

4. FORESTRY

This section pertains to all areas that are designated as Forestry on the Plan Map. The vast majority of the Plan area is composed of lands designated as Forestry. These are areas where natural resource activities such as Forestry and Mining are prevalent, and recreational opportunities are abundant. It is recognized that, on both Crown Lands and privately owned lands, resource extraction activities such as forestry and mining are under the jurisdiction of the provincial government and, to some degree, the federal government. Such legislation as the Forest Practices Code, the Minerals Act, the Fish and Wildlife Act, the Forest Land Reserve Act, the Private Forest Land Regulation, and the Fisheries Act, supersede local government bylaws and are enacted to ensure that resource activities can continue and that the natural environment will be respected.

The Plan area is characterized by wilderness recreational opportunities from the Cowichan Corridor to the Pacific Coast. It is important that these opportunities be preserved for existing and future generations in a way that is least disruptive to the large forest companies that own most of the private forest lands. Further, adequate campgrounds and servicing facilities should be provided and maintained, to protect area watercourses and related ecosystems and to reduce the potential for land use conflicts between forestry and recreational uses.

FORESTRY - OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Regional Board pertaining to Forestry are:

- a) to support and encourage the commercial harvesting of timber from tree farm and forest reserve lands provided that the harvesting is consistent with the Forest Practices Code for Crown lands, and the Private Forest Land Regulation and Forest Land Reserve Act for privately owned lands;
- b) to encourage Forest Companies to operate on a sustained yield basis, complementary to the requirements of Forest Practices Code, the Private Forest Land Regulation, and the Forest Land Reserve Act;
- c) to encourage Forest Companies to preserve hazardous slope areas, environmentally sensitive areas, and groundwater recharge areas, complementary to the requirements of Forest Practices Code, the Private Forest Land Regulation, the Forest Land Reserve Act;
- d) to encourage Forest land owners to make forest lands available for recreational enjoyment and education; and
- e) to encourage the provision and maintenance of rustic campgrounds so that residents and tourists will minimize their impacts on the land and water base and on forestry operations by using appropriate areas for camping and waste disposal.

FORESTRY - POLICIES

The policies of the Regional Board pertaining to Forestry are as follows:

POLICY 4.1:

Primary resource extraction industries, including but not limited to mining and forestry, and other activities permitted by virtue of superseding statutes, are permitted in areas designated as Forestry. Additionally, outdoor recreational activities, residential uses and agriculture shall be permitted.

POLICY 4.2:

Senior governments are encouraged to ensure that primary resource activities occur and that at the same time:

- a) the quality of fresh water within the drainage systems of the Cowichan, Chemainus, Robertson and Nitinat Rivers, and all other watercourses, is not threatened,
- b) landscape management techniques are utilized to minimize impacts on the aesthetic appeal and visual integrity of the Plan area,
- c) areas of unique or rare vegetation or wildlife are protected, and
- d) logging activities do not result in increased peak flows or soil erosion.

POLICY 4.3:

Most private lands that are designated as Forestry are within the provincial Forest Land Reserve (FLR). All uses and subdivision of lands within the Forest Land Reserve shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Forest Land Reserve Act, regulations thereto, and orders of the Forest Land Commission.

POLICY 4.4:

Lands within the Forestry designation shall generally be zoned as F-1 (Forest Resource), wherein the minimum parcel size is 80 hectares. Other lands in the Forestry designation may be zoned as "Secondary Forest Resource" wherein the minimum parcel size will not be less than 4 hectares, to provide for smaller specialised forestry activities or to provide a buffer between large forestry holdings and residential developments.

POLICY 4.5:

The Ministry of Forests and the private forest companies are encouraged to protect the potential for outdoor recreation, including wilderness recreation, that exists in the natural woodlands of the Plan area, for continuous use by future generations in conjunction with the management of the forest. This would include the controlled use of private logging roads and areas during non-operation periods for public recreational use, where possible, except during times of high and extreme fire hazard.

POLICY 4.6:

Rustic campgrounds may be developed in accordance with the following:

- a) Permanent structures shall be kept to a minimum and shall only be permitted for health or safety reasons.
- b) Impacts on floodplains and environmentally sensitive areas shall be prevented or minimized.
- c) Rustic campgrounds shall be encouraged to locate in the vicinity of clean recreational waters, panoramic mountain views, or other such natural attributes.
- d) No rustic campground shall have a negative impact upon a fish bearing stream or lake, wildlife or waterfowl habitat or sensitive plant community.
- e) All sewage effluent originating on the parcel shall be disposed of by an acceptable means of ground disposal approved by the Health authority having jurisdiction.
- f) Solid waste collection shall be provided.
- g) Wildfire safety concerns, including vegetation management, adequate water storage or access, and on-site emergency planning, shall be addressed.
- h) No rustic campground shall have a negative impact upon any adjacent forestry operation.

POLICY 4.7:

Where a residence is permitted to locate in the forestry designation, the owner of the property is encouraged to address wildfire safety concerns. This may include landscaping, residential structural options, choice of building materials, adequate water storage or access, and on-site emergency planning.

POLICY 4.8:

The siting of forestry related structures and buildings or the storage of machinery, in areas adjacent to residential development, shall be in a manner which minimizes noise, visual and environmental impact and traffic generation.

POLICY 4.9:

The Regional Board encourages the retention of the community forest along the Cowichan Valley Highway No.18 and the Town of Lake Cowichan community forest located on Mount Bolduc.