



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### **Audit of Prince George forestry operations finds compliance issues**

VICTORIA – An audit of the BC Timber Sales program and 26 timber sale licensees in the Prince George District found that the forestry activities of BCTS and 24 licensees complied with forest practices legislation, but two licensees had non-compliance issues, according to a report released today.

Auditors found that one licence holder installed an unsafe bridge, while another operated during a restricted period without an adequate fire suppression system in place.

“The board is concerned with the growing number of instances of unsafe bridges showing up in recent audits, and points out the requirement for licence holders and forest professionals to ensure bridges are structurally sound and safe for use,” said Tim Ryan, board chair. “We also wish to draw attention to the requirements to minimize the risk of starting a forest fire during high fire-hazard conditions.”

BCTS is responsible for operational planning, silviculture, and most road and bridge construction, as well as maintenance and deactivation outside cutblocks. Licence holders are responsible for harvesting, fire protection, and most road and bridge construction, as well as maintenance and deactivation within cutblocks.

During the one-year audit period, BCTS maintained 511 kilometres of road and 68 bridges, while TSL holders constructed 181 kilometres of road and two bridges. A total of 750 000 cubic metres of timber was harvested by TSL holders, primarily to address mountain pine beetle infestations. The board’s fieldwork took place from July 22 to 26, 2013.

The Forest Practices Board is B.C.’s independent watchdog for sound forest and range practices, reporting its findings and recommendations directly to the public and government. The board audits forest and range practices on public lands and appropriateness of government enforcement. It can also make recommendations for improvement to practices and legislation.

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