



Forest
Practices
Board

Climate Change Adaptation and Forest Management in British Columbia

Presentation to the Standing Senate Committee on
Agriculture and Forestry - March 2018

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The Forest Practices Board serves the public interest as the independent watchdog for sound forest and range practices in BC.



Board Mandate

- Audits of industry practices and government enforcement
- Investigations of public complaints and issues of general concern
- Participation in administrative appeals
- Recommendations to improve practices, policy, legislation



Forest Practices Legislation in BC

Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA)

- Results-based
- Mainly operational
- Does not explicitly speak to climate change

Wildfire Act

- Wildfire prevention – forest and range practices
- Government authority on fire prevention/ control

FPB's Work and Climate Change

- Board members and staff - skilled professionals (foresters, biologists, engineers, geoscientists, lawyers)
- “Boots on the ground” observations of forest practices and climate change effects
- Board reports may include observations re: climate change effects on forest values

Threats to Timber and Range Values

- **Forest health**

- insects and disease resulting in tree mortality



Photo: CBC

- **Invasive plant species**

- changed species composition and forage quality

- **Changing growing conditions**

- challenges with forest regeneration and range health

- **Increased frequency and intensity of wildfire**

Lower Resilience of Non-timber Values

- **Changes to water quantity and flow**
 - Impacts on domestic water supply and fish habitats
- **Increased potential for landslides**
 - Impacts on water quality and stream structure
- **Changed forest structure, species composition, conditions**
 - Impacts on wildlife and fish habitats
- **Increased wildfires**
 - Loss of habitats, loss and damage to property



Example 1. Fuel management near communities

Investigation: Efforts to prevent wildfires at the wildland-urban interface.

Findings:

- Few forest fuels treated between 2004 and 2015 ($\leq 10\%$ of high risk areas)
- High treatment costs; opportunity to use more cost-effective alternatives; Inadequate government funding to protect at-risk communities

Note: Lack of funding for federal lands puts provincial efforts at risk

Example 2. Beetle salvage and water flows

Investigation: Effects of salvage logging on water quality, quantity and flow

Findings: Cumulative effects of salvage logging in watersheds:

- Increased peak flows; reduced low flows
- Reduced water quality (sediment)
- Changed natural drainage patterns
- Stream channel changes
- Effects on drinking water supply

Example 3. Landslides on Vancouver Island

Investigation: Frequency of landslides associated with cutblocks and roads following major rain storms



Findings: Increase in number and area of landslides before and after large rain storm events

- **12** landslides in the 2 years before
- **95** landslides in the 2 years after

How Can the Federal Government Help?

- Support the provincial efforts to promote climate change adaptation, mitigation and resilience
- Continued funding for fuel reduction treatments to protect communities, including on federal lands
- Support research and monitoring to track changes and inform adaptive management
- Consider benefit of oversight by a public climate change “watchdog”

Thank you for this opportunity to present.

We would be happy to answer your questions.

All our reports, audits and investigations are available at www.bcfpb.ca

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