

#02

# FSC AT WORK

**CANADA: FSC-CERTIFIED  
FOREST MANAGEMENT THAT  
CUSTOMERS EXPECT**

**GREENPEACE**

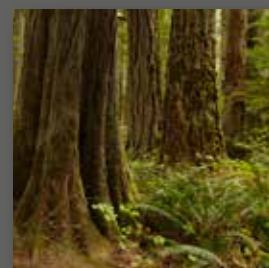
Established nearly 20 years ago, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is widely recognised as the highest global certification standard for forest management. Nonetheless, with the FSC's rapid growth, there is growing concern with the increasing number of certificates being awarded to controversial forest management operations that do not meet the standards of the system.

To keep FSC certification as a credible tool to help protect forests, Greenpeace International is publishing a series of case studies exposing controversial operations that are posing the greatest risk to the FSC's integrity. We will also be highlighting best practice operations that are meeting and/or exceeding the FSC's principles and criteria. These case studies will show the standards that must be consistently met if the FSC is to maintain its credibility.

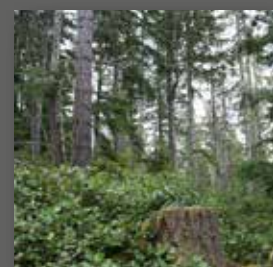
Increasingly, the poor performance of some companies holding FSC certificates is beginning to overshadow the cases where the FSC has led to a substantial improvement from status quo logging practices and supported the increased on-the-ground protection of forests. These "bad apple" FSC-certified operations present a reputational liability to the FSC brand, and will likely undermine consumer trust of the label.

The FSC needs to be strict with these "bad apple" operations by removing them from the system until they sufficiently reform their practices to meet FSC standards. FSC must also strengthen the certification process to prevent any more certificates from being awarded to operations that fail to meet the standards. Furthermore, the FSC needs to apply its world-leading criteria consistently in order to maintain the integrity of the FSC brand. Members of the FSC's economic, social and environmental chambers have worked hard for two decades to maintain the value of the FSC as a validator of responsible forest management, and as a tool for the marketing of responsible forest products. As a result, both the system and the availability of FSC-certified products have grown by leaps and bounds.

Now FSC supporters need to work together to keep the FSC strong as it continues to grow.



**image:** A majestic old-growth forest in the Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH) biogeoclimatic zone on Vancouver Island, BC. Forests like these are located in the same region where some Ecotrust group members practice their low impact FSC certified forest management.



**image:** Ecotrust Canada's FSC certificate improves practices over the status quo. © Ecotrust Canada

## OTHER CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

Greenpeace does not believe that other forest certification systems, such as PEFC, SFI and CSA, have the ability to ensure responsible forest management. While the FSC faces challenges, we believe that it contains a framework, as well as principles and criteria, that can guarantee socially and ecologically responsible practices if implemented correctly. The other systems lack robust requirements to protect social and ecological values.

## ECOTRUST CANADA — PROTECTING THE FSC BRAND

**image:** A reserve designed to protect skunk cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*), a native species.  
© Ecotrust Canada



The following case study is an example of how FSC certification has successfully led to a substantial improvement in forest management practices from the status quo. It profiles how the forest management group, Ecotrust Canada, respects and in places even exceeds key FSC's Principles and Criteria, thereby maintaining the forests' ecological and social values.

Based in Vancouver, BC, Ecotrust Canada<sup>1</sup> established its Forest Management Group to provide a cost-effective mechanism for smaller companies and practitioners to become FSC certified. The forest managers in Ecotrust Canada's group certificate are engaged in small operations with the careful practices that customers expect from the FSC brand.

Ecotrust Canada's members are managing forests with very high biodiversity values across British Columbia. Outside of a small number of protected areas,<sup>2</sup> much of Vancouver Island's iconic large old-growth trees have already been cut, with the remainder threatened by additional logging. These remaining areas, which have not yet been harvested, contain important habitats for species at risk, including the marbled murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) and the sharp-tailed snake (*Contia tenuis*) to name but a few.<sup>3</sup> Located in drier climates and/or higher elevations on BC's mainland, the forests of the West Kootenay and northern regions are characterised by increased grasslands, greater disturbance from fire and insects, and tree species such as larch (*Larix* spp.), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), and interior Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *glauca*).<sup>4</sup> West Kootenay forests provide important habitat for several species, such as grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*), wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) and Lewis's woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*)<sup>5</sup> - which are now at risk due to logging and other development.<sup>6</sup>

The Ecotrust Canada certificate was granted under the small and low intensity forest management (SLIMFs) operations version of the British Columbia FSC Standard,<sup>7</sup> which puts particular emphasis on maintaining and restoring old-growth forest. Most of the forests managed by members of the FSC group certificate were logged decades ago by previous managers, and are generally younger compared to similar untouched old-growth forests. However, the current managers are dedicated to protecting the remaining old-growth areas and threatened species, working to restore the older forest structure, and maintaining positive and collaborative relationships with First Nations communities.

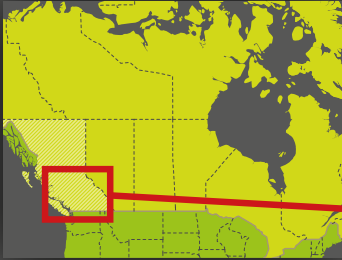
**KEY FSC VALUES PROTECTED BY ECOTRUST PRACTICES**

HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS  
RARE, THREATENED, AND ENDANGERED SPECIES  
RESPECT FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS



## ECOTRUST CANADA FOREST MANAGEMENT GROUP

**image:** Ecotrust Canada's group certificate operations sites in British Columbia.



FSC certificate #	SW-FM/COC-001758
FSC licence code	FSC-C017908
Certifying body	Rainforest Alliance
Country of operation	Canada (British Columbia)
Total FSC forest management (FM) area certified	3,559 ha
Number of FSC chain-of-custody (CoC) facilities	40 British Columbia, 2 New Brunswick and 1 each Ontario and Quebec Businesses are currently using wood from Ecotrust chain-of-custody certificate #002600
Members	Greenmax Resources (WL 1479), Elkington Forest, One Creek Forestry, Marshall Forestry Services, Monticola Forest Limited
FSC area covered by this case study	3,559 ha
FSC products	Logs, timber, lumber, pulp, poles, house logs, specialty products
Markets for FSC products	Mainly North America
FSC complaint(s) on certificate(s) by stakeholders	No
FSC corrective action requests filed	Yes
Public availability of permits, forest management plans, detailed maps	Yes

## PROTECTION OF KEY FOREST VALUES

### FSC VALUES: AREAS OF GOOD COMPLIANCE



**PRINCIPLE 3:  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES'  
RIGHTS**

**PRINCIPLE 6:  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT**

**PRINCIPLE 9:  
HIGH CONSERVATION  
VALUE (HCV) FORESTS  
OF THE SLIMF NATIONAL  
BRITISH COLUMBIA  
STANDARD**

The FSC's Principles and Criteria (P&C)<sup>9</sup> require protection of threatened and endangered species and HCVs, including through habitat protection and restoration. The BC FSC SLIMF standards require that 4% to 8% of specific forest types over 200 hectares (ha) in size be designated as reserve areas, if less than 10% of that type is protected within the broader eco-section (which is a subset of an eco-region).<sup>9</sup> Large operations in BC also have old-growth targets, with standards that require management units over 2,400 ha to maintain or restore older forests to their range of natural variability. The BC FSC standards for larger operations in BC also define old growth as HCV when located in eco-regions where old growth is present at 50% or less of its natural occurrence, and also require older forests to be maintained or restored to their range of natural variability.<sup>10</sup>

FSC's criteria 6.2 requires safeguards for the protection of rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats. Rare and threatened species, including habitats for the red-listed Queen Charlotte goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis laingi*), red-legged frog (*Rana aurora*), and Keen's long-eared myotis (*Myotis keenii*) have been found and protected in Ecotrust Canada's Vancouver Island forests. One Ecotrust Canada forest manager protected the forest cover around a goshawk nest site, despite its inactive status, and also maintained key habitat attributes for red-legged frog. Two Kootenay region members are also providing habitat for Lewis' woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*) and Williamson's sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*) by retaining large trees as well as snags – dead or decaying trees – and are protecting habitats for other threatened birds and snakes. The Ecotrust Canada members' forest management is compliant with the FSC BC SLIMF standard; however, their certification body (Rainforest Alliance) also found that several participants in the Vancouver and Kootenay regions could improve in some areas, such as conducting more thorough species assessments that would result in better documentation of how species can be protected through the creation of additional reserves.<sup>11</sup>

Underlining their precautionary approach, some of the participants are also exceeding the BC standards requirements for reserve areas. One manager protected 28% of the forest concession area as reserves, with additional sites protected for threatened species. Another manager exceeded the standard's requirement by placing 12% of the forest in riparian reserves, and made efforts to restore the remainder of the forest to mature forest conditions with only limited harvest. The other members have roughly 10% in reserves.<sup>12</sup> This contrasts with most industrial logging operations who view the minimum requirement in the standard as the maximum they need to do.

***“Ecotrust’s mission is to inspire fresh thinking that creates economic opportunity, social equity and environmental wellbeing. Our goal is to foster a natural model of development that creates more resilient communities, economies, and ecosystems here and around the world.”***

– <http://www.ecotrustforests.com/managementapproach.html>

The two original Ecotrust Canada forest managers, Al Hopwood (WL 0082), and Susan Paul (WL 1557), have excellent track records of consulting with First Nations, whose representatives were generally satisfied with the outcomes, according to the audits for the certificate. One of the more recent members also has a formal agreement recognising First Nation's title to the forest, and letters from the Hupacasath First Nation consenting to his management plan.

***“The Hupacasath Nation supports several of Greenmax Resources [a member of Ecotrust Canada] initiatives across our territory, including its project based learning program on its certified woodlot, voluntary forest management consulting to our nation, partnership in restoring valuable Roosevelt Elk winter range, and assistance with acquiring Hupacasath’s own woodlot license. Greenmax is committed to managing for Hupacasath interests and are a valuable member of our community.”***

– Warren Lauder,  
Forest Resource Manager and Councillor, Hupacasath First Nation

## A RESPONSIBLE APPROACH

While the CB found areas for improvement, the forest managers are practising more precautionary forestry, and local stakeholders support their management approach. One of the original Ecotrust Canada forest managers, for example, “managed for continuous forest cover and restoration towards a late successional forest.”<sup>13</sup> Another original forest manager was noted for robust stand level retention and managing for a natural diversity of trees, including cedar (*Cedrus*), arbutus (*Arbutus*), and pacific yew (*Taxus brevifolia*) - species that tend to be eliminated by status quo industry practices. For the most part, the Ecotrust Canada members practice single tree selection, selection logging, or patch cutting that retains far more of the forest than do typical status quo commercial operations, and that also allows for natural regeneration.

### Strengthening FSC Quality Control, Monitoring and Enforcement

While the forest managers in the Ecotrust Canada certificate are voluntarily doing more to protect their forest and are using a more cautious approach to forestry, they were still required by the CB to make further improvements to keep their certification, specifically around identifying species at risk. FSC can affirm and reward good practices as well as find room for improvement, particularly when the CB applies the proper interpretation of the regional standard. The managers also adopted the changes in a straightforward manner allowing for a short-term close out of the CB’s corrective action requests.

## REFERENCES

- 1 See <http://ecotrust.ca/enterprises/forest-management-group>. Ecotrust USA has a separate group FSC certificate (SCS-FM/COC-00117G) for four forests in the states of Washington and Oregon, totalling 12,375 acres (5,010 ha)
- 2 13% of Vancouver Island is currently protected. Vancouver Island Land Use Plan of the BC Land Management Bureau. [http://archive.ilmb.gov.bc.ca/slrp/lrmp/nanaimo/vancouver\\_island/plan/summary\\_lup/4a.htm](http://archive.ilmb.gov.bc.ca/slrp/lrmp/nanaimo/vancouver_island/plan/summary_lup/4a.htm)
- 3 British Columbia, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. “Ecosystems in British Columbia at Risk: Coastal Douglas-fir Ecosystems” <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/douglasfir.pdf>
- 4 Forest Management 2011 Annual Audit Report for EcoTrust Canada in Vancouver, BC, Rainforest Alliance, 16 December 2011 <http://info.fsc.org/Detail?id=a0240000005sUvRAAU>
- 5 See Garth Mowat, BC Ministry of Environment, “Large carnivore population review for the Kootenay Region” (2007) [http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wildlife/wsi/reports/4349\\_WSI\\_4349\\_RPT.PDF](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wildlife/wsi/reports/4349_WSI_4349_RPT.PDF); “Cooperative wolverine study in the Columbia Basin” <http://www.cmiae.org/Resources/wolverine-study.php> John Cooper and Cameron Gillies, “Breeding Distribution of the Lewis’s Woodpecker in the East Kootenay Trench in Relation to Fire History” (2000) <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/ie05cooper.pdf>
- 6 Government of Canada, Species at Risk Registry [http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/default\\_e.cfm](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/default_e.cfm)
- 7 Ecotrust USA has a separate group FSC certificate (SCS-FM/COC-00117G) for four forests in the states of Washington and Oregon, totalling 12,375 acres (5,010 ha)
- 8 Based on P&C Version 4, as the revised Version 5 has not yet been implemented.
- 9 For eco-sections in British Columbia, see <http://srmwww.gov.bc.ca/rib/wis/eco/>
- 10 FSC Canada, Regional Certification Standards for British Columbia, Main Standards, October, 2005
- 11 Forest Management Public Summary for EcoTrust Canada, SW-FM/COC-1758, SmartWood, February 2006; Forest Management 2007 Annual Audit for Ecotrust Canada (Vancouver Island Ecoforestry Group) in Vancouver BC, Canada, January 17, 2007; and Forest Management 2011 Annual Audit Report for EcoTrust Canada in Vancouver, BC, Rainforest Alliance, December 16, 2011.
- 12 Orrin Quinn, Manager, Ecotrust Canada Forest Management Group
- 13 Forest Management Public Summary for EcoTrust Canada, SW-FM/COC-1758, SmartWood, February 2006; Forest Management 2007 Annual Audit for Ecotrust Canada (Vancouver Island Ecoforestry Group) in Vancouver BC, Canada, January 17, 2007; Forest Management 2008 Annual Audit for Ecotrust Canada Forest Management Group in Vancouver, BC, January 21, 2008; Forest Management 2009 Annual Audit Report for Ecotrust Canada (Forest Management Group) in Vancouver, BC, March 12, 2008; Forest Management Certification Reassessment Report for Ecotrust Canada (Group Management) in Vancouver, BC, November 29, 2010; Forest Management 2011 Annual Audit Report for EcoTrust Canada in Vancouver, BC, Rainforest Alliance, December 16, 2011. <http://info.fsc.org/Detail?id=a0240000005sUvRAAU>
- 14 <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/campaigns/forests/solutions/alternatives-to-forest-destruc/FSC-at-Risk/>

## KEEPING THE FSC CREDIBLE

While Greenpeace continues to support the FSC, we cannot indefinitely endorse a system that is not globally consistent in its certification of forest management and controlled wood.<sup>14</sup> Along with other FSC members across its chambers, we are working to achieve the following key improvements in FSC operations and procedures so that the environmental and social values of forests are maintained under the FSC seal of approval.

FSC members, certification bodies, stakeholders and consumers must hold FSC accountable to ensure its standards and policies are strengthened, consistently applied and met to ensure that the ecological and social values of forests managed under the FSC seal of approval are maintained.

### FSC must:

- 1) Support the conservation of Intact Forest Landscapes (IFLs) and other HCVs via the International Generic Indicators (IGI) process, and provide guidance on HCV identification and on their maintenance and enhancement.
- 2) Establish safeguards for FSC certification in “high risk” regions facing rampant social conflict and human rights violations, including prioritising the development of a robust Policy for Association due diligence approach – which ensures the disclosure of a company’s ownership, including parent, sister and subsidiary companies – and compliance guidance.
- 3) Tighten the controlled wood system by: increasing the scope and rigour of National Risk Assessments (NRAs) and its control measures, requiring field verification in the absence of a NRA, and implement measures for transition to full forest management certification including a phase out of CW by 2018.
- 4) Improve on the ground performance by holding certification bodies (CBs) accountable for meeting the FSC’s standards. Also, increase FSC’s level of transparency by requiring that Accreditation Services International (ASI) and CBs publish all assessment reports, including the location of forest management units, HCVs and protected areas.
- 5) Increase its support for smallholders and community forest managers to achieve FSC certification across the FSC network, including swiftly implementing the Modular Approach Programme standard.

To review the FSC’s progress on Greenpeace’s recommendations, please visit: [www.greenpeace.org/international/FSC-at-risk](http://www.greenpeace.org/international/FSC-at-risk)





**image:** Small operations such as these maintain the forests' ecological values  
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# WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE



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