

## What is it?

Community forestry is widely interpreted by different people in different contexts. In general, it is used to describe initiatives where local people and groups play a key role in decision-making processes concerning regional forests.

Community forestry involves the three pillars of sustainable development: social, ecological, and economic sustainability. At its core, community forestry is about local control over and enjoyment of the benefits offered by local forest resources.

## Benefits

- Capacity building for increased resilience of rural communities
- Conserve watersheds and viewsapes valued by local citizens
- Provide training and employment opportunities
- Promote youth outdoor education



## CURRENT STATUS IN CANADA

- 348 million hectares of Canada is covered in forest, representing about 47% of its total land surface
- There are currently over 100 active community forests on public land
- Most community forests are located in the provinces of British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

**Northern Ontario Sustainable Communities Partnership:** <http://noscp.ca/>

**British Columbia Community Forest Association:** <http://www.bccfa.ca/>

**Community Forests International:** <http://forestsinternational.org/>

**UBC Community & Aboriginal Forestry Program:** <http://web.forestry.ubc.ca/firstfor/program.html>

**Canadian Model Forest Network** <http://modelforest.net/>

**Aboriginal Forestry:** [http://www.canadian-forests.com/aboriginal\\_forestry.html](http://www.canadian-forests.com/aboriginal_forestry.html)

*Created by Emily Thorne - 2013*

# COMMUNITY FORESTRY IN CANADA





*Non-timber forest products can be harvested from community forests and redistributed locally, as value-added products.*

Community forestry is about fostering local control over not only the decisions affecting use of nearby forests, but also how and where forest-derived benefits and products are distributed.

Forest-derived benefits and products come in many forms, often called “environmental services” and “non-timber forest products” (NTFPs). Environmental services include clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat, and carbon storage that provides a buffer against climate change. NTFPs are anything taken from a forest that does not include the harvesting of trees. Mushrooms, medicinal plants, fur-bearing animals, and essential oils are examples of the resources that can be used to provide local livelihoods, or be sold to provide income.

When a product is harvested and modified before sale or use, it becomes a value-added product.

Manufactured wood products, maple syrup, woven baskets and the greenery in floral bouquets are just some of the value-added products.

# MAIN OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNITY FORESTRY

Community forestry, as it currently exists in Canada, is a practice that has been advocated over the past few decades as an innovative approach to forest management and community development. Typically, community forests share 3 primary objectives:

## TO ENHANCE LOCAL CONTROL OVER DECISIONS

Community forestry enables participatory decision-making processes where citizens can express opinions and have more influence than typically occurs through industrial forestry that operates under a centralized, command-and-control system. Achieving the best possible representation of local values and interests, and easing land ownership issues are important to multi-party collaboration.



*Partnerships and mixed ownership models can ease land ownership and tenure issues*



*Some communities elect community shareholder boards to represent the values of various local groups*

## TO ENHANCE LOCAL ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Community forest initiatives create employment within the forestry and tourism industries, in addition to creating opportunities for harvesting a considerable number of non-timber forest products. This ensures recirculation of resources within communities and keeping more benefits at the local level.



*Emphasis is placed on economic value and best-end use, rather than volume*



*Modes of production are labour-intensive as opposed to capital-intensive*

## TO ENHANCE SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

Community forests can be sustainably managed through ecologically sensitive forestry practices that recognize and place value on all ecosystem components that comprise the local forest.



*Respecting whole ecosystems including air, water, soil, wildlife, and plants within a forest can ensure conservation and enable sustained use for generations to come*

