Make it
Crafting wood on the Coast, from playthings to paper

Break it
Foresters reveal the climate change they're witnessing

Not gonna take it
The Lot 450 logging protest wasn't an anti-logging protest

Ferns & Fallers

Forests and forestry on the Sunshine Coast

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Ferns & Fallers

Forests and forestry on the Sunshine Coast
a publication by *Powell River Living*

Volume 2, Number 1

ISSN 2367-9751

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We welcome feedback from our readers. Email your comments to isabelle@prliving.ca, or mail to *Ferns & Fallers*, c/o Powell River Living, 7053E Glacier Street, Powell River, BC V8A 5J7 Tel 604.485.0003

This issue is also available online at www.prliving.ca

ON THE COVER: The alder moose family (a rare coastal species) by Jalu Wood Creations gets our vote for 'most value added' of any product. True?

Add value... to the conversation

Imagine for a minute that you're the editor of a magazine about forests & forestry. Just in time for the second annual edition, a monumental conflict breaks out in the middle of the region, where chainsaws are severing tall Douglas-firs and cedars from their roots, in de-facto city parks (see Page 38).

If this were a different town, you - or I - might want to hide under a blanket. But here, it's all good.

Why? Because this region is really, really good at nuance. On the upper Sunshine Coast, we have a wealth of collaboratively-oriented, complex-thinking leadership that makes my job easy. Judi Tyabji, Wayne Brewer, Eagle Walz, Stuart Glen, Dave Formosa, Patrick Brabazon, Jane Cameron, Erin Innes, Nola Poirier, Russ Brewer, the Fuller brothers, and many others all live here. When situations get hairy, we've got smarties to lean on.

The conflict over Lot 450 helped sharpen my vision for this publication, too. Last year, just getting basic information out about the Sunshine Coast's biggest industry felt like an achievement. This year, the publication is closer to its potential: a hyper-local salon with a mission to deepen our shared understanding of the forest, and to connect people across perspectives. Yes, the ads are mostly from forestry companies; they, of course, alongside everyone else, have a genuine interest in furthering and deepening conversations.

I am particularly grateful this year for the trust and patience of Torrance Coste, a campaigner with the Wilderness Committee. He was willing to risk unpopularity by advocating for a ban on raw log exports in a region dependant on big forestry – which resists a ban for reasons which are now obvious to me, and worthy points. (see Page 30).

A danger of the Internet age is that we hunker down in our ideological factions, and only engage with publications we're sure to agree with – whether that's emails from the Dogwood Initiative, or *The Economist* app. Both contain excellent journalism, but there's something worth preserving about the commons, too.

Pieta Woolley, editor

If there's one thing everyone can agree with, it's that BC will be better off when we collectively add more value to the wood we harvest. If you're entrepreneurial at all, I encourage you to read the profiles in the main feature of the magazine (starting on Page 16) and get dreaming. Theoretically, there's support out there for you.

Happy reading!

'Shroom Boom

Harvesting wild mushrooms is as trendy right now as binge-watching *Orange is the New Black* on Netflix and wearing onesie pyjamas as a fashion statement (not making this up.) Beyond trendiness, though, the morsels are tasty, free when you pick them yourself, and worth about $10 million annually to the harvesters who travel Western Canada picking for cash.

How well do you know your 'shrooms? The photos to the left are meadow, morel, lobster, chantrelle, and cauliflower mushrooms. Which is which?

Wild British Columbia Mushroom Soup

Dave Bowes May 2015
Executive chef,
Laughing Oyster Restaurant

1 1/2 lbs assorted wild forest mushrooms ie. chantrelle, lobster, cauliflower, morels, cepes, oyster, meadow, etc.
1/4 litre water
2 tbsp minced French tarragon leaves
1/2 tbsp. Garden Gate Blackspice
1/4 cup diced shallots
1/4 lb. butter
1/2 cup flour
1 litre hot whipping cream
1/4 cup dry sherry
1/2 cup white wine
1 Tbsp. garlic
1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1 1/2 tbsp. salt
(measured and level)
1 bay leaf

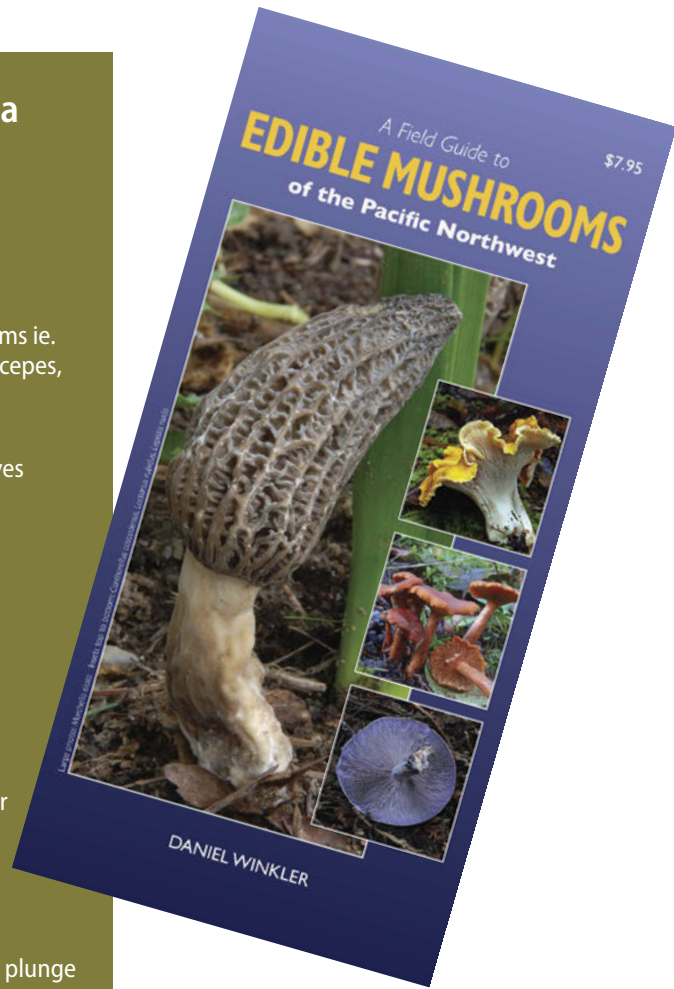
Clean and tear the wild mushrooms, plunge into boiling water for 30 seconds while skimming forest debris.

Lift mushroom from the water, cool on a board and cut into soup-sized pieces that will fit into a soup spoon.

Sweat shallots and garlic in butter, add flour to form roux.

Add hot cream, sherry, wine and mushrooms.

Bring to boil, add seasoning then simmer for 30 min.



THE MOREL OF THIS STORY IS: Make sure you take a guide with you, if you're a newbie picker – preferably human. The Powell River Recreation Complex runs workshops on mushroom picking. Above, this new, handy guide is available at Breakwater Books.

Powell River loves Trees

Mayor Dave Formosa

After more than eight years of negotiations, the City of Powell River has secured the trees in Millennium Park. Right in the middle of our City, the expanded park is 105 hectares, stretching from the Recreation Complex to the waterfront.

This forest is a natural sanctuary for wildlife – and humans. The park features wooded trails, creeks, a swimming beach, a waterfront trail, a bike park, a skate park, a playground and a water park, two museums, the Complex, and many other attractions and natural amenities.

Negotiating the purchase of the lands and, of late, the trees was an achievement of which we should all be proud. The lands were purchased at a discount value from PRSC for $1.43 million and funded by a successful municipal referendum. The trees were recently purchased for $1.125 million from Island Timberlands and funded from the Powell River Community Forest dividend. In other words, trees harvested sustainably by our locally owned and managed community forest have saved the trees in Millennium Park.

The revenue from our community forest has also funded many community projects, including construction of the bike park and skate park, upgrading the trails in Millennium Park, returning the historic Anderson sawmill and logging equipment to the Powell River museum, renovations to the Powell River Academy of Music and other community buildings, the Brain Injury Society community garden, and PRISMA.

We've known for more than a decade that Island Timberlands intended to exercise its valuable, one-time logging rights on PRSC lands as well as its privately held lands within the City and the Regional District. Over the years, City staff and your elected representatives, including myself, have urged Island Timberlands to recognize these lands and forests as places the community values and uses and we've emphasized the importance of implementing sustainable forestry plans and activities. We must remember that PRSC was established to create economic development opportunities that would create new jobs, diversify our local tax base and reduce our reliance on major industry taxation, and to preserve Millennium Park.

We support the democratic rights of those citizens of Powell River that are expressing their concerns regarding harvesting activities within the City. We applaud your political engagement, your clear love of this community, and your dedication to learning and sharing.

We are also thankful to those of you who differentiate and recognize the benefits of our local, sustainably and professionally managed Powell River Community Forest and other locally-based managed forests and companies.

The vast majority of logging, forest management, tree-planting and silviculture that happens around Powell River is done to world-class sustainable standards on public lands, governed by the *Forest Act* and other provincial laws and regulations.

We are proud of our historic mill town roots and we are excited that our community has evolved into a community that encourages diversity, creativity and sustainable development.

Collaboration between locally-based companies, local governments, individual citizens and citizen groups is what makes Powell River such a remarkable place to live.

Please join with us in celebrating what we have achieved already: a stunning, 105-hectare urban park – the green heart of Powell River.

Civic Green Areas

Millennium Park & Willingdon
Waterfront, trails, a bike & skate park, playground, McFall Creek, McGuffie Creek.

Valentine Mountain
A short hike to a panoramic lookout.

Mowat Bay
Lakefront beach and playground, access to the Sunshine Coast Trail, Gallagher Hill and Haywire Bay.

Larry Gouthro Park
Sports fields, trees and playground.

Sunset Park
Sports fields, forest and playground.

And more!

If you have questions or concerns about the harvesting you're seeing, Millennium Park, or other issues, please visit the City's website to find out more, or contact us.

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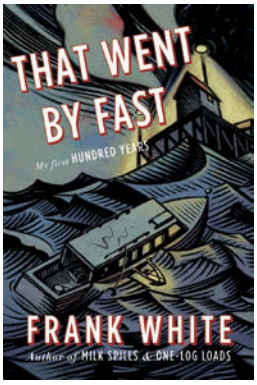
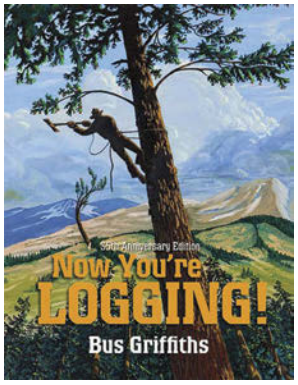
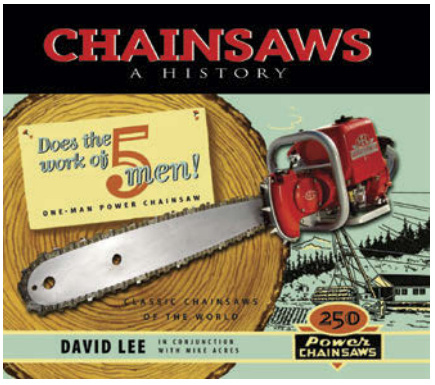
Powell River
coastal by nature

He kept on truckin'







FOR THE FORESTRY-FRIENDLY COFFEE TABLE: Three funner-than-you-might-think-possible books about the industry, all published by Madeira Park's Harbour Publishing.

Excerpt from That Went by Fast: My First Hundred Years, by Pender Harbour's Frank White (Harbour Publishing 2014).

Looking back, I can admit something that I wouldn't have admitted then, and that is that I was past my peak. I was thirty-five and at a point where a man's physical abilities start to go into decline. A logger in those days was like a professional athlete. Many working trades were. Your work took pretty much a maximum physical effort. You never saw belly fat in the bunkhouse in those days, except maybe an old donkey puncher, but even the machines in those days took a lot of work. The steering clutches on a D8 took a 30-lb pull and you were pulling them thousands of times a day. Trucks had no power steering so truck drivers had arms like wrestlers. All different today of course. Everything's air or hydraulic and you spend all day twiddling computerized solenoids. They have to have gyms so the men can get a little exercise.

From the time I first went out driving truck, I'd always felt I could overcome almost any obstacle with physical effort. Just lift harder, pull stronger, work longer—and always when I asked my body for more, more was there. But a man's body is like a drum of gas. There's only so much in there and you can use it up fast or slow. I had used up a lot by the time I was thirty-five. Up to that time, every time I opened the bung to check the level, it looked as good as full. Now this time I looked and for the first time, I could see a lot was used up. And from that time on, I noticed it more and more.

THE SECRET TO A LONG LIFE IS... LOGGING: Garden Bay author Frank White, 100, pictured here with wife Edith Iglauer, 97.

> **"A logger in those days was like a professional athlete.... You never saw belly fat in the bunkhouse."**
> *– Frank White*

I'd always been sound as a dollar physically but now I started to have a lot of back trouble. Already I'd lost the ability to sleep, and I was tired a lot. I had stiff joints in the morning. And somewhere around then I started to experience the first twinges of phantom pain in my face, a tic that would become more familiar over the years. I still had forty years of working life in me as it turned out, but it worries a young guy when he encounters his first whiff of mortality.

~ Reprinted with permission of the publisher. www.harbourpublishing.com

Bob'll bring back LOGGER SPORTS

But here's the deal: 5,000 people need to say they want it back, and let Bob Marquis know that they're willing to help. Literally.

Local logger, blaster and road builder Marquis organized the biannual summer festival for two decades. He quit, and the event folded, after 2005, because, he said, "I got tired of putting 15 grand and three months of my own time into it every year. You didn't want to be my friend during those three months... and it was me standing in a #&%! television tower for three days." In other, less colourful words, it was a lot of work, and he needed to take a break.

The event was, for a time, the largest logger sports festival in the world, attracting teams from Australia, New Zealand, and across North America. Crowds of more than 10,000 people came out for it. For three years, TSN came to Powell River to broadcast the show, which was a part of Seafair.

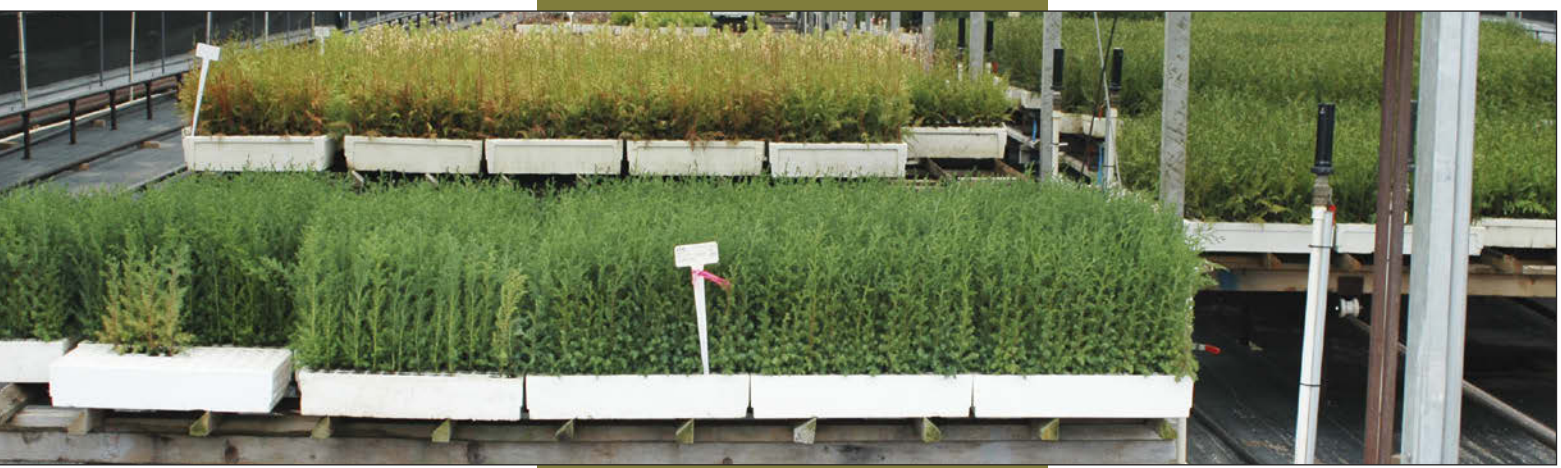
Logger sports is still a big attraction, and BC boasts its share of world-class competitors on the international circuit. (Marquis was at one time among them. He was one of just 20 guys in the world who could chop through 13 inches of alder in under 20 seconds, he said.)

For *Ferns & Fallers*, Marquis pulled a box of photos out of his home's crawl-space, and anted up the 5,000 challenge. Want to see logger sports back in Powell River? Join the Bring Back Logger Sports Powell River group on Facebook, or shoot *Powell River Living* an email at contest@prliving.ca.

SAW DUST IN THE WIND:
Logger sports used to bring thousands of spectators to Willingdon Beach for events such as (from top), the obstacle pole, log burling, chainsaw carving and the Jack and Jill log saw. Left, setting up for the pole climb was a big project. But it's been so long since the sport was held here, the decaying logs have since been removed.

Baby Trees

Before



Where do baby trees come from?

There's no great mystery.

Most BC trees start at the BC Forest Service's Tree Seed Centre in Surrey (top photo).

Many trees growing in the Powell River Region started as seedlings at Sylvan Vale Nurseries in Campbell River (see photos, this page.)

The Stillwater Community Advisory Group (right) visited the nursery this past winter.

Treeplanters find the perfect place for each seedling. (Top right) Megan Reeve, with Evergreen, plants a Douglas-fir by Dixon Road, for Western Forest Products.

The Coastal Silviculture Committee (far right) put on a two-day destination workshop in Powell River last year, to talk seeds, trees, pests, soil and the future of alder.

& After

Come Play In The Working Forest

www.westernforest.com

What adventures are you planning this year? The Western Forest Products Tree Farm License on the Sunshine Coast supports our local forest economy while providing a full range of recreational opportunities. Our working forest is always growing, giving us an amazing lifestyle for work and play. Before your next adventure, please visit www.WFPRoadInfo.com to get the latest information on the industrial roads we manage and review our safety alerts . See you out there.

Western Forest Products Inc.

At just 17 years old, Breagh Megan Kobayashi has already worked a summer in the woods. After she graduates from Campbell River's Carihi Secondary School this June– where she took the innovative Carihi Forestry Education Program – she's off to the University of British Columbia for the Forest Resources Management program.

Highland-dancing teen chooses a career in the woods

Mud & Moxie

Why forestry?

BMK • I've always been passionate about the health of plants and animals. I wanted a job that would give me the opportunity to get outside and to make a positive difference in the environment while studying ecology. During National Forestry Week, I met a lady who explained that forestry is more than just logging and tree planting - there are a lot of research and management jobs as well - so when I heard that Carihi was offering a forestry course, I signed up to see if the forest industry was right for me. I learned right away that the industry offers a career for all different interests, mine included, so I sent my application to the UBC forestry faculty immediately.

Does anyone in your family work in the woods? What do your parents do?

BMK • I'll be the first in my family to pursue a career in the woods. My mother owns a property management business and my father is a power engineer.

What do your friends think about your career choice?

BMK • My friends think my career choice is interesting, in a positive way. I don't think forestry is something they ever saw me doing, mostly because they didn't know much about the industry to begin with, like me. Once I told them exactly what my goals were though, they thought it was a perfect match for my interests.

What are some other things you thought you'd like to do as a career, when you were growing up?

BMK • For a really long time, I wanted to be a vet. Later, I wanted to be a physiotherapist or a journalist. Just before I learned more about forestry, I thought I might like to be a wildlife rehabilitator as well as an author and a Highland dance teacher.

What do you think you'll like about working in forestry after you graduate?

BMK • I think my favourite part about working in forestry will be the chance to travel and spend time outside, in the forest, doing the things I enjoy. I also think that friendly, close-knit work environments are very important and all of the companies and logging sites that I've visited so far have seemed to fit my values.

Do you worry about the up-down cycle of the industry? Do you think you'll always have stable employment?

BMK • I think forestry will continue to grow and thrive for the foreseeable future because it's such an important industry in the province. Even if it does go down again, I think I'll always have a stable job because so many of the current employees are nearing retiring age and the industry is looking for more young workers.

What's the funniest thing that's ever happened to you while working in the woods?

BMK • My favourite memory in the woods

MUCH MORE THAN CHOPPING AND PLANTING: Before Breagh Kobayashi could commit to a career in the woods, she had to learn more about BC's biggest industry.

was when my class was doing a plant identification test right after a heavy rain-fall. We had to go down a steep hill to get to the site. I slipped and slid down the hill and got mud all over myself. My friends' shocked faces when I got back to school, dripping and leaving footprints in the hallways, were priceless! It was embarrassing, but we all had a good laugh.

What's the biggest thing you've learned about yourself since starting the program?

BMK • I don't think I learned much about myself in the forestry program at my high school, but I did grow in my self-confidence. Before I started the course, I didn't like working in groups much and I felt nervous about starting conversations with professionals. Throughout the course, I started feeling much more comfortable with group work and I did interviews with forest professionals while conducting research for a project about root rot that I ended up presenting in front of the mayor of my town, among others in my community! I finished with a summer job at Capacity Forest Management and my offer of admission from UBC came about a month later.

What's the biggest thing you've learned about the forest industry since starting the program?

BMK • Before starting my forestry class, I didn't realize how extensive the industry is. It offers so many opportunities, and opens so many doors, especially for young and eager workers. You don't need a post-secondary education to find a great job in forestry, but with a college or university degree or diploma, you could go into so many different fields: forestry, environmental analysis, biology, engineering… the list goes on. Not only was this a big lesson for me, I think this is what ultimately attracts me most to forestry.

What has surprised you most about the people you've met in the industry?

BMK • One thing that has surprised me a lot about the people I've met so far is their passion for their careers. They have all been super excited about what they do every day, full of energy and, in most cases, a bit of pride. I haven't yet met anyone who has had a bad word to say about their jobs, or who doesn't seem to be enjoying themselves.

Why do you think more teens don't go into careers in forestry? What would you tell them?

BMK • I think forestry isn't a more popular choice among teens simply because most don't realize how many job opportunities the industry offers. Before I started researching forestry as a potential career, I thought it was all tree planting and logging but there is so much more to it. I think more teens would go into forestry if it was promoted a bit more, particularly in the fields where further education is required and more choices are available. I would tell any teen that if they're willing to work in teams and enjoy being outside, then there is probably a job in the industry that will interest them.

Did anyone ever discourage you from going into this career?

BMK • Only those who don't realize that forestry is more than chopping down trees have ever discouraged me from forestry.

What's the hardest thing you do in the woods?

BMK • The hardest thing in the woods, for me so far, is climbing over logs. I wouldn't say I'm in bad shape, but I'm pretty short and it's tough for me to haul my stumpy legs over some of the larger obstacles!

> **"I would tell any teen that if they're willing to work in teams and enjoy being outside, then there is probably a job in the [forestry] industry that will interest them."**
>
> *– Breagh Kobayashi*

Describe your personality

BMK • Although I'm shy, I enjoy being with people. I'm ambitious, but I have a good sense of humour and I like to have fun. I always try to encourage others. I'm also fairly artistic - I am a highland dancer and I play the clarinet, the saxophone and the violin.

What do you care most about in life?

BMK • Above all, I value friends and family, but I'm also interested in arts and sciences. I want to make a positive difference for the environment. I also want to travel and learn new ideas from different cultures to bring home and integrate into my daily life. FF

making the most of our WOO

Jalu Wood Creations

Jalutoys.com

Makes • Handcrafted wood toy figurines in animal and human shapes

Where • Plummer Creek Road, near Lund

Wood • Local alder

You'll recognize their work at • Ecossentials; Filberg Festival; Waldorf schools; Vancouver Circle Craft Christmas Market; ETSY

Government money • Started on the local EI Community Futures program

When their kids were small, Eric Renken and Gabriele Shaub ran out of patience with plastic toys, and started making an alternative: their own, high-quality colourful wood figures.

Eric was an avionics electrician with Pacific Coastal, and Gabriele, an artist. When the airline moved its shop to Vancouver, the family elected to stay in Powell River, and start a toy company.

"The first five years were really hard," says Gabriele. But now, the duo are at their maximum capacity. He carves the toys in his garage workshop, she paints them in a loft studio overlooking the fat chickens in their lush garden.

African animals; Little Red Riding Hood; rolling beavers that toddlers can pull on a string; Rainforest animals; stacking rainbows – each piece is non-toxic and finished with beeswax.

"From August until Christmas we're working 12-hour days, seven days a week," said Eric. He also notes that the business is about lifestyle; the pair have no interest in expanding beyond the two of them, and they like that they can be independent and make their own schedule.

Q: How do you make a log more valuable than a log?

A: Make it more than a log.

The Sunshine Coast is home to the following 10 companies, and dozens more, each making beautiful and useful things from the forests. We all want more of this. "Value-added" means well-paid jobs and a healthy environment.

But is the government's $17 million annual investment to enhance this sector working hard enough for this region?

GO PLAY IN THE WOODS: Eric Renken and Gabriele Shaub's wood toys transform the ubiquitous Alder into these squeal-worthy toys. Goldilocks, moose, seals, little forest critters... which one do you want the most?

The furniture maker Nico Spacecraft, with a studio in the woods of Robert's Creek, has a Web site that speaks a pared down language, radiating a particular cool factor. Check it out if you want: *nicospacecraft.com*. It's bare, uncluttered. All that white, with muted neutral tones and art photography make the wood grains pop on the screen.

In the value-added wood business, a well articulated brand sells, its a calling card, a finger print - a signature. That's according to Nicolas Meyer (above), the Swiss-trained designer and fine furniture maker who owns Nico Spacecraft with his partner and wife, Jess Meyer. He didn't start out just knowing

that, though. He thought, if you want to succeed you have to do it all, so he kept focusing on his old-world craft only.

But through friends in the field of marketing he realized what a brand actually can do– providing its done right. So these carpenters changed their company's name from "Swiss Quality Furniture" to "Nico Spacecraft." And they decided to utilize BC Wood's services. That's the government-funded agency tasked with helping small value-added forest-products manufacturers break into the international market.

Fifteen years ago, the Meyers paid their fees and became members of the agency. On the government's dime, BC Wood took them as observers to the International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York, where design savvy firms from all over the world come to mingle, showcase and order new and trending product.

There, they were able to experience and understand how their company compares in that culture of design, learn about logistics and what goes on behind the scenes of an event at that calibre. Businesses they met were surprisingly open about sharing insights and how to get a fair shot at success.

"It was a huge learning curve for us," said Meyer, on the phone from his Robert's Creek studio.

"It's not just about taking what you built and put it on the floor. It's about how you present yourself; from booth design and brochures to how you dress – that is your brand and it will represent a particular lifestyle. First you'll need to establish what that style is, for yourself and for your company, and then translate it into everything to do with your brand. This may not always be seen as politically correct, but its a fact. First impressions count. For example, dress appropriately and people will treat you accordingly."

The duo went home, fine-tuned their new brand "Nico Spacecraft" and muscled up the courage to commit. Instead of taking whatever carpentry contract came along, the Meyers committed to crafting just one-of-a-kind contemporary furniture. They created the aforementioned cool website, business cards and brochures and went back to the same show

Compuwood

Compuwoodmfg.com

Makes • Wood signs, inlaid floors, posts & beams, other stuff

Where • Padgett Road, Powell River

Wood • Western Red Cedar, Douglas-fir, exotics

You'll recognize their work at • The Willingdon Beach bandstand, the Tla'Amin Community Health sign, private properties from West Vancouver to New York City.

Government money • A $130,000 loan from the local Community Futures program

Whether you need a 30-foot log milled for a swank post-and-beam palace in Lund, or an intricate design carved in to a weather-proof wooden sign, George Ouellete and Clay Brander are your men. Ouellete, a carpenter, faller, and inventor hailing from Rimouski in Eastern Quebec, and Brander, a mechanical engineer who has worked in Japan, Honduras and Ghana, have built up a flexible shop on Ouellete's Padgett Road property.

"I'm a scrounger," said Ouellete, referring to his skill for finding used equipment and re-purposing it to turn out impressively-diverse wood products. He made a laser cutter, an adjustable router, and many other unique machines. "This whole operation is very high risk. That's what I like. I like to do things that no one else does."

Toquenatch Creek

Cedar-strip.com

Since • 2001

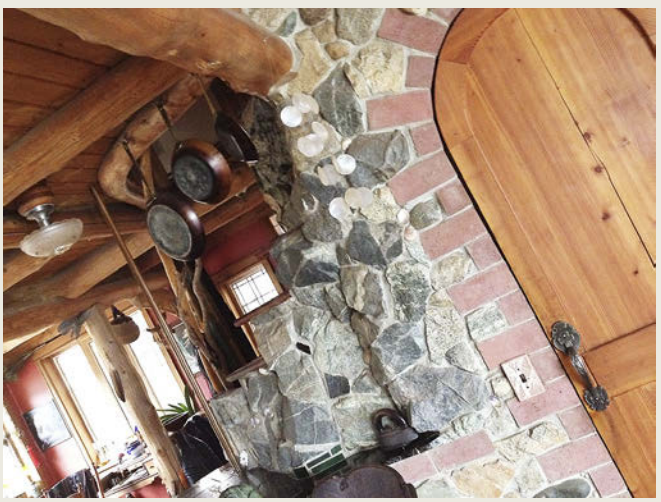
Makes • Timber-framed homes; cedar-strip kayaks, canoes and small watercraft; furniture

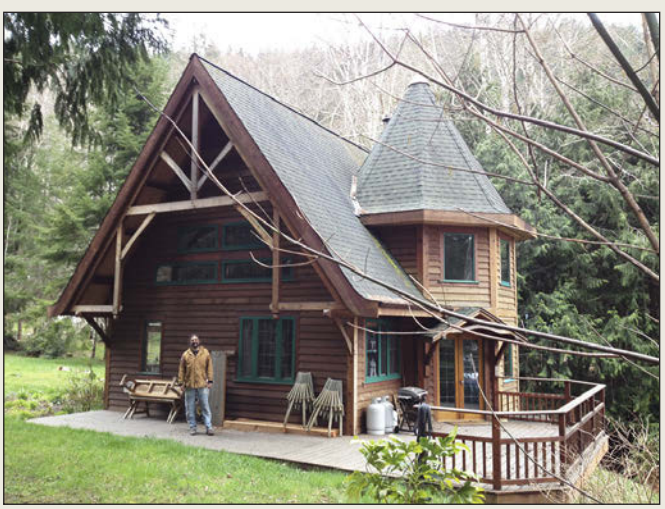
Where • Plummer Creek Road, near Lund

Wood • Western Red Cedar

You'll recognize his work • on the ocean, in private homes, online

Government money • Started on the EI Community Futures program





At the end of a long, bumpy road near Okeover Inlet is Jurgen Koppen's extraordinary property and workshop. He lives there with his wife Cindy and their two dogs, Cello & Kiwi.

In his well-lit woodworking shop, he crafts many beautiful products made with cedar, plus some abalone & hard wood for embellishments. Primarily he builds stunning cedar-strip kayaks, in-demand by serious paddlers throughout the country. Due to their firm, ultra-light construction that speed through the waters, owners remark on his boats, "You always end up waiting for your paddling buddies, because you're just gone!"

Jurgen & Cindy's hobbit-like home – which they designed and crafted themselves, is an example of the organic, West Coast Builders-style that emerged from the temperate rain-forests in Oregon and on up to Alaska. Curving rock walls, timber-framing, recycled materials and old lead-glass windows, make the house appear ideal for a forest fairy-tale. Jurgen would like to do more home designing & building, he says.

"North of town, you're never the odd-man out," he said, of his original style. "There's no building code, so you get to build strange things. You can be creative. Hexagons, octagons, round stuff, domes. The weirder the better."

Theden Forest Products

Thedenforestproducts.com

Since • 1992

Makes • Wood floors, windowsills, molding

Where • Highway 101, north of Powell River

Wood • Douglas-fir, Alder, Maple.

You'll recognize their work • Reproduction-heritage wood moldings at Henderson House in Townsite, private properties.

Government money • Skills workshop through BC Wood several years ago, PRREDS

We only deal with local wood. We want to make this forest as valuable as it can be." So says Peter Ranger, who owns Theden with his ex-son-in-law Darren Gaylard.

In their workshop on the side of an idyllic hill, where Peter lives, the pair turns raw lumber from local sawmills into exquisitely-crafted wood flooring. Old growth, they note, has a tighter grain than the second-growth commonly available here. But they'll work with what's available. They kiln-dry it themselves, and run each piece through a Weining molder twice by hand, to make it buttery-smooth.

Once they sold flooring to customers in the USA and England, as well as across Canada, but with so many local sawmills out of business, they can't reliably source enough lumber to operate at that level anymore. So they take on smaller local contracts, and focus on quality.

Local business, they note, means more local jobs with better salaries.

BEAUTIFUL AND USEFUL: That was Arts & Crafts movement pioneer William Morris' wise words about what belongs in a home. Only things that are beautiful and useful – both of which Theden excels at making. Above is Henderson House, the Arts & Crafts-era doctor's home in Townsite, which the duo helped restore.

the next year – this time as exhibitors.

"We were met with an overwhelmingly great response," he said, recalling that one well known firm wanted to order 150 of one of their designs – with a three-month deadline. "The Terrance Conran Shop showed interest. We were thrilled!!! So excited. We thought this can be our breakthrough."

This is the kind of story economic development folks hope for. A small, local company embraces the available support, and in turn catches a break to see their hard work come to fruition in starting to play a role in the regional value-added landscape.

However, that story doesn't repeat itself very often here in forestry country. Despite the Sunshine Coast and Northern Vancouver Island being home to dozens if not hundreds of wood manufacturers, most wood harvested locally is processed elsewhere. And, it seems many local manufacturers – with room to grow – are disconnected from government help. How did this happen?

On the Sunshine Coast, Nico Spacecraft is the only member of BC Wood. In 2015, the provincial and federal governments will spend $17 million to help this industry develop, through BC Forest Innovation and Investment – which in turn supports BC Wood, FP Innovations, BC's Centre for Advanced Wood Processing, and WoodWorks BC. Much of the investment is about branding and developing international markets. Some is hands-on help

for small manufacturers, such as Nico Spacecraft, or theoretically, others profiled here. (No spokesperson for the agency made themselves available by deadline.)

Together, the agencies seem to be doing a good job selling BC's story as a place that produces beautiful, sustainably-harvested wood. But no agency plays the role of talent scout, searching out undiscovered manufacturers and helping them to raise their profile – like Nico Spacecraft – or at least become more successful. That's up to the manufacturers themselves. Not one of the small businesses we profiled for this magazine had grabbed on to what's offered.

Inside Passage School of Fine Cabinetmaking

insidepassage.ca

Since • 2005

Makes • Furniture; on-site courses in fine furniture making

Where • Roberts Creek

Wood • Arbutus, Hemlock, and other sustainably-harvested local woods

You'll recognize his students • in over 35 countries, including South Africa, Spain, China, and the USA

From all over the world, and ranging from life-long wood-workers to those who have never picked up a hand-tool, Robert Van Norman's students come for one purpose: to learn the art and skills to craft fine furniture. The school offers four 10-week modules designed around the late, renowned woodworker James Krenov's craftsman philosophy.

"The furniture we make tells a story," says Van Norman. "Our clients like to know the story. If I'm purchasing furniture from Edmonton, I have no idea where the wood came from or who made it. Here, we purchase our logs locally, we know where it came from and who cut it down."

Van Norman's favourite species to work with?

"Whichever one I'm working with right now! Now it's arbutus. I have a love affair with wood: the colour, the texture, the grain. It's all magical."

Come on, logs. Be valuable.

Ever since Scott Randolph moved to BC in 1997, the province has mulled the same question. How to light the wood manufacturing industry on fire? Programs have come and gone, said the City of Powell River's economic development officer.

"It's been a difficult nut to crack in this province," admitted Randolph, in an interview in his office. "When you think about the incredible resource we have, you'd think we could come up with more products.... Everyone likes to talk the talk about value-added, but there doesn't seem to be much control. The focus has always been on where to build the next sawmill, or how are we going to save the pulp and paper industry."

Here on the coast, he's thrilled with what we do have: a bow and arrow maker, wood flooring, shakes and shingles and more. Finding the support to help them grow is the key. But the reality is, he notes, like any business, it takes hard work and it's a bit of a crap shoot.

Locally, he said, Community Futures has been key in helping artisan producers find their footing. The City of Powell River is soon relaunching its Business Retention and Expansion program. And there are, of course, the traditional, not wood-specific small business programs available.

"Everyone says it's a no-brainer," he reiterated. "We should be doing more with the wood we harvest."

Make more, sell more

"The reality is the squeaky wheel gets the grease."

That's according to Christopher Gaston, an associate professor of markets and economics with UBC's Centre for Advanced Wood Processing (from here out, we'll call it "The Centre.) Helping small businesses find their customers; helping to develop their products, and teaching them marketing skills are The Centre's core.

A lot of smaller manufacturers don't know about the program, Gaston concedes.

For an example, he offers his "baby" – a joint project he's coordinating between Emily

Valley Building Supplies

valleybuildingsupplies.com

Since • 1976

Makes • Roof trusses

Where • Padgett Road, Powell River

Wood •Spruce, from the BC Interior

You'll recognize his work •
In the interior roof structures of many buildings around the Sunshine Coast.

Government money • None

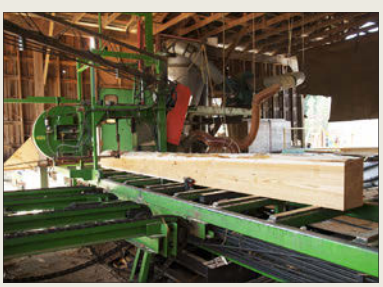
As a hardware store and lumber yard, most of Valley's business involves selling value-added products, rather than building them. But about 20 years ago, owner Vic Spreeuw saw an opportunity: roof trusses. These are the triangular frames that support the roofs of homes and commercial buildings. With more and more hips and valleys appearing on designs, roofs were becoming much more complex to build. And, because they're awkwardly-shaped, trusses are difficult to ship. So his crew started making them to order.

"It's difficult to convey that [design] information from Powell River to the Lower Mainland [where they might otherwise be built,]" he noted. "Being local makes it better."

Now, Spreeuw employs five full-time guys who design, make and deliver trusses. They're mostly for the Powell River region, but also ship to the lower Sunshine Coast and Vancouver Island.

Spreeuw's dad and uncle started Valley nearly 40 years ago as a building materials shop. Today, trusses represent about five per cent of this local family business' work.

Goat Lake Forest Products & Lois Lumber



goatlake.com

Since • 1980

Makes • Shakes and shingles; lumber; fencing; decking, trim, etc.

Where • South of Powell River

Wood • Cedar: salvaged and lower-end harvested timber

You'll recognize their work • On local construction, but also on high-end homes and commercial projects around North America

Government money • None

What do you do with those half-rotted cedar trees you find in the woods? They're soft, so they have no value as saw logs. Back in 1980, Rory Maitland started Goat Lake as an answer to that question. You make shakes and shingles, of course. Chunks of decadent cedar get split by machine into small flat boards, which become richly-textured, natural roof shingles. Or, high-end siding. Locally, you'll find a lot of Goat Lake shakes and shingles on high-end homes in Whistler; about 70 per cent of them are sold to the US.

"We can't automate it," said co-owner Howie McKamey, noting that the two companies employ 30 full-timers at good wages. "Rory and I were just talking about it. Guitar tops are probably the most value-added. But shake and shingle is next!"

Unlike other small wood manufacturers with rising stars, McKamey notes that shakes and shingles are "sunset products." The only material you can make them out of is decadent old-growth cedar, which BC's forests are running out of. Now, there's about 40 shake and shingle mills operating on BC's coast.

"It used to be a commodity," he said. "There were big mills with three shifts a day. Now, it's a specialty market."

Carr University in Vancouver, and the Freida Diesing School of Design in Terrace. First Nations are invited to send teams of carvers to compete in making door panels. They work under master carvers, and with an established Lower Mainland door manufacturer.

Once the door panel designs are chosen, carvers learn how to make high-quality, artist-finished reproductions of the panels, for sale in the range of $20,000 each in Japan, Germany and elsewhere.

"It's not new that First Nations communities have this incredible skill set in wood carving," said Gaston, in an interview from his office on the woodsy UBC campus. "Rather than just making that about individual artists, we can help show how to turn that into an enterprise for the community."

Competing in wood manufacturing with existing door makers can be a losing business; competing globally means someone else usually wins on price. "You have to find a niche that makes you different. First Nations products are easy to brand…. The answer to me is to go for higher-end products. That doesn't always take large investments. The door example – that's pure labour. It's not equipment. It's skilled labour."

Exporting raw wood should be seen as a failure, he noted (he's not in favour of a ban, though). It represents a much-smaller-than-it-should-be wood manufacturing industry.

Challenges, he enumerated, are access to wood; capacity and training; knowledge about markets, and programs to help. But he also noted those challenges are not insurmountable.

"I can't say enough about the importance of us branding ourselves," said Gaston, echoing suit-wearing Nico Spacecraft. "On the BC coast, we've got the nicest softwood you'll find anywhere in the world. We have access to exceptional wood to work with. Historically, a lot of that has gone into commodity markets, so we've not come close to extracting the value that we could."

West Coast Log Homes

Westcoastloghomes.com

Since • 1999

Makes: • Post-and-beam, timber-framed and other stately styles of wood building

Where • Gibsons

Wood • 90 per cent Western Red Cedar, 10 per cent Douglas-fir

You'll recognize their work at • The Ruby Lake Resort; the Gibsons RCMP offices; Gibson's Landing Harbour Office; the Iris Griffiths Centre are all their work. Plus, many opulent homes in Whistler, Pender Harbour; Sun Peaks, and elsewhere.

Government money • None.

If it were publicly-traded, Andy Koberwitz's Gibsons-based log home company would be a no-brainer for investment. Buy stocks immediately! After 15 years in business, Koberwitz partnered this year with Fei Liu, a Chinese business strategist who is developing markets for the Canadiana-style homes and commercial buildings. In 2008, it was this company that built Japan's "log home of the year." That same year, the company was recognized as one of BC's top 25 exporters in the category of sustainability. When markets crashed in 2008, business slowed, but it's picked right back up again, and Koberwitz has his eyes on the Asian and German markets.

But not at the expense of local sourcing or quality. West Coast Log Homes maintains a unique relationship with the Sunshine Coast Community Forest.

"We go in the forest and hand-pick our logs," he said, explaining how he maintains his high-quality fibre supply. "Because we take the bark off and finish them smoothly, we need to pay more. They fall them carefully for us. We pay close to $100 more per metre. The value is added right down to the logger. Everyone makes more."

That value is then realized by the community forest, which gives dividends to the lower coast's infrastructure projects.

Given the worth to the coast – the company employs 30 people – why there aren't more value-added forest products companies on the coast?

"There should be," he said. "It is hard to start a company but we do need more. We are in discussion with [Sechelt City] councilor Noel Muller to help establish more value-added companies to work with our community forest. There are a lot of by-products we could make here on the coast – and that creates opportunities for others."

Koberwitz suggested products he uses but sources off the coast, such as wood doors, stairways, window frames and others, would be a good starting place.

He also offered some words of advice for young entrepreneurs: "You can do it and never give up."

"We had the chance to become big, and we stayed small. We discussed it. We like this small shop. It's my wife and I and one guy.... [To go big] we'd have to jump in and create a beast that we'd have to keep feeding."

- Nicolas Meyer, Nico Spacecraft, with life and business partner Jess Meyer

Adding up our other values

That may be true. At all of the small manufacturers I visited (as a non-expert), I believe I saw the potential for growth. Jurgen Koppen's exquisitely-crafted cedar-strip kayaks, for example, or his unique Hobbit-style timber-frame homes, should be marketable throughout the Northwest, and globally. However, he said, he lives at the end of the road for a reason. Growing a business, hiring staff, bookkeeping, taxes, marketing,

Saltair Mill

Western Forest Products

Westernforest.com

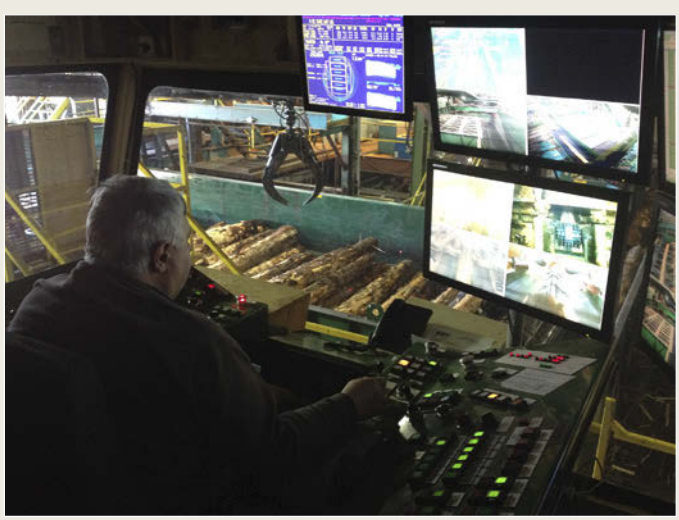
Since • **1972**

Makes • **Lumber: decking, squares and Japanese genban**

Where • **Ladysmith**

Wood • **Douglas-fir, Western Red Cedar, Hemlock, Cypress**

You'll recognize their work • **In buildings throughout Canada, plus US, Japan, China, Australia and Belgium**



THE LOG RIDE: Top, logs from the Powell River region are floated over by tug, and arrive on the mill's waterfront. Right, logs are scanned and in milliseconds, the computer detects the best way to saw the log for maximum value. Far right: about 150 people work at the mill.

stress – does he want this? No. Neither do several other small manufacturers. The curse of the coast. And its charm.

That's what we're selling through our resident attraction program, said Economic Development officer Randolph: lifestyle.

"It's not necessarily bad," he said. "If we can support these small businesses where the owners can ride the trails with their kids everyday, that's success."

Even Nico Spacecraft's Nicolas and Jess Meyer, when debriefing their breakthrough moment after the International Contemporary Furniture show in New York ultimately chose the forest, over fame.

"We had the chance to become big, and we stayed small," said Meyer. "We discussed it. We like this small shop. It's my wife and I and one guy. We have basic machines. To go big, we'd need a line of credit, to hire people, and to get a bigger facility. We'd have to jump in and create a beast that we'd have to keep feeding."

That kind of life also requires a city, a nanny, and a busy lifestyle, Meyer said. Instead, the Meyers chose to live and work on their Sunshine Coast property, raise their own kids, share family meals, and on weekends, work on projects and go to the beach.

No regrets. On the Sunshine Coast, they craft beautiful and unique furniture, and they've manufactured a sweet life. FF

If you spend time around Powell River, you've probably seen your share of tree-filled trucks rumbling down the highways. Where are they going? If you're guessing that they're being exported as raw logs, get ready for it… in most cases, you're wrong.

More than 97 per cent of the trees harvested by Western Forest Products' Stillwater Forest Operation – the biggest licensee in these parts – goes to local mills in coastal British Columbia for domestic value-added processing. One such example is Saltair Mill, just outside of Ladysmith, on Vancouver Island. There, the mill's 150 employees use high-tech equipment to process the logs into contract-specific building materials. The rounded corners of the logs and the bark become chips and "hog," which get fed into the coast's pulp and paper industry.

The day I was there, the mill was handling two lumber contracts. One was an order from Japan, and the other for Belgium.

Saltair, situated on the waterfront, looks a lot like an amusement park log ride – but with more whirling saws. Powell River logs arrive by tug, and get forked up out of the water by an Iron Giant-sized claw, dripping with ocean.

Then, they tumble into the automated conveyors. The metal-grate walkways shake as the machines move the logs along, as they're scanned, squared, sawed, and packaged. The noise, as you might imagine, makes conversation difficult.

Why has WFP invested $38 million in it over the last three years?

In short, to compete globally.

"We're a global company and we have to be able to compete on a global stage. That's why we need to invest in technology," said Mark Buckley, the manager of Saltair, in an interview onsite, explaining how the context has changed since the days of hundreds of small independent mills on BC's coast.

Chile, India and China's mill industries all spend far less on labour, Buckley said. Russia has trees, he noted, but the country can't claim a sustainable industry, as it doesn't require replanting as Canada does. Also, it doesn't have the infrastructure or stability Canada does.

Investing in becoming globally competitive means the company can provide stable employment and support local communities. Investing in technology also enhances safety, reduces costs, improves productivity, and ensures the best use of the forest resource. Saltair is one of seven mills and two re-manufacturing facilities owned by WFP. The $38 million invested in Saltair is part of WFP's $125 million strategic capital investment program to modernize its mills.

The mill is dying.

It's closing in three years.

Besides, hardly anyone works there anymore.

Since Fred Chinn took over as manager of Catalyst Powell River a year ago, he's heard it all. And he wants you to know, none of it is true.

"There will always be newspapers and books. The question is, will you be one of the people providing it?" he said during a tour of Catalyst's oceanfront site. "We will."

The Richmond-headquartered Catalyst transferred Chinn from its Port Alberni mill location to Powell River specifically to tweak the mill's efficiency. Like other industries, paper production is swiftly changing. Competition is global. Technology has replaced some labour. Safety records are much better than they used to be (especially at Catalyst, where – knock on wood – it's been over a year since the last time someone was injured on the job).

And, of course, demand for paper has fallen.

How fast? Projections are, newspapers and magazines will shrink by about five per cent over the next five years. But retail inserts (like the flyers that come in the *Weekend Shopper*) are projected to shrink by only 1.3 per cent. Seeing as that's the local mill's niche, Chinn explains, this community is well-suited for a future as a paper maker, as well as a past.

"Are times scary? They're scary," said Chinn. "But we're not sitting back and saying, 'We're done.'"

Some of the mill's reputation for being close to death has come from the shut-down of Paper Machine 9. The small, slow machine (which looks curiously like a big, clunky Star Wars Rebel Alliance ship) was bought in 1957. Shutting it down, and shrinking the workforce from 400 to about 325 over the next few years will help make the local mill profitable. In fact, the mill hired 100 people last year, and will be hiring another 200 over the next five years to replace retiring Boomers.

The two remaining machines, are 10 and 11. Number 11 was re-purposed from making newsprint, which really is dying, to the still-thriving glossy and hi-bright papers. Fewer phone books get made now, said Chinn, but more paper is used in packaging. So they're diversifying.

More deadly reputation comes from the brouhaha last year over rising BC Hydro rates. To your house and mine, those 2015 rate hikes represent less than $30 a year.

But to Catalyst, the difference is, well, shocking. Over the four years from 2010 to 2014, Catalyst Powell River's BC Hydro bill jumped from $108 million to $145 million – an increase of $37 million a year – and they're projected to be $188 million per year by 2018.

"There's not a lot of margin," explained Chinn, on balancing energy, labour, materials and transportation costs versus finding a profit. "So we're working closely with BC Hydro."

Chinn noted that many people he's met don't realize the benefits the mill brings to the community. Of the 100 people he's hired, he said, most are locals, but some of them have come from outside the region, bringing their children and spouses with them – which of course helps fill the schools and empty the grocery stores – two clear economic goods.

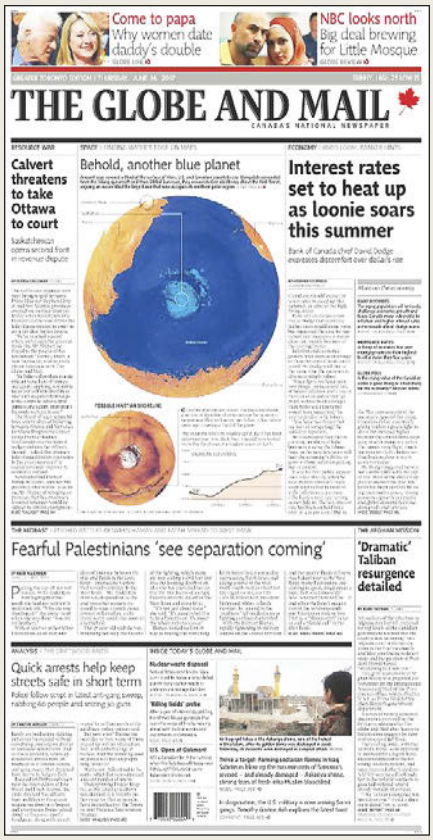
He's also made an effort to spread the wealth. Since coming, Chinn has increased donations to the Powell River Kings Junior A hockey team, getting a "Catalyst" badge on the uniforms and the company's logo on the ice. The company donates to the Fishing Derby; dry grad; Inclusion Powell River; Girl Guides; PRISMA; Powell River Chorus; the food bank; the Library; Seafair; the Legion; the Terry Fox run and others.

The bigger benefit, though? It's 325 locals making an average salary of $75,000 a year, plus benefits, and high-skills, high-wage work for another 1,800 locals working spin-off jobs.

That's not dying. That's bread and roses.

Catalyst Powell River: By the numbers

- $40 million in wages and benefits
- 400 workers, 1800 spin-off jobs
- $3 million in property taxes
- $5 million spending with local businesses
- 2.5 million fry per year into local streams
- The boiler makes steam. 93 per cent of the energy comes from hog – bark. Seven per cent natural gas.
- Is in the lowest 10 per cent of reporting mills for greenhouse gas emissions.



Catalyst

Powell River

Since • 1912

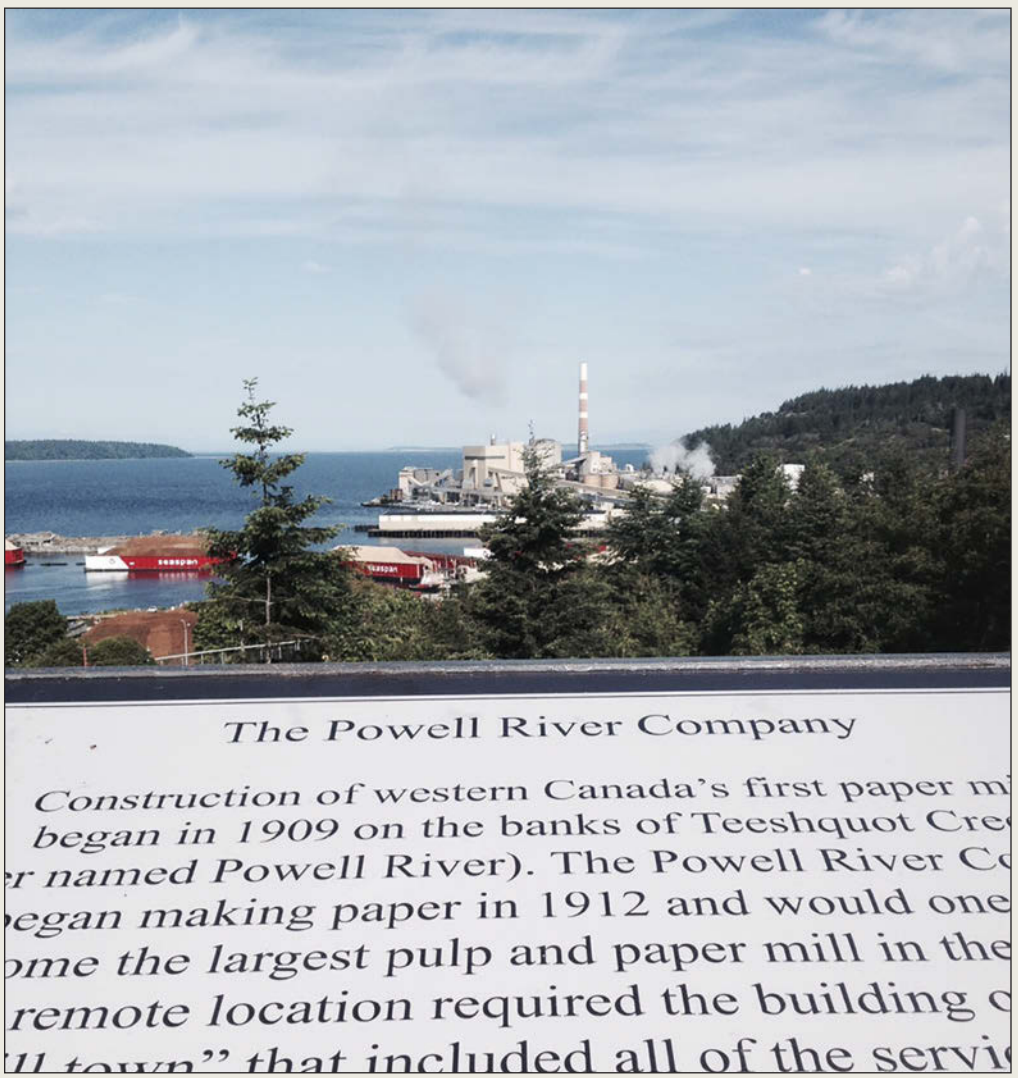
Makes • Paper

Where • Powell River's Townsite

Wood • Spruce, Pine, Fir from the pine-beetle-kill areas in the BC interior

You'll recognize Catalyst's work • *50 Shades of Grey*; the front page of the *Globe and Mail*; newspaper flyer inserts

A MILL-ION STORIES: Top, mill manager Fred Chinn says we're in this for the long haul. Above, three products that are produced at this mill: front page of the *Globe & Mail*; flyers; and *50 Shades of Grey*. Right, the mill in the landscape, photographed from the newly-signed lookout on Marine.



Myth 1

ANTI-LOGGING TREEHUGGER

Bust those ra

Who loves raw log exports? We couldn't find anyone, though industry says they're necessary to keep work flowing.

Torrance Coste (pictured above) always wanted to be a Vancouver Island fisherman, like his dad was. Instead, when the salmon stocks plummeted in the 1980s, he watched his father give up his livelihood, "the thing he cared about more than anything, besides his family." It was a painful lesson. Instead, Coste went to university.

Now, as the Vancouver Island campaigner for the Wilderness Committee – a 35-year-old Vancouver-based nonprofit that aims to preserve wild areas of BC – he lobbies to prevent the same collapse of the forest industry as he witnessed in fishing. It's how he articulates the values he was raised with, he said. He jumps out of bed excited to go to work in the morning.

So, Coste lobbies for a ban on raw log exports. But he's not anti-logging at all. His pressure for a ban is in the context of supporting the enhancement of BC's forest industries, and he's working with a strange group of bedfellows to do it – including the Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada union.

"We've cut too fast, too much, for too long," said Coste in a phone interview from a Victoria-bound ferry. "So we need to lie in the bed we've made. We can't keep cutting as we have in the past. We have to be slowing down."

The ban, he said, would put immediate pressure on local mills and manufacturers to enhance capacity. Everyone loves more value-added work in BC. And, it would force the province to reduce the annual cuts to more sustainable levels, he said.

"We need to focus on managing renewables: forests and fish. We need to get the most value out of the smallest use. Raw logs are not the way to do that. It benefits the big players, but not the people here, or the ecosystem."

"Managing renewables" is a battle cry aimed at collaboration – who wouldn't want that? – rather than conflict. It's a new kind of soft-talk in a province that's heard its share of slogans yelled into megaphones. "Manage our renewables!" doesn't have the same oomph as "Hell no, we won't go." But it might just attract enough disparate interests to push BC's old war in the woods into a shared vision for the 21st century. Or not.

The subject of raw log exports is both white-hot, and mindbogglingly-complex. The Ministry of Forests' Alan Rudson recently spoke to the Stillwater Community Advisory Group about exports; many members of the group had questions about the practice. If you want to read an excellent summary of the issue, the group's questions, and his answers, can be found online in the minutes of the November 2014 meeting at www.cagstw.org.

In short, though, there are, both federal and provincial laws in place preventing the raw export of logs. However, governments allow exemptions to those laws – and that's what's changed. In BC, raw log exports have increased significantly over the last two decades.

Before 2000, rarely did raw logs exports reach above 1 million cubic metres. In 2013,

Myth 2

THEY'RE ALL EXPORTED RAW

aw log myths

Raw log exports is the hottest topic in the woods today. It's also probably the most complex and difficult to resolve.

however, 6.7 million cubic metres were exported, without any processing. That represents 9.4 per cent of the BC harvest, according to the 2013 State of the BC Forest Sector report, prepared for the BC Ministry of Forests.

The benefits to log sellers is obvious. According to a 2014 report from the Fraser Institute – not your usual treehuggers – "the average price of logs sold domestically on the Vancouver Log Market was $74.28 per cubic metre, while the average price of logs exported was $108.35 per cubic metre." But even the usually libertarian Fraser Institute, while recommending more flexibility, proposed a cap on log exports because "free trade in logs is not the most desirable policy from British Columbia's perspective."

Both forestry proponents and government say they rely on a small amount of exports to keep people working and the flow of their operations profitable. Some of those profits are reinvested in BC mills and other operations.

On June 9, for example, the province announced it was extending an exemption to allow up to 20 per cent of logs harvested from the north coast and northwest interior to be exported raw (not including cypress or cedar). The media release noted, "Logging in these areas is expensive, given the remote locations and rugged terrain, and the logs are of poor quality and difficult to sell to the few domestic manufacturers in the area. These exemptions allow logging companies to look for international markets for the low-grade wood and enhance job opportunities for loggers and truckers in the region."

Certainly, the raw-log-export banners might quibble with that as a good solution to the problem of expensive harvesting. And, the harvesters might quibble with Coste's assertion that the sins of the past require a cut smaller than what's allowable today.

Is a ban the best way to get more local value from our timber harvest?

Perhaps. And perhaps not.

But this is a pivotal moment to see if one mounting tension in the woods can be solved through collaboration and innovation, rather than simply conflict. FF

One in 10 (9.4 per cent) BC logs are exported raw, according to the Ministry of Forests.

In Powell River, less than two per cent of logs from WFP's Stillwater Forest Operations – the biggest operator in the region – are exported raw.

Exported BC timber goes to China (54 per cent), Japan (24 per cent), South Korea (14 per cent) and the USA (7 per cent).

Your place or ours?

Catching rays on the Tree Frog Bistro patio overlooking the ocean, or enjoying a cold one while people watching in the shade on the street-side patio is hard to beat.

But if you like your location better, Tree Frog Bistro is happy to help.

"We love large groups," says manager Jovelyn Parker. "Our Banquet Room can hold up to 60 people, and we can sit 100 when we include the main dining room."

But if you're looking to hold an event at your home, bring tasty food to an office meeting or hold an event elsewhere, the Tree Frog Bistro team is ready to cater at your location.

"We can create something for any budget from sandwiches to steak and rib dinners," says chef Kim Mohr.

Mohr and her team recently expended the menu, and have created a new appetizer platter, from which patrons can pick three or four appies for discounted prices.

Mohr also creates a weekly feature menu. "We're creating something new all the time. It keeps me watching trends and paying attention to what people like. People enjoy trying something new and different."

Tree Frog first opened its doors in 2003 on Texada Island. Chef/owner Marika Varro brought her passion and love of cooking to the tiny community of Gillies Bay. Over the years she created a regular client base and people from all over the world made their way over to Texada Island where she dazzled them with her culinary delights.

When Marika moved the operation off the island to Powell River, the owners of the building renovated the garage and car dealer ship that occupied the space and in 2010 the restaurant opened in its current beautiful space.

Tree Frog Bistro is now under new management, but in keeping with Marika's tradition, is looking forward to having a long lasting relationship with the people of Powell River and making new relationships with our visiting friends from around the world.

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Climate clarion

Foresters are pretty stoic scientists. For example, they think trees are exciting. So when they start planning BC's forests for climate change, you know it's time to wake up.

Do you remember the wild wind storms of 2006? Stuart Glen does. That's the year he started working as a forester in Powell River.

The series of storms raged through BC's coastal forests that November. In a single afternoon, a storm blew down 100,000 cubic metres of timber in the Stillwater area behind Powell River – representing a quarter of Western Forest Product's allowable cut that year.

Glen, like other Registered Professional Foresters, spends a good deal of time in the woods, ruminating about the weather.

"We're closely tied to the outdoors," he said in an interview in a cut-block near Lois Lake, where the slash was drying under a hotter-than-normal spring sun. "As forest professionals, we're always watching what the weather is doing from year to year. But it's difficult, because how do you tease out what's a two-year variation from a long-term trend?"

Surprisingly, if you're outside the industry – and not surprisingly, if you're in it – foresters such as Glen are the canaries in the climate coal mine. Or, more precisely, the miners giving CPR to canaries. They're not a radical group for the most part – wonky applied-scientists who are the last to "cry wolf." But, they've got to make realistic forestry plans. And now, those plans includes adapting for inevitable climate change.

No doubt: it's changing

As they work with trees, which grow over decades, foresters look 70 years into the future to guess what the climate will be like, and adapt their planting and management plans to suit those future forests.

The extreme events that can come with even small changes in mean temperature can have dramatic effects on trees: droughts, wind storms, heat, fires, freezing and unfreezing. So they must get it right.

Think of the dramatic pine beetle infestation, for example, that killed 160,000 square kilometers of BC forests, caused by a lack of freezing temperatures in winters, and resulting in increased summer forest fire risks. If you doubt whether climate change is happening, in other words, talk to a forester; he or she will talk your ear off.

In the eight years since 2006, no storms have equaled those squalls. But in 2015, foresters from California to Alaska are facing another extreme weather event: a perhaps-frighteningly hot, dry summer. In California alone, the drought has killed 12 million trees in a year.

> **"It's very concerning.... A lot of the trees that are in our forest right now will be considerably unhappy in 60 or 80 years."**
>
> *– Greg O'Neill*

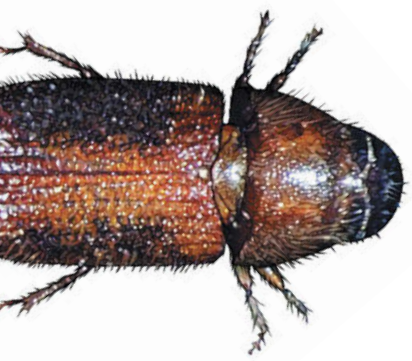
Environment is economy

Here in BC, where forestry employs one in eight working residents (directly or indirectly) and represents $28 billion in exports, the provincial government takes climate change in the woods very seriously. The Ministry of Forests, for example, employs Greg O'Neill, one of the only full-time climate change adaptation scientists around.

"It's certainly a hot topic," he said. "Climate change is such a downer of a topic. But forestry is one area where we can actually respond. We just need to understand what's happen-

YEP, THAT'S A MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE: And yep, climate change helped these little buggers kill 160,000 square kilometres of BC's forests. In a battle over what's the most destructive climate-related force, though, the droughts in California this year may win. They've already killed 12 million trees.

THEY GROW UP SO FAST: Above, RPF Stuart Glen stands with a five-year-old cedar tree in a cut block near Lois Lake. Across the road, he stands with a 15-year-old Douglas-fir. How well trees grow depends on matching the right seed stock to the site ecology, as foresters predict how the climate will be in 70 or so years. Below, a Douglas-fir bark beetle outbreak was averted here, after the 2006 wind storms.



ing. If we can do that, it's conceivable that we can mitigate climate change."

It's real. About 20 per cent of climate zones have shifted over the past two decades to a different type of climate zone, O'Neill explained. Foresters can select for a seedling mix appropriate to the future forest, he noted. In BC's 350 test plots, trees that are ill-adapted for the current climate tell him about it: they look sick, contorted, they have fewer needles, and they grow slower. Western Larch, he noted, is now grown in the Bulkley Valley, where it never was before.

What about the argument that if climate change is coming, maybe BC should get out of the business of logging?

"Stopping cutting down the forest will not stop climate change," he said. "If we leave forests to their own devices to address climate change, there's a good chance they will become increasingly sick if we don't assist them in moving, because they can't migrate quickly enough."

Growing forests a good thing

Across BC, 232 million hectares of forests are "managed." That represents about 60 per cent of forested land in the province, so seed selection and adapting for change is a big deal here. It is internationally, as well. At the 14th World Forestry Conference, happening this September in Durban, South Africa, adapting forests for climate change is a key topic.

In 2013, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization released "Climate Change Guidelines for Forest Managers," to help guide industry.

"Significant and rapid changes in climate patterns worldwide are being driven by global warming caused by human activities that emit… greenhouse gases," reads the 123-page paper. It notes that 17 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions globally can be blamed on deforestation and forest degradation, but also noted that well-managed forests – young and growing forests – are important carbon sinks.

"It is concerning that neither climate nor species [of trees] respond linearly to changing conditions, but rather, tend to react abruptly at certain thresholds or tipping points. Forest managers should keep this in mind while recognizing that thresholds are hard to predict."

Don't fumble that fire

O'Neill, from his BC lab, and Glen, on the ground in Powell River, live this complexity every day.

For Glen, especially, his day-to-day work involves mitigating for climate change-related risks.

In the cut-block near Lois Lake, for example, Glen explained that the wood debris has been piled as part of the plan to manage the fire hazard. This year, WFP will have these piles chipped and removed by Stewart Systems. They also thin out the tops of some trees so extreme winds won't topple them – though he notes that anything like the 2006 storms will take down even well-managed forests. Seed selection, and choices about where to plant here, are also determined through a climate change lens.

After the 2006 storms, Glen recalled, foresters here predicted an infestation of the Douglas-fir bark beetle. They were right. Two years after the wind storm, foresters confirmed the first signs of attack by the bug. With a sharp understanding of the weather event, though, they developed a plan, harvested infected trees, and set traps, and the beetle returned to endemic levels.

Can you see it?

What does Glen think about the change he's seen here over the past decade?

"It's like aging. If you look in the mirror every day, you won't see it. But if you look at a picture of when you're 20, and a picture of when you're 60, you'll see it. We are watching for trends, reading the latest science, we are thinking about it. And we are working it into our practice."

And O'Neill?

"Well, scientifically, its very intriguing," he said. "As a human being, it's very concerning. I expect that a lot of the trees that are in our forest right now will be considerably unhappy in 60 or 80 years because they evolved in a climate that was a degree or a degree and a half colder than the current climate. Since evolution happens very slowly, those trees can't keep up with the rate of climate change. So I'm very concerned about climate change impacts." FF

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For Aggressive Timber's falling supervisor Trevor Herron, 42, the forest is his office. Here, the Powell River dad-of-four chats with *Ferns & Fallers* about the unparalleled adventure – and danger – of harvesting timber for a living.

Falling for the wild

What does a faller do?
A faller cuts down trees and bucks them into marketable lengths. Assessing and controlling the hazards involved, as well as making it safe for the logging and planting crews that will follow, is also part of the job.

Position title with Aggressive:
Superintendent.

Number of years as a faller:
20 years.

Who's your family?
My immediate family is my spouse Alisha Tedesco and four boys: Andrew (21), Richard (18), Kyle (15) and Matthew (14).

Where you're from originally:
I moved from Calgary at eight with my family. I've called Powell River home since then.

Why you decided to become a faller:
It was more a progression of experiences rather than a decision. I started working in the bush after Grade 12 as a shake blocker, and as my experience in the bush grew I was introduced to a faller, who mentored me along the way. There was not any course needed back then. I could never imagine being in an office all day long. There is an element of thrill and a great sense of accomplishment which keep this job enjoyable to me.

Describe a typical work day:
That's another nice thing about my job, no two days are the same. As a supervisor I oversee the progression and organization of falling activities for a given project and make sure the crew is operating in a safe and efficient manner; this includes a long list of duties and responsibilities. A heli-faller gets transported onto the hill with a helicopter at heli pads which we build out of the timber we fall in the area. The faller falls and bucks trees for a seven-hour day. Weather, timber type and terrain vary greatly in our forests, making every day a new challenge and never the same.

"We care about the forest more than just about anyone else."
– Trevor Herron

CHOPPERS IN A CHOPPER: (right) Trevor Herron and his colleagues build platforms for helicopters to land on when they're falling in remote areas; (left) Herron falls a cedar.

What do you think about when you're falling trees?

This is a fairly intense job, requiring great attention, focus and all of your senses. Everything we do changes our work area as we try to control thousands of pounds with just our chain saws and hands. Everything else seems to disappear when I'm falling trees.

What equipment do you use?

My daily tools include chain saws, axe, wedges and a portable radio. We wear personal protective equipment to help keep us safe like cut-resistant pants, hard hat, face screen and earmuffs to name a few.

How much time do you typically spend away from home working, in a year?

I spend anywhere between 200 - 250 days away from home every year.

What kind of living set-up do you have when you're working away?

Mostly we specialize in helicopter logging and we work in remote locations all over the coast. Floating camps are set up to be mobile and are towed to these locations with tug boats. Everyone has their own rooms on these camps and food is catered on site.

What scares you about your job?

We have a very tight crew and are almost like family to each other. As the person sending them into these areas my worst fear is any of them getting hurt or worse.

Have you been injured on the job? Seen others injured?

I have been fortunate to have only had minor injuries on the job myself but as a supervisor and Level 3 First Aid attendant I have had to help in a number of incidents with others. These incidents have mostly been minor cuts and bruises but also include a fatality.

Best book about logging:

There are lots of great books on logging and its history. One that stands out in my memory is *Never Chop Your Rope* by Joe Garner.

What animals have you seen when you've been working?

Bear, cougar, deer elk, martin, squirrels and various species of birds, as well as all the marine life from living on float camps: whales, porpoise, seals.

What kinds of bugs have bitten you while working?

Wasps, spiders, horseflies, mosquitoes, black flies, carpenter ants and possibly others I don't even want to know about.

What do you wish other people knew about your job?

People should know that we care about the forest more than just about anyone else. It's where we spend the majority of our time; it's our families livelihood. We depend on it and appreciate it more than most would ever think.

What would you tell young people about working in the woods? Should they choose it as a career?

I would tell them that it is a very physically and mentally difficult job which can be demanding and rewarding at the same time. FF

"There is an element of thrill and a great sense of accomplishment which keep this job enjoyable to me."

– Trevor Herron


POWELL
RIVER
SUPPORTS
REAL
LOGGERS
I. T.
GET OUT!

"When the trucks show up virtually unannounced, that's when you want to dig in your heels and shout, 'Stop.'"

Nola Poirier, Friends of Stillwater Bluffs, environmental researcher

"I'm really proud of the people of Powell River who were prepared to show up and speak out against bad practices in a town that has so much wealth from forestry. That takes a lot of courage."

Judi Tyabji, former MLA and founder of Pebble in the Pond Environmental Society

"All our lives we're told to write letters, to go through the proper channels. It doesn't work anymore."

Erin Innes, activist and permaculture teacher

Not anti-logging

Anti This Logging

On May 9, about 200 people showed up for a Willingdon Beach rally, to protest Island Timberlands (IT) cut in the centre of Powell River.

"Save our trees," read one placard.

"Birds and bears and trees. Save Lot 450 Please," read another.

"Don't let the land be bare naked," read a third, held, of course, in proud West Coast naturist–activist tradition, by a man wearing shoes, and little else.

Frustration had echoed around the region since the cut was announced – a Stop IT page on Facebook, a meeting at Base Camp Coffee/Food/Art with the mayor and others; heated conversations in the hot tub at the Recreation Complex (if you've spent time in the hot tub, you'll know this is where the Sunshine Coast's great ideas are exchanged) and much more.

That frustration continues this summer, though much of the logging has been stalled, following the discovery of nesting birds in the proposed cut.

Looking around at the rally, I wondered, what, exactly, is being protested? Many of the signs seemed more anti-logging in general, than anti this particular cut – save the one pictured to the left. Was I witnessing, I wondered, the beginning of a broad-based anti-logging movement, such as those on the lower Sunshine Coast and the Gulf Islands?

So, I asked three activists. In short, the answer is both no, and perhaps yes.

Erin Innes

"Our group started as a response to the community's outrage about what IT is doing in the heart of Powell River," said Erin Innes, who is with the Powell River Forest Coalition (PRFC) – an umbrella of groups opposed to the Lot 450 cut. Innes facilitated the meeting at Base Camp, and has a background in activism – including high-profile work with the pro-democracy, anti-corporate power Occupy Vancouver in 2011. She wanted to be clear that she is speaking for herself only, not as a spokesperson for the coalition.

"That's what we're focusing on right now. And in terms of what's going on in other places, certainly I want to advocate for a kind of forestry that doesn't have to have winners and losers."

Innes shared that she grew up in the bush around BC, the daughter and granddaughter of loggers who saw their own industry crumble around them. Technology replaced people, small companies faded as giant corporations took over, and the once-thriving everyman industry has been pushed aside for shareholders, she said. Innes would like to see more sustainable, locally-benefiting, community-controlled forestry in the region.

"We know there are really skilled people working in forestry – fallers who know how to pick the high value trees and fall them, silviculturalists who can plant so it looks like the forest was never cut," permaculture-teacher Innes said, pointing to local wood lots as an example of forestry done right. "But rolling in with a feller-buncher that replaces five fallers? That's not a sustainable economic or environmental model. There is a way to do this work that doesn't pit jobs against environmentalists."

Judi Tyabji

Judi Tyabji, who is a media front-person for the anti-IT protests, said locals are reacting to two things. First, they're horrified at the logging and forest management practices allowable under the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* – far less strict than regulations under the *BC Forest Act*, which governs most of the other forested land around Powell River – which is largely Crown land. Second, they're reacting to the imminent threat of losing their urban forest.

"People thought those trees were already protected, that they were a part of Millennium Park." said Tyabji, referring to many of the trees between Townsite and Willingdon Beach. "They thought that's what the fundraising campaign was about."

As the former MLA for Kamloops-Okanagan and a rural-raised British Columbian,

Tyabji said she's in favour of regulated industry – but she is irate with Island Timberlands for, she said, cutting without following the rules.

Island Timberlands, it should be noted, refused to make a spokesperson available for an interview for this article.

At the Willingdon Beach Rally, Tyabji spoke and led the crowd in a repeated cry of "Stop The Cut!"

"I'm really proud of the people of Powell River who were prepared to show up and speak out against bad practices in a town that has so much wealth from forestry," said Tyabji, whose husband, Gordon Wilson, is the provincial LNG advocate. "That takes a lot of courage."

Nola Poirier

South of town, Nola Poirier has noticed Island Timberlands staffers in the woods, on and off, since she moved to Stillwater Bluffs three years ago. Island Timberlands is one of three companies that operate on private lands in the regional district. The company has plans, she believes, to log Lot 30-40, near the popular climbing and hiking destination.

"I hope this [Stop IT] is part of a wider movement," said Poirier, who has a Bachelor of science, a Master's in environmental studies, and works as an environmental researcher. "Not all the logging in this region is being done well.

"We call them working forests, but they're not working environmentally or economically. What's happening in town is a great reminder of what's happening in the back country. And it's really important that we take care of what's happening in our back yard. That's what we can steward."

Poirier got involved in forest research in 1992, just after the war-in-the-woods apocalypse at Clayoquot Sound.

"Companies didn't want to be the bad guy," she said. "They wanted logs, and the bottom line is, they wanted to make money. But they also wanted to find a way to make it work. Was there a contentious valley? They might not log there in favour of somewhere else." Island Timberlands, she said, was always different. The company wouldn't negotiate, or work with communities.

Poirier believes in conversations. Talking about forestry, having patience to understand others' positions, is important, she said.

"When the trucks show up virtually unannounced, that's when you want to dig in your heels and shout, 'Stop!'" she said.

Meanwhile in the Regional District...

If the City of Powell River thought its job was tough when the Lot 450 debacle cropped up, staff and administration should thank their lucky stars they're not the Powell River Regional District (PRRD).

Within the PRRD's boundaries sit two community forests, several wood lots, large companies such as Western Forest Products working on public lands, BC Timber Sales, and three private companies working on private lands: Island Timberlands, the US-based Merrill & Ring, and Texada Island Forest Reserve (TIFR).

Island Timberlands has logging rights on several controversial properties, including Crowther Road, Stillwater Bluffs, Stewart Lake, Valentine Mountain and elsewhere. At any time, the company may start logging… or not.

And the chair of the regional district, Patrick Brabazon, is fed up with the lack of communication.

"I don't have much sympathy for Island Timberlands or the PRSC [during the Lot 450 debacle] because the communication is so abysmal," Brabazon said in an interview at the PRRD offices on Marine Avenue. The PRRD sends a representative to the communications-focused Community Advisory Group, which meets with Island Timberlands annually (Brabazon's wife, Jane Cameron, is the chair). Meanwhile, Western Forest Products meets with the group between six and eight times per year, often in the field.

Patrick Brabazon, Chair, PRRD

"Someone will call the office the minute the [Island Timberlands] flagging tape goes up, and that's how we'll find out what's happening."

Brabazon noted that regional districts have very little power over activities in their jurisdictions, though are forced to deal with the consequences when things go wrong. As an example, he pointed out the Cariboo Regional District's relationship with Imperial Metals, which caused the August 2014 Mount Polley Mine disaster, spilling a toxic slurry into the drinking water reservoirs of the region.

The local regional district receives voluntary reports from some companies, but, Brabazon said, there is little mandated reporting from industry.

But former MLA Judi Tyabji said that elected directors can get the information they want. "Any locally-elected person can direct administration to write letters to companies asking for information that may impact infrastructure issues: water, roads, fire, etcetera," she said. "They might ignore you, and if they do, go to your MLA. Get them to go directly to the regulator and ask. Almost without exception, when the regulator is asked, they'll hand over the information. If not, then they can file a Freedom of Information request."

Given how bare-bones regional districts are, wouldn't it be easier to just change the *Local Government Act* to force resource companies operating within regional districts to regularly hand over information?

AHA MOMENT: From the sky, it all becomes clear. Or, somewhat clearer. You can see along the pole-line what has already been logged, and the puff of trees on Valentine Mountain. What looks like a forest behind Townsite is just a heavy buffer, it seems.

"I don't think its necessary if everyone is doing their job," she said.

So far, the region has been lucky because it has a history of responsible forestry operators, Tyabji pointed out. But both the elected people at city council and the regional district, Tyabji said, should get filing those requests.

Brabazon responded that it's not that easy.

"It is nonsense to suggest that regional districts can be aware of all that is happening in the resource industries," he wrote in an email. "Regional Districts don't/can't know who is doing what on private land and writing letters blindly simply uses up valuable staff time in a vain attempt to achieve what should happen in the first place: the operators should talk to us.

"Regional Districts are indeed 'bare-bones' governments and simply do not have the resources or authority to police the various resource operators."

Brabazon doesn't believe Victoria will change the *Local Government Act* to help local governments monitor resource activities on their lands, "although it's a pleasant thought," he noted.

"Regional Districts... simply do not have the resources or authority to police the various resource operators... although it's a pleasant thought."

-Patrick Brabazon

Everyone else

How many of us are interested in having that conversation? Just one in 100 people in the region showed up at the Willingdon Beach rally to protest logging the great swath of Powell River's urban forest. Even online, fewer than one in 10 of us added our names to either the Stop IT or Cut IT Facebook pages.

Of course, there may be a silent majority that concede Island Timberlands owns the trees, and should be allowed to cut them. And there are others who would trade even downtown trees for jobs. For the most part, though, they're absent from the conversation, too.

Long-time activist Innes has seen this disengagement before.

"There's just a huge feeling of disempowerment," she said. "The community has been steamrolled by corporations for so long. They just throw up hands and say, 'There's nothing we can do.'"

In grocery stores and on the sidewalks, she said, many strangers told her how happy they are that activists were in the woods, facing off against contractors to keep them away from nesting areas. Direct action like this, Innes said, only happens when people have no other choice. When the regulations have been relaxed. When decisions are made far away from communities. When avenues for communication are broken. When regulators don't have the resources to enforce the rules.

"All our lives we're told to write letters, to go through the proper channels. It doesn't work anymore," Innes said.

Powerlessness frightens people, she said. It makes them feel sad and betrayed. And when you're feeling that way, it's hard to "muster up the emotional resources to act…. What's exciting about this work is, we do have power collectively."

Once IT has come and gone, how that collective power will evolve is an open question.

Contractors are the people in your neighbourhood

Jim Girvan calls forestry "the invisible industry."

The former executive director of the Truck Loggers Association and "industry-watcher" said most people on the coast don't understand how many people work in the forest, or how much cash it brings to their communities.

Contractors are the guys and gals who build logging roads, plant trees, fall trees, transport logs, run camps, and other tasks. They work on contract for big companies, such as Western Forest Products and Interfor, and small ones, such as the Sunshine Coast Community Forest and Klahoose Forestry Partnership.

Once, Girvan said, he attended a conference of 22 coastal mayors, when he witnessed an exchange between a logging contractor and a mayor.

"The mayor asked, 'How many people work for you?' '55,' said the contractor. 'What's your payroll?' '$5 million.' 'What? You're the biggest employer in this town. I had no idea,' said the mayor.

"The reality is," Girvan said, "contractors go to work at 5 am and get home at 7 pm. They don't work downtown. They don't eat at the restaurants at noon. You see logs in trucks or on the water. But you don't see the people."

Money & Jobs

The province of BC gets about $1.4 billion in tax revenues directly from the forest industry each year.

64,000 FTE jobs in BC directly in forestry

82,000 FTE jobs in BC indirectly from forestry

However, he said, those who live on the coast do hear a lot about how forestry is a "sunset industry."

"I graduated from the University of Toronto in 1979, and people were saying it's a sunset industry then," said Girvan, a forester and MBA – among many other roles. "But it must be a northern sunset because it's so long!"

Newspaper readers will know that there's plenty of seemingly-bad news out there. In a March 5 media release, for example, the Truck Loggers Association named several contractors recently selling off equipment at auctions: Alternative Forest Operations, Copcan Contracting and Bruce Jackson Contracting. At least 20 others have gone under over the last few years. In a paper commissioned by the agency called "Tired Iron: The State of the Harvesting Sector on the BC Coast," the authors note that "we are at a critical moment in the history of the forest industry."

But after nearly 40 years in business, Powell River's Howie McKamey isn't worried about yet another "critical moment." He and Rory Maitland own Pilldolla Creek Contracting and a handful of other local forest-related companies.

Over his working life, McKamey has witnessed a coastal industry in constant transition. From the gold rush-like days of the 1980s, to the war in the woods of the 1990s, to the consolidation of major companies in the 2000s, and the loss of about half the forestry workforce and a quarter of the annual allowable cut over the last 15 years.

Now, he says, a welcome change is coming: the growth of First Nations and community forestry.

"We're transitioning back into the old type of relationships – they're more personal," said McKamey. "The industry has struggled for years. But now, I'm hopeful." FF

Education

Far fewer die in the woods today. Why?

BY THE BC FORESTRY SAFETY COUNCIL

Safety in forestry has come a long way since logging incidents took more than 21 lives on average each year between 1999 and 2005.

In 2014, four men died in the woods, and two have died so far this year (2015). More work still needs to be done to get to zero.

"We are committed to continuous improvement in safety. It is not just the right thing to do for workers and their families, it's good for improving business results," said Rob Moonen, the BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) SAFE Companies director.

The BCFSC is a not-for-profit member society, charged with helping to reduce serious injuries and fatalities in forestry.

The organization, directed by industry, works with industry to identify, develop, implement and continually improve initiatives that will secure improved safety performance in forest harvesting operations.

SAFE Company Certification – through education and audits – helps ensure log truck, falling, silviculture and other forestry companies meet industry standards.

Launched in late 2006, more than 5,320 forestry operations have registered and 2,597 companies have achieved SAFE Certification as of April 2015 – including 68 companies on the Sunshine Coast in the communities of Powell River, Sechelt, Roberts Creek, Gibsons and Madeira Park.

While SAFE certification is a pre-requisite to bid on B.C. crown forest contracts, the BCFSC also administers faller certification in the Province of BC under the BC Faller Training Standard. It champions safe faller training, certification, supervision and promotion of falling to ensure industry is able to meet increasing demands to replace retiring fallers.

> **"In 2014, four men died in the woods, and two have died so far this year (2015). More work still needs to be done to get to zero."**
>
> *– BCFSC*

Supporting the development of a confident, competent and well-trained work force, where safety is integrated into every action and process to maximize safe, effective and efficient performance, the BCFSC delivered 1,105 seats of training across 133 courses in 2014, bringing the total to more than 13,000 workers who have received training from the organization since its inception.

In addition, industry drives many safety programs and tactics supporting the principle that injury prevention is most effective when the overall industry owns and leads the change.

The BCFSC provides technical and administrating support to each of these initiatives such as the Trucking Advisory Group, Log Truck Technical Advisory Committee, Falling Technical Advisory Group, Coast Harvesting Advisory Group, Prequalification Steering and Working Groups, Construction Initiated Slides Working Group, Bulk Haulers Injury Elimination Task Force, Silviculture Advisory Committee, Woodlot Licence and Community Forest Agreement Safety Committee and an Injury Management/Return To Work two-year pilot project. FF

Local legacies

Worldwide, communities thrive when they manage their own resources

Compared to his ocean-spanning career with the forestry giant MacMillan Bloedel, Glen Bonderud's retirement project is humble… but just as ambitious. He's the chair and president of the Sunshine Coast Community Forest (SCCF), which is in three sections (at Halfmoon Bay, Eastern Sechelt, and above Robert's Creek). It's a subsidiary of the District of Sechelt.

Community forests are part of a growing global movement towards community co-management of resources. They're governed by local representatives, and dividends go back into the community.

"The debate here is economic development," said Bonderud, who worked in Vancouver and Tokyo as a marketing executive, noting that even this progressive model has its critics.

"We have a great proximity to Vancouver, a great lifestyle, with biking and recreation in the forest. To have all that, you need a vibrant community that has jobs. Tourism is great, but it's seasonal. [Most] people who work in the tourism industry are not making the same wages as workers in forestry or pulp and paper. We need those types of [well-paying, stable] jobs whether they're forestry or other industries. If you don't have that, you're going backwards."

On the surface, the most obvious benefits of the forest model are financial. The SCCF pays a $26,000 dividend to the district annually; last year, it also paid out $100,000 to the Davis Bay Wharf Restoration, $29,000 for a bus stop in front of the hospital, and $40,000 to the Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Society.

> **"Every community forest in BC has different values."**
>
> *– Jennifer Gunter*

Beyond the big bucks, co-managed resources are progressive because they're hyper-local, according to Jennifer Gunter, the executive director of the BC Community Forest Association, headquartered in Victoria and Kaslo.

Globally, community co-management is emerging in agriculture, fisheries, irrigation and other water systems and, of course, forestry, Gunter noted. In the 21st century, from Tanzania to Terrace, community forestry has become a thing – thanks in part to Canadians, who are among the pioneers of this model.

During her undergraduate degree, Gunter's honour thesis examined co-management of Atlantic salmon. When she moved to Simon Fraser University for her Master's degree in 1991, she wrote about the Kaslo Community Forest just before the model "popped."

In BC, there are 56 community forests, many of which were initiated over the last decade. On the Sunshine Coast, there are four: SCCF, the Powell River Community Forest, Klahoose Forestry Partnership Ltd,

What the Community Forest buys...

A few projects the **Powell River Community Forest** has funded since 2010
(this is not all of them - just a selection)

Millennium Park timber buyout from Island Timberlands	$1,020,642	South Harbour connecting walkway	$273,996
Bike park	$550,000	Children, Youth and Family Services Society	$113,500
Athletic Track and Field	$978,652	Success By Six - Orca Bus retrofit	$55,000
Powell River Curling Club	$126,000	PR Therapeutic Riding Association new roof on arena	$50,000
Powell River Gymnastics Club	$141,886	Myrtle Point Golf Club teaching center	$53,286
Powell River Kings/Complex arena seats	$94,000	Life Cycle Housing Society playground/community garden	$21,882
Powell River Academy of Music	$197,000	Tennis courts resurfacing	$208,312
Townsite Heritage Society	$40,000	Replacement floats at Powell Lake boat launch	$120,000

RADICAL REC: The $550,000 Powell River Bike Park, which opened this spring, is radical in that, "Woah, rad jump, dude," kind of way. But the origin of the bike park's funding is also radical in the original meaning of the word: radical means roots, or rooted. The Powell River Community Forest's work paid for the amenity – a rooted, community-run, radical model of resource co-management.

and Tla'Amin Timber Products Ltd.

"There's more and more recognition around the world that there's benefits in having local people have some degree of management over local resources. You see sustainable management because they're in it for the long-term."

In Powell River, where the model is slightly older, the monetary benefits are even larger. The bike park – a half-million dollar project, was paid for by the community forest. The $1.1 million in trees the City of Powell River bought from Island Timberlands to expand Millennium Park this year were paid for by the community forest.

"Every community forest in BC has different values," said Gunter, noting that the Harrop-Procter Community Forest in Selkirk, BC started their forest to stop logging in a watershed. The community originally lobbied for a park there, but the province refused. Instead, residents manage their forest for community values – through a board of community residents, as do all community forests here.

"Protecting viewscapes, if you're trying to develop tourism, communities are grappling with how to keep the scenery looking good. About one half are held by First Nations, so they manage for protection of heritage sites and values. McBride is really trying to support value-added. That's certainly a value that many proponents of forestry support – getting more value out of the forest resource."

At their foundation, Gunter noted, these are all businesses; profit and values must coexist. On the lower Sunshine Coast, it's a vision that Bonderud works hard to relay.

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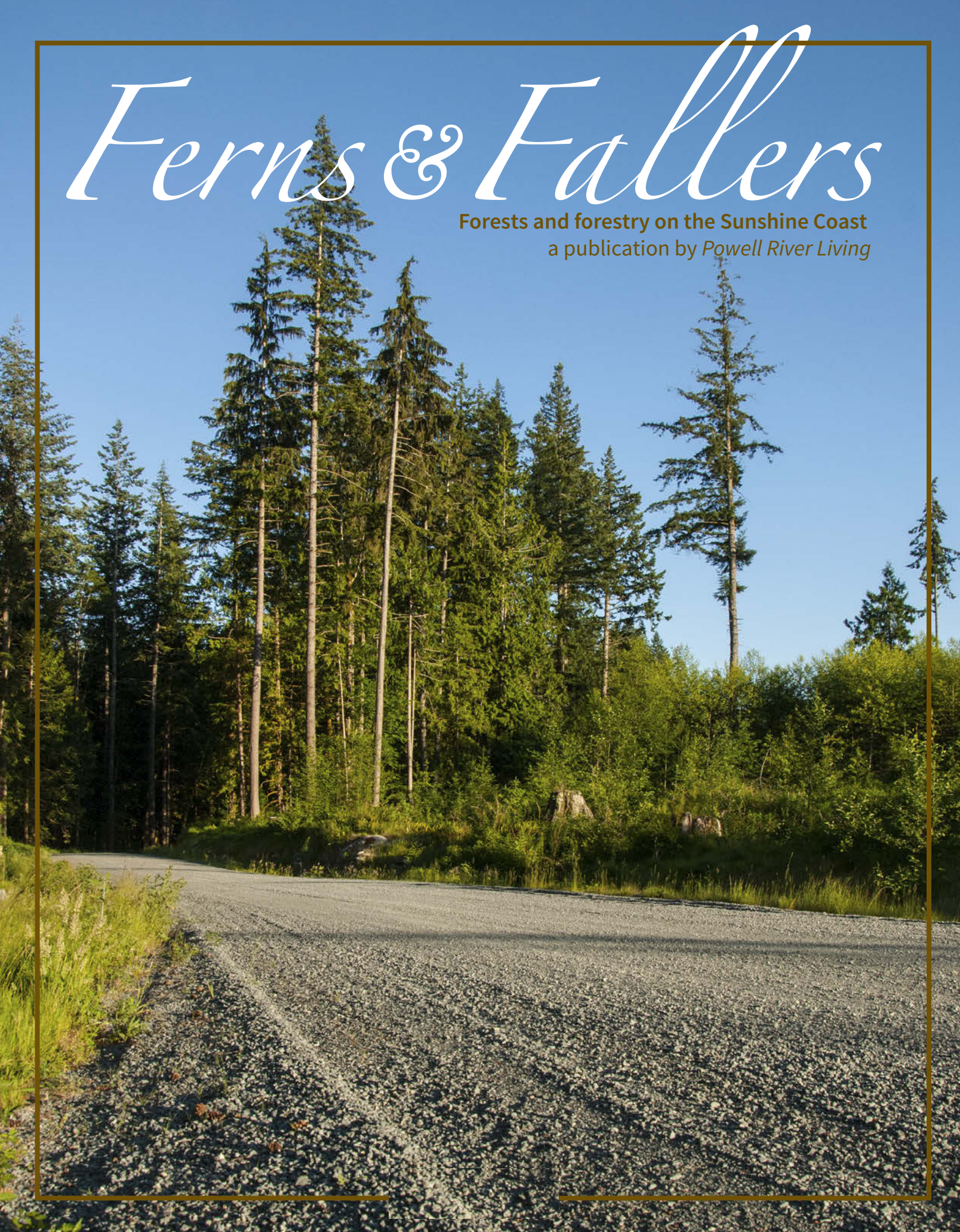

Ferns & Fallers

Forests and forestry on the Sunshine Coast

a publication by *Powell River Living*