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Ministry of Forests and Range

NEWS RELEASE

COMMUNITY FOREST BENEFITS THE KOOTENAYS

NELSON – The Province has entered into a 25-year community forest agreement with the Harrop- Procter Community Co-operative, ensuring long-term benefits from sustainable forestry and local decision-making, Forests and Range Minister Pat Bell announced today.

“Forestry succeeds when all stakeholders, including local communities, share in its success,” said Bell. “The Harrop-Procter Community Forest provides eco-certified wood to consumers, a wood supply and value-added jobs to local mills, and the preservation of the area’s watersheds. It is yet another community forest success story in British Columbia.”

The Harrop-Procter Co-operative manages about 10,900 hectares of Crown land east of Nelson that includes the two communities’ watersheds. The co-operative works with local mill owners and businesses to produce rough-cut lumber and home finishing materials such as panelling, flooring, interior and exterior decks, and siding.

The long-term agreement grants the co-operative the right to harvest up to 2,600 cubic metres per year. All of the wood harvested in the community forest is certified by the non-profit Forest Stewardship Council, which means that the forest is managed according to the council’s environmental, social and economic standards.

“Residents from Harrop and Procter have been working towards achieving local stewardship of this area since the 1990s and the long-term community forest agreement brings us that certainty for the next 25 years and beyond,” said Harrop-Procter Community Co-operative director Dave Johnson. “The co-operative is committed to preserving the area’s watersheds and creating employment that supports the sustainable management of the forests and land.

Community forests are area-based forest tenures that grant communities exclusive rights to harvest timber, as well as the opportunity to manage forest resources such as timber and botanical forest products, recreation, wildlife, water and scenic viewscapes on specific pieces of Crown land. They are intended to stimulate long-term employment, forest-related education and skills training, as well as other social, environmental and economic benefits, while meeting environmental stewardship standards.

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Long-term agreements have a minimum term of 25 years and can be replaced every 10 years with a new agreement. The community forest program continues to grow with 52 licensees either operating a community forest or in the planning stages to receive an agreement.

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