



Forest Enhancement
Society of British Columbia

Falkland Forest Rehabilitation Project: 129,000 Trees Planted Spring 2019

Press Release | May 15, 2019

FALKLAND, B.C.: a large area 8 kilometers east of the community of Falkland on Highway 97C, previously burned by a wildfire 14 years ago, was the focus of a local Natural Resource District staff and Tolko Industries Ltd. project funded by the Forest Enhancement Society of B.C. (FESBC) for forest rehabilitation and to improve the area for Mule deer winter range.

“The Cedar Hills fire of 2005 in the Okanagan Shuswap Forest District burned approximately 1,200 hectares of forest land,” said Dave Conly, Operations Manager for FESBC. “Of the land affected by the fire, 830 hectares was salvage logged and reforested by Tolko Industries Ltd., BC Timber Sales, and local woodlot holders. There remained a significant area of land untreated, and until now, was severely degraded due to the intensity of the fire.”

Difficult growing conditions, including drought, existed for some of the remaining area and previous attempts to reforest for timber productivity had been largely unsuccessful.

“Tolko Industries Ltd., working with the local Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) District staff, assessed the site and concluded there was an opportunity to reforest portions of the burnt area,” said Conly. “14 years since the fire, the area has experienced some deciduous brush growth and recovery of the soil which led the professional foresters to conclude it would be worth another try to regenerate the area. The work is supported by local biologists as the area is part of a critical mule deer winter range.”

The treatment area is BC Crown land that has not been harvested, and therefore falls to the Province of BC to do the reforestation. Although Tolko has no legal obligation for the treatment area, they wanted to help. They applied for funding to undertake the reforestation work on behalf of the Province. FESBC and FLNRORD reviewed and supported the application and a commitment for funding of just under \$200,000 was awarded in 2017.

Extensive planning ensued and included consultation with wildlife specialists and First Nations followed by detailed prescriptions for reforestation and habitat improvement objectives. Winter wildlife surveys were completed and concluded the area held significant importance as winter range for Mule deer. Next, Tolko foresters developed silviculture prescriptions, obtained seed for sowing, grew seedlings in nurseries, and prepared for planting for the spring of 2019.

“Planting started early this April with Caretakers of the Land from Enderby, who subcontracted the planting to Nature’s Treasures,” said Conly. “The 19 workers planted 1,600 trees per hectare with three different ratios of Ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir, depending on the bio geoclimatic zone of the site, and completed the planting mid-April.”

The area is currently reported to have good soil moisture with recent rains adding to the probability of successful survival for the newly planted trees. Tolko’s silviculture forester, Stefan Albrecher expressed a personal interest in the project and indicated he would be visiting the area to check survival and growth. “It’s probably a good 10 years before we could expect to see trees above the brush from the road,” said Albrecher. “But when we do, it will be great to see.”

For More Information or Interviews:

Aleece Laird, Communications Liaison

communications@fesbc.ca | 250.574.0221