



For immediate release
Aug.10, 2026

Board to audit stand-level biodiversity practices in the north island area

Fieldwork will examine wildlife tree-retention areas managed by BCTS and two forestry licensees

Summary

- *Field work is scheduled for Aug. 17-22, 2026, in areas managed by BC Timber Sales (BCTS), North Island Community Forest, Western Forest Products*
- *Auditors will assess compliance with biodiversity requirements under the Forest and Range Practices Act, Forest Planning and Practices Regulation*
- *The audit will focus on the management of wildlife tree-retention areas, block reserves*

VICTORIA – The Forest Practices Board will conduct a limited-scope compliance audit of stand-level biodiversity practices and block reserve management by BCTS and two forestry licensees in the North Island Natural Resource District, beginning Monday, Aug. 17, 2026.

The audit area is within the North Island Timber Supply Area, extending from Brooks Bay to Port McNeill and encompassing the northern portion of Vancouver Island that is subject to the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan. Port McNeill and Port Hardy are the principal communities in the audit area.

The audit will examine the practices of BC Timber Sales' Seaward-tlasta Business Area, North Island Community Forest and Western Forest Products. Auditors will review harvest planning and on-the-ground practices and reporting, including the establishment and management of wildlife tree-retention areas (WTRAs), to determine compliance with legal requirements.

Stand-level biodiversity is primarily maintained through WTRAs, which help conserve forest ecosystems and protect riparian areas, cultural heritage values, visual quality and other important forest attributes. In the North Island Natural Resource District, these practices are guided by the objectives of the Vancouver Island Land Use Plan, the Forest Planning and Practices Regulation and commitments contained in licensees' forest stewardship plans.

The audit area overlaps the territories of numerous First Nations. It includes areas covered by the Maa-nulth and Tla'amin modern treaties.

Once the audit is complete, the board will prepare a report. Parties that may be adversely affected by the findings will have an opportunity to respond before the final report and any recommendations are released publicly.

The Forest Practices Board is B.C.'s independent watchdog for sound forest and range practices. Auditees are selected using a modified random sampling method, without considering past performance or public complaints.

Learn More:

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