



BCCFA 2026 Conference Notes – Session #3

Community Forest Showcase: Defining and Delivering Benefits

Panel members: Mike Crone, RPF, General Manager, Nakusp and Area Community Forest, partner/manager at Cabin Resource Management, Hugh Flinton, RPF, P. Ag. Manager, Williams Lake Community Forest, Warren Hansen, RPF, Operations Manager, Sunshine Coast Community Forest, Jean-Yves Landry, Director, Wetzin’Kwa Community Forest

Moderator: Dan Macmaster, RPF, Forest Manager for the Osoyoos Indian Band and the West Boundary Community Forest

Note Taker: Wendy Sherman

Session Description

The goal of this session is to examine how community forests define, deliver, and demonstrate the full range of benefits they provide, and how these benefits are shaped by policy and community priorities.

Community forests create value in many ways, from local employment and economic activity to stewardship, recreation, and community well-being. This session highlights how community forests are defining and delivering these benefits in practice and within the policy context that shapes them.

Through case examples, presenters will share approaches, innovations, and lessons learned. The session will explore how benefits are measured, communicated, delivered, and adapted over time, offering practical insights and ideas for strengthening impact.

Session Summary

This session featured presentations from Nakusp and Area Community Forest, Williams Lake Community Forest, Sunshine Coast Community Forest, and Wetzin’kwa Community Forest, highlighting the diverse ways community forests define success and deliver benefits to their communities. While each organization reflected its own local priorities and



governance model, common themes emerged around stewardship, community engagement, education, and long-term sustainability.

Presenters shared overviews of their community forests, including their core values, board structures, decision-making processes, and approaches to balancing economic, social, cultural, and environmental objectives. Discussions reinforced that community forests are much more than timber operations—they are community-driven organizations that seek to align forest management with local values and priorities.

Several speakers emphasized the importance of building and maintaining public trust through transparency, education, and meaningful community engagement. Strong relationships with local governments, First Nations, community organizations, contractors, and residents were identified as essential to long-term success. Community forests described a range of strategies for involving communities in decision-making and communicating the benefits of their work.

The session also explored how community forests reinvest benefits locally. Examples included awarding contracts to local businesses, supporting community initiatives through donations, maintaining operational reserves, investing in recreation and education programs, and making strategic decisions about harvest levels to ensure long-term sustainability. Participants discussed the challenges of balancing immediate community needs with the responsibility to maintain healthy forests and viable organizations for future generations.

Key Takeaways

- Community forests are guided by local values and tailored to the unique needs of their communities.
- Strong governance and clearly defined core values provide the foundation for effective decision-making.
- Building trust through transparency, education, and community engagement is essential.



- Community benefits extend far beyond timber revenues and include local employment, donations, recreation, education, and stewardship outcomes.
- Partnerships with First Nations, local governments, community organizations, and contractors strengthen community forest success.
- Long-term forest health and stewardship should guide management decisions, even when this requires difficult trade-offs.
- Maintaining operational reserves and financial stability is important for ensuring community forests remain viable over the long term.

Notable Themes

A recurring theme throughout the session was that successful community forests place stewardship and community well-being at the centre of decision-making. While approaches differ from one community to another, participants consistently emphasized the importance of balancing economic returns with broader social, cultural, and environmental values.

Note Taker's Overall Reflection

The session demonstrated the diversity and strength of BC's community forest model. By adapting governance and management approaches to local circumstances, community forests are able to deliver meaningful and lasting benefits while maintaining strong connections between communities and the forests they depend on.



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Main Topics Discussed: List main themes and relevant subtopics within each main topic.

1. Reported on their AAC's
2. Gave brief overviews of their individual Community Forests and their core values



3. Reported on their Board structure and the parameters for choosing a board member
4. Partnerships within the Community Forest
5. Educating the public and gaining their trust and support
6. Discussed how they manage their Community Forest
7. Talked about how the Community Forest Benefits to the community
 - a. Awarding of contracts
 - b. Awarding of donations
 - c. Operational reserves
 - d. Deciding when to pay a dividend to the Community
 - e. Reducing AAC to ensure a Community Forest is maintained in perpetuity.

Key Takeaways: Summarize the most important points or insights from each session.

1. Core values
2. Strong community alliance
3. Putting forest health benefits before monetary benefits
4. Education

Action Items: Identify tasks, deadlines, and responsible parties for any follow-up actions.

Questions & Follow-Ups: Record any questions that arise that need further information or clarification.



Important Details/Quotes: Capture specific details or quotes that stand out.

1. Mike – “Focusing on the social benefit,” rather than the volume. Reduced AAC.
2. Hugh – “Foresight is everything,” when speaking about planning for the future.
3. Warren – “Investing for future generations.”
4. Jean-Yves – “Review policies annually. Write things down before you need them.”

My Thoughts/Observations: Include your own reflections, insights, or questions.

I heard many synergies between the speakers:

1. Reduction of AAC’s to ensure a strong Community Forest
2. Hard to educate the public
3. Wonderful monetary and educational contributions to their communities
4. Strong core values

Connections to Other Sessions: Note links between different conference sessions or ideas

Personally, I heard a real need for educating the public in most sessions. There is so much work going into doing things right....the public needs to know that.

Resources Mentioned: Record links, websites, or documents mentioned during the session

Feedback/Suggestions: Note any feedback or suggestions you have about the session

Time for questions would have been great. I think reducing the number of speakers or adding additional time for questions to this session would have benefited the audience.