

A Proposal for the Creation of the Knarston Creek Forest Corridor in Woodlot 1475

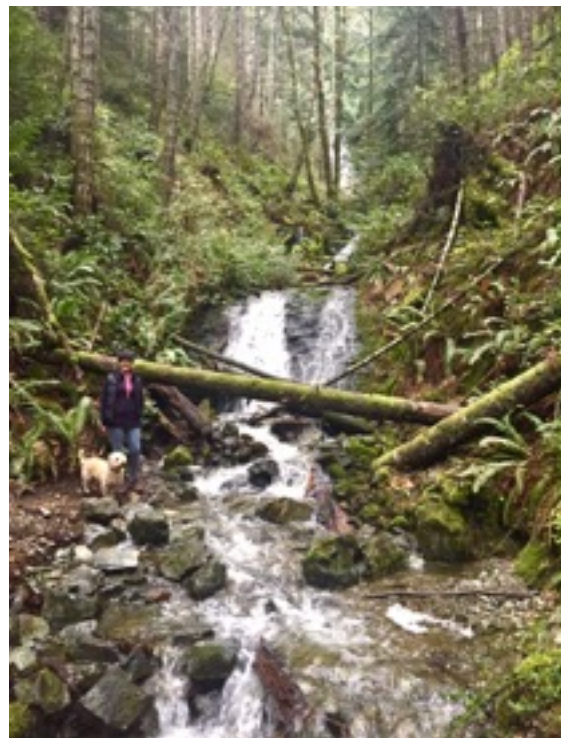
Central Island residents would like to work with the provincial government to allocate an additional 60 ha of Woodlot 1475 for conservation and recreation. Key elements of our proposal area as follows:

- Approximately 30 ha of forest would be designated to greatly improve representative conservation of globally endangered Coastal Douglas Fir Ecosystems (see Appendices One and Two)
- Another 30 ha would be designated to form a recreation corridor along the Knarston Creek, which has long been a favourite area for locals, and which has tremendous untapped potential for recreation for Central Island residents.

These areas would be additional to the existing c. 43 ha that are removed from the harvestable land base under the current management plan for Woodlot 1475.

Our proposal allows the area to remain as a working woodlot, while achieving a better balance between social, environmental and economic values of the forest.

In order to compensate the licensee for the reduction in timber harvest that would be required under our proposal, we suggest that an independent financial valuation of the timber license be conducted. Local residents, municipal governments and NGOs would raise half of the funds necessary, while the provincial government would fund the other half.



Supporting information

Woodlot 1475

Woodlot 1475 is 242 hectare (600 acre) parcel of public/crown land in Upper Lantzville, located adjacent to the Foothills development. The licensee began managing the woodlot for timber production in 2005. Last year (2015) marked the end of the first ten-year management period and the government has renewed the license for a further 20 years.

Location of Woodlot 1475 in Upper Lantzville

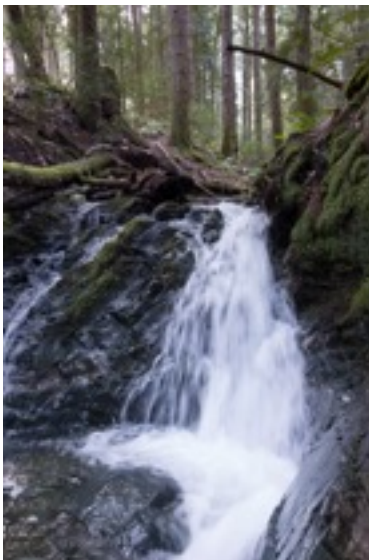
Other forest values

Hundreds of people regularly enjoy the woodlot, including mountain bikers, horseback riders, hikers and dog walker. Given the tens of thousands of people in the central island that live in close proximity to the woodlot, there is potential for much greater recreational use.

The forest also contains a significant area of red-listed ecosystems within the Coastal Douglas Fir and Coastal Western Hemlock forest types in BC. Indeed, some of these ecosystems are considered globally endangered. These forests are important in their own right for biodiversity conservation, but they also provide homes for many at-risk species, including the federally-listed Northern Screech Owl, and three listed amphibian species.

Finally, although formal studies have not yet been done, it is likely that the forests in Woodlot 1475 play an important role in regulating the hydrology responsible for recharging aquifers that supply private well and district wells in Lantzville.

A question of balance



The high social and environmental values found in Woodlot 1475 have led many concerned residents to question whether the current balance between logging and forest protection is appropriate. Under the current government-approved management plan, only about 17% of the area of the forest is protected from harvest. The protected forest includes a 20 m riparian buffer around most of Knarston Creek, a voluntary 20 m management zone adjacent to the riparian buffer where limited harvesting may occur, and areas where it is uneconomic to harvest due to steep terrain. There is no legal requirement to leave forest buffers around the provincially registered trail network on the woodlot, nor around the extensive and growing network of secondary trails. Furthermore, the current management plan does not protect red-listed ecosystems from logging. For these reasons, many people view the current level of timber harvest as too high, and not reflecting the environmental and social importance of Woodlot 1475.

Support for the idea of greater forest protection in Woodlot 1475

In early 2015 a group of Lantzville residents began to explore possibilities for increasing forest protection in Woodlot 1475. As the group engaged the broader community, they found support at all levels for protecting the Woodlot. Here are some of the main findings:

- More than 2000 mid-island residents have signed a petition asking the provincial government to compensate the woodlot licensee so that the woodlot can be re-designated as a park or protected area.
- Protecting some or all of the forests in Woodlot 1475 is an important goal for the District of Lantzville. Lantzville's *Parks, Trails and Recreation Plan* states the District's intention to pursue the acquisition of this land for a community park.
- In September, Lantzville's Council formally expressed the community's support for protecting Copley Ride by unanimously passing the following motions:

That the District recognizes and supports the communities desire to protect the lands of Woodlot 1475 from any further logging.

That Council requests a meeting with the Honourable Steve Thomson and MLA Stillwell in regards to changing the status of Woodlot 1475 and consider creating a recreational area and/or Wildlife Habitat Area.

And that the District of Lantzville send a letter to the Honourable Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands & Natural Resource Operations, requesting that the Minister consider a temporary stay on any further logging in Woodlot 1475 until May 1, 2016 while negotiations with the Ministry continue regarding the future use of this woodlot.

The District will increase its focus on land use in the watershed and better delineating the aquifer recharge areas so that they can be managed appropriately.

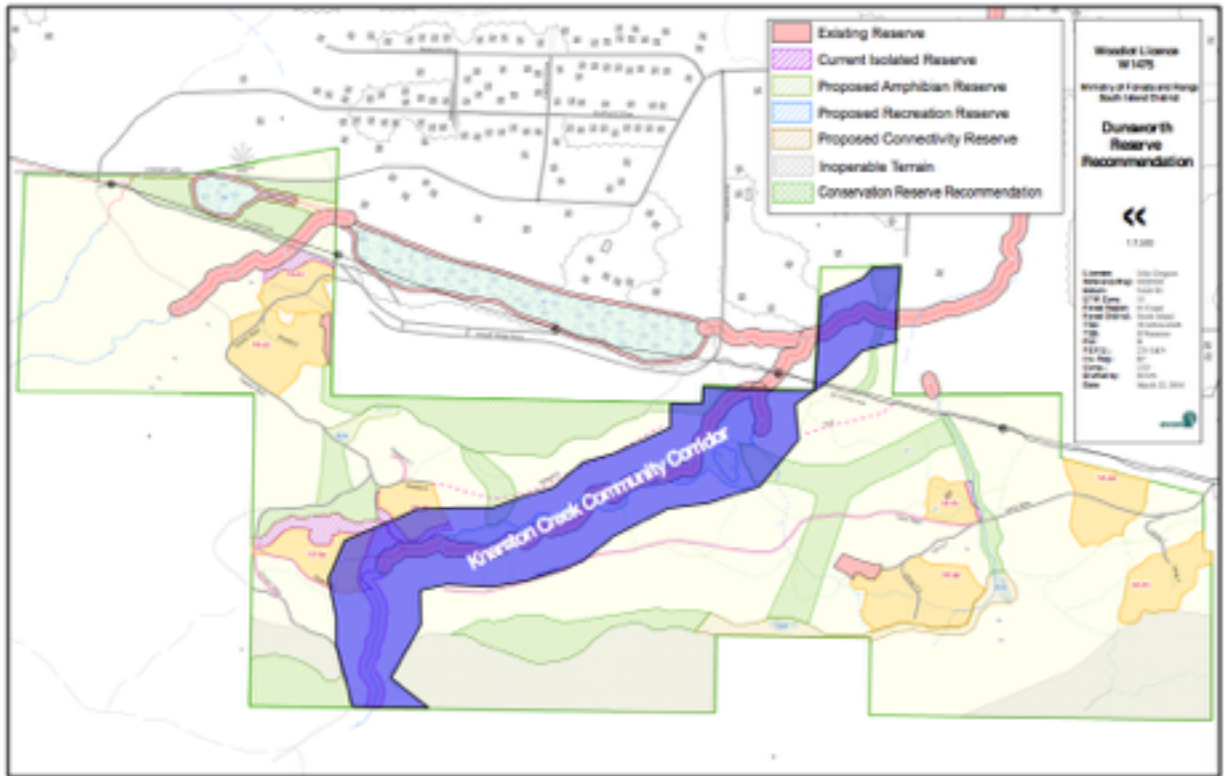
- The Lantzville Village Core businesses also support Woodlot 1475 being turned into a community park as they see a potential economic benefit and wish to support a community effort. Local cycling and outdoors stores also support the idea and are hosting petition sign-up sheets.



For more information, contact:

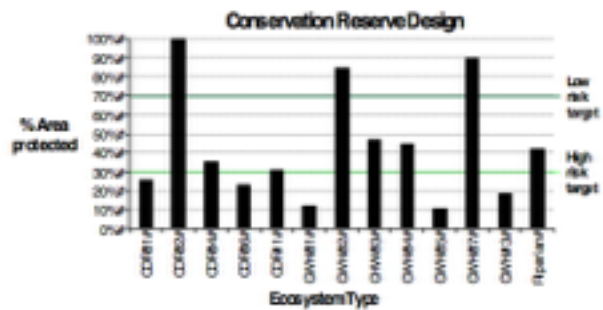
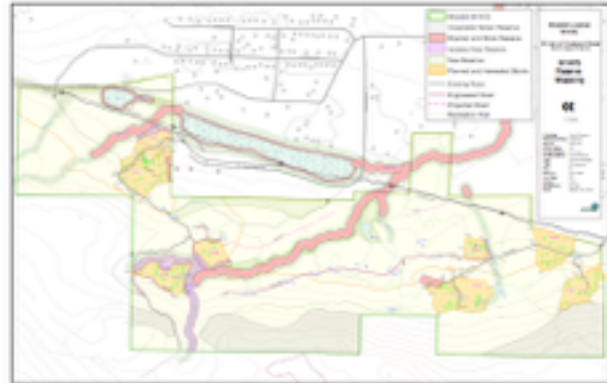
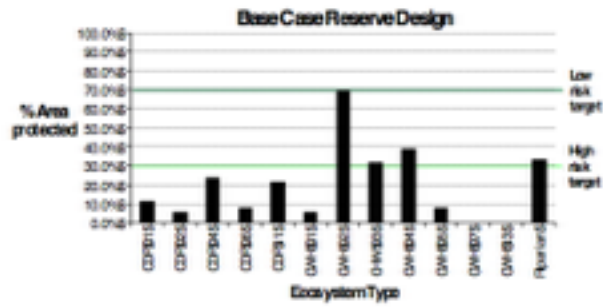
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Proposal for additional protected lands in Woodlot 1475. Approximately 30 ha would be located to protect mature globally endangered Coastal Douglas Fir ecosystems (green hatched areas on map), and another 30 ha would be protected to create recreational corridor along Knarston Creek (blue shading). The remainder of the forest would continue to be managed as a timber production forest.



The proposed conservation reserves would greatly improve protection for mature CDF ecosystems. Under the proposal, most CDF types would have at least 30% of their area protected.

Effectiveness of Woodlot 1475 Reserve designs in Protecting Red- and Blue-listed Plant Communities



Protection levels - >72% protection = low risk/high certainty; <30% = high risk/low certainty. Source: HOT, R.F. Conservation Planning and Targets for the Coastal Douglas Fir Ecosystem. A Science Review and Preliminary Approach. Report prepared for BC Integrated Land Management Bureau.