

### **Distinguished Forest Professional Award:**

#### **Paul Lawson, RPF, University of British Columbia, Vancouver**

Paul has dedicated his career to elevating the practice and profession of forestry in BC. He has made distinguished contributions as an educator, research supporter, and leader in demonstrating excellence in forest stewardship.

In his role as director of the UBC Research Forests, he helped to build a stable business and innovative forest management model in a highly visible urban interface. He also led the recent renovation of Loon Lake camp at the Malcolm Knapp Research Forest.

Paul uses his expertise to develop and deliver courses in areas such as forest business, operations, and watershed restoration. He is a past member of the joint practices board of the forest and engineering professions, and sponsors ABCFP's enrolled members. His writings have been featured in the association's BC Forest Professional magazine and the Raincoast Chronicles.

**Distinguished Forest Professional Award:**

**Rita Winkler, PhD, RPF, Ministry of Forest Lands and Natural Resource Operations, Kamloops**

Rita is a leader in the fields of forest hydrology and watershed management in BC. Her research has had a significant influence on our understanding of the interrelationships between forests, forestry and water in the interior of BC as well as on approaches to watershed management. She is a strong advocate for the protection of long-term research installations, such as the Upper Penticton Creek Experimental Watersheds and the opportunities they provide to better understand forests of today and tomorrow.

Rita is also committed to sharing knowledge and its application, whether through teaching, guest lecturing, or giving professional and scientific presentations, public talks, or field tours. Rita has a long history of acting as a mentor to students and professionals and has volunteered on numerous ABCFP committees including council, joint practices board, forest hydrology academic standards committee, and public affairs committee.

**Registered Professional Forester of the year:**

**Ian Smith, RPF, BC Timber Sales, Terrace**

Ian was recognized in part for his work with major forest company representatives on a migratory bird project, assembling a comprehensive set of best management practices that were used as a key element of a larger toolkit released by the Council of Forest Industries in 2016. This toolkit provides common management guidance to forest sector workers in the Interior. Ian was a key figure in the development of these best management practices, researching and compiling a significant portion of this document.

**Registered Forest Technologist of the year:**

**John Hopper, RFT, BC Timber Sales, Kamloops**

John was recognized for his untiring support and efforts to ensure utilization of low quality timber. Through BC Timber Sales' association with Forests For Tomorrow, a significant area of the province has been rehabilitated in the wake of the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic. John's work in this area will yield positive effects on future timber supply, provincial revenue, and help ensure resilience in the face of climate change.

Congratulations to all the winners. Photos available on request.

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*The Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABCFP) is responsible for registering and regulating British Columbia's professional foresters and forest technologists. It is the largest professional forestry association in Canada.*

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