



Slocan Integral Forestry Cooperative

Box 189, Winlaw, B.C., V0G 2J0
ph 250-226-7012 fax 250-226-7014
office@SIFCo.ca www.SIFCo.ca

President's Report for the 2016/2017 Year

May 30, 2017

Welcome everyone to SIFCo's 11th Annual General Meeting. I am excited to be able to share with members tonight, the highlights of our past year. It's been an eventful year, our busiest yet. After three years of developing our Slocan Valley Landscape Level Fuel Management Plan, the plan is being implemented and it has resulted in significant growth for SIFCo, both in terms of actual projects being accomplished, and expanded recognition as leaders in the provincial Wildland Urban Interface community.

Our Landscape Level Fuel Management Plan (hereafter referred to as our Plan) was finished and released to the public in June of 2016. This was right on the heels of the Fort McMurray fire, a wildfire of epic proportions that held us all enthralled as it ravaged the whole city and outlying areas. Our hearts all broke as we watched a whole community fleeing for their lives and losing so much. I think we all knew that it could happen anywhere in B.C. given climate change and the current state of our forests. It could happen here. This is the kind of event that SIFCo is committed to preventing in our community, and our Plan is the new back bone of that commitment.

All of the research done over the last 8 years has been consolidated into an operational plan that identifies twelve landscape level management zones and the type of treatment appropriate to each area within those zones. Five distinct treatment types have been identified:

- Type 1: Wildland Urban Interface Management, thin from below
- Type 2: Partial cut harvester with post harvest clean-up
- Type 3: Machine Based Interface Clean-Up
- Type 4: Fuel Management for habitat restoration and ecosystem resiliency
- Type 5: Wildland Urban Interface Retreatment

Concurrent with the release of our Plan, was the formation of a new society, Forest Enhancement Society of B.C. It was formed and funded to the tune of \$85 million by the Provincial Government, to address the need for fuel management strategies in areas not covered by the UBCM fuel management program, which only funds projects within two kilometers of a municipality. In keeping with our commitment to treating all of the zones in our Plan, our funding application to FESBC spanned five to seven years of projected work and included 995 hectares to be treated. FESBC funded the first year of this plan with a grant of \$425,000 and we hope that our relationship with them continues to grow and that they eventually become one of the main funders of our plan for years to come.

As I said earlier, we've been busy. With the additional funding from FESBC added to the projects funded through UBCM, Stephan has raised \$865,000 in 2016 that will be spent in our community.

Over the course of our 2016 fiscal year, approximately \$615,000 of our expenses went directly into purchases or employment in the community.

I'll say it again, we've been busy. Over the past eight years, we have usually been working on two or three projects at any given time. With the release of our plan in June 2016 and the infusion of FESBC funding, this year, we have worked on twelve projects:

Type 1: Wildland Urban Interface Management, thin from below

- Silverton North 39.2 hectares completed
- New Denver Phase 2 43.6 hectares in progress
- Silverton South Phase 2 42 hectares approval pending
- Lemon Creek 9 hectares in progress
- Trozzo Creek Phase 2 33.5 hectares approval pending
- Silverton, Hewitt Mine FSR 7 hectares in progress

Type 2: Partial cut harvesting with post harvest clean-up

- Ponderosa FSR 31 hectare harvesting completed, clean-up in progress
- Silverton, Hewitt Mine FSR 42 hectare harvesting 50% completed, clean-up not started

Type 4: Fuel Management for habitat restoration and ecosystem resiliency

- Winlaw Creek 59 hectares completed, prescribed fire pending in 2018

Type 5: Wildland Urban Interface Retreatment

- Anderson Creek 35 hectares in progress

Other:

- Community Wildfire Protection Plan North approval pending
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan South approval pending

SIFCo is on another cusp; after eight years of doing leading edge work on Wildfire protection by a tenure holder, we are becoming recognized for our work by the larger forestry/emergency preparedness community. Response from the community at large, to the release of our Plan, was immediate and exciting. After years of discussion about the need for comprehensive wildfire fuel management planning, someone was showing the way. A little Community Forest in south-eastern B.C. had done the work, and had a plan. Here are some examples of how SIFCo is engaging the larger WUI/forestry community:

- Stephan is representing SIFCo at a CBT roundtable formed to discuss possible approaches to WUI treatments on privately held land (the next uncharted territory in the WUI field, which has been on our radar for years now). We are the only tenure holder at the table.
- Stephan is sitting on the Harrop Procter Community Forest's advisory committee as they develop their best forestry practices for climate change
- Stephan addressed a conference in Kelowna in October 2016 sponsored by Wildfire Canada, presenting SIFCo's WUI experience & evolution
- We are collaborating with the RDCK, the Village of New Denver, the Village of Silverton and the Village of Slokan on WUI projects Valley wide.

At the same time we continue to support local community and forestry education where we can.

- Stephan and Tom both participated in a forestry project on landscape level planning coordinated by Linda Out of Winlaw Elementary School.

- Tom took a group of Environmental Planning Technologist students from Selkirk College on a field trip up Winlaw Creek.
- Tom and his wife Jo Brown participated in the Slocan Valley Garden tour after doing a WUI treatment on part of their property. SIFCo provided signage & educational materials.
- SIFCo hosted two public meetings on the impact of climate change on Slocan Valley forests. Greg Utzig, climatologist, was the main presenter on climate change. Stephan and Tom filled in how SIFCo's operational plans are informed by climate change.
- Stephan continues to pursue strategies to educate local residents on the importance of, and techniques for doing WUI work on private property.
- We have a new website... it is not yet up to date but is it live... it is now tablet and smart-phone friendly.
- Stephan and Tom have attended numerous meetings with residents/home owners to discuss SIFCo WUI projects.

And always, quietly working behind the scenes is our dedicated board of directors who consistently engage in meaningful dialogue about the forestry issues facing our community. They show up, rain or shine (I think we came close to losing several this winter in a snow storm) and they are even willing to meet by candle-light (thanks Tom Bradley, and I thought you were bringing wine, not candle holders).

- Lesley Mayfield our Secretary/Treasurer representing WWC.
- David Liske our Vice-President representing WWC.
- Moonbow representing RMRA.
- Sam Tichenor representing RMRA.
- Lisa Farr our President representing EACT.
- Stephan Martineau representing EACT.
- Tom Armstrong our board member at large.

It is also important to acknowledge the folks who work tirelessly at the front end of everything that SIFCo has accomplished to date; Stephan Martineau, our General Manager, and Tom Bradley our Forestry Supervisor. They continually go beyond expectations. I know that they are both motivated by being able to work on behalf of the community doing work that they believe in, but it is the energy that they put into the work that they do, that is responsible for all of our successes. They are always coming up with a new way to look at a situation that is useful and moves us forward, they are inspired and inspiring, they are nimble thinkers and execute our vision with grace.

And I can't forget a big thank-you to our general membership who have supported SIFCo's vision and our hard work. I think we can all be proud of what we have accomplished over the past 11 years and I look forward to seeing what we will accomplish next.

In closing, the past year has been a testament to the financial and social value that a Community Forest with a clear vision, can contribute to its constituent community. I believe we are clearly achieving one of the purposes stated in our Memorandum of Association:

“To stimulate locally based employment and economic opportunities from these forest lands, that are ecologically sustainable and socially responsible.”

I humbly submit this report,

Lisa Farr, President