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To: All Regional Executive Directors  
All Directors, OCF Division  
Mike Falkiner, Executive Director, BC Timber Sales  
Forest Industry Associations

From: Diane Nicholls, Chief Forester

**Re: Chief Forester Guidance on Seed Supply and Use in Areas Affected by the 2017 Wildfires**

The 2017 wildfires affected over one million hectares of forest land base. After the fires, as planning for reforestation began, tree seed suppliers and users began discussing ways to increase the amount of seed available for reforestation and optimize the use of the available seed. The Forest Genetics Council of BC turned its attention to these issues and provided recommendations to the Chief Forester. The attached Chief Forester guidance was developed using these recommendations, and from the best practices that many seed owners, producers, and users are already implementing.

Reforestation programs are critical to forest recovery in the areas affected by the 2017 wildfires. This guidance is intended to encourage practices that increase seed supply and optimize seed use for the benefit of all British Columbians.

Please address questions or comments on this guidance to Patrick Martin, Director, Forest Improvement and Research Management Branch (Pat.Martin@gov.bc.ca; 250-356-0888).



Diane Nicholls, RPF  
ADM Chief Forester

encl: Chief Forester Guidance on Seed Supply and Use in Areas Affected by the 2017 Wildfires

pc: FLNRORD Executive Committee  
Shane Berg, Executive Director, Deputy Chief Forester  
Meggin Messenger, Executive Director, Strategic Initiatives  
Forest Genetics Council  
SPAR Users Distribution List

# **Chief Forester Guidance on Seed Supply and Use in Areas Affected by the 2017 Wildfires**

## **Purpose and Context**

This document provides guidance on issues related to the supply and use of tree seed in areas affected by the 2017 wildfires. The intended audience is all parties involved in seed production, acquisition and use, including ministry staff, licensees, consultants, orchard owners, and nurseries.

Given the large areas affected by the 2017 wildfires, the number of reforestation programs operating in these areas, large numbers of seed owners, and known constraints on seed supply, collective action is required to ensure an adequate supply of tree seed and to make best use of the available seed. Implementing the guidance below will contribute to efficient reforestation programs and effective forest recovery in the 2017 wildfire areas.

Individuals from a wide variety of public- and private-sector organizations make decisions that affect the supply and use of tree seed for the reforestation of Crown lands. Given the diverse parties involved, this document provides general recommendations intended to encourage all parties to act in ways that provide optimal benefit for British Columbians. As such, this guidance addresses both ministry programs and the operations of organizations that are private-sector or external to the ministry.

## **Chief Forester Guidance**

### **Management of seed inventories**

1. Seed owners should review their seed inventories and reassess their seed needs in light of the 2017 wildfires and the new climate-based seed transfer (CBST) seed use areas.
2. Sellers of orchard seed (Class A) and superior provenance seed (Class B+) should make seed available to satisfy current sowing needs. Where supply is limited, the stockpiling of large reserves of select seed is discouraged.
3. Seed deemed surplus should be identified as such on the ministry's Seed Planning and Registry system (SPAR) so that others may access and use it.

### **Reforestation planning, strategies and assessments**

4. Where the supply of orchard seed is limited, its use should be prioritized to the most productive sites on the timber harvesting land-base.
5. Where seed supplies are limited, avoid direct seeding.
6. To support planning and assessment, the ministry will continue to update forest inventories and refine the estimates of denuded areas requiring reforestation.

7. With various partners, the ministry will continue to monitor seed supply and demand and undertake seed supply and demand forecasts that consider the potential impact of CBST.
8. Co-ordinated reforestation plans and landscape-level reforestation strategies should be developed to optimize the use of seed by the various reforestation programs operating in wildfire-affected areas.

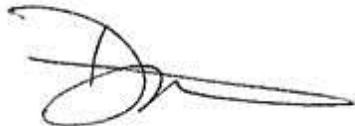
### **Seed production and acquisition**

9. Orchard managers should defer roguing orchards in those cases where this activity will reduce critical seed production in the short-term.
10. Wild stand seed collections should be undertaken where seed shortages have been determined, guided by CBST considerations.
11. The ministry will continue resourcing BC's tree improvement program and existing orchards to sustain seed production, and consider orchard improvements and expansions.

### **Nurseries**

12. Tree nurseries should maximize seedling yields by adjusting sowing factors and utilizing all suitable plugs.

I thank the members of the Forest Genetics Council of BC for draft recommendations on seed supply and use. The Forest Genetics Council of BC is a multi-stakeholder group appointed by the Chief Forester. Additional specific direction, consistent with this general guidance, may be provided to programs over which the Chief Forester exercises direct oversight.



Diane Nicholls, RPF  
ADM, Chief Forester