



A forest full of opportunities

Webster's dictionary defines, a *Forest* as a thick growth of trees and underbrush covering an extensive tract of land.

The forest industry, including woodlot licences, typically focuses on the trees — or, more specifically, logs and conventional wood products. But what about the products that can be produced from trees, other than timber, or from the underbrush? Forests contain a wide range of natural products which when harvested and utilized are often referred to as non-timber forest products (NTFP).

There are many examples found among the more than 860 woodlot licences around the province. A woodlot licence outside Quesnel taps birch and alder trees for producing syrup and fudge, while a woodlot near Campbell River taps big leaf sugar maple trees. A Chilliwack nursery selling only natural plants finds its vine maple and salmonberry shoots from the neighbouring woodlot licence. A woodlot on the Island is used as a source for bows for making wreaths and salal for floral decorating.

These are but a few examples. Beyond syrup, birch trees can be a source of toffee, marinades, ice cream toppings, sauces, basketry, weaving, paper from bark, bowls, platters, cutlery, serving utensils, twig furniture, canoes, paddles, shoe insoles, sleds, snow-



Peter McCallister has been experimenting with growing shiitake mushrooms on birch logs as part of his work with non-timber forest products. WIM TEWINKEL PHOTOS

shoes, oils for cosmetics, medicines, sweeteners (xylitol), and the list goes on.

One example of a forest managed for more than timber is Woodlot Licence #494 located outside Kaslo, BC. This woodlot licence is held by the Kootenay Agroforestry Society and the multitude of resources in addition to trees is managed by Peter McCallister. He harvests and processes culinary and medicinal mushrooms for sale and teaches workshops on behalf of the society about "alternative foods" and non-timber forest resources. Peter refers to the many NTFPs as GFTF's — "gifts from the forest."

"We've grown a lot of food on underutilized wood," McCallister said. "Mainly on deciduous species." Woodlots provide many other foods in addition to berries. Pine mushrooms, for example, are harvested and sold to buyers in Japan. Popular shiitake mushrooms are gathered and then dried using a method that causes them to secrete maximum

amounts of precious vitamin D.

McAllister said the society's workshops have introduced such subjects and skills as dyeing natural fabrics with lichens; pine needle and cedar basket weaving; culinary and medicinal mushroom growing; native plants, yew bow making, edible and poisonous mushroom identification.

Opportunities abound for the many NTFPs that have yet to be developed. The Centre for Livelihoods and Ecology (CLE) at Royal Roads University is working to provide information to better understand the potential of these species. Working in partnership with First Nations, industry, communities and all levels of governments, the CLE (formerly the Centre for Non-Timber Resources) is improving the contribution of natural products and services to sustaining livelihoods and forest ecosystems. More information is available at the Centre for Livelihoods and Ecology at Royal Roads University: royalroads.ca/cle.



Hayden recognized as exemplary woodlotter

Grant Hayden thought someone had made a mistake when he received the phone call. It took some convincing, but he eventually accepted the fact that he had been selected as the Coastal region's recipient of the 2011 Minister's Award of Excellence for Woodlot Management.

MLA Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations announced the award in Campbell River this month, honouring this Quadra Island-based woodlotter for his exceptional dedication and innovation.

Hayden, along with his partners Rolf and Markus Kellerhals, maintains a rugged and varied piece of land that is characterized by thick carpets of salal, and voracious deer.

He's designed an original piece of equipment, a specialized rake, which attaches to his 200 size excavator. He's able to clear planting sites, slowing the growth of the salal and making the ground more favourable for young seedlings.

He's also devised a creative, and more effective, method of deterring deer – his "browse protection" consists of D-grade, 2-inch stucco wire secured with cedar stakes milled on Quadra Island, some from short log-sort debris. The resulting growth inside the barrier is more solid and stable than those protected by plastic cones or tubes; in fact, the survival rate is nearly 90 percent. The barriers are less intrusive visually, can be reused and, eventually, recycled.

Hayden is very diligent in striking a balance between commercial needs and preservation of resources. He's taken care to protect snags in an effort to preserve the biodiversity of the area, and tries to avoid harvesting during nesting season to protect the bird



Grant Hayden, left, receives the Minister's Award of Excellence for Woodlot Management from Forests, Lands and Natural Resources Minister Steve Thomson.

population. The majority of the roads in their woodlot are built by endhauling or overlanding with minimal, if any, ditches and trees are only cut if they're in the direct path of the intended route. The resulting roads are narrow, yet functional, require less maintenance, and have a much smaller impact on the natural terrain, both visually and environmentally.

A diesel mechanic by trade, Hayden has dedicated considerable time and energy to acquiring a solid grounding in the field, taking courses and training sessions in order to maintain an up-to-date understanding of forestry practices. He's served not only on the board of his local woodlot association, but also plays a significant role in the Quadra Island Salmon Enhancement Society and has donated time and material to the Quadra Is-

land Trails Committee.

An active community member with a love of forests and a passion for adventure, Hayden epitomizes the spirit of the Woodlot program and stands as an excellent example of thoughtful, sustainable and innovative forest management.

What is "overlanding"?

A construction technique in which road fill is placed on undisturbed organic soil, stumps, and vegetative material to distribute vehicle loads over weak soils using the inherent strength of the vegetation mat to support the weight of the road fill without disturbing subsurface groundwater flows.

What is "endhauling"?

To move excavated material from one section of the road to another or to a disposal site during road construction or modification.



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