



Canada provides financial relief to forestry for operating through COVID

18 December 2020

British Columbia, Canada is delivering relief to small and medium sized forestry businesses for the extra costs of keeping their employees and communities safe, while operating through the COVID-19 pandemic. Source: Timberbiz

“Our government worked with forest contractors to plant 300 million seedlings this year with no recorded COVID-19 transmissions,” said Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development. “This Can\$9.3-million fund will help forestry businesses keep their employees on staff, and their communities safe with the additional costs they’ve already faced related to COVID-19.

“It’s a credit to these companies that they were able to keep people safe while planting trees that will help keep BC’s forest sector sustainable and fight climate change.”

Amid the unprecedented conditions of COVID-19 and additional health and safety protocols issued by the provincial health officer in April 2020, a record number of trees were planted in 2020, with no recorded COVID-19 transmissions.

In September, the Government of Canada launched the Can\$30-million Forest Sector Safety Measures Fund program to offset additional COVID-19 health and safety costs for small- and medium-sized forestry companies.

“Protecting workers in our forestry sector and ensuring the success of our tree planting season. We said we would be there for Canadians through COVID-19 and we are delivering,” said Seamus O’Regan, Canada’s Minister of Natural Resources.

BC expects about 175 companies to apply for its Can\$9.3-million share of the fund, to cover costs of implementing COVID-19 health and safety measures between 1 April 1 and 31 December 2020. These costs include personal protective equipment, handwashing stations, extra vehicles and accommodations.

“Since being designated as an essential service, our members have faced increasing costs associated with ensuring that their employees and families remained safe during these unprecedented times,” Todd Chamberlain, general manager, Interior Logging Association said.

“We welcome this funding to assist our membership and appreciate that both the federal and provincial governments have come to the table to help the forest industry.”

Eligible companies must have on average fewer than 500 employees across all offices in Canada with primary business activities in forestry and logging, support activities for forestry, wood product manufacturing, or pulp and paper manufacturing.

“The Forest Sector Safety Measures Fund provides critical support for the British Columbia reforestation sector during this year’s pandemic,” John Betts, executive director, Western Forest Contractors’ Association said.

“Tree planting and silviculture contractors, tree seed and seedling producers, and independent consulting foresters all had to take extraordinary measures this year to ensure the success and

safety of BC's 2020 reforestation and forestry campaign. This funding will cover outstanding COVID-19 safety costs incurred this year by small and medium forestry companies ensuring they will be at full strength for planting again in 2021."

Source:<https://www.timberbiz.com.au/canada-provides-financial-relief-to-forestry-for-operating-through-covid/>