



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

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**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](http://www.bcfpb.ca)

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