

Community Forest Background

In 2001, the Village of Pemberton Council took into consideration the changes that were taking place in the Forest Industry at the time and determined it would be prudent to investigate the possibility of establishing a Community Forest in the Pemberton area. In 2005 the Ministry of Forests issued a press release in which the Village of Pemberton along with the RMOW and District of Squamish were invited to apply for a five-year probationary community forest licence that would provide up to 10,000 m³ of timber annually. Although application was not made at that time there continued to be interest in pursuing this initiative and over the years the Village has met with Ministry officials to discuss the Community Forest program, understand the 2007 timber supply analysis and consider partnership opportunities.

Due to renewed interest in 2014, Council determined that it would be useful to better understand the feasibility of pursuing this initiative. In 2015, a request for proposals was issued by the Village for a study to explore the feasibility of entering into a Community Forest Agreement with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resources Operations. Over the past number of years there have been numerous discussions with Provincial representatives and some preliminary research has been completed. The aim of the study was to learn about the potential benefits of entering into a Community Forest Agreement including the establishment of forest stewardship over the lands surrounding the Village; facilitating potential recreation opportunities and protecting those opportunities that are already in place; review partnership opportunities; and social and economic benefits to the community through potential job creation and retention.

In January 2016, the Community Forest Feasibility Study was completed and presented to Council. To view the Feasibility Study, click on the Spelkúmtn Community Forest Documents section below.

The Study outlined the process to make application and provided information of the potential costs and benefits to undertaking this project and options for partnerships. An opportunity to partner with Lil'wat Nation was presented and in December of 2016, Council resolved to enter into negotiations with Lil'wat Forest Ventures to establish a Partnership Agreement to operate a Community Forest.

In 2017, negotiations proceeded to establish an official partnership between the Village and Lil'wat Nation which included the development of a Limited Partnership Agreement and Shareholders Agreement. As well, naming of the Community Forest Corporation was confirmed and through this process the Spelkúmtn Community Forest Corporation was formed in 2018. An Interim Board was appointed with representation from both communities.

At the same time, work proceeded on the development of a Management Plan and Forest Stewardship Plan. These plans were presented to the public in the fall of 2018. These plans accompanied the Spelkúmtn Community Forest Limited Partnership's application to the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) for a Community Forest Agreement in the areas surrounding Pemberton & Mount Currie. The Agreement was approved and announced by FLNRORD on March 11, 2021.