

**Ministry of Forests**

**2022/23**  
**Annual Service Plan Report**

**August 2023**



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## Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Forests 2022/23 Annual Service Plan Report compares the Ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the 2022/23 – 2024/25 Service Plan published in 2022. I am accountable for those results as reported.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Ralston', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Honourable Bruce Ralston  
Minister of Forests  
August 17, 2023

## Table of Contents

Minister's Accountability Statement .....	3
Letter from the Minister .....	5
Purpose of the Annual Service Plan Report .....	6
Strategic Direction.....	6
Purpose of the Ministry.....	6
Operating Environment.....	7
Economic Statement .....	8
Report on Performance: Goals, Objectives, and Results .....	10
Financial Report.....	24
Forest Practices Board Resource Summary.....	26
Appendix A: Public Sector Organizations.....	27
Appendix B: Progress on Mandate Letter Priorities.....	28

## Letter from the Minister

The Ministry of Forests is committed to delivering sustainable natural resource management of the Province's Crown land, water and natural resources for the benefit of British Columbia and all that live in our Province. In 2022/23, the Ministry advanced many important priorities that support Government's overall goals of meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, addressing climate change, and building a strong economy that benefits all British Columbians.

This year, we made progress towards delivering a strong future for our province's forest industry. In January, we announced the new BCTS Timber Sales Value-Added Manufacturing Program, which will help more companies gain access to the timber needed to produce value-added wood products. We also continued to modernize forest policy through regulatory changes to the *Forest Act* and *Forest and Range Practice Act* to create opportunities for partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, as well as to provide a stronger, more resilient forest sector.

Together with Indigenous Peoples and many others, we are taking an inclusive and collaborative approach to protect the province's old forests and the rich biodiversity that they support. In 2022/23, we continued to implement deferrals on nearly 1.7 million hectares of old growth, including approximately 1.05 million hectares of B.C.'s forests most at risk of irreversible loss. Additionally, we are advancing collaboration with First Nations rights holders to establish legal direction for forestry practices through the Forest Landscape Planning framework, with four Forest Landscape Planning tables underway and eight more being established with participation from approximately 50 First Nations.

We have continued to make investments to keep communities safe from natural hazards. Although we experienced a below-average wildfire season in 2022, sustained warm and dry weather in the fall extended B.C.'s wildfire season much later than usual, setting new records in late August and mid-October for maximum number of fires detected per week. In recognition of the impact that natural hazards have on B.C. communities, this year our government committed to making the BC Wildfire Service a year-round organization, providing additional capacity and resources to help communities prepare and recover from natural disasters.

I am pleased to present this annual report. I would like to thank all staff in the Ministry for their professionalism and dedication to excellence in service delivery and natural resource management for our province.



Honourable Bruce Ralston  
Minister of Forests  
August 17, 2023

## Purpose of the Annual Service Plan Report

This annual service plan report has been developed to meet the requirements of the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act* (BTAA), which sets out the legislative framework for planning, reporting and accountability for Government organizations. Under the BTAA, the Minister is required to report on the actual results of the Ministry's performance related to the forecasted targets stated in the service plan for the reported year.

## Strategic Direction

The strategic direction set by Government in 2020 and the Minister of Forests [2020 Mandate Letter](#) shaped the goals, objectives, performance measures and financial plan outlined in the [Ministry of Forests 2022/23 – 2024/25 Service Plan](#) and the actual results reported on in this annual report.

## Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Forests (the Ministry) is the Province's agency responsible for natural resource management services that supports resilient forests, landscapes, watersheds, and fish and wildlife for the benefit of all British Columbians. The Ministry establishes the policy and conditions for access to, and use of, the province's forests, land, water and natural resources, and provides integrated decision-making that ensures effective stewardship and sustainable management of B.C.'s land and water base for a variety of uses. The Ministry ensures that the province is prepared for, and can effectively respond to, natural hazards such as wildfire and floods. The Ministry is working to fight climate change by enhancing the role of forests and forest products as carbon sinks or opportunities to reduce emissions, while also supporting B.C. to prepare, adapt and respond to the impacts of climate change already underway. With a commitment to sustainable natural resource management, and through the advancement of forest policy modernization and new transformational initiatives, the Ministry supports activities that provide economic, environmental, cultural and social benefits to all British Columbians. This work directly contributes to the achievement of the Province's goals of meaningful reconciliation; a strong, sustainable economy; and a better future for all British Columbians.

The Ministry oversees policy development, operational management and implementation, and administers relevant statutes and associated regulations. The Ministry also supports the Minister in his governance responsibilities for the [Forest Enhancement Society of British Columbia](#). A complete list of Crown Agencies associated with the Ministry can be found in [Appendix A](#).

## Operating Environment

The Ministry of Forests is responsible for overseeing a total land base and freshwater area of 94.8 million hectares. Managing such a broad and diverse land base is complex, bringing together a number of internal and external factors that affect the Ministry's performance towards its goals and objectives.

Supporting a strong natural resource economy in B.C. is a priority for the Ministry. B.C. remains the largest lumber producer in Canada, and the forest sector plays a key role in keeping the Province's economy strong and healthy. The forest sector supported about 56,000 direct jobs in communities across British Columbia in 2022, generated \$1.9 billion in government revenues in 2022/23 and \$5.82 billion in gross domestic product (GDP) in 2022.

Market conditions, however, were challenging for the forest sector in 2022. The demand for lumber in the U.S. and China decreased, resulting in lower lumber exports to both countries compared to 2021. Lumber exports in 2022 totaled \$7.3 billion, down 18% from 2021, and lumber export volume was down 13%. Total harvest volume in 2022 was 47.6 million m<sup>3</sup>, including private and Crown lands, down 10% from 2021. Log prices increased by 22% in the Interior and 18% on the Coast in 2022 compared to 2021. In 2022, B.C. produced 7.9 billion board feet (18.6 million m<sup>3</sup>) of softwood lumber, down 15% from 2021.

In 2022/23, the Ministry maintained its focus on creating the conditions and policy to support a vibrant and thriving forest sector that is a source of good jobs and economic uplift for communities across B.C. both now and into the future. The Ministry continued work to modernize forest management to create opportunities for partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, as well as to provide a stronger, more resilient forest sector. Key initiatives include supporting transformation of the forest sector to shift from high-volume to high-value by encouraging increased value-added manufacturing and secondary processing to produce more from every tree harvested.

As the Province's land manager, the Ministry is responsible for approximately 70% of all resource permit requests in the province for use of forests, water, land, fish and wildlife, and archaeology, and has averaged about 23,600 statutory decisions per year over the last five years. Industry sectors such as forestry, housing and infrastructure construction, transportation, tourism, telecommunications, and aquaculture rely on the Ministry's authorizations decisions to do business. In 2022 alone, the Ministry received over 23,000 applications for natural resource use across the province.

For every application, the Ministry balances multiple, and sometimes competing, interests on the land base in a way that builds partnerships, advances true and meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, supports a strong economy, and ensures sound environmental stewardship of our province's natural resources and values. As a result of the significant volume of incoming applications and the increasing complexity of information being considered, in 2022/23, the Ministry has made investments towards streamlining the permitting process to help address workload and to enhance efficiencies while ensuring durable decision-making that is in the best interests of all British Columbians.

Although the province did not experience the extreme weather events in 2022 as in previous years, the cumulative effects of recent wildfires, floods, heat dome, and the impact of invasive pests such as the mountain pine and spruce beetles continue to impact the lives of people in B.C.

In recognition of the increasing impacts of a changing climate, in 2022/23, the BC Government committed to making the BC Wildfire Service a year-round organization. The BC Wildfire Service also continues to support communities by administering the Cooperative Community Wildfire Response Project (formerly the Community Firefighting Model) to coordinate engagement with Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, and to enhance and/or develop a range of opportunities that reflect the diverse needs and values of the province's rural and remote communities. The Ministry is also supporting the Province's response to flood hazard events, releasing [From Flood Risk to Resilience in B.C.: A Intentions Paper](#) (Flood Strategy Intentions Paper) in 2022/23 to engage Indigenous Peoples, communities, businesses and others for feedback about how B.C. proposes to help reduce flood risks, while enhancing community resilience to more frequent extreme flood events in the future.

After an extensive review, the Natural Resource Sector ministry restructuring was completed in 2022/23 with the new Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship announced on April 1, 2022. As a result, the Ministry of Forests portfolio was adjusted, with a renewed focus on forest management, advancing the modernization of forest policy, and further strengthening integrated natural resource decision-making at the operational level. Through 2022/23, operational level roles and responsibilities were established between the two ministries, and close collaboration on initiatives continues to move forward.

## Economic Statement

After rebounding rapidly in 2021, British Columbia's economy saw slower yet strong growth in 2022. B.C.'s real GDP growth of 3.6 per cent last year was the fourth highest among provinces (tied with Ontario) and grew at the same pace as the national average, following growth of 6.2 per cent in 2021. Growth in B.C.'s real GDP was mostly supported by service-producing industries such as transportation and warehousing, accommodation and food services, and professional, scientific and technical services. Goods-producing industries also experienced growth led by construction.

While B.C.'s recovery broadened in 2022, it remained uneven as sectors such as transportation and warehousing; accommodation and food services; and arts, entertainment and recreation have yet to fully recover to pre-pandemic levels. B.C.'s labour market continued to grow in 2022, with employment growth of 3.2 per cent and an average unemployment rate of 4.6 per cent, while wages and salaries increased by 10.8 per cent. Consumer spending on goods grew slowly after a rapid expansion at the beginning of the recovery and nominal retail sales posted overall growth of 3.1 per cent. Last year, prices rose dramatically as strong demand for goods and services was met with lingering supply-chain challenges and high prices for global commodities following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



In 2022, B.C.'s inflation rate averaged 6.9 per cent, the fastest annual rate since 1982, and up from 2.8 per cent in 2021. B.C. housing starts totalled 46,721 units in 2022, down 1.9 per cent compared to the previous year. Despite the decline, housing starts in 2022 were the second highest on record. Home sales fell sharply in 2022 as they adjusted to higher mortgage rates not seen since 2008. B.C. MLS home sales decreased by 35.2 per cent in 2022 compared to 2021. Meanwhile the MLS average home sale price rose by 7.4 per cent in 2022 because of strength early in the year, despite monthly declines in 9 of the last 10 months of the year.

On the external front, B.C.'s international merchandise exports grew by 20.4 per cent, boosted by strong commodity prices in the first half of 2022.

# Report on Performance: Goals, Objectives, and Results

## **Goal 1: Economic benefits and resilience for all British Columbians, through a modernized forest sector and effective natural hazard management**

### **Objective 1.1: Modernize the B.C. forest economy and support an innovative, sustainable forest sector**

This objective directs Ministry efforts towards creating the conditions that support a vibrant, innovative forest sector in B.C. Through specific policy changes and initiatives aimed towards modernizing forest policy, the Ministry is leading a forest sector transformation to enhance stewardship and sustainability, as well as to increase forest sector participation and economic development in the province.

#### **Key results**

- Continued to [Modernize Forest policy in British Columbia](#) by making regulatory changes to the [Forest and Range Practices Act](#) and the [Forest Act](#) to ensure that both Acts consider all forest objectives such as water quality, wildlife habitat and biodiversity, rather than just timber supply as the primary objective.
- Announced the new [BC Timber Sales](#) Value-Added Manufacturing Program to provide dedicated access to timber and accelerate the growth of value-added manufacturing, supporting innovation and creating jobs in facilities that produce high-value wood products such as mass timber, panelling and flooring.
- Participated in trade missions to Japan and India to identify new market opportunities, encourage the use of B.C. wood products, and increase awareness of B.C.'s leadership in sustainable and innovative forest product manufacturing and construction practices.
- Launched the [BC Manufacturing Jobs Fund](#), which has a primary focus of partnering with the forest sector to re-invest and grow their manufacturing operations, and innovate in the production of higher-value wood products in order to make better use of limited fibre supply and move away from the harvest of old-growth timber.
- Expanded the [Indigenous Forest Bioeconomy Program](#) with the launch of a new accelerator stream that provides additional funding for First Nation projects at the pilot, commercialization or scale-up phases.
- Continued to represent B.C.'s interests in the Canada-U.S. litigation on the softwood lumber dispute, in cooperation with industry and the federal government.

#### **Summary of progress made in 2022/23**

Together with Indigenous Peoples, other ministries, stakeholders and communities, the Ministry is supporting initiatives to modernize the forest sector in B.C. through transformation

of forest policy as well as changes to regulations to benefit communities and align with Government's reconciliation commitments.

This year, the Ministry worked to improve fibre access for secondary manufacturers, creating expanded opportunities for the value-added sector of the forest economy. Engagement sessions were held with the value-added sector and First Nations to better understand their needs, challenges and recommendations. In January 2023, a new BC Timber Sales Value-Added Manufacturing Program was announced to better support higher-value over higher-volume forest sector manufacturing in the province. The Ministry also piloted [BC Timber Sale Licences](#) that encourage better fibre handling and business partnerships to improve utilization of forest fibre.

The Ministry, working with pulp companies, created the Pulp Fibre Supply Task Force. Over the last 12 months, the Task Force developed a range of policy tools that support pulp mills' access to residual fibre now and into the future. The Ministry also implemented multiple initiatives to increase fibre utilization and reduce slash burning in both the Interior and Coast regions, working to reach the goal of near zero slash burns by 2030.

The Ministry continued to support and encourage the use of mass-timber in public buildings in B.C., including schools, post secondary, and multi-family housing. The Ministry supported the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation in the release of B.C.'s [Mass Timber Action Plan](#), which shows a pathway to increase value of B.C. forest products, while supporting clean growth in line with the province's climate goals. The Ministry also advanced its Indigenous Forest Bioeconomy Program, focusing on using waste that is left over from logging, wildfire debris, and damaged wood to make new, low-carbon forest-based products, while increasing the participation of First Nations in the forestry sector.

In 2022/23, the Ministry continued its focus on providing more opportunities for communities and First Nations to participate in the forest economy. The Ministry made further improvements to the *Forest Act* and the *Forest and Range Practices Act* that provided updates to forest management and an increased role for First Nations in decision-making and stewardship. The Ministry is also engaging collaboratively and extensively with First Nations in the development of regulations to bring previous legislative changes to the *Forest and Range Practices Act* and *Forest Act* into force on the ground.

Consistent with commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#), the Province has committed to co-develop and align policy development with that legislation. Extensive discussions are underway to ensure all policy changes in the Modernizing Forest Policy initiative are in alignment with the *Declaration Act*, and the Ministry continues to work closely with First Nations in a number of venues across the province.

The Ministry has provided multi-year funding to the [B.C. First Nations Forestry Council](#) to advise on, and facilitate engagement with First Nations rights and title holders, on changes to forest policy. In these engagements, the Ministry continues to hear from First Nations that the pace of legislative and policy change is important, but that achieving meaningful and lasting

change through the Modernizing Forest Policy, through true co-development as reflected in *Declaration Act*, is of greater importance.

### Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
1.1 Policy Intentions implemented from the Modernizing Forest Policy initiative <sup>1</sup>	N/A	6	3

Data source: Ministry of Forests

<sup>1</sup>Performance measure 1.1 targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as 7 and 6, respectively. This measure was not continued in the 2023/24 - 2025/26 service plan. For forward-looking planning information, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget](#) website.

The Modernizing Forest Policy in B.C. initiative identified 19 policy intentions requiring engagement with First Nations, forest industry representatives, and communities to develop the future vision of the forest sector and B.C.'s forests. This performance measure evaluated the implementation of the articulated forest policy intentions, in alignment with the objective of transforming the B.C. forest economy and supporting an innovative, sustainable forest sector.

In 2022/23, the Ministry implemented three policy intentions. The Ministry improved the apportionment process to consider harvest sustainability and the interests of local Indigenous Peoples and stakeholders. Several apportionment decisions were made in 2022/23, with strong consideration to the interests of local Indigenous Peoples and input of stakeholders. Furthermore, policy provided through updates to the *Forest Act* (Bill 28) has improved the timeliness of apportionment decisions, in support of harvest sustainability.

The Ministry successfully implemented its intention to continue to improve the *Forest and Range Practices Act* to better incorporate, manage and conserve forest values and ensure Indigenous Peoples can be involved at the start of planning. The Ministry also achieved its intention of committing to implement deferrals of old growth forests by continuing to implement deferrals on nearly 1.7 million hectares.

While the Ministry did not achieve its target for full implementation of six specific policy intentions in 2022/23, the Modernizing Forest Policy intentions continue to guide Ministry efforts to support forest sector transformation, in cooperation and consultation with communities, Indigenous Peoples, and other interested parties. Progress has been made towards many of the remaining intentions which will inform ongoing implementation in 2023/24. For example, the Ministry advanced the intention to support silviculture management and innovation investments through development of tools to better support proponents, land managers, and decision makers in silviculture management and innovation investments, and the initiation of the Silviculture Innovation Program.

## **Objective 1.2: Improve community resilience through proactive and collaborative natural hazard management**

This objective aims to reduce the risks and impacts of natural hazards such as wildfire and floods through the implementation of a risk assessment-based approach, including incorporation of Indigenous values, knowledge and practices.

### **Key results**

- Invested over \$7 million in initiatives and partnerships under the [Community Resiliency Investment](#) (CRI) program to support wildfire risk reduction initiatives across the province and to strategically fill gaps in funding initiatives, including new partnerships with [BC Cattlemen's Association](#), [BC Community Forest Association](#), the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Fire Chief's Association of British Columbia, Columbia Basin Trust, and Farmland Advantage.
- In partnership with the [Columbia Basin Trust](#), established the [Columbia Basin Wildfire Resiliency Initiative](#) to support expanded wildfire risk reduction in the Columbia Basin, with 20 wildfire resiliency projects supported in 18 communities.
- Collaborated with the First Nations Forestry Council and [First Nations' Emergency Services Society](#) to establish a range of engagement pathways with First Nations on the co-development of a policy and program framework for [cultural and prescribed fire](#), while continuing to expand the number of burn projects developed with First Nations and other partners.
- Engaged on the BC Flood Strategy Intentions Paper with Indigenous Peoples, communities, businesses and others, informing a comprehensive provincial BC Flood Strategy that will help reduce flood risks while enhancing community resilience.

### **Summary of progress made in 2022/23**

The Ministry plays a key role in the Province's efforts to improve landscape and community resiliency through natural hazard emergency preparedness, response and land base recovery. The Ministry is committed to collaborating with local and First Nations government partners on the implementation of this work.

In recognition of the expanded role that BC Wildfire Service plays in preparing, responding and recovering from more frequent and severe natural hazard events in B.C., in 2022/23, the Ministry began transitioning BC Wildfire Service from a seasonal to a year-round organization. This will allow for more time planning and mitigating for wildfire seasons that are becoming longer and more intense, and help the Province respond to other natural disasters such as flooding, and help to resource other hazards and incidents.

This year, the Ministry continued its efforts to support communities and industry to prepare for and reduce the risk of wildfire, completing wildfire risk reduction treatments on 3,000 hectares in and around B.C. communities. In 2022/23, there was an increase in community participation in the [FireSmart](#) program, with 41 new FireSmart neighbourhoods recognized in 2022, 197 additional Local FireSmart Representatives trained, and 37 full-time FireSmart

Representatives hired with local governments, regional districts, and First Nations. In addition, ongoing funding to the First Nations' Emergency Services Society of British Columbia to support the inclusion of traditional knowledge led directly to the initiation of a Cultural and Prescribed Fire program.

In 2022/23, the Ministry advanced work to make B.C. more prepared for and resilient to the impacts of flooding. The Ministry released the B.C. Flood Strategy Intentions Paper to engage Indigenous Peoples, communities, businesses and others. The Ministry began coordination of new regional Floodplain Mapping with 70 communities in higher risk areas of the province, in partnership with the federal Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program, to update the shared understanding of flood hazards in a changing climate.

The Ministry also continued its contribution to natural hazard recovery work with communities across the province. In 2022/23, the Ministry completed \$13 million in critical infrastructure upgrades and replacements on forest service roads to communities, rural residences and recreation areas, in addition to critical repairs to over 138 kilometres of resource roads and the replacement of 12 bridges damaged by the atmospheric river event in November 2021. In partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, the Ministry invested in research and development aimed at reducing the vulnerability of forest service road infrastructure to the impacts of climate change in the future. In the B.C. Interior, the Ministry supported the BC Cattlemen's Association in completing a five-year, \$15.9 million Crown rangeland fence construction project to repair 900,000 metres of fence damaged or destroyed in the 2017 and 2018 wildfire seasons.

## Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2020/21 Baseline	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
1.2 Number of cultural and prescribed fire projects developed by or co-developed with First Nations <sup>1,2,3</sup>	3	N/A <sup>4</sup>	20	15

Data source: BCWS prescribed fire provincial project data tracking spreadsheet.

<sup>1</sup>Performance measure 1.2 targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as 40 and >40, respectively. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget](#) website.

<sup>2</sup>"Cultural and prescribed fire" is defined by the [Wildfire Regulation](#) as Resource Management Open Fire and includes the use of fire by government for purposes established in Section 18 of the [Wildfire Act](#); "Developed by a First Nations" is a BCWS-approved independently developed First Nations' burn plan; and "Co-developed with a First Nation" is a First Nation actively engaged in project development, a First Nation is a burn plan co-proponent, or where cultural burning is the primary objective.

<sup>3</sup>This performance measure is reported by calendar year for 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

<sup>4</sup>This performance measure was introduced to the service plan in 2022/23, and therefore, was not reported in the 2021/22.

The *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* Action Plan commits to integrating Indigenous cultural burning into land management and expanding the strategic use of beneficial fire on the land. The Ministry's Modernizing Forest Policy in British Columbia initiative also commits to re-integrating cultural and prescribed (C&Rx) fire into forest management practices in B.C.

Cultural burning is an Indigenous practice, often defined as the strategic and controlled application of fire on the landscape to achieve a specific cultural objective. The Ministry

recognizes that each First Nation has its own distinct knowledge and customs regarding the role and use of fire on the land, and that “cultural burning” may mean different things to different First Nations. Prescribed fire is the planned and controlled application of fire to the landscape to achieve objectives, including fuel management (risk reduction), habitat enhancement, ecosystem restoration, and pest management.

This performance measure reports on the number of cultural and prescribed fire projects developed by or co-developed with First Nations to focus efforts on relationship development, partnership opportunities and capacity building. As the ability to carry out a burn depends on favourable weather conditions, the performance measure tracks the completion of approved burn plans that are ready to implement when conditions allow.

In 2022, the Ministry contributed to the completion of 60 burn plans, 15 of which (25%) were led by or co-developed with First Nations. Capacity development and relationships built with First Nations and other partners through the burn planning process, while not formally captured in hectares burned, are key to expanding the use of cultural and prescribed fire in B.C. A total of 1,647 hectares were treated in 2022.

The Ministry strengthened its cultural and prescribed fire program by adding dedicated capacity at the fire centre level to lead operational collaboration and delivery. The Ministry is also working to further relationships with First Nations and Indigenous organizations, including First Nations’ Emergency Services Society and the B.C. First Nations Forestry Council, which will help build capacity and guide work on co-developing a co-managed program.

## **Goal 2: Partnerships that support reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples**

### **Objective 2.1: Strengthen partnerships and meaningful engagement with Indigenous Peoples in the management of the land base and natural resources in B.C.**

This objective demonstrates the Ministry’s commitment to strengthening the voice of Indigenous Peoples in the stewardship of natural resources in B.C., and building capacity for government-to-government collaboration. The Ministry is dedicated to supporting the Province’s commitment to implement the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, and the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.

#### **Key results**

- Began engagement on the new fiscal framework and forestry revenue sharing models with Indigenous Peoples as part of Government's commitment to a new fiscal relationship that recognizes Indigenous governance and jurisdiction. The interim approach resulted in an immediate increase of approximately \$54 million to the revenue shared with participating First Nations in 2022/23.



- Launched Wildfire Salvage Opportunity Agreements, which enable the timely direct award of forestry licences to First Nations for salvaging timber damaged by wildfire. These agreements support mills and increase harvest activities in fire-damaged forests, while providing meaningful employment and economic benefits to First Nations communities.
- Enabled by amendments made in 2021 to the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, initiated eight new Forest Landscape Plans, in addition to the four pilot projects already underway, to provide a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to forest stewardship with Indigenous Nations, that incorporates local knowledge, values and community priorities.
- Together with [S'ólh Téméxw Stewardship Alliance](#) (STSA) partners, completed the first ever *Heritage Conservation Act* Section 4 Agreement, providing legal protection for 45 heritage sites and outlining a consensus-seeking, shared decision-making process between the STSA and the Province for ongoing heritage-site management.
- Together with the other Natural Resource Sector Ministries, reached consensus on a collaborative approach with Fort Nelson, Saúlteau, Halfway River, Doig River, McLeod Lake, West Moberly, and Prophet River First Nations and a separate agreement with Blueberry River First Nations. These agreements established a collaborative approach to land and resource planning – including a commitment to work toward wildlife co-management that promotes improved shared understanding and management of wildlife – to address cumulative effects and protect Treaty 8 rights.
- Continued to work in partnership with First Nations across B.C. to defer logging of old growth, while developing a new approach to sustainable forest management. Deferrals were implemented on nearly 1.7 million hectares of old growth forests, including approximately 1.05 million hectares of B.C.'s forests most at risk of irreversible loss.

### **Summary of progress made in 2022/23**

The Ministry is committed to working towards true and lasting reconciliation with First Nations, and to strengthening partnerships, collaboration and engagement with Indigenous Peoples on the sustainable management of the Province's natural resources.

In 2022/23, the Ministry made progress towards implementing the 89 priority actions identified in the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* Action Plan (the Declaration Act Action Plan), released on March 30, 2022. Actions include advancing co-development of a scalable cultural and prescribed fire program with Indigenous Peoples, and better protecting sacred Indigenous heritage sites through amendments to the *Heritage Conservation Act*. In addition, the Ministry is working closely with Indigenous partners and other natural resource sector ministries to develop the elements of a co-managed long-term program, inclusive of collaborative governance, integrated planning, policy, and public education. This new approach includes increasing Indigenous participation to ensure that the benefits provided by B.C.'s forests are shared, as well as advancing reconciliation by creating more tenure opportunities, and working towards a new fiscal relationship with First Nations.



In 2022/23, the Ministry strengthened partnerships, collaboration and engagement with Indigenous Peoples through a renewed relationship with the First Nations Forestry Council. There were a number of regional and provincial engagement sessions held during the year, including the [Provincial Forestry Forum](#) in November 2022. The forum and associated sessions provided an opportunity for the Ministry to strengthen partnerships and meaningful engagement with a total of 179 First Nation participants, representing 87 different First Nation communities, organizations, and forestry companies.

Also in partnership with the BC First Nations Forestry Council, the Ministry worked to improve Indigenous participation in the forest industry through delivery of the [Indigenous Forestry Scholarship Program](#), which supports Indigenous students enrolled in an accredited forestry program, including on-the-job training. In 2022/23, the Province contributed \$437,000 in funding for the development of [Forestry Connect](#), a new online forestry careers matching tool, as well as funding for 25 students to participate in work placements in BC Timber Sales, BC Wildfire Service, and with our industry partners.

This year, the Ministry also focused on improvements to its systems and processes by completing the implementation of the First Nations Consultation System; improving processes by bringing together consultation information, spatial data and processes into a single system; and by enabling different provincial government agencies to work together more efficiently and with simplified practices.

## Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
2.1 Number of programs, policies or pieces of legislation modified in response to cooperation and consultation with Indigenous Peoples, including but not limited to those outlined in the <i>Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act</i> Action Plan. <sup>1</sup>	N/A	TBD	N/A

Data source: Ministry of Forests

<sup>1</sup>Performance measure 2.1 targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as TBD and TBD, respectively. This measure was not continued in the 2023/24 - 2025/26 service plan. For forward-looking planning information, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget](#) website.

This performance measure demonstrates the Ministry's commitment to working towards true and lasting reconciliation and towards strengthening partnerships, collaboration and engagement with Indigenous Peoples in the management of the natural resources and land base in B.C.

Following the principles of the Declaration Act, cooperation and consultation as contemplated in this measure is now a part of all ministry policy and program development. As part of its ongoing business, the Ministry engages with First Nations on all major policy and legislation proposals. Notable examples of changes that were made in consultation and cooperation with First Nations in 2022/23 include modifying the Timber Supply Review process to align with the Declaration Act; identification of eight new Forest Landscape Plans and progress towards the

four pilot projects already underway; amendments to the *Forest and Range Practices Act* regulations; initiation of the Heritage Conservation Act Transformation Project (HCATP) through the Joint Working Group on First Nations Heritage Conservation, with input from First Nations and the Alliance of Modern Treaty Nations, to align the *Heritage Conservation Act* with the United Nations Declaration; and improvements to the Forest and Range Evaluation Program pertaining to cultural heritage monitoring. The Ministry's overall design and development of the Old Growth Action Plan is also a direct result of engagement completed with First Nations in 2022, and will inform program responses to the 14 recommendations in the [Old Growth Strategic Review](#).

Given the extensive mandate of the Ministry and the variety of engagements underway, it was not feasible to accurately track the number of programs, policies or legislation modified in response to cooperation and consultation with Indigenous Peoples. In 2022/23, the Ministry focused its efforts on transitioning to the accountability and implementation strategy set out in the Declaration Act Action Plan. The Province is developing the action plan in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples in B.C., and will work together to identify suitable tools, indicators and measures for monitoring, assessing and reporting on implementation of the Declaration Act.

## Goal 3: Sustainable natural resource management

### Objective 3.1: Improve wildlife management, protect wildlife habitat, and support the recovery of species-at-risk

This objective ensures that the Ministry has the information needed to support durable natural resource decisions, including the recovery of priority species-at-risk and the overall sustainable management of fish and wildlife populations in B.C.

#### Key results

- In cooperation with the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, First Nations and other interested parties, initiated a review of the *Wildlife Act* as part of the [Together for Wildlife](#) strategy in order to support reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, determine objectives for wildlife populations, improve wildlife stewardship, and deliver effective and accessible service.
- Released the [Hunting and Trapping Regulations Synopsis](#) effective July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2024, which sets out general hunting information, summarizes important hunting regulations, and supports the responsible stewardship of wildlife populations future generations.
- Completed public engagement on a draft thimhorn sheep stewardship framework that summarizes the best available information to provide managers and decision-makers broad advice for thimhorn sheep stewardship at the provincial, territorial, regional and local levels.

- Enacted [Bill 14 Wildlife Amendment Act, 2022](#), which brings in a requirement to consider Indigenous knowledge, and establishes a process by which the Province can align its laws with protocol hunting agreements and traditions that have long existed.

### **Summary of progress made in 2022/23**

Through research, consultation and information-sharing processes, the Ministry works with its partners, including Indigenous, federal and other provincial governments and agencies, as well as other ministries, to ensure sustainable management of fish and wildlife species and habitat in B.C. Due to the natural resource sector ministry re-organization in April 2022, the Ministry's core mandate is now focused on the management of fish and wildlife populations, and related scientific research and analysis that informs the decision-making process and results in changes to regulations, policies and procedures. Responsibilities for fish and wildlife habitat and species-at-risk have shifted to the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship.

In 2022/23, Ministry research and analysis advanced work on several projects to support sustainable populations and habitat for B.C.'s fish and wildlife. For example, Ministry research provided critical analyses that reduced decision risk to the joint Federal, Provincial, and First Nations Technical working group tasked with recovery planning for the endangered white sturgeon populations in the Nechako River. The Ministry worked to improve the sustainable management of wolverine populations in B.C. through research of population abundance and trapping data, which generated guidance for changing trapping season dates, allocations, creation of wolverine habitat maps, and initiated prioritization of wolverine habitat in forest management practices. Ministry research into the sediment dynamics of the San Juan River on Vancouver Island provided guidance to the Pacheedaht First Nation and Department of Fisheries and Oceans on limiting factors for chinook salmon survival, and provided technical guidance on management of an extensive log jam at the head of the San Juan estuary.

In addition, BC Timber Sales completed several projects in 2022/23 to improve fish stream and marine habitat in B.C. Projects included using Land Based Investment Strategy fish passage funding to remove a dam that was blocking fish passage in the Kootenays, which resulted in reconnecting over 50km of fish habitat. Restoration of marine habitat in areas off mid-Vancouver Island, including the establishment of carbon sequestering kelp forests, was completed to offset the impacts of marine log storage areas. BC Timber Sales also worked collaboratively with other government ministries to update the Fish Passage Guidebook to the new Fisheries Act standards which will help improve future fish passage work.

## Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2020/21 Baseline	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
3.1 Wildlife habitat restored or enhanced through Ministry management activities <sup>1,2</sup>	117,960 hectares	121,964 hectares (3.4% increase from 2020/21 baseline)	10% increase from baseline	188,978 hectares (60% increase from 2020/21 baseline)

Data source: Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

<sup>1</sup>Performance measure 3.1 targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as 15% increase from baseline and 20% increase from baseline, respectively. This measure was not continued in the 2023/24 - 2025/26 service plan. For forward-looking planning information, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget](#) website.

This performance measure demonstrates the result of efforts to support wildlife populations and to help recover species-at-risk through identifying opportunities to manage and protect Crown land to improve the health of the provincial land base. This work results in improved habitat for fish and wildlife, while also realizing additional co-benefits including the restoration of forests impacted by wildfire and pests, and increased carbon sequestration.

Working together with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy and the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, 188,978 hectares of habitat was restored or enhanced in 2022/23 through completion of 138 projects across the eight natural resource regions in the province. These projects are the culmination of ongoing investments in research, inventory and monitoring work that identifies where and how enhancement and restoration activities can be undertaken to improve the management of wildlife, fish and habitat values across B.C.

The Ministry exceeded the 2022/23 target due to expanded data collection for projects pertaining to aquatic habitat and fish passage investments, as well as range remediation projects. In addition, systems and data collection processes for this performance measure have improved, resulting in a more comprehensive reporting of work completed to benefit fish and wildlife habitat in B.C.

## Objective 3.2: Revitalize and protect B.C.'s forests, and strengthen climate change mitigation and adaptation activities to benefit all British Columbians

Through this objective, the Ministry is advancing towards its goal of sustainable natural resource management, and taking steps to protect B.C.'s forests by fostering innovative forest management activities, modernizing forest policies and strengthening the resiliency of B.C.'s forests to climate change.

### Key results

- Initiated work to develop an Old Growth Action Plan in partnership with First Nations and through engagement with local governments, industry, and other interested

parties to implement the recommendations outlined in the Old Growth Strategic Review.

- Together with forestry contractors, planted approximately 45 million trees and fertilized approximately 32,000 hectares of forest land through the Forest Investment Program, well over the 10-year historic average of 17,000 hectares per year.
- Initiated the development of the Silviculture Innovation Program in partnership with Bulkley Valley Centre for Natural Resources Research which will invest \$10 million over 5 years to support new research on the ground innovative practices that better address forest resiliency, ecosystem health and climate adaptation.
- Established the Future Forest Ecosystems Centre as a commitment in the B.C. [Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy](#) to support natural resource decision making in a changing climate.
- Through government-to-government partnership with First Nations, completed initial work for a five-year review of the implementation of Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) in the [Great Bear Rainforest](#) to improve the protection and stewardship of forest resources, biodiversity and cultural heritage in this area.
- As part of the Province's [CleanBC 2030 Roadmap](#), supported efforts to develop renewed rules to govern how forest carbon offsets are developed to ensure that they support local communities, promote ecosystem health, and represent verifiable, long-term reduction of emissions. The new protocol will enable First Nations and others to finance new conservation projects by earning verified carbon credits.

### **Summary of progress made in 2022/23:**

It is recognized that land management, including forest management, is critical to addressing climate change and its impacts. In 2022/23, the Ministry continued to focus on activities that revitalize and protect B.C.'s forests, strengthen resiliency to climate change, and modernize forest policies, while also building a sustainable, innovative forest economy together with Indigenous Peoples.

This year, the Ministry took steps to increase the carbon stored in B.C.'s forests, reduce emissions, and support the province's forests to adapt to climate change. Through the Forest Investment Program, the Ministry invested over \$100 million (before federal recoveries) in activities such as fertilization, reforestation, tree improvement, and road rehabilitation to increase carbon sequestration. The Ministry is also advancing policy to nearly eliminate emissions from slash pile burning by 2030. The Ministry has established the Future Forest Ecosystems Centre, a scientific team to forecast climate change impacts to B.C.'s ecosystems; through the Future Forest Ecosystems Centre projects, the ministry aims to support climate change adaptation and mitigation by reducing disruptions to ecosystem services.

The Province continues to invest in reforestation of areas impacted by natural disturbances as a climate mitigation strategy through the new Forest Investment Program. The Office of the Chief Forester partnered with Natural Resources Canada through the [2 Billion Trees program](#), resulting in approximately 2.3 million trees planted in 2021, approximately 8.5 million trees in

2022, and 29 million trees planned for 2023. The Ministry also continued work to implement the activities outlined in the forest bioeconomy pathway of the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030, including advancing manufacturing and markets for B.C. bioproducts.

Following the release of the Modernizing Forest Policy initiative, the Ministry committed to implementing the recommendations from the Old Growth Strategic Review and is making progress on protecting old forests in partnership with First Nations across the province. Consistent with the recommendations from the Old Growth Strategic Review, B.C. is integrating climate mitigation into forest management and undertaking research to improve our understanding of old forests and their impacts on greenhouse gases.

B.C. uses many mitigation options in our forests, including reforestation, fertilization, managing forest health, reducing slash pile burning, and using more fibre in longer lived products. Conserving old forests as carbon sinks is one of those strategies. In 2022/23, Government initiated eight new Forest Landscape Plans, in addition to the four already underway. Working in partnership with First Nations and in collaboration with other interested parties, these twelve forest landscape planning tables will develop long term permanent approaches to managing our forests, including old growth and biodiversity, as well as climate change and wildfire risk.

The Ministry continued to advance the incorporation of climate change considerations into natural resource management planning and decision-making in 2022/23, including timber supply reviews, permitting and authorizations, and forest landscape planning. The Ministry developed guidance for [Land Act](#) and Rangeland natural resource authorizations to support decision-makers to incorporate potential climate change adaptation measures and considerations into strategic planning, project designing, and statutory decision-making. The Ministry is developing a Climate Adaptation Policy Framework as a strategic anchor to streamlining the Ministry's climate strategies, policies, priorities and guidance, and to guide legislative and regulation changes to enable the consideration of climate risks and data in decision-making processes. The Ministry is also improving its carbon and emissions data, supporting the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy to update [Forest Carbon Offset Protocols](#), and is undertaking policy development to establish forest carbon offset projects on Crown land.

## Performance measure and related discussion

Performance Measure	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Actual
Greenhouse gas emissions reduced or sequestered through Forest Carbon Initiative (FCI) activities <sup>1, 2, 3</sup>	3.9	1.0	3.4

Data source: Forest Carbon and Climate Services Branch

<sup>1</sup>Performance measure 3.2 targets for 2023/24 and 2024/25 were stated in the 2022/23 service plan as to be determined. For forward-looking planning information, including current targets for 2023/24 – 2025/26, please see the latest service plan on the [BC Budget](#) website.

<sup>2</sup>Emission reductions and sequestration resulting from Forest Investment Program activities delivered in the current fiscal year are measured in units of MtCO<sub>2</sub>e (million tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent) and indicate the cumulative effect of each year's investment out to year 2050.

<sup>3</sup>The Forest Carbon Initiative was changed in 2022/23 and is now part of the Forest Investment Program.

Through the Forest Investment Program, the Province invests in activities that increase greenhouse gas (GHG) sequestration and reduce GHG emissions. This includes carbon sequestration from increased fertilization, reforestation of areas impacted by natural disturbance, tree improvement, forest health treatments, and rehabilitation of roads.

This performance measure projects the cumulative GHG emissions reduced or sequestered by 2050 resulting from this year's investments. Estimates are updated annually to reflect changes in program delivery, impacts of disturbances that occur after treatment, and methodological improvements.

The Ministry exceeded the 2022/23 target due to the expansion of the activities and associated benefits included through the Forest Investment Program. The Forest Investment Program was created to better coordinate multiple forest investment funding sources, including the Forest Carbon Initiative, for the delivery of activities such as reforestation and fertilization. Research is being conducted to understand the benefits of forest health treatments, which are currently excluded from the analysis.

# Financial Report

## Financial Summary

	Estimated (\$000)	Other Authoriz- ations <sup>1</sup> (\$000)	Total Estimated (\$000)	Actual (\$000)	Variance (\$000)
<b>Operating Expenses</b>					
Integrated Resource Operations	81,601	25,700	107,301	108,189	888
Office of the Chief Forester	111,946	74,191	186,137	172,643	(13,494)
Forest and Range Sector Policy	10,477	2,400	12,877	12,459	(418)
Fire Preparedness	43,348	17,166	60,514	56,984	(3,530)
Regional Operations	116,588	5,275	121,863	132,422	10,559
Executive and Support Services	67,029	6,547	73,576	79,571	5,995
Fire Management	194,285	217,633	411,918	411,918	0
BC Timber Sales Account	206,742	8,655	215,397	215,397	0
Crown Land Special Account	500	0	500	500	0
Forest Stand Management Fund	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>832,516</b>	<b>357,567</b>	<b>1,190,083</b>	<b>1,190,083</b>	<b>0</b>
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0	(8,622)	(8,622)
<b>Total</b>	<b>832,516</b>	<b>357,567</b>	<b>1,190,083</b>	<b>1,181,461</b>	<b>(8,622)</b>
<b>Ministry Capital Expenditures</b>					
Executive and Support Services	35,936	0	35,936	31,226	(4,710)
Fire Management	2,575	0	2,575	4,909	2,334
BC Timber Sales Account	40,671	0	40,671	31,140	(9,531)
<b>Total</b>	<b>79,182</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>79,182</b>	<b>67,275</b>	<b>(11,907)</b>
<b>Other Financing Transactions</b>					
<b>BC Timber Sales Account</b>					
Total Receipts	0	0	0	0	0
Total Disbursements	96,347	0	96,347	64,973	(31,374)
Net Cash Requirements (Source)	96,347	0	96,347	64,973	(31,374)
<b>Crown Land Administration</b>					



	Estimated (\$000)	Other Authoriz- ations <sup>1</sup> (\$000)	Total Estimated (\$000)	Actual (\$000)	Variance (\$000)
Total Receipts	0	0	0	0	0
Total Disbursements	6,382	0	6,382	159	(6,223)
Net Cash Requirements (Source)	6,382	0	6,382	159	(6,223)
<b>Habitat Conservation Trust</b>					
Total Receipts	(6,500)	0	(6,500)	(6,100)	400
Total Disbursements	6,500	0	6,500	6,100	(400)
Net Cash Requirements (Source)	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>(6,500)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(6,500)</b>	<b>(6,100)</b>	<b>400</b>
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>109,229</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>109,229</b>	<b>71,232</b>	<b>(37,997)</b>
<b>Total Net Cash Requirements (Source)</b>	<b>102,729</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>102,729</b>	<b>65,132</b>	<b>(37,597)</b>

<sup>1</sup> "Other Authorizations" include Supplementary Estimates, Statutory Appropriations and Contingencies. Amounts in this column are not related to the "estimated amount" under sections 5(1) and 6(1) of the Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act for ministerial accountability for operating expenses under the Act.

<sup>2</sup> The Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual of \$8.622 million is a reversal of accruals in the previous year.

## Forest Practices Board Resource Summary

The Forest Practices Board independently monitors and reviews forest and range practices in B.C.'s public forests and rangelands. The Board audits both tenure holders and government ministries for compliance with forest and range practices legislation, carries out special investigations and issues reports as appropriate, investigates concerns and complaints from the public, and participates in appeals to the [Forest Appeals Commission](#). It informs both the B.C. public and the international marketplace of forest and range licensees' performance in carrying out sound practices and complying with legal requirements.

The Board's mandate is provided by the *Forest and Range Practices Act* and the *Wildfire Act*. While the Board operates independently from the Ministry of Forests, its budget vote is the responsibility of the Minister. The Board reports its accomplishments and priorities through an annual report found at: [www.bcfpb.ca](http://www.bcfpb.ca).

	Estimated (\$000)	Other Authori- zations <sup>1</sup> (\$000)	Total Estimated (\$000)	Actual (\$000)	Variance (\$000)
<b>Operating Expenses</b>					
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,896</b>	<b>0,000</b>	<b>3,896</b>	<b>3,887</b>	<b>(9)</b>

## Appendix A: Public Sector Organizations

As of August 2023, the Minister of Forests is responsible and accountable for the following organizations:

### [Consular Corps of B.C.](#)

The Consular Corps is the official body of Consular Officers who reside in the province of B.C. They represent more than 80 countries to promote their trade within the Consular District. In addition to this, they assist and protect nationals of the countries they represent, and explain their policies and achievements in areas such as culture, trade, science, technology and tourism.

### [Creston Valley Wildlife Management Authority](#)

The Creston Valley Wildlife Management Authority manages the conservation of wildlife, particularly waterfowl, in the Creston Valley.

### [Forest Appeals Commission](#)

The Forest Appeals Commission is an independent tribunal granted authority under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* to hear appeals from decisions made under a variety of statutes administered by the Ministry.

### [Forest Enhancement Society of British Columbia](#)

The Forest Enhancement Society of British Columbia (FESBC) supports the Ministry by identifying, funding, advocating for and advancing environmental and resource stewardship of B.C.'s forests.

### [Forest Practices Board](#)

British Columbia's Forest Practices Board provides independent oversight of compliance with the *Forest and Range Practices Act* and the *Wildfire Act*.

## Appendix B: Progress on Mandate Letter Priorities

The following is a summary of progress made on priorities as stated in Minister Katrine Conroy's 2020 Mandate Letter.

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
Support people and businesses, with a focus on rural communities, in our government's COVID-19 response and recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority is in progress.</li> <li>• The Ministry continues to support the economic health and stability of communities in B.C. through a number of initiatives, including those addressing impacts from post-pandemic recovery and other emergencies.</li> <li>• For more information, see <a href="#">Objective 1.1</a>.</li> </ul>
Support the Minister of State for Lands and Natural Resource Operations to create a new Ministry for Lands and Natural Resource Operations that will develop and implement land use policies that support B.C.'s goals for economic activity, environmental sustainability, and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority was met with the establishment of the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship on April 1, 2022.</li> </ul>
Continue work to update and modernize forest policy and legislation to ensure a competitive, sustainable future for forest communities, Indigenous peoples, workers, and companies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority is in progress.</li> <li>• Multiple projects to update and modernize forest policy and legislation are ongoing to ensure the forest sector continues to be a good source of jobs and economic uplift for communities in B.C.</li> <li>• For more information, see <a href="#">Objective 1.1</a>.</li> </ul>

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Lead the transition of our forestry sector from high-volume to high-value production, increasing the value-added initiatives of our forest economy, including by making mass timber a priority in public buildings moving forward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority is in progress.</li> <li>• The Ministry is leading multiple initiatives through the Modernizing Forest Policy initiative to diversify the forest sector, provide more opportunities for communities and First Nations to participate in the Forest Sector, and to create the conditions that encourage a shift from “high volume” to “high value” production.</li> <li>• For more information, see <a href="#">Objective 1.1</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>Support the Minister of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation to advance the mass timber action plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority is in progress.</li> <li>• The Ministry’s work to support the advancement of mass timber in cooperation with the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation is ongoing.</li> <li>• For more information, see <a href="#">Objective 1.1</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>Working with industry and labour, dedicate a specific portion of the annual allowable cut toward higher value producers who can demonstrate their ability to create new jobs for workers in B.C.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority is in progress.</li> <li>• The Ministry continues to focus on improving fibre access for secondary manufacturers, including creating expanded opportunities for the value-added sector of the forest economy. For example, under the new BC Timber Sales Value-Added Manufacturing Program, small and medium-sized secondary manufacturers now have a dedicated fibre supply.</li> <li>• For more information, <a href="#">see Objective 1.1</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>Continue collaborating with the forest industry and stakeholders to implement the Interior Forest Sector Renewal process and the Coast Forest Sector Revitalization Initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress towards this mandate letter priority is ongoing under the Modernizing Forest Policy initiative.</li> <li>• For more information, see <a href="#">Objective 1.1</a>.</li> </ul>

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Implement the recommendations of the Old Growth Strategic Review in collaboration with Indigenous leaders, labour, industry, and environmental groups to protect more old growth stands – in addition to the 353,000 hectares protected in September 2020.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority is in progress.</li> <li>• The Ministry has initiated work to develop an Old Growth Action Plan in partnership with First Nations and through engagement with local governments, industry, and other interested parties to implement the recommendations in the Old Growth Strategic Review.</li> <li>• For more information, see <a href="#">Objective 3.2</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>With support from the Parliamentary Secretary for Emergency Preparedness, lead work with local governments to reduce wildfire risk and better prepare and support communities for future wildfires.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority is in progress.</li> <li>• The Ministry has multiple initiatives underway to reduce wildfire risk, such as Firesmart, the Community Resiliency Initiative, and the cultural and prescribed burning program. The Ministry ensures a coordinated approach to the Four Pillars of Emergency Management through inter-agency planning as well as coordination with Indigenous communities leading to reducing wildfire risk.</li> <li>• For more information, please see <a href="#">Objective 1.2</a> and the associated <a href="#">Performance Measure 1.2</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>Plant more trees for a healthy industry and province and continue to make significant investments in forest health, wildfire protection, silviculture, and revitalizing our forests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority is ongoing.</li> <li>• The Ministry makes investments annually in fertilization, reforestation, tree improvement, and road rehabilitation through its Forest Investment Program to increase carbon sequestration, and is encouraging better use of wood fibre to reduce slash pile burning to zero by 2030.</li> <li>• For more information see <a href="#">Objective 3.2</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>Protect and create jobs by fighting for a fair deal for B.C. wood products in softwood lumber negotiations with the United States.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority is in progress.</li> <li>• For more information, see <a href="#">Objective 1.1</a>.</li> </ul>

2020 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2023
<p>Champion innovation in our forestry sector that aligns with CleanBC objectives and improves sector efficiency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority is in progress.</li> <li>• Through research, education, policy and decision-support tools, the Ministry is incorporating climate change information into its natural resource assessment, planning and development initiatives, and building a sustainable, innovative forest economy in partnership with Indigenous Peoples.</li> <li>• For more information, see <a href="#">Objective 3.2</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>With support from the Parliamentary Secretary for Environment, lead work with neighbouring jurisdictions to cooperatively develop and invest in new strategies aimed at better protecting our shared wildlife and habitat corridors, including work to implement the Together for Wildlife Strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority was transferred to the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship in December 2022.</li> <li>• The Ministry continues to support the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship on implementing the Together for Wildlife Strategy.</li> <li>• For more information, please see <a href="#">Objective 3.1</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>Assume responsibility for the Columbia Basin Trust and Columbia Power Corporation, and lead negotiations regarding the Columbia River Treaty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This mandate letter priority was transferred to the Ministry of Finance in December 2022.</li> </ul>

