



LOGGING AT SUMMIT LAKE - FAQ'S

Who wants to log at Summit Lake?

Some of the area around Summit Lake is part of Nakusp and Area Community Forest's (NACFOR) license area. NACFOR was granted a Community Forest Agreement (CFA) by the provincial government as a way of diversifying the forest industry and putting some of the rights to manage forests, back into local hands. Nakusp and Area Community Forest is owned by the Village of Nakusp.

The total area that NACFOR manages is 9,000 ha (one ha is 100m x 100m), in seven different areas around Nakusp. See nakuspcommunityforest.com for an area map and general information. NACFOR's agreement with the government gives management and harvesting rights to NACFOR, in exchange for managing the land base and paying the government "stumpage" (a payment for harvested logs).

Why does NACFOR want to log at Summit Lake?

The Summit Lake working forest is a productive and diverse part of NACFOR's managed area. Harvesting (logging) a tree crop is part of responsible forest management and a means to derive economic benefits for our community.

The amount that is logged from year to year varies, but the allowed rate of harvest is 20,000 m³ or about 500 logging truck loads from NACFOR's entire 9,000 ha land base. The profits from harvesting are returned to our community through grants, or for community projects via a Legacy Fund.

NACFOR's logging rate is based on the inventory of timber as well as other considerations on the land base. Other considerations and responsibilities in a land base include: wildlife, water, streams and lakes, terrain, visual quality, technology and others.

Does NACFOR have a plan?

NACFOR has a plan for Summit Lake that has been in the planning stages for over three years. The plan is to log seven cut blocks along the Summit Lake Forest Service Road. Our plan is to minimize road construction and ground disturbance as this area is an important terrestrial habitat and hibernation area for the Western toad, and a cross-valley migration corridor and spring feeding-ground for grizzly bears. NACFOR's plan has been developed in consultation with these experts:

- Foresters
- Forest Technicians
- Archaeologists
- First Nations
- Grizzly Bear expert
- Riparian Assessments – looking at the streams and classifying them
- Silviculture expert – so we know how to manage the next crop



NAKUSP & AREA COMMUNITY FOREST (2013) INC.

P.O. Box 925
Nakusp, B.C. V0G 1R0
Telephone: (250) 265 3656
Fax: (250) 265 3261

- Geotechnical experts – identifying terrain hazards
- Biologists/toad experts – NACFOR is working on some joint studies to determine where the toads go after they cross the highway. NACFOR has compiled some good toad information which is available at www.nakuspcommunityforest.com
- Visual modelling experts – so we can tell what the logging will look like from the highway, the campground and Summit Lake.
- Hydrologists – to assess the condition of streams channels and to protect water quality.

Our plan is based on findings from all these experts.

Does NACFOR have a permit?

NACFOR has a cutting permit for the entire community forest land base. A new administrative process (called One-CP) will allow more flexibility for harvesting the blocks over a longer time frame. The new system means that single blocks can be harvested under the One-CP, rather than all seven proposed blocks falling under a cutting permit with a four-year term. With this flexibility, blocks can be harvested under conditions that will have the least impact to toads (i.e. – not during migration periods and with sufficient snowpack) and also allow us to monitor the impacts of harvesting over time and incorporate new or revised management regimes as needed.

Have any other Western toad hibernation areas been logged?

The Western toad is a widespread species, ranging from the southern USA to Alaska, so it is very likely that there have been hibernation areas logged in other parts of the continent. However, research and/or statistics on Western toads is very limited.

See www.nakuspcommunityforest.com for a fact sheet. This fact sheet summarizes the difference in toad habitat: *breeding habitat* down by the lake, which in our area results in toads crossing roads and Highway 6; and *terrestrial habitat* up the slope where they live when they are not breeding. They hibernate away from the lake, usually in burrows (hibernaculum).

Loss of breeding habitat has a significant impact on the Western toad. Loss of habitat can happen by destroying the breeding area through land development, subdivisions, use of pesticides and herbicides, building of roads and houses, and generally altering or disturbing their habitat through recreational or agricultural use. No breeding = no toads. At Summit Lake, an additional hazard is the highway that bisects their breeding habitat and their terrestrial habitat.

What type of equipment will be used in harvesting?

Feller buncher, skidder, excavator, processor, log loader, dozer. Much of the work will be done during the winter on snowpack, for most of the areas. A yarder (overhead cable logging) may be used for one cutblock.

Why doesn't NACFOR wait (four to five years) until more research is completed before applying for a cutting permit?

We are in our third year of field work in preparation for this cutting permit. We have collected information for the past two years on the occurrence of toads in the area. We do not feel that waiting four to five years will benefit anything. We believe that moving ahead in a careful and conservative fashion; utilizing the



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information we have gathered; monitoring the results of our activities; and making adjustments to the plan when necessary, is a responsible approach to forest management in the Summit Lake area.

What about slowing down the pace of logging: i.e. logging the cut blocks over a longer time span?

This is something we are looking at and working towards. NACFOR has committed to taking a conservative and careful approach by using the One-CP cutting authority to harvest at Summit Lake over a longer time frame. However, NACFOR must also consider meeting the community forest allowable annual cut when scheduling harvesting of the Summit Lake cut blocks.

Will NACFOR collect more data?

We will continue to maintain a data collecting program covering the cutblock areas and surrounding area, to measure toad occurrence and habitat use. This will add to the currently-limited body of knowledge about the effects of logging on Western toads. We believe that operational-based research is valuable information that we can apply to other areas in the NACFOR land base.

Will machine traffic on snowpack in the winter cause compaction of the snowpack and cut off oxygen to hibernating toads?

No. Because machine traffic is not continuous over the snow surface, it would not “seal off” the snow surface.

It is not known how many toads hibernate within the exact cut block areas planned by NACFOR, but 2015 field studies revealed adult toads hibernating in the lower slopes: three out of five radio-collared adult toads in a 2015 study preferred lower elevations on the north shore of Summit Lake; ten out of twelve radio-collared toads in a 2016 study preferred the lower elevations on the south shore. More radio telemetry work would help us determine general trends.

Within the areas we plan to log, there appears to be a lot of suitable hibernation habitat including squirrel middens, old rotten stumps, complexes of wood debris on the forest floor, and cracks and crevices to hibernate in. Based on experience and logic, NACFOR feels that logging on snowpack will protect these hibernation features and the toads, if they are present in the area.

How is NACFOR going to monitor / measure toad usage before and after logging?

NACFOR will be conducting daytime and nighttime surveys along roads in the development area. This data will allow us to schedule activities around toad movements. An environmental monitor will be on-site before and during operations to observe and track toad movement in the operating area. Post-harvest monitoring may include toad counts across a mosaic of different ground and disturbance types to determine what habitat features are used by toads.