



Silviculture Innovation Program

STRATEGIC PLAN
2023-2028

Recognition and Respect of Indigenous Rights

We acknowledge and respect Indigenous rights and title as well as treaty rights in BC – as articulated in legislation, law and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA). In addition, we recognize the self-determined legal and governance systems of Indigenous communities, which play a crucial role in shaping our collaborative approaches and practices.

In alignment with these principles, the Silviculture Innovation Program will uphold respectful, reciprocal, and collaborative relationships with Indigenous peoples, communities, and organizations. We aim to support and advance Indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination and self-government, and the rights to land, territories, and resources traditionally owned, used, or occupied by Indigenous peoples.

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This Strategic Plan is a dynamic and adaptive framework, subject to change as it evolves with the integration of new information.

Purpose

The **purpose** of the Silviculture Innovation Program is to improve knowledge regarding **innovative silviculture systems** through extension, applied and operational research.

While the increased adoption of innovative silvicultural systems is our goal, we recognize that this will require addressing multiple barriers (e.g., legislation and policy) which are beyond the scope of this program.

KEY DEFINITION | Innovative Silviculture Systems

Innovative silviculture systems include systems for the harvesting, growing and tending of forests where the primary objective is to achieve holistic stewardship of the land base, including maintaining ecosystem health, water quality and quantity. Innovative silviculture systems are driven by an appreciation of ecological, social, cultural, and economic values of forests, where stewardship is focused on maintaining the continuity of dynamic ecosystem processes and functions.

Context: The term 'silviculture' has historically been defined as the 'art and science' of growing and tending forest crops (Nyland 1996). This definition is rooted in a European worldview that understands forests simply as a commodity. This approach to silviculture requires a critical assessment in the face of cultural, social and environmental change. More recently, there has been increased awareness that silviculture needs to recognize forests as complex adaptive systems (Puettmann et al. 2009). In British Columbia, "A New Future for Old Forests" by Al Gorley and Garry Merkel was released in 2020, where Recommendation 12 calls for the creation of a program that supports broad scale collaboration to develop and implement silvicultural systems that maintain or enhance old forest values. It suggests that through collaboration we can test and demonstrate how silvicultural systems can be applied to manage a range of values and encourage new practices through knowledge sharing.

Nyland, R. D. (1996). Silviculture concepts and applications. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
Puettmann, K.J., Coates, K.D. and Messier, C.C. (2009). A Critique of Silviculture: Managing for Complexity. Island press.

Vision

Innovative silvicultural systems are applied *widely* across British Columbia's forested ecosystems for the **stewardship of multiple values**.

KEY DEFINITION | Stewardship

Forest **stewardship** is the responsible use of forest resources based on the application of social, cultural and ecological understanding at the stand, forest, and landscape levels. Stewardship maintains and protects ecosystem function, integrity and resilience, and requires an ethical responsibility to the land and the people on the land for current and future generations

KEY DEFINITION | Multiple Values

Conventional forestry approaches have historically emphasized commodity production of timber. Innovative silviculture creates the framework for considering **multiple values** at the stand and landscape scale, ranging from the physical to the spiritual. Managing multiple values, such as water, wildfire resilience, wildlife habitat, food sovereignty and forest health requires a holistic, ecologically centered approach.

Mission

The Silviculture Innovation Program will accelerate the growth of innovative silviculture by **improving knowledge of these systems** in British Columbia.

We will:

- Assess the needs and state of knowledge of the forest management community;
- Be inclusive of multiple and diverse knowledge systems;
- Link **extension** needs to a motivated network of forest practitioners around the province;
- Make existing information more accessible, transparent and easier to interpret;
- Bridge existing gaps in knowledge that advance practices and inform policy;
- Develop projects to advance innovative silviculture practices and approaches to forest management.

KEY DEFINITION | Extension

Extension is a practice of building trust, relationships, and capacity to enable collaboration. Extension supports active engagement with diverse stakeholders and governments (Indigenous and provincial) to identify opportunities, information needs, and synergies, and through cooperation eliminate redundancies within a shared community of practice. A foundational principle of extension is centering reciprocity, where two-way knowledge creation and mobilization informs decision-making and implementation. Some examples of extension activities include convening workshops, hosting joint training sessions, creating course curriculum, supporting land-based learning and creating communication tools and resources to help transfer knowledge into practice.

Values

All projects and programs of the Bulkley Valley Research Centre are consistent with the Centre's values.



COMMUNITY

The work of the Silviculture Innovation Program will contribute to the vitality and diversity of British Columbia's communities.



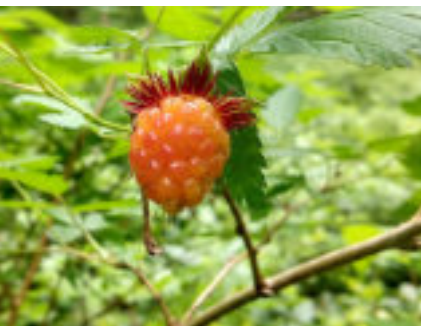
COLLABORATION

The Silviculture Innovation Program will work to strengthen and foster reciprocal and respectful relationships to co-create new research opportunities that promote equitable and inclusive collaboration and improve interdisciplinary communication.



ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

All work will be guided by the principle that ecological integrity is a requirement for resilient cultural, social, economic and environmental systems.



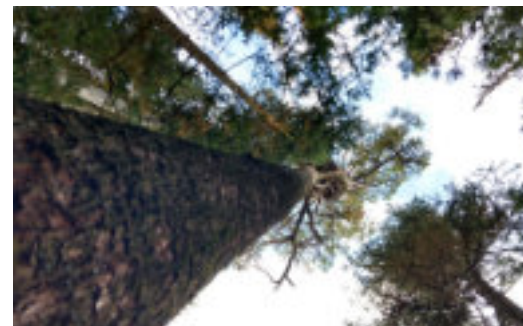
ACCESSIBLE

Co-created knowledge will be communicated and shared in respectful ways to the public, forest practitioners, communities and Nations to inform decision-making.



TRANSPARENCY

We strive to demonstrate a high level of transparency in our governance.



EXCELLENCE

Research will include Indigenous knowledge and meet or exceed accepted scientific and Indigenous research methods and ethical standards in the relevant field.



1

GAP ANALYSIS

By assessing and building on the current state of Indigenous and western knowledge across BC, and understanding the needs of the forest management community, we can identify priority areas.

- Conduct needs assessments across scales, such as watersheds and ecosystems;
- Align information needs with existing knowledge;
- Identify and prioritize knowledge gaps.

3

CO-CREATING KNOWLEDGE

By focusing on collaboration, leveraging different forms of knowledge, expertise and practice across diverse communities, and informing research through our needs assessment we can fill critical knowledge gaps.

- Expand on existing research trials;
- Develop new applied research projects;
- Prioritize Indigenous-led applied research projects.

Priority Areas

To achieve the goals of the Silviculture Innovation Program we will focus on **four key priorities**

2

EXTENDING CURRENT INFORMATION

By centering on the reciprocal nature of knowledge exchange and maintaining flexibility and adaptability we can share existing knowledge from Indigenous and western perspectives.

- Identify relevant groups and expand networks;
- Collate existing knowledge on innovative silviculture;
- Extend knowledge and assess impact and effectiveness.

4

BUILDING LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

By maintaining open dialogue with practitioners, Indigenous communities and leadership, decision- and policy-makers we will promote the operational implementation of innovative silviculture across BC.

- Foster ongoing discussion and deliberation within diverse knowledge systems on innovative silviculture to mobilize knowledge into action and inform policy.

**Silviculture
Innovation
Program**



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