

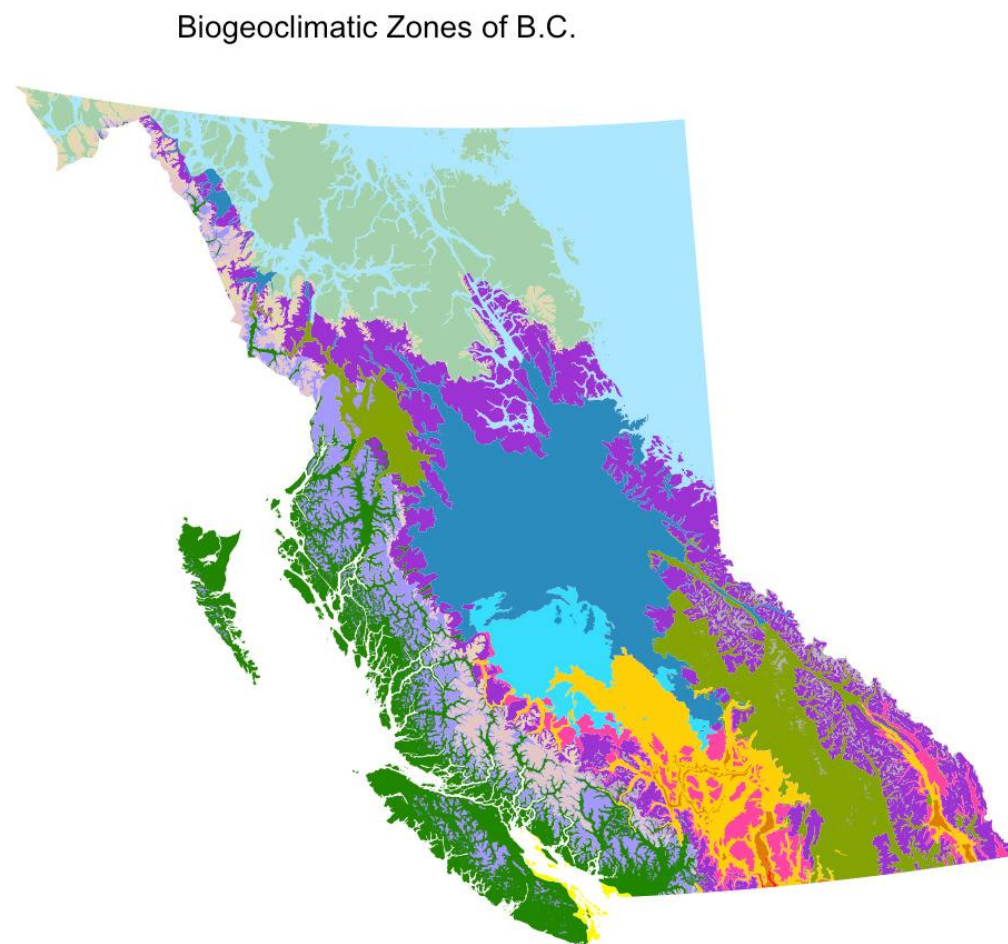
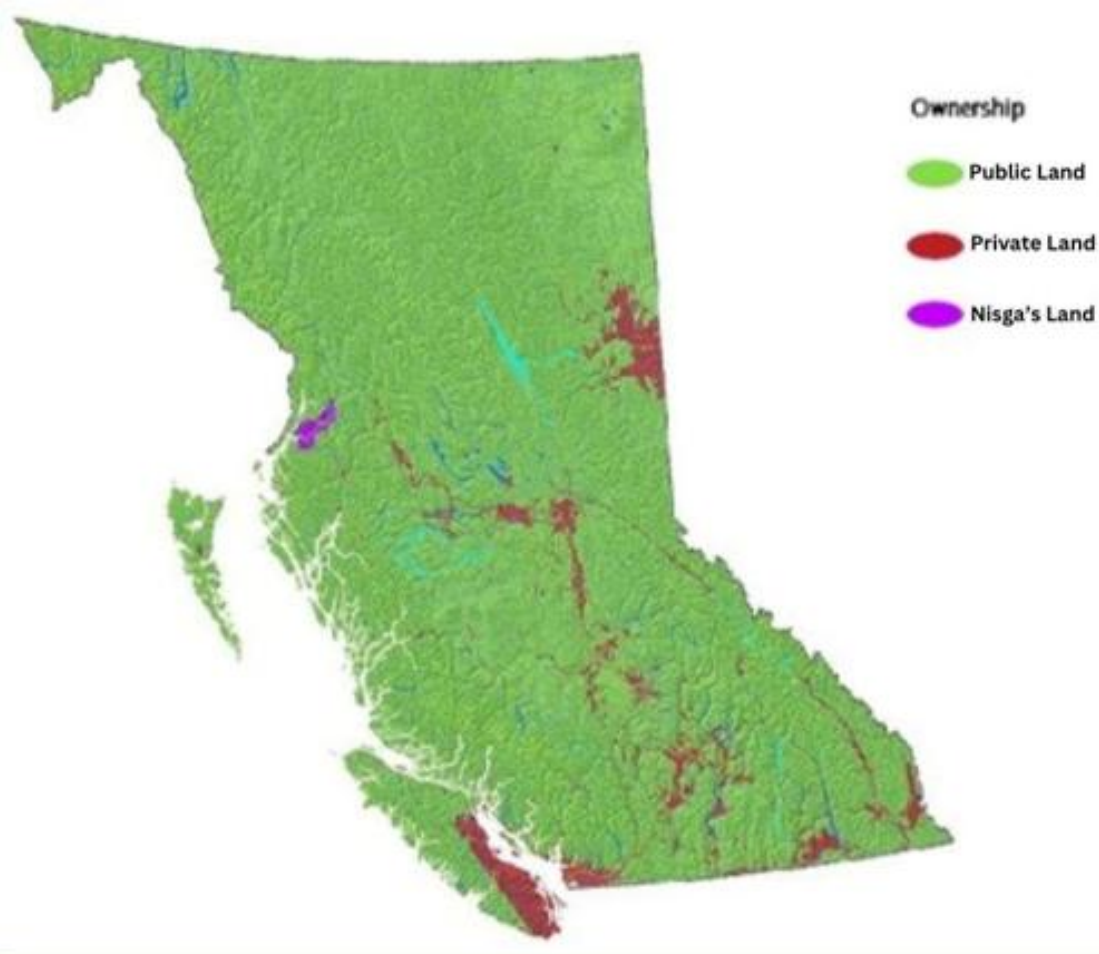
Trade-offs in Forestry

Lessons from British Columbia, Canada

Norah White, RPF, MBA
Deputy Chief Forester
British Columbia Ministry of Forests

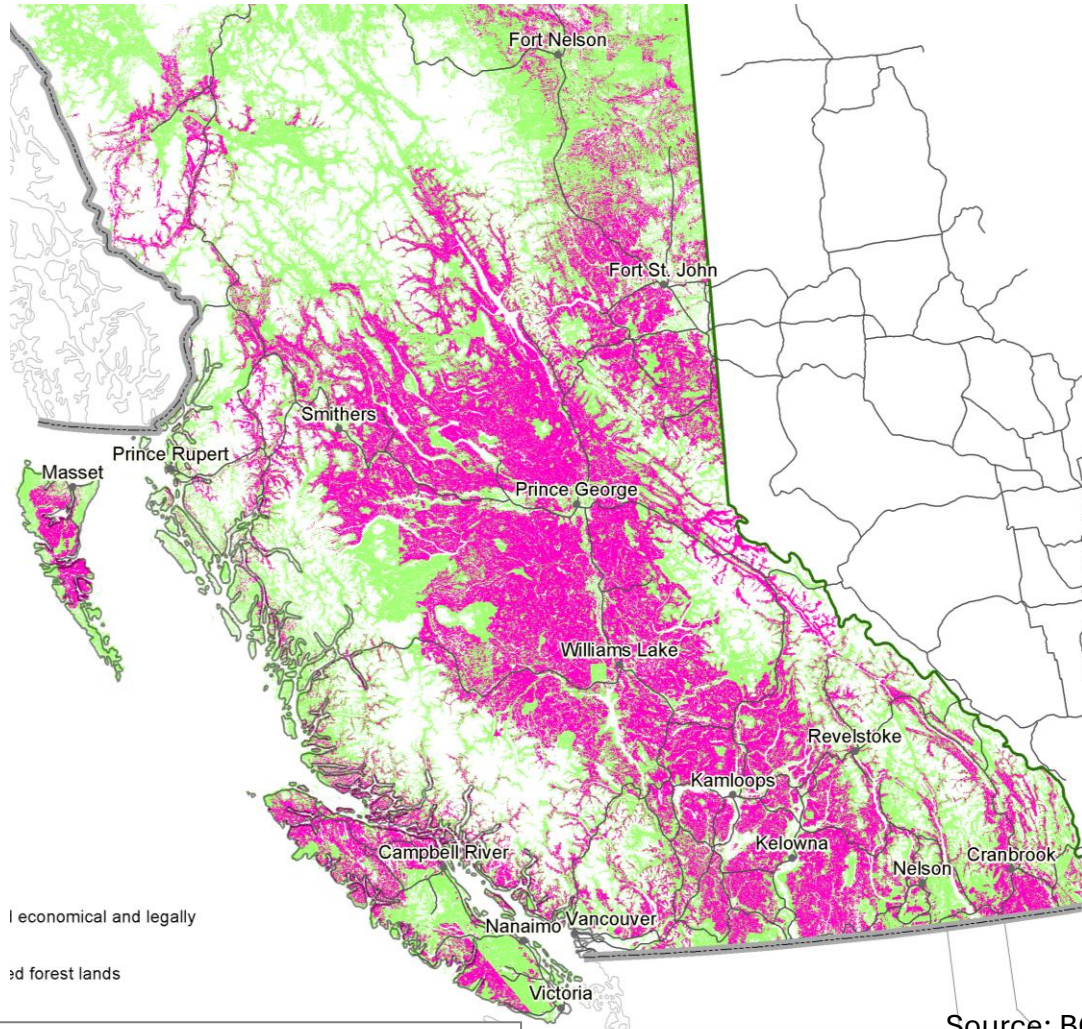
4th OECD Forest Dialogue
Online workshop, July 16, 2026

British Columbia: Scale and Complexity

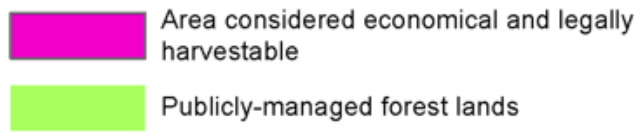
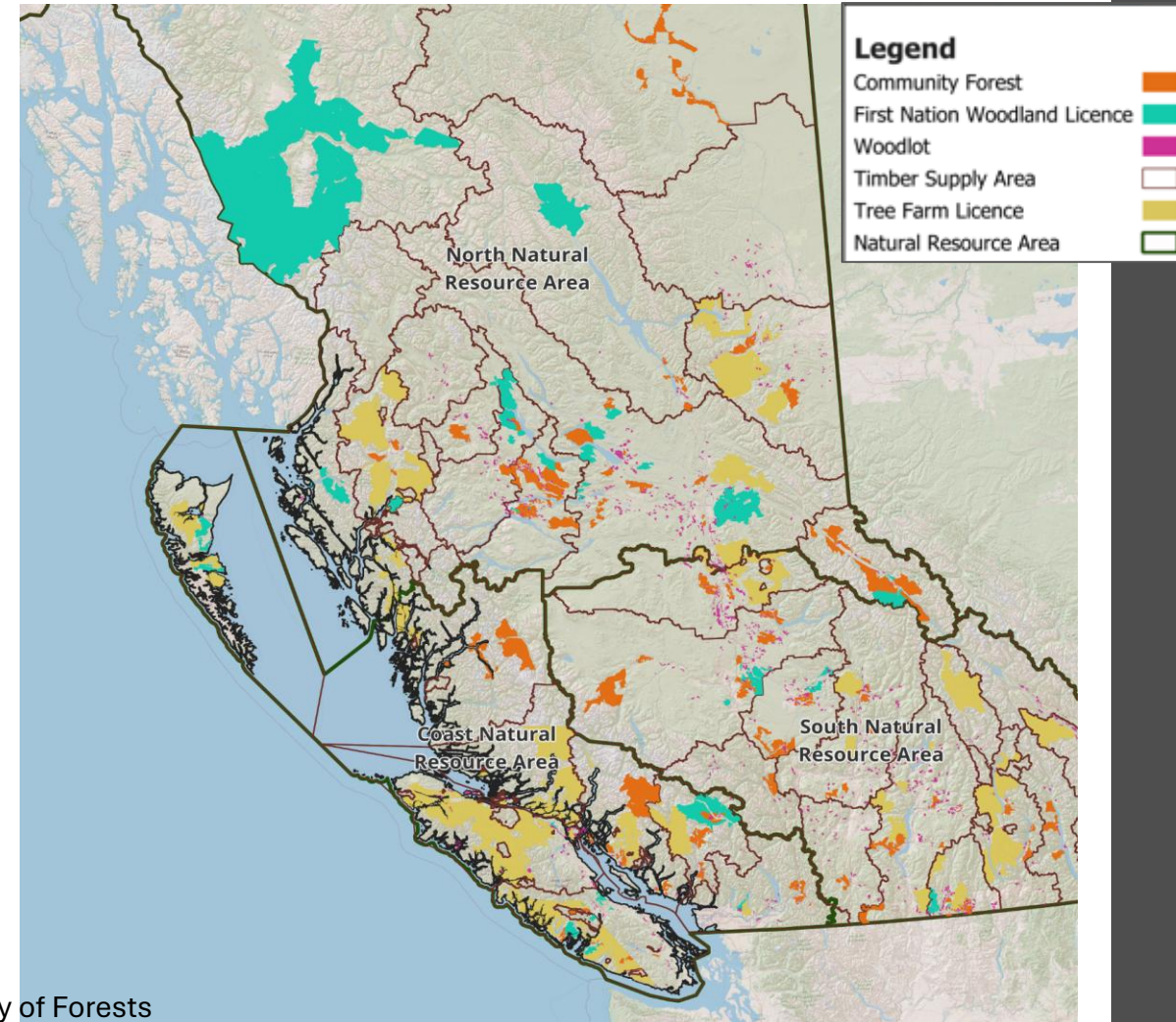


Source: BC Ministry of Forests

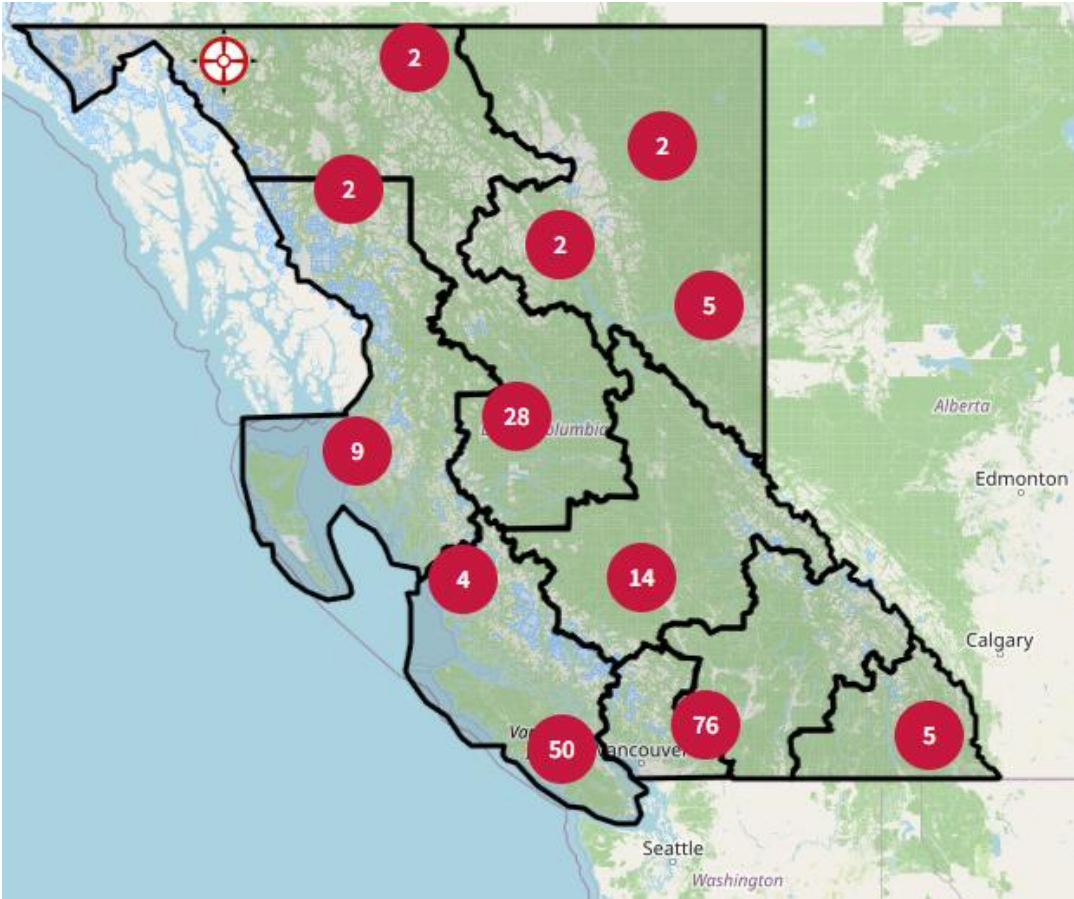
British Columbia: Scale and Complexity



Source: BC Ministry of Forests

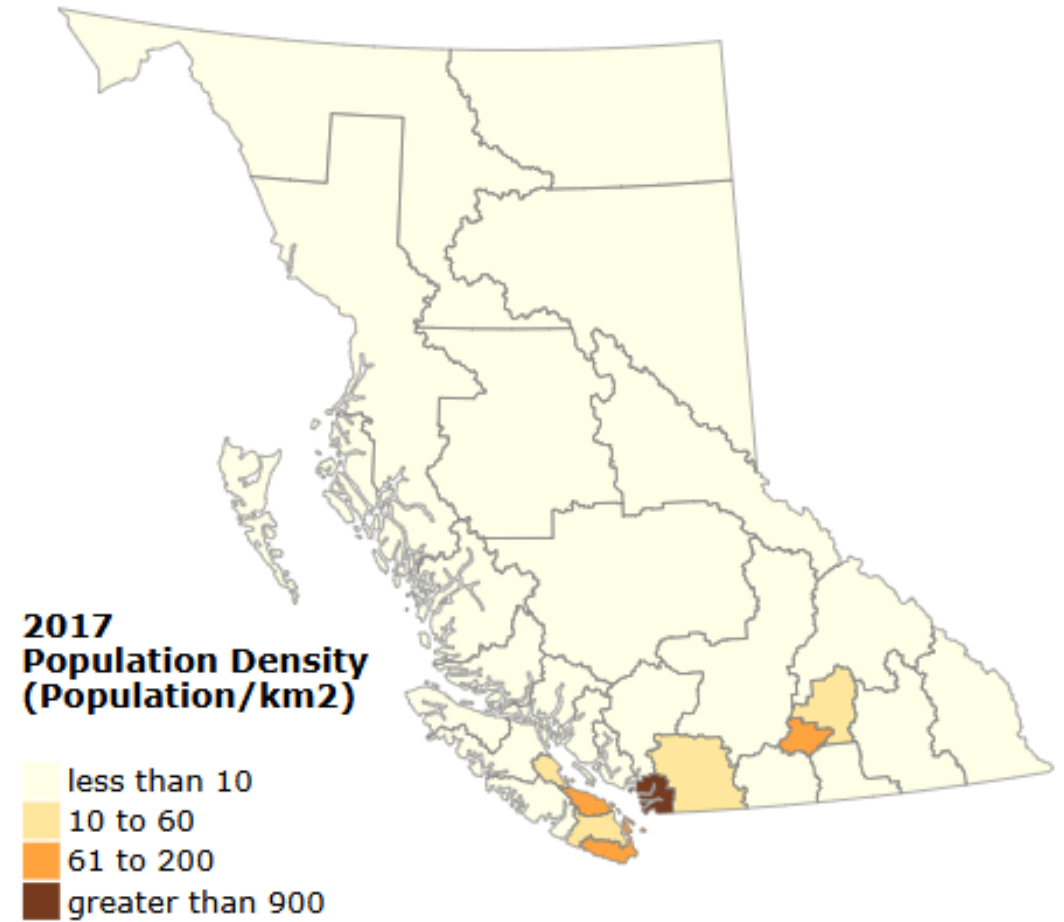


British Columbia: Scale and Complexity



First Nations in British Columbia

From: [Interactive Map | British Columbia Assembly of First Nations](#)



From: [pop_subprovincial_population_highlights.pdf](#)

Forest stewardship decision-making model

Provincial

- Government determines land use – e.g., land use planning
- Industry-specific laws and functions – e.g., forest landscape planning, allowable annual cuts
 - Statutory decisions by Minister or Chief Forester and/or First Nation(s)
 - Objectives set by government (delegated decision-makers, independent professionals)
- Practice requirements (independent professionals)

Site



REQUIRED CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE

- ① Indigenous involvement
- ② Prioritize ecosystem health
- ③ Adopt a 3-zone management framework
- ④ Strengthened governance
- ⑤ Better public information

IMMEDIATE RESPONSES

6. Ecosystems at very high risk
7. Compliance with existing requirements and guidelines

IMPROVE MANAGEMENT

8. Monitoring and evaluation
9. Objectives & targets framework
10. Update targets & guidance
11. Improved inventory
12. Innovative practises

ORDERLY TRANSITIONS

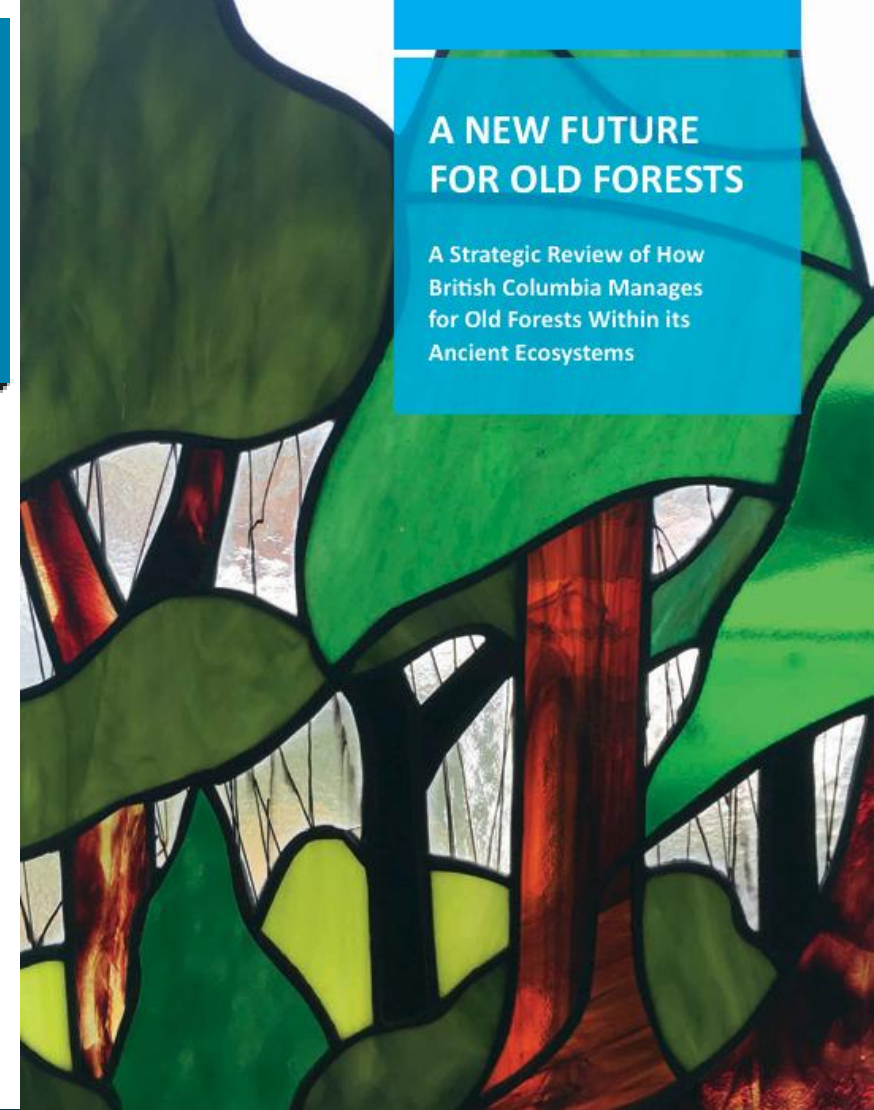
13. To new management approaches
14. For communities

— LEADING TO —

Healthier ecosystems | Better management | Greater public support

A NEW FUTURE FOR OLD FORESTS

A Strategic Review of How British Columbia Manages for Old Forests Within its Ancient Ecosystems

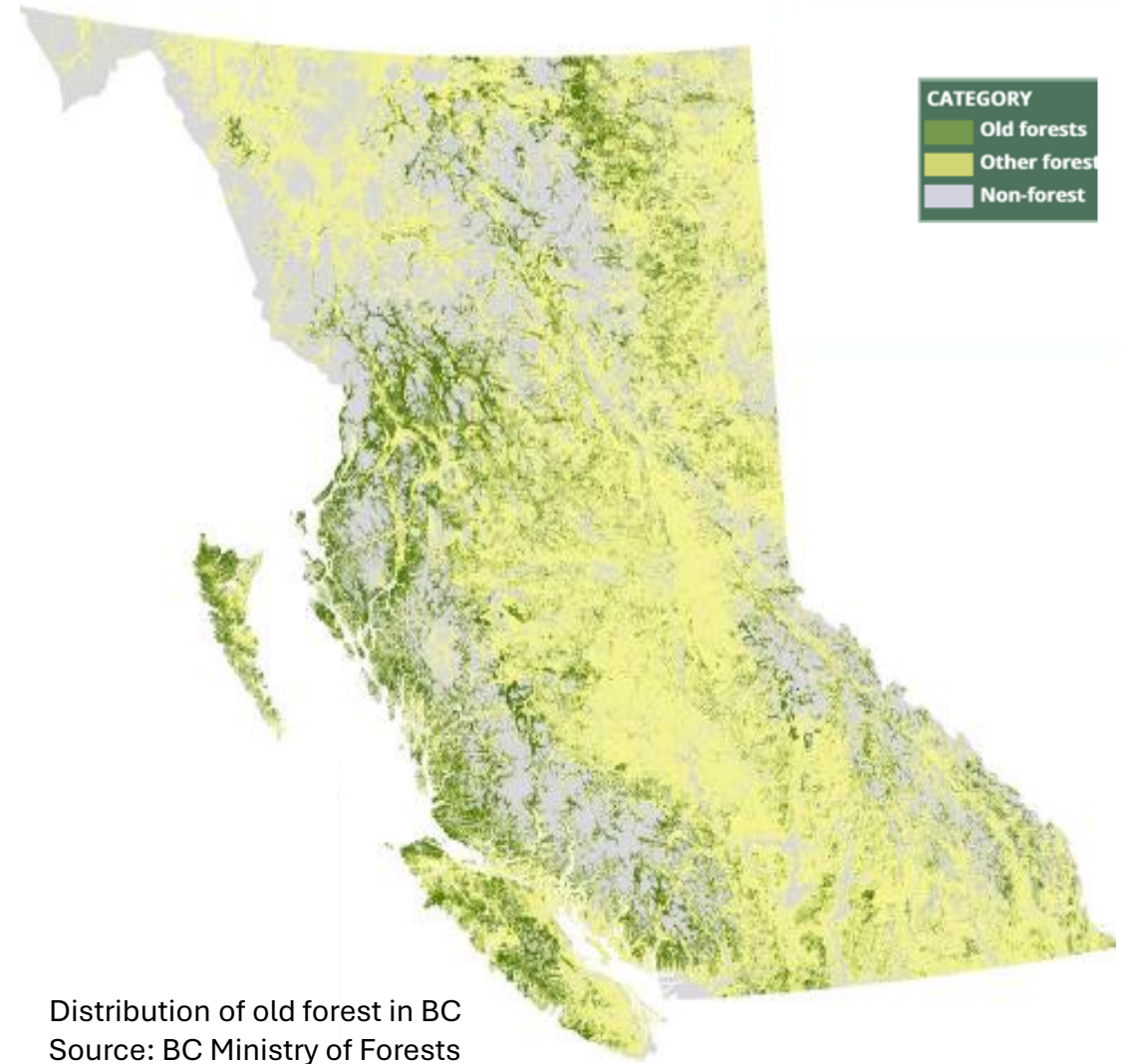


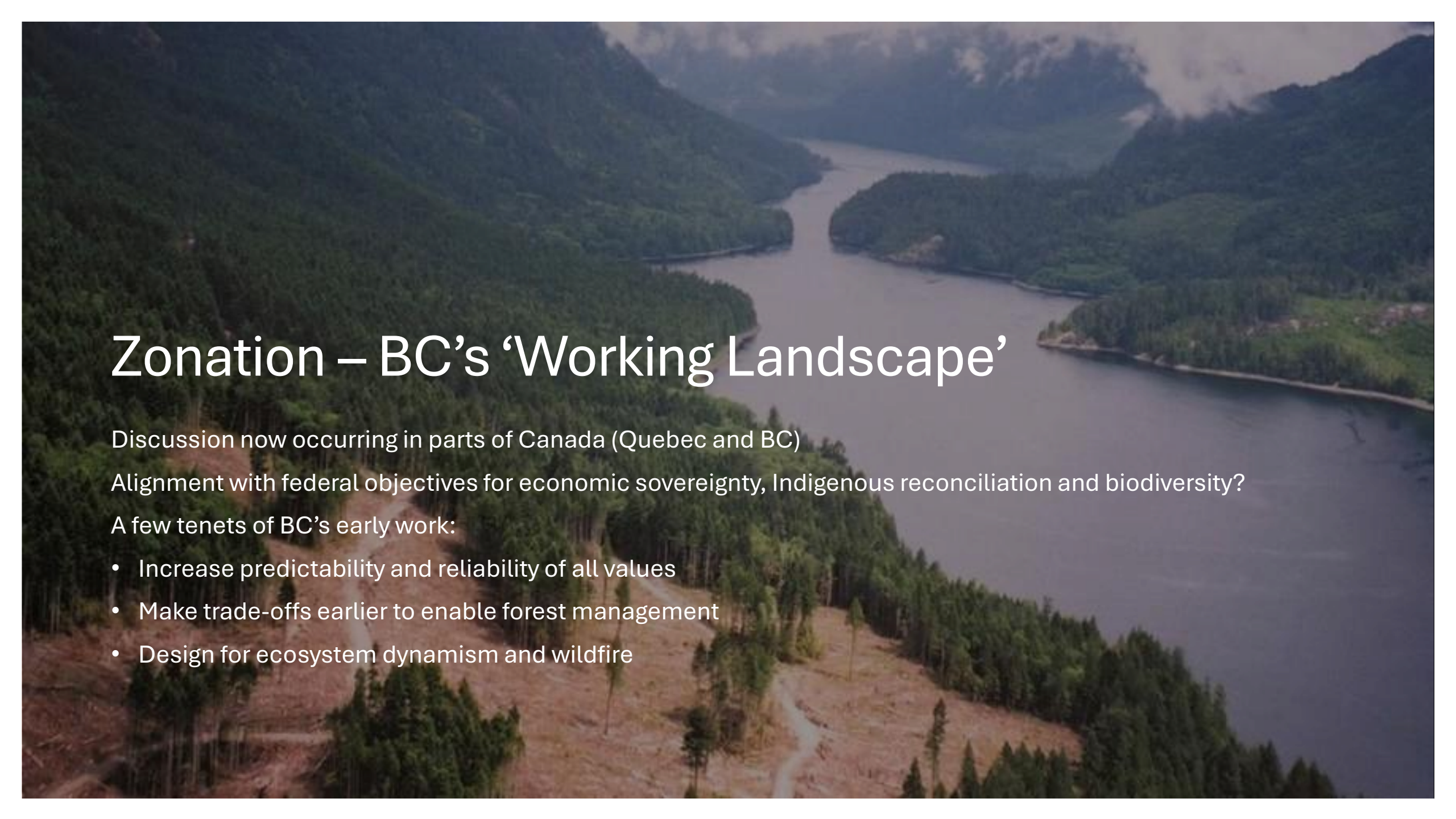
Old Growth

Old Growth

Highlights from recent work:

- New mentality – from ‘what constrains’ to ‘what is possible’?
- New question – what does it mean to have a provincial initiative on a landbase as complex and diverse as British Columbia?
- New standard of engagement with the goal of building trust



An aerial photograph of a wide river flowing through a lush, green forested valley. The river is surrounded by steep, forested mountains. The sky is overcast with soft, grey clouds. The overall scene is a natural, working landscape.

Zonation – BC's 'Working Landscape'

Discussion now occurring in parts of Canada (Quebec and BC)

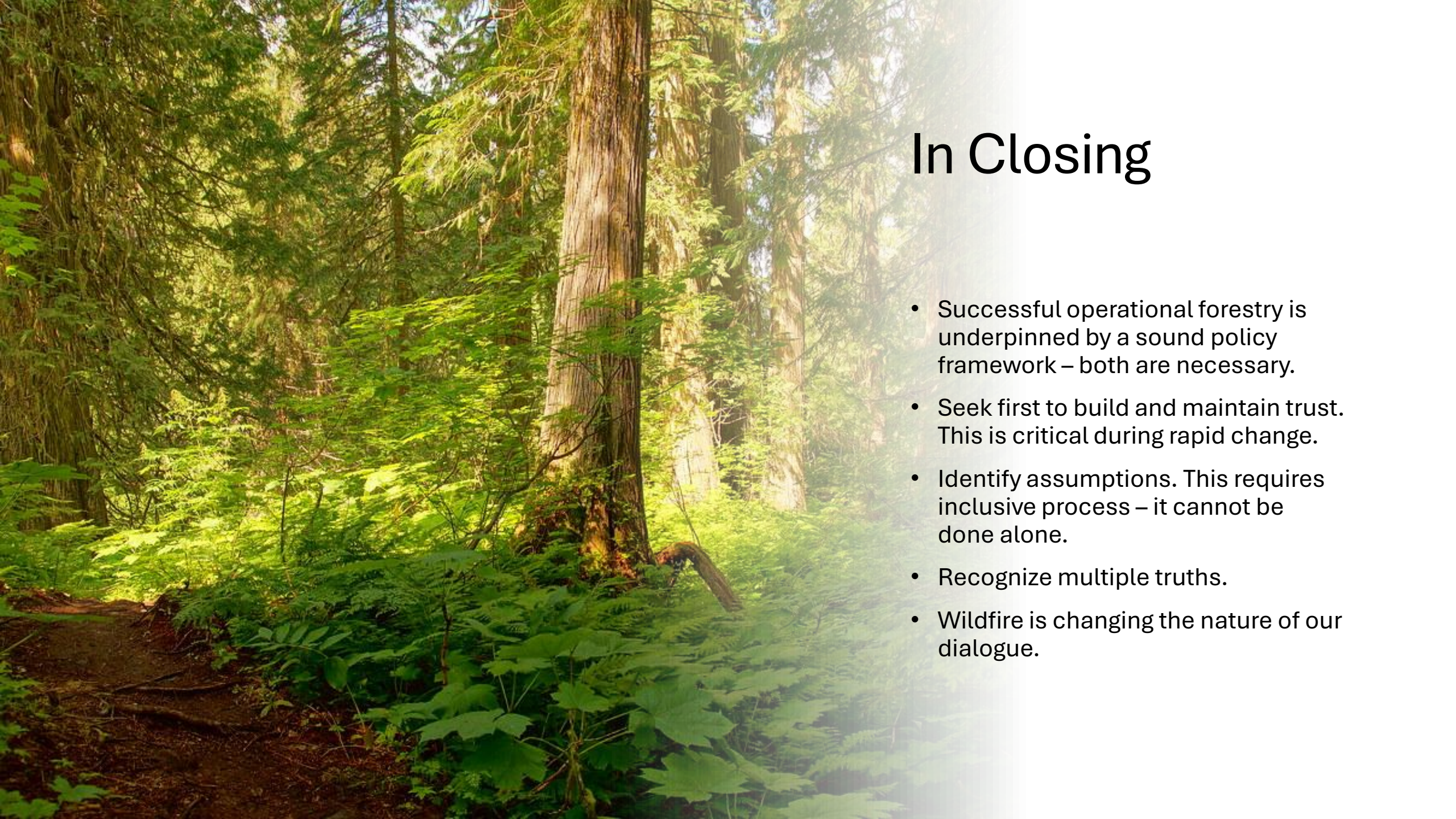
Alignment with federal objectives for economic sovereignty, Indigenous reconciliation and biodiversity?

A few tenets of BC's early work:

- Increase predictability and reliability of all values
- Make trade-offs earlier to enable forest management
- Design for ecosystem dynamism and wildfire



Fire paramountcy



In Closing

- Successful operational forestry is underpinned by a sound policy framework – both are necessary.
- Seek first to build and maintain trust. This is critical during rapid change.
- Identify assumptions. This requires inclusive process – it cannot be done alone.
- Recognize multiple truths.
- Wildfire is changing the nature of our dialogue.