



TSL TA1375 – Block Evtk4SY - Tsitika

Timber Sale License (TSL) Fact Sheet

About BC Timber Sales (BCTS)

BCTS manages 20% of B.C.'s public timber harvest, driving economic prosperity and supporting sustainable land management. Under its new mandate, BCTS has expanded its role to reflect community needs and lead the way for an evolving forestry sector. This includes wildfire risk reduction, land and range stewardship, and support for diverse manufacturers.

BCTS takes a community-driven, values-based approach that strengthens partnerships with First Nations and local interest holders while promoting resilient forest ecosystems and thriving communities. Operating in 33 communities throughout B.C., BCTS helps sustain economic activity and employment by working with First Nations, contractors, and local businesses around the province.

Reconciliation with First Nations is integral to BCTS' long-term success. BCTS supports the Province's commitment to true, lasting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in British Columbia, including the implementation of the 2022-2027 Declaration on the *Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* Action Plan and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In supporting Provincial reconciliation efforts, BCTS is also committed to the Ministry of Forests' objective to strengthen partnerships and increase engagement with First Nations in the management of B.C.'s natural resources.

Overview

BCTS is proposing a timber sale license (TA1375) within the Tsitika Landscape Unit. This area has been subject to extensive ecological review and planning to ensure alignment with provincial conservation priorities, Indigenous values, and sustainable forest management practices.

Harvest Area: 24.4 hectares (ha); the Biological Ecosystem Classification of the harvest area is Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH) Very Wet Maritime (vm2) site series: 01⁶⁰ HwBa – Blueberry, 06³⁰ HwBa Deer Fern, 05¹⁰ BaCw - Foamflower

BCTS' approach to forestry and landscape management considers the full spectrum of ecosystems and values present in a watershed. This approach examines the larger forest area and informs the selection of specific stands for harvesting to support the province's economic well-being. At the same time, other stands within the same forest are set aside to protect important non-timber values, like biodiversity, wildlife habitat, riparian zones, water quality, and areas with unique ecological or terrain features.



Key Topics of Concern

Old Growth Deferrals & Technical Advisory Panel (TAP)

TA1375 overlaps TAP deferral polygons. The TAP deferrals are areas of old growth forest identified in November 2021 by the province's TAP. These areas have been identified for temporary protection while long-term conservation decisions are made. Since then, BCTS has been working with the Nanwakolas member First Nations to complete an Integrated Resource Management Plan (IRMP) using current resource inventories, information concerning important indigenous cultural values and field data of stand level attributes. The IRMP includes a conservation network intended to protect multiple resource values across the landscape, including Old Growth, Elk, Marbled Murrelet, and important fish habitat. While the IRMP corridor plan does not include the TAP polygons in their entirety for this Landscape Unit, the conservation network still integrates significant areas of priority TAP Old Growth with new recruitment areas to create a Forest Ecosystem Network connecting major valley bottom riparian corridors to forested ecosystems along elevational gradients. In this planning process, the 24.4 hectares comprising TA1375 were not among the forested areas selected for the conservation network.

The conservation network is being finalized and has been designed to protect the most culturally and ecologically important areas in the Tsitika Landscape Unit. The network increases Old Growth protection from current levels in the legal Landscape Unit Plan and promotes connectivity of reserves. The values and proposed corridors in the IRMP are intended to be the foundational plan for the pending Forest Landscape Unit Planning (FLP) initiative soon to be initiated for central east coast Vancouver Island.

Ecology

The Tsitika Landscape Unit contains 3500ha of comparable Old Growth Forests in the CWH vm2 01 classification and 2100ha are protected. Harvest of TA 1375 will not lead to the depletion of this forest type from the Tsitika valley.

Overall, approximately 18% (7,325 ha) of the Tsitika Landscape Unit (LU) is currently set aside in Parks and Protected areas. The protected areas include Old Growth Management Areas (OGMA), Wildlife Habitat Areas (WHA), Ungulate Winter Range (UWR) and Marble Murrelet Retention Areas (MAMU). The current inventory of Old Growth (Age Class 9) across all the Biogeoclimatic variants occurring in the LU equals approximately 17,500 hectares. The Nanwakolas Nations IRMP proposes to significantly increase the overall protected areas in the Tsitika LU with a conservation network.

Legacy Trees and Big Trees

This development was completed within the original BCTS Coastal Legacy Tree policy (2021). Within the general area of the timber sale, there were two trees that were initially identified as Coastal Legacy Trees (CLT) and had been excluded from the proposed harvesting area. Upon careful re-examination, neither met the diameter threshold of a CLT, however, they remain excluded from the harvest area.



Consideration of the updated BCTS [Legacy Tree 2025](#) Policy also occurred. Though the application of that policy only applies to new block developments, a review of tree diameters in TA1375 against these new diameter thresholds again, did not find any trees meeting the criteria.

TA1375 does contain several Large Cultural Cedar (LCC) which have been inventoried and protected in partnership with Nanwakolas for First Nations cultural use.

Siltation, Salmon Habitat and Robson Bight Rubbing Beach

The Tsitika watershed is not designated as a Fisheries Sensitive nor a Community Watershed, both of which carry mandatory watershed assessment requirements. However, in 2021 BCTS utilized a professional hydrologist to complete a watershed assessment in the Tsitika in consideration of proposed harvesting plans in the area. It was concluded that risk to fish and fish habitat would be low where terrain stability is appropriately considered and siltation management and various other recommended measures and practices are implemented. BCTS implements enhanced erosion and sediment control measures, including riparian buffers, wet weather timing restrictions, and sediment traps, to mitigate downstream effects. BCTS also commissioned a terrain stability assessment from a professional geotechnical engineer and are following the recommendations to ensure harvesting does not result in impacts to values. Long-term research from the Tsitika River Sediment Project, showed that ocean currents carried sediment from the Tsitika River away from the rubbing beaches¹. Research showed that sediment at the beaches is primarily sourced by onshore drift of sediment from Schmidt Creek. The watershed is being managed to a very low risk to the whale rubbing beach in Robson Bight. Currently, the Equivalent Clearcut Area (ECA) of both Tsitika and Schmidt Creeks are below 20%.

Marbled Murrelet Habitat

Marbled Murrelets (MAMU) are unusual among seabirds with respect to their solitary and secretive nesting habitat. Since MAMU nest locations are extremely difficult to confirm from the ground and aerial surveys risk disturbing nesting birds, the species is managed at the habitat level.^{2 3 4}

In 2021, the Province enacted an Implementation Plan to strengthen MAMU protection. This legislation established an **Order** and **Notice** that specifies minimum habitat retention requirements within each Landscape Unit (LU) and providing updated Provincial habitat mapping based on field assessments.

¹ [Tsitika River Sediment Project - Province of British Columbia](#)

² <https://pacificseabirdgroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/A-Revised-Protocol-for-Surveying-MAMU-in-Forests-2024-1.pdf>

³ <https://www.fs.usda.gov/psw/publications/documents/wild/gtr152/chap10.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.sfu.ca/biology2/wildberg/papers/SilvergieterLankACE2011nesttrees.pdf>



The Order Suitable Habitat target for *Tsitika DCR* is 2214ha and the Notice target is 489ha. *Tsitika DNI* has additional targets. All targets have been met in the Tsitika landscape Unit. These targets include both spatial targets (mapped reserves) and aspatial targets (unmapped habitat).

The spatial component for the Tsitika LU has already been met through colocation of habitat protection in existing OGMAs, WHAs, and Ungulate Winter Ranges (UWRs). BCTS is responsible for maintaining 744 ha of suitable habitat under the aspatial target. BCTS has opted to spatialize this component internally to ensure meaningful habitat attribute retention across the landscape.

The boundaries of TA1375 overlap 1.3 ha of provincially modeled moderate suitability nesting habitat but it does not overlap with nesting habitat identified to meet BCTS' aspatial target in the Tsitika LU. There is additional Suitable Habitat in the area that will remain available to support MAMU nesting.

BCTS has met the MAMU nesting habitat management requirements in the Tsitika LU as outlined in the provincial **Implementation Plan, Order** and **Notice** and has therefore ensured effective protection of nesting habitat on provincial Crown land to support the recovery of MAMU.

Oldgrowth Specklebelly Lichen

BCTS is aware of oldgrowth specklebelly lichen and its blue-listed ranking and has taken measures to manage the species that include:

- Development of a conservation oriented Best Management Practices (BMP) guide for BCTS forest practitioners
- Training field staff to identify the species
- Surveying for the species and recording all occurrences located in and around a proposed development
- Ensuring that a local population is not extirpated by protecting a representation of occurrences - balancing the protection of the species with socio-economic considerations
- Sharing our findings with the Conservation Data Center to improve the province's overall knowledge of this species distribution

Oldgrowth specklebelly lichen has been confirmed to be present within the Tsitika Mountain Ecological Reserve as reported by the BC Conservation Data Centre. This reserve is located to the north of TA1375 and confirms the presence of suitable habitat for the lichen and the landscape level conservation of this species.

Adjacent Protected Areas

BCTS Planning activities are compliant with legal requirements to not disturb Ecological Reserves or Parks. Recent re-engineering of TA1375 involved reconfiguration of the block boundary and road to remove

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approximately 8ha or 25% of the harvest area and related road. This was initiated out of an abundance of caution aimed at increasing the overall resilience of the post-harvest block perimeter to potential storm events. The 8 hectares removed from the Timber Sale now provide an enhanced treed buffer against the Ecological Reserve. Safety requirements related to Hazard Tree abatement and Windthrow Management within the work area will not require treatment or any entry within the Ecological Reserve.

Consideration of prevailing winds in the local area has informed prescriptions of planned treatments for post-harvest forest edges to ensure residual perimeter timber will not be unduly damaged by storm events. Staff from the Ministry of Environment and Parks reviewed operational plans for the Timber Sale License and did not express any concerns.

First Nations Consent and Consultation

The Crown has a legal duty to consult First Nations when proposed activities on the landbase may impact their asserted territorial rights and title. BCTS follows all BC Government consultation standards, relevant legal jurisprudence and Consultation Agreements that may be in effect with a Nation. BCTS has fulfilled its consultation duties with respect to timber sale TA1375 by way of referral and engagement processes with the nations in whose territory timber sale TA1375 is located.

TA 1375 is situated in the territories of the Nanwakolas member First Nations. The Nanwakolas Nations have a Strategic Engagement Agreement (SEA) with the Province. The Nations review and assess projects proposed to them relative to their aboriginal rights and title interests, and more recently against their IRMP. The Nanwakolas Nations IRMP protects old growth, cultural and ecological values important to the Nations within their territories. BCTS' TA 1375 timber sale license is in alignment with the IRMP. The proposed timber sale has secured the support of the Nations.

The detailed consultation records are considered confidential between the parties and will not be released in this information package.

Conclusion

Timber Sale TA1375 has been planned with significant consideration for local biodiversity values, ecological integrity, Indigenous concerns and existing provincial conservation frameworks. BCTS considers both landscape level and site-specific factors with every proposed timber sale development and will continue to adopt practices that reflect evolving science and societal values.

BCTS has conducted its due diligence in the planning of the Timber Sale License and believes an appropriate balance has been struck between economic interests that contribute to local economies and environmental management interests in meeting the interest of all British Columbians. TSL TA1375 is being prepared to be auctioned in early 2026.

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