



NATIONAL FOREST WEEK – BC COALITION

2016 Accomplishments Report

Key Points

National Forest Week is our opportunity to rally the troops, wave the flag, show-case the high level of professionalism used in managing the forest resources of BC and demonstrating the value of our forests to British Columbians.

The 2016 NFW campaign was again a success. Over 10,000 people were exposed to information regarding BC forests. Almost 5,400 K-12 students received direct education about forests and an additional 1,300 student requests were not able to be accommodated demonstrating the demand, which is expected to continue to grow in 2017.

Although the number of communities holding local events was similar to 2015 (31) with 27 communities taking part. The celebration of BC forests continues to be a year-round initiative and not limited to NFW per se.

Volunteer commitment to organizing the celebration of BC forests continues to be strong but a “changing of the guard” appears to be occurring and 2016 was the transition year in several communities. “Volunteer burn-out” is an issue that will have to be addressed next year.

Sponsorship for the NFW-BC Coalition (*Coalition*) activities was down slightly but remains strong. Without the sponsorships at both the provincial and community levels, the celebrations would not occur and British Columbians will be prevented from easily knowing the value of their forests to the Province, communities and personal life. We thank the sponsors for their commitment to this initiative!

Provincial Activities

The celebration of BC forests occurs throughout the year but is concentrated during National Forest Week. The celebrations are organized by local event committees in communities across BC. The *Coalition* provides support for these committees to avoid unnecessary duplication and sharing of basic information and experiences between the groups. This support occurs in the areas of provincial advertising, guidance materials for local event organizers, promotional and knowledge building handout materials for students and adults and a hub for networking among local event organizers.

The primary focus for 2016 remained on K-12 students and teachers with a secondary audience being parents and those within communities interested in learning more about BC forests and forest management.



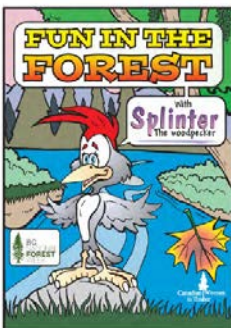
Advertising

Advertising continued to be a major focus of bringing the celebration of BC forests and National Forest Week to the attention of the public. Our primary audience was young people in BC – plus their parents and teachers. The objective was to send the message as broadly as possible across the Province to these audiences.

This year's plan included utilizing the CNW wire service to expand the distribution of the Press Release to ensure it reached all BC media outlets. The result was it was viewed 478 times. In addition, advertising included posting on the websites of 250 News in Prince George and Castanet in Kelowna, advertisements in 14 Black Press newspapers across the Province with a total circulation of more than 155,000 copies and radio ads on 19 Vista radio stations plus CFNR (Canadian First Nations Radio). Media coverage was also obtained on Shaw TV (Port Alberni), Clearwater Times, Alberni Valley News, Prince George Citizen, Terrace Standard and Campbell River Mirror.

Giveaways

We continued to provide handouts to students that will remind them of NFW and the celebration of BC forests. The traditional products (i.e., pencils, stickers and coloring books) were provided. We added temporary tattoos to the catalogue of materials. We also made them aware of the Tree App to identify BC trees using their cell phones. The partnership with Women in Timber continued in providing the coloring books directed to Grade 4-5 students. They remain very popular and hopefully funding will be sufficient in 2017 that we can make them more widely available to teachers and students.



Other awareness materials for teachers and parents included the NFW posters and post cards describing NFW. New products included a caribiner and display rack card providing basic information on BC forests and forest management. The text was developed collaboratively with the Provincial Chief Forester's office. The desire is to be able to develop more products for adults that will build the knowledge of teachers, parents and interested public regarding BC forests and forest management. The preference will be on using existing materials as a considerable amount is available for appropriate modification.

Local event organizer guidance

A major effort was expended in 2016 to update and improve the primary guidance document and materials (i.e., "Starter Kit"). The *Starter Kit* is intended to help local event organizers, new and experienced, in organizing and holding a successful local event to celebration BC forests. It was posted on the *Coalition* website (www.bcnfw.ca) along with pictures, examples of previous local events, resource information, tips on organizing an event, etc.



Partner Support

Partnerships in local events continued to be encouraged. This allowed the *Coalition* to take advantage of



events outside NFW per se and tap into an audience that might not have forests as their priority interest. Some examples were booths at Rivers Day in North Vancouver, Treefest at the Riverview Hospital Grounds in Coquitlam and Brackendale Farmers Market in Squamish in partnership with the Forestry Centre Society. We added to the events by being the organization to distribute seedlings (thanks to Tree Canada and BC Hydro) to the students and interested adults.

Local Events

The number of local events remained relatively the same in 2016 (27 versus 31). Although there were some new communities becoming involved, there were some who traditionally are involved did not participate in 2016. This was due in part to several local organizers wishing to take a break from the volunteer commitment and replacements not been identified. Another significant reason was the focus by volunteers in Metro Vancouver on the Canadian Institute of Forestry AGM and the Demo International Equipment show. Regardless of the lower number of events, it was gratifying that new entrants surfaced that brought exciting celebrations to communities not holding events in the last few years. It was especially encouraging to see expansion on the number of local events that involved a wide range of participants, including MFLNRO, BCTS, industry and consultants.



We continued to encourage local organizers to take advantage of community events outside of NFW to bring attention to BC forests. These included fall fairs, farmers markets, community festivals, conferences, workshops, forest related presentations to local organizations, community displays, etc. Although some events involved public forest walks, we applied lessons learned in the previous years to focus these on specific community groups rather

than a general public invitation.

The celebration of BC forests has clearly gone beyond NFW per se. In 2016 it is estimated over 10,000 people in communities were exposed to information on BC forests and their importance





to the Province, communities and personal lives. This provides the *Coalition* and local event organizers with an opportunity to talk about BC forests throughout the year.

Children’s Art Contest

The Association of BC Forest Professionals and Truck Logger’s Association sponsored an annual art contest for children in three age categories ranging from 4 to 12 years. The theme was “What does the forest mean to you?” and drew more than 200 entries from children across BC. In several instances, school classes used the contest as the basis for an art class with teachers submitting the entire class’s work to the contest.

K-12 Students and Teachers

A considerable amount of effort was expended in 2016 to introduce students to the forest and make teachers aware of the benefits of using forests as a tool to deliver their school curriculum. The *Coalition’s* Forest Professionals in the School Classrooms program expanded significantly in 2016. It exposed students to the forest in one of two ways:

- Forest Professionals in School Classrooms program
- NFW local events focused on K-12 students



The NFW local events involved 4,380 students (mainly K-7 students) taking field trips into the forest. The Forest Professionals in School Classrooms Program, coordinated by the ABCFP with assistance from the CIF, generated 76 K-12 teachers approaching the *Coalition* to capitalize on the classroom lesson or field trip opportunities. Unfortunately, we were unable to get volunteers to supply this request. However, there were enough to provide the experience to 990 students. The combination of the two programs provided 5,370 students being introduced to the forest. Although this is a large number of students, we should realize it is <1% of the BC K-7 students.



If all of the teacher requests for foresters to come to their classroom or take the students on a field trip were to be fulfilled, an additional 1,290 students would have been exposed to forests bringing the total to 6,660 students. Clearly there is a great demand for programs to expose students to the forest. This is a great opportunity for Government, industry and others who depend on support for managing BC forests.

It should be noted that there are several other BC K-12 programs that expose students to the forest (e.g., Community Forest Licensees, Woodlot Licensees, Municipal Parks and Recreation Departments, NGO programs,



etc. There is very little data on the extent of the number of students involved but it is thought to be significant.

Lessons Learned and Looking Ahead

K-12 Student Program

The demand for student classroom lessons and field trips are expected to increase in 2017. We can expect to have an over subscription in both cases, especially in the larger centres. This will require a registration process to make sure the *Coalition* or local events commitments are able to be delivered upon. Other organizations with K-12 student programs require a fee for the class attending. This is an option but it would be a major deviation from the operations of the *Coalition*.

Experience within the *Coalition* and local event organizers suggests the following in response to lessons learned:

- Teacher awareness should include:
 - Distribution of information regarding the opportunity for a classroom lesson or field trip in early May, including clarity regarding the limited capacity, the need for registration and the acceptance based on a first come-first serve basis
 - A friendly reminder in early September to teachers in situations where openings remain.
- Call for volunteer foresters for assistance throughout the school year be distributed in early spring and again in late August or early September
- No point in trying to co-ordinate school visits within National Forest Week, other than those where the field trip is part of a local NFW event
- The *Coalition* should ask those who have history in holding K-12 field trips as a local NFW event to provide a list of lessons learned that could be included in the *Starter Kit*
- The *Coalition* should encourage Community Forest and Woodlot licensees to learn from their colleagues and expand the number of K-12 programs that exist to broaden local student education
- The Professional Foresters Networks (PFN) should be encouraged to work with or become NFW local event organizers as part of the professional outreach in their communities

Local events

The *Coalition's* organization and delivery through local events has become a full year operation with capitalizing on the opportunity to celebrate BC forests as part of other community events outside NFW. This is putting a strain on the volunteer time commitment of the core group and needs to be reviewed to prevent "volunteer burn-out." A larger portion of the sponsorship revenue may have to be allocated to addressing this issue but if this was to be considered additional sponsorship contributions will be needed, if support for other *Coalition* activities is to continue at the current level.



The *Coalition* should make a concerted effort to bring local event organizers back into the fold and encourage others to hold events in communities previously not involved.

Program delivery

Distribution of the handout materials improved over 2016 through the use of Regional Coordinators. However, further improvements will be required in 2017 to keep costs at a minimum and reduce stress on the *Coalition* volunteers.

Our Sponsors

Without the generosity of our Sponsors, the 2016 NFW celebrations would not have been a success. We thank all of them for their support of our activities and look forward to their participation in 2017. The following is a list of the 2016 Sponsors.

Platinum (\$2,000+)

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ForesTrust
FP Innovations
Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
The Truck Loggers Association

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West Fraser Mills Ltd
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