

# *Wetzin'kwa Community Forest Corporation*



*Our Forest,  
Our Community,  
Our Future...*

# *What is a community forest?*



*“An area based forest tenure awarded by government to communities to enhance their local control over forest management.”*

*“Local forests, local people, local decisions!”*

# *Background*



- *1998 – a community economic development strategy was completed*
- *2001 – establishment of the Bulkley Valley Forest Community Economic Development Group to address the crisis regarding Skeena Cellulose situation*
- *2002 the community supported the transfer of the SCI license to West Fraser*

# *Background* continued



- *2003 – the Softwood Industry Community Economic Adjustment Initiative was tapped to develop a community forest business plan*
- *2004 – Lynx Forest Management was contracted to assess community forest models and volume requirements for profitability*
- *2004 – with Wet’suwet’en support, a request was made to the Minister for an opportunity to apply for a community forest tenure (AAC = 100,000 m<sup>3</sup>/yr )*

# *Background* continued



- *2005 - Smithers and Telkwa, with Wet'suwet'en support, were invited to apply for a probationary community forest agreement with a 30,000 m<sup>3</sup> AAC*
- *2006 – WCFC incorporated and management plan was approved by the Ministry of Forests District Manager.*
- *January 1, 2007 Wetzin'kwa Community Forest Corp. was awarded Community Forest Agreement K2P*

# *Attributes of Successful Communities*

- *General passion for local control*
- *Visionary leaders*
- *Shared concern for state of local forest*
- *Sense of community*
- *Love of place*
- *First Nations Involvement*
- *On-going volunteer support*
- *Track record in land-use issues*

# *Corporation Name*



- *Wetzin'kwa refers to the Bulkley/Morice Rivers and means 'flowing blue-green or clear waters' in the Wet'suwet'en people's language.*

# *WCFC Mission Statement*



*“WCFC will manage a profitable community forest tenure while providing good forest management stewardship that will sustain forest resource values for future generations.”*

# *Our New Logo*



- *Depicting the flowing blue-green waters and symbolizing the range of values within our stewardship responsibility.*

# Core Values



- *to sustain financially viable forest resources business for long term benefit of BV residents;*
- *to maintain and sustain functional integrity of ecosystems;*
- *to protect water quality in watersheds;*
- *to maintain a healthy balance of all plants and animals;*
- *to recognize the Wet'suwet'en people and their culture;*
- *to establish long lasting, respectful relationships between partners;*
- *to expand local small business opportunities and employment when and where feasible;*
- *to enhance outdoor educational and recreational opportunities;*
- *to increase community involvement and reflect community values in decision making.*

# *Governance*

- *The governance of Wetzin'kwa is provided through a seven person volunteer board*

*4 permanent board positions – currently held by:*

- *Town of Smithers (Dean Daly)*
- *Village of Telkwa (Tom Dall)*
- *Office of the Wet'suwet'en (David de Wit)*
- *Newpro (David Jacobs)*

*3 directors at large (nominated from community for 3 year Terms)*

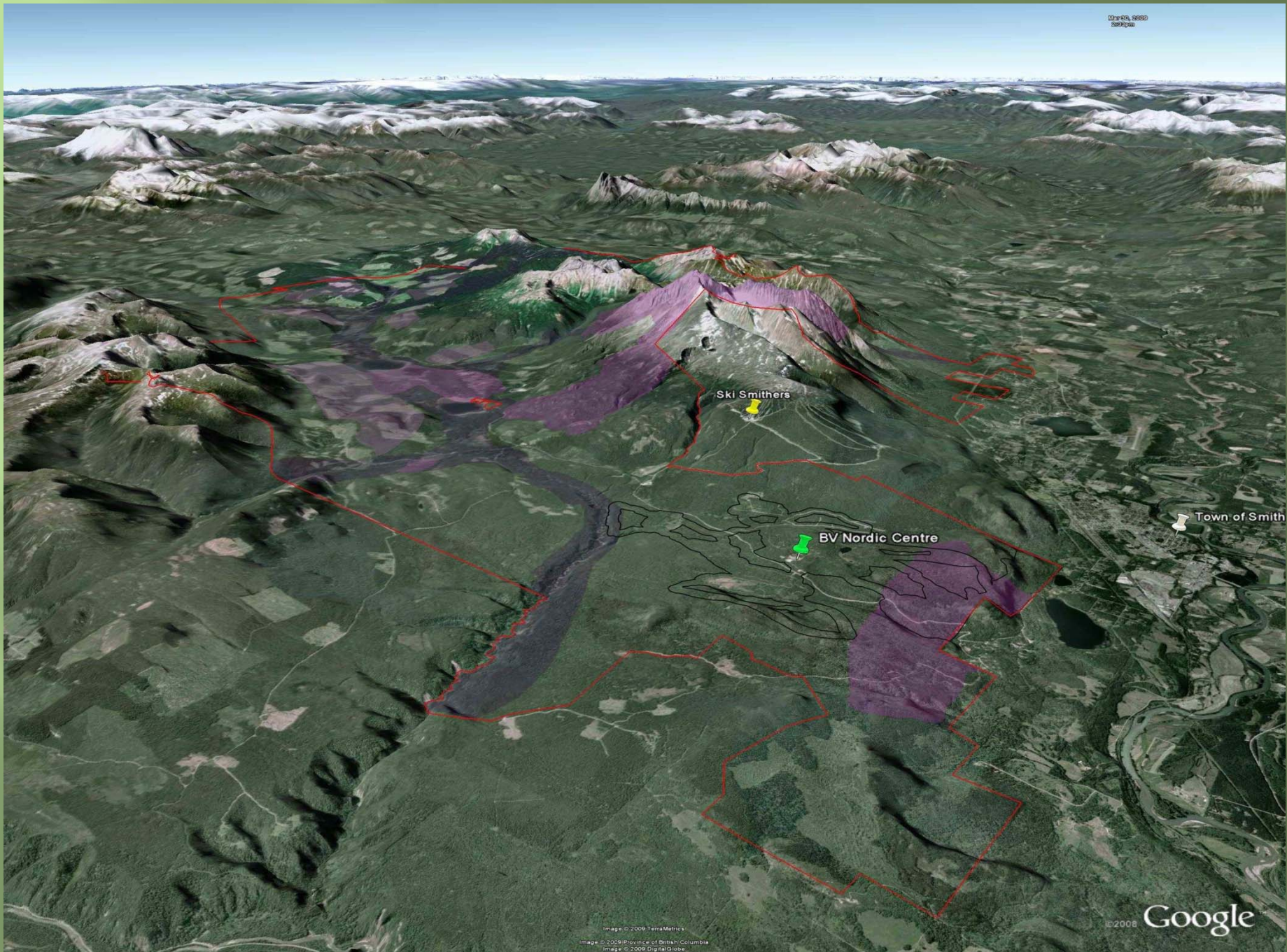
- *Nikki Skuce (vacant as of Oct 2009)*
- *Jass Morin Parker*
- *Colin Macleod*



# *The Tenure*



- *The total area is approximately 31,000 hectares (timber harvesting landbase ~ 16,000 hectares)*
- *The Annual Allowable Cut is 30,000 cubic metres*



# *Local Planning Direction*



- *Wetzin'kwa Management Plan*
- *Higher Level Plans*
- *Forest Stewardship Plan*
- *Wet'suwet'en Territorial Plan*
  - *Once this Plan is complete and accepted by the WCFC board of directors*
- *Resource Users Group (local stakeholders)*
- *Office of Wet'suwet'en MOU*
- *BV Cross Country Ski Club MOU*
- *Smithers Community Forest Society MOU*

# *Community Forest Benefits*



- *Community-based land management decisions*
- *Improved local accountability*
- *Ability to support local timber manufacturers*
- *Ability to support local service providers*
- *Ability to enhance local recreation*
- *Ability to support local research / innovation*
- *Ability to encourage economic diversification*
- *Ability to reinvest profits directly back into Bulkley Valley communities*

# *Local Financial Benefits*



- *In 2008, over \$1,500,000 was spent by WCFC in the local economy through contracts to local companies*
  - *\$1,330,000 (logging/log hauling)*
  - *\$21,800 (road building)*
  - *\$100,000 (forest management/planning)*
  - *\$60,000 (First Nations – forest health contracts)*
- *In 2008, operating revenues have allowed for:*
  - *Reserve Fund establishment, debt repayment,*
  - *self financing of next years' operations and*
  - *profit redistribution*

# *Local Financial Benefits*



- *In 2009, \$1.8 million budgeted for local contracts*
- *2009 Grant Applications: \$90,000 to 15 regional organizations*
- *2009 Direct Award Grants: \$30,000 to 3 regional organizations (BVXCSC, O/W, SCFS)*

# *A Few Key Challenges*



- *Developing community involvement tools to ensure forest management reflects community needs and interests*
- *Maintaining high forest stewardship standards while salvaging Mountain Pine Beetle damaged timber*
- *Remaining solvent in a weak forest product market*
- *Uncertainty regarding stumpage rates (fees to Crown)*
- *Reinvesting profits to provide the greatest long term benefit to our: environment, society and economy*

# *Advice in Lean Times (BCACF)*



- *Be ready and nimble*
- *Know your costs*
- *Pre-sell when possible*
- *Small is good*
- *Cultivate diverse markets*
- *Think value-added*

# *Lessons for Success*

*(from Connecting Lands and People)*



- *Sound Business skills*
- *Effective Board and GM*
- *Strong relationships*
- *Support from local industry*
- *Maximize value-added processing within community*
- *Diversification into new revenue streams*

# *Adding Value*

- *Adding value to living tree*
- *Sorting on the stump and at roadside landing*
- *Local log markets*
- *Local milling*
- *Supporting value added manufacturers*



# *Revenue Stream Diversification*



- *Research Partnerships*
- *Demonstration Forests*
- *Education*
- *Recreation*
- *Non-timber Forest Products*
- *Alternative Markets*
- *Carbon Management?*
- *Bioenergy?*

# ***Our Future?***



“Control is power; the power to make decisions about our land, our lives, our future.”

From *Connecting Lands and People*

***With the Wetzin’kwa  
Community Forest, we now  
have the power to make  
decisions and guide our own  
future.***

# *Coming Events*



- *Fall Nature Walk,  
Saturday, Oct. 24 11am  
at BV Nordic Warming  
Hut*
- *Our AGM  
Monday, Oct. 26 from 7-  
9pm at Smithers Town  
Hall*