

Report

Date September 17, 2025
Subject 2024 Annual Forestry Report

File:

PURPOSE

To provide a general summary of the metrics and activities conducted within the Forestry Department in 2024.

BACKGROUND

Each year the Municipal Forester prepares an annual report containing key Municipal Forest Reserve (MFR) metrics and information about activities from the previous year.

Since Council initiated the forestry review in 2019, forest management practices in the MFR have evolved significantly. Staff collaborated with the UBC Partnership Group to develop four forest management scenario options and assess the feasibility of a forest carbon credit initiative within the MFR. A parallel public engagement process was undertaken to gather feedback on the proposed scenarios and initiate dialogue with the Quw'utsun Nation, ensuring their interests are considered and integrated into the decision-making process.

In August 2021, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed in partnership with the Quw'utsun Nation to foster meaningful dialogue on key initiatives within the MFR. Since then, staff and Quw'utsun Nation representatives have convened multiple times, advancing discussions on co-management and partnership opportunities. Respecting the commitments of the MOU, at the November 15, 2023 Council meeting, staff were directed to pause all forest management recommendations until a co-management framework and plan for the MFR is jointly developed with the Quw'utsun Nation. In parallel with these collaborative efforts, there has been sustained interest in further exploring a shared forest carbon credit initiative within the MFR. Ongoing discussions have also focused on future trail development and the direct awarding of silviculture contracts to qualified Quw'utsun Nation companies—such as the FireSmart fuel mitigation work on Mount Tzouhalem and Maple Mountain.

Until Council provides further direction, staff continue to carry out essential forest management activities. These include danger tree removal, forestry road maintenance, tree protection and planting, security patrols, silviculture practices, fire prevention and continuing with FireSmart initiatives.

Although the 2024 Annual Forestry Report presents MFR metrics and activities aligned with the current forest management model under review, future reports are expected to reflect any new or revised models adopted by Council.

DISCUSSION

Harvest Summary

Total Area = 0ha

Total Volume = n/a

Harvest Cost = n/a

Gross Revenue = n/a

Net Revenue = n/a

Forestry Program Total Net Income = (\$184,465)

Log Sales Summary

Domestic sales = n/a

*Export sales = n/a

*Includes United States

Planting

Costs \$ 4,561 Budget \$ 14,250

In spring 2024, ~6ha were fill planted with 2,560 seedlings. The total cost for each tree planted was \$1.69/tree. Seedling costs were \$0.54/tree*, and planting costs were \$1.15/tree (includes fertilizer). Seedling costs include seed purchase, cold storage and shipping.

Planting Summary:

Species Planted	# Planted	% of Total Planted
Douglas Fir	2560	100%
Western White Pine		0%
Western Red Cedar		0%

Tea-bag fertilizer application at the time of planting = 2000

Since 1987, the Municipality has planted 2,309,692 seedlings and harvested 1567ha – all of which have been replanted.

Road Maintenance

Costs \$68,529 Budget \$62,000

The Forestry Department is responsible for monitoring, inspecting, and maintaining the forestry road systems within the MFR to ensure safe access, operational integrity, and environmental compliance. The following is a summary of the activities undertaken:

- Danger tree removal and road clearing along forestry roads throughout the MFR allows safe access for forestry activities, public users, and emergency vehicle access.
- Removed and replaced failing road culverts on Mount Prevost.
- Dust control applied along Mount Prevost forestry road.
- Culvert/ditch cleaning and road grading/repair of forestry roads completed on Mount Richards, Mount Prevost, Mount Sicker and Grace Road.
- Roadside brushing completed to maintain vehicle access on Mount Prevost.

Fire Protection

Costs	\$ 13,523	Budget	\$ 13,600
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The Forestry Department supports fire protection efforts within the MFR through proactive monitoring, fuel management, and coordinated response planning in partnership with the Fire Services Department. The following is a summary of the activities undertaken:

- There were no large forest fires within the MFR in 2024.
- Additional firefighting equipment was purchased to add to the current equipment inventory.
- The Mount Prevost, Mount Sicker and Grace Road gates were closed due to high fire hazard on July 5 and reopened on September 12.

FireSmart

The Forestry Department is responsible for FireSmart activities within the MFR, including implementing recommendations from the Community Wildfire Protection plan, fuel reduction treatments and supporting community education through FireSmart home assessments. The following is a summary of the activities undertaken:

- Completed the FireSmart fuel mitigation project (CRI – 594) on Mount Tzouhalem. Additionally, started the FireSmart fuel mitigation project (CRI – 610) on Mount Tzouhalem and Maple Mountain.
- Hosted a field tour for members of the Cowichan Regional Wildfire Resiliency Committee to present and discuss the fuel mitigation initiatives currently underway on Mount Tzouhalem.
- Debris removal for the community FireSmart project in Panorama Ridge
- Staff provided free FireSmart Home Assessments to 8 North Cowichan residents.

Security and Vandalism

Costs \$15,699 Budget \$24,000

The Forestry Department is responsible for monitoring and patrolling the MFR to identify and act on security concerns, vandalism, and unauthorized activities. Staff periodically encounter issues such as garbage dumping, timber theft, campfires, and overnight camping in various areas within the MFR. Staff continued with the following initiatives:

- Promoting public awareness, education, and reporting by installing/maintaining signage and social media posts
- Ongoing regular patrols within the MFR
- Working with RCMP and the Bylaw Services Team on various initiatives
- Illegal access dig up/blocking
- Quick detection and cleanup of encampments and large garbage accumulations

Silviculture

The Forestry Department is responsible for all silvicultural activities and obligations within the MFR, carried out by municipal staff and contractors. Staff regularly survey and monitor plantations to ensure healthy growth and the development of a well-established future forest.

Activity	Type	Area/# Treated	Cost	Budget
Plantation Brushing	Manual	0ha	\$0	\$8,340
	Herbicide	0	0	\$0
Invasive Species Control	Manual	*see below	\$17,375	\$15,000
White Pine Pruning	Manual	110 trees (Completed by Forestry Staff)	\$0	\$7,800
Silviculture Surveys	Various	192ha	Completed by Forestry staff	

*Invasive Species Control Summary:

Tansy Ragwort – Various locations on Mount Richards, Maple Mountain, and Stoney Hill

Scotch Broom – Various locations on Mount Prevost, Mount Richards, Maple Mountain, and Stoney Hill

Tree Protection

The Forestry Department monitors and maintains young plantations within the MFR, often applying protective measures such as tree guards at the time of planting to reduce ungulate browse pressure. These protectors are removed once the trees have grown beyond the vulnerable stage.

Costs \$ 21,599

Budget \$ 28,640

- A contractor removed 6,660 browse protectors, while staff removed 2,500. A total of 8,695 browse protectors were re-packaged by the contractor
- Re-Use 2,560 browse protectors.

Community Relations and Contributions

The Forestry Department continues to provide limited community support while the forestry review is ongoing. The following is a summary of the activities undertaken:

- Annual high school scholarship and bursary winners were chosen - \$2,400 awarded.
- ~\$163,200 total awarded since 1998
- Annual high school woodworking contest winners are chosen with \$1,000 in prizes awarded. A total of 3 students entered their "Wall Cabinet" project into the contest.
- ~\$21,050 total awarded since 2001
- Annual firewood donations program is suspended until the conclusion of the forestry review.
- Zero firewood permits and one salal permit was sold to the public.
- There were no Forest Legacy funded projects in 2024.

Other Notable Activities

Forestry Staff:

- Continued to support work by an ecologist with the Conservation Data Center under the BC Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, conducting research and surveys looking for potential rare species of plants and ecosystems in various locations within the Municipal Forest Reserve.
- Continued to support work by a research ecologist with the Ministry of Forests, to maintain a study site for a coast plant phenology and climate change research project on Maple Mountain.
- Continued to support representatives from the Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship as they continue to conduct research and remove invasive species in areas of high conservation value on the southern and eastern portions of Maple Mountain. This work is funded through the federal Priority Places Program to protect Garry Oak ecosystems.
- Supported Cowichan Community Land Trust volunteers in removing invasive species from areas of high conservation value on Maple Mountain.
- Continued to support work by an independent research group that obtained funding through the federal Habitat Stewardship Program to conduct survey work for the endangered Sharp-tailed snake on Maple Mountain.

- Continued to support the BC Purple Martin Stewardship & Recovery Program as they continue to work with their Coastal Purple Martin colony monitoring and nest-checking program on Mount Richards and Maple Mountain.
- Supported Cowichan Search and Rescue to conduct training events on Mount Prevost and Mount Tzouhalem.
- Coordinated and provided residual timber from the Mount Tzouhalem FireSmart Project to the Cowichan Trail Stewardship Society for the purposes of producing materials to be used for trail infrastructure maintenance and construction.
- Supported Cowichan Tribes Elders and community members who held a private ceremonial event on Mount Prevost.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receives the 2024 Annual Forestry Report dated September 17, 2025, from the Acting Director of Parks and Recreation, for information.

Report prepared by:



Shaun Mason, RPF
Acting Director, Parks and Recreation

Report reviewed by:



George Farkas
General Manager, Planning, Development and
Community Services

Approved to be forwarded to Council:



Bill Corsan
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments:

- (1) 2024 Harvest and Profit Summary
- (2) 2024 Statement of Account

Harvest and Profit Summary

1987 To 2024 Harvesting Summary

	Year	Ha	Volume m³	Volume /Ha	Net Revenue (Harvesting)	Net Revenue \$/m³
1	1987	63.4	13,159	208	\$204,772	\$15.56
2	1988	73.9	18,602	252	\$354,256	\$19.04
3	1989	43.2	14,798	343	\$272,913	\$18.44
4	1990	36.1	10,969	304	\$254,831	\$23.23
5	1991	32.2	12,740	396	\$271,217	\$21.29
6	1992	63.3	12,935	204	\$289,102	\$22.35
7	1993	55.2	14,907	270	\$542,821	\$36.42
8	1994	58.6	16,160	276	\$692,414	\$42.85
9	1995	78	21,556	276	\$1,205,329	\$55.92
10	1996	48.7	14,427	296	\$639,017	\$44.29
11	1997	32.3	13,371	414	\$625,437	\$46.78
12	1998	30.2	12,085	400	\$444,933	\$36.82
13	1999	41	16,428	401	\$564,867	\$34.38
14	2000	35.9	13,378	373	\$564,778	\$42.22
15	2001	39.34	15,538	395	\$660,924	\$42.54
16	2002	39.9	13,880	348	\$580,631	\$41.83
17	2003	49.2	15,841	322	\$661,089	\$41.73
18	2004	64.47	19,126	297	\$773,940	\$40.47
19	2005	54.6	16,018	293	\$672,876	\$42.01
20	2006	53.4	17,518	328	\$792,562	\$45.24
21	2007	65.6	21,153	322	\$804,375	\$38.03
22	2008	39.5	13,703	347	\$619,866	\$45.24
23	2009	46.5	14,296	307	\$439,936	\$30.77
24	2010	42.1	16,418	390	\$451,287	\$27.49
25	2011	45.5	17,775	391	\$664,170	\$37.37
26	2012	42.7	17,142	401	\$618,045	\$36.05
27	2013	60.4	24,355	403	\$1,110,159	\$45.58
28	2014	51.7	20,226	391	\$1,063,196	\$52.57
29	2015	46.7	22,271	477	\$1,003,533	\$45.06
30	2016	36.6	17,268	472	\$1,020,010	\$59.07
31	2017	21.8	10,585	486	\$832,043	\$78.61
32	2018	25.1	11,562	461	\$977,787	\$84.57
33	2019	45.1	15,255	338	\$840,922	\$55.12
34	2020	5.4	2,734	506	\$117,125	\$42.84
35	2021	0	68	0	\$4,433	\$65.19
36	2022	0.3	253	0	\$24,357	\$96.27
37	2023	0.2	607	0	\$23,726	\$39.09
38	2024	0	0	0	\$0	\$0.00
Total		1568.11	529,107		\$21,683,680	\$40.98
Average		41.3	13,924	337	\$570,623	

Summary 1987 to 2024 337 m³/ha \$13,828 /ha
 Total Net Revenue from harvesting = \$2,476,449 \$4.68 /m³

Profit distribution for 2024

\$ (184,465) to Forest Reserve Fund
 \$ - to Forest Legacy Fund
 \$ - to General Revenues

\$ (184,465) Net Income

Forestry Program Profit

Annual Profit	Annual Profit \$/m³	Annual Forestry Profit Split As Follows:					
		General Revenues	Forest Reserve Fund	Forest Legacy Fund	Scholarship Fund	Land Purchases	Hectares
-\$24,825	-\$1.89	\$0	-\$24,825	\$0		\$0	
\$115,885	\$6.23	\$0	\$115,885	\$0		\$0	
\$38,486	\$2.60	\$0	\$38,486	\$0		\$0	
\$48,571	\$4.43	\$0	\$48,571	\$0		\$0	
-\$12,370	-\$0.97	\$0	-\$12,370	\$0		\$0	
\$67,231	\$5.20	\$45,000	\$22,231	\$0		\$0	
\$272,276	\$18.27	\$240,000	\$32,276	\$0		\$0	
\$275,880	\$17.07	\$250,000	\$25,880	\$0		\$0	
\$755,771	\$37.24	\$489,230	\$33,313	\$92,308		\$140,920	14.2
\$131,057	\$9.08	\$65,000	\$51,057	\$15,000		\$0	
\$24,815	\$1.86	\$24,815	\$0	\$0		\$0	
\$47,420	\$3.92	\$0	\$37,935	\$9,485		\$0	
\$97,579	\$6.04	\$29,274	\$48,789	\$19,516		\$0	10.5
\$33,745	\$2.52	\$9,865	\$17,057	\$6,823		\$0	
\$111,851	\$7.20	\$100,666	\$11,185	\$0		\$0	
\$95,375	\$6.87	\$28,612	\$47,688	\$19,075		\$0	
\$94,484	\$5.96	\$52,162	\$22,273	\$18,609	\$1,440	\$0	
\$121,932	\$6.38	\$29,183	\$68,880	\$19,455	\$4,414	\$0	
\$29,901	\$1.87	\$14,951	\$0	\$14,950	\$0	\$0	
\$30,343	\$1.73	\$15,171	\$0	\$15,172	\$0	\$0	
\$65,344	\$3.09	\$0	\$65,344	\$0	\$0	\$0	
-\$20,393	-\$1.29	\$0	-\$20,393	\$0	\$0	\$0	
-\$119,382	-\$6.24	\$0	-\$119,382	\$0	\$0	\$0	
-\$137,409	-\$8.37	\$0	-\$137,409	\$0	\$0	\$0	
-\$55,879	-\$3.14	\$0	-\$55,879	\$0	\$0	\$0	
\$9,602	\$0.56	\$0	\$9,602	\$0	\$0	\$0	
\$435,606	\$17.89	\$130,682	\$217,803	\$87,121		\$0	
\$409,430	\$20.24	\$122,829	\$204,715	\$81,886		\$0	
\$359,381	\$16.14	\$239,381	\$0	\$120,000		\$0	
\$412,195	\$23.87	\$206,098	\$123,659	\$82,438		\$0	
\$130,165	\$12.30	\$39,049	\$65,082	\$26,033			
\$261,077	\$22.58	\$78,323	\$130,539	\$52,215			
\$275,255	\$18.04	\$82,567	\$137,634	\$55,054			
-\$469,046	-\$171.56	\$0	-\$453,846	-\$15,200			
-\$509,476	-\$7,492.29	\$0	-\$509,476	\$0			
-\$310,641	-\$1,227.83	\$0	-\$310,641	\$0			
-\$430,322	-\$708.93	\$0	-\$430,322	\$0			
-\$184,465	\$0.00	\$0	-\$184,465	\$0			
\$2,476,449	\$4.68	\$2,292,858	-\$683,123	\$719,940	\$5,854	\$140,920	24.7
\$65,170		\$60,338	-\$17,977	\$18,946	\$154	\$3,708	

2024 Statement of Account

	2024 Budget	Year to Date Jan 1 to Dec 31, 2024
Revenue		
Log Sales	0m ³ -	0m ³ -
A SUBTOTAL - LOGGING SALES	-	-
Grants	296,690	150,000
Rentals (Cell Towers)	98,320	112,209
Other Revenue	9,880	9,710
B SUBTOTAL - OTHER REVENUE	404,890	271,919
C TOTAL REVENUE	404,890	271,919
Expenses		
Harvesting	-	-
Scaling	-	-
Contract Engineering	-	-
Road Construction	-	-
D SUBTOTAL - LOGGING COSTS	-	-
Road Maintenance	62,000	68,529
Road Deactivation	-	-
Site Preparation	-	-
Planting	14,250	4,561
Brushing and Weeding	8,340	-
Brushing and Herbicides	-	-
Pruning	7,800	-
Tree Protection	28,640	21,599
Administration	250,646	233,538
Fire Protection	232,790	80,859
Security & Vandalism	24,000	15,698
Tours	3,400	-
Integrated Resource Mgmt	5,000	4,970
Municipal Forest Review	80,000	-
Forestry contractor	-	-
Recreation Roads Maintenance	10,000	4,130
Scholarships	3,050	3,000
Grants in Aid	2,550	2,125
Invasive Species Control	15,000	17,375
Vehicles (included with Admin)		
E SUBTOTAL - FORESTRY OPERATIONS	747,466	456,384
F TOTAL LOGGING OPERATIONS (A-D)	-	-
G TOTAL FORESTRY OPERATIONS (B-E)	(342,576)	(184,465)
NET INCOME (F+G)	(342,576)	(184,465)