



LABOUR MARKET STRATEGY FOR THE SILVICULTURE INDUSTRY

January 13, 2022

Canada



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Funding provided through the Canada-British Columbia
Labour Market Development Agreement



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The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of its author(s) and not the official policy or position of the Government of British Columbia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Western Forestry Contractors' Association wishes to acknowledge many stakeholders who have supported and contributed to the LMI study on which this strategy is based.

This Labour Market Strategy would not be possible without the funding provided through the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Development Agreement's Sector Labour Market Partnerships (SLMP) Program administered by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training.

The Governance Committee played a crucial role in project oversight. The Committee members meet periodically to provide guidance and direction to the LMP project team. They reviewed and approved research methodology, research tools, and project deliverables, participated in the interviews and encouraged others to participate, approved and provided final sign-off on the LMI report and the final Strategic Plan. Chris Akehurst of Akehurst Enterprises Ltd, was a chair of the committee and was responsible for all communications between consultants and the committee members and with the province.

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The WFCA also wishes to thank all employers, employees, stakeholders, experts and others who participated in the surveys, interviews and consultations as part of this project.

Finally, WFCA also wishes to thank the consulting team from Qatalyst Research Group for undertaking the LMI study and helping WFCA and the committee develop strategic plan and implementation approach.

*Chris Akehurst,
Chair WFCA*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 WESTERN FORESTRY CONTRACTORS' ASSOCIATION

The Western Forestry Contractors' Association (WFCA) is an association of contractors who provide all levels of pre- and post-harvest planning and implementation services to the forest industry. The WFCA was established in 2017, through a merger of two organizations with a long history of supporting forestry contracting business in BC:

- The Society of Consulting Foresters was founded in 1968 as a division of the Association of BC Forest Professionals with an original mission to raise the profile of forestry consultants, improve standards of work, and increase opportunities for contract work with government.
- The Western Silvicultural Contractor's Association was formed in 1984 with a focus on advocating for effective policies for the stewardship of the province's forest resources.

The merging of the two organizations into the WFCA created one unified system, provided a more comprehensive voice for the members, and brought more resources and long-term stability through combined membership and funding. The WFCA focuses on the following:

- *Communication* – provides regular communication and press releases about industry issues and events including annual conferences and staging international conferences on wildfire.
- *Business practices* – advocates for sound, appropriate regulations and standards (labour and contracting standards) and establishment of value-based business practices.
- *Forest Policy* - advocates for high professional standards such as professional compliance certificate development, review of professional reliance standards and input into BCTS structure and policy framework.
- *Safety* – actively participates in the Forest Safety Council and advocate for implementation of safety programming and training for the industry.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The Western Forestry Contractors' Association engaged Qatalyst Research Group to:

- Undertake research on the composition of the labour force and workforce development issues related to recruitment and retention; and
- Develop a labour market strategy that is focused, pragmatic, actionable, and supported by the industry and other key stakeholders. The sectors within silviculture include nurseries, tree-planting, brushing & spacing, consulting foresters, and wildfire fighting.

Several factors contributed to the decision by WFCA to develop the strategy, including:

- **The previous labour market strategy was designed to cover the period 2015 to 2020.** In 2014, the BC Silviculture Workforce Initiative completed a labour market project which

produced the *BC Silviculture Labour Market Information and Training Needs Analysis Report* and the *2015 – 2020 Human Resource Strategy*. At that time, the workforce was estimated at 7,766 workers including tree planters, brushers and spacers, wildfire suppression/fuels management workers, and administrative/officer workers.¹

- **Increasing demand for reforestation workers.** The largest reforestation effort ever in BC (about 305 million seedlings planted) moved ahead in 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. The size of the industry has increased significantly since 2014, largely because of increased investment. The Province of BC and the Government of Canada committed \$290 million to the Forest Carbon Initiative to help the province meet emissions reduction targets through “activities such as reforestation, fertilization, and tree improvement”.² Healthy forests help stabilize the climate, regulate ecosystems and play a key role in carbon sequestration and sustainable growth. Increasing threats to BC’s timber supply due to climate change related forest fires have also required new investments in fuel management and wildfire fighting.
- **Changes occurring in the industry.** For example, COVID-19 had a significant impact on the recruitment, development and retention of silviculture workers and has increased the need to enhance safety guidelines and practices to prevent and control transmission of the virus.
- **Lack of secondary data available on the size and characteristics of the labour force in the industry.** Access to relevant labour market data is constrained by the way in which the industry sectors (NAICS) and occupations (NOC) are defined. In the NOC codes, silviculture workers are mixed in with other types of forestry workers in NOC 8422 and with other types of nursery and greenhouse workers in NOC 8432. Similarly, employers are mixed in with other types of organizations providing support activities for forestry in NAICS 11531 and with other scientific and technical consulting services in NAICS 54169.

Funding for the labour market information (LMI) research and resulting strategy has been provided through the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Development Agreement’s Sector Labour Market Partnerships (SLMP) Program administered by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The labour market strategy was developed in two phases. The output of Phase 1 was an extensive LMI Research Report while the output of Phase 2 is this strategy. An overview of both phases is provided below.

¹ The scope of the 2015-20 Strategy did not include silviculture nurseries or consulting foresters.

² <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/natural-resource-stewardship/natural-resources-climate-change/natural-resources-climate-change-mitigation/forest-carbon-initiative>

Phase 1

Phase 1 focused on researching (collecting, compiling and analyzing) LMI that could be used to deepen the understanding of workforce issues. A detailed account of the work completed in Phase 1 and the resulting findings can be found in the LMI Report. The major data sources included:

- **Literature review and environmental scan.** A report was prepared which summarized available industry information and data related to the characteristics of the sectors, employers, employees, and occupational groups, the outlook for the industry in BC, key factors driving growth, and key trends and issues facing the industry.
- **Survey of 84 employers in the industry in BC.** Those 84 employers accounted for 37% of the active companies in BC. Given the labour market focus of the research, the survey placed particular emphasis on major employers in the sector. The 84 companies accounted for 64% of the full-time equivalent (FTE) employment and 66% of the projected peak employment in 2020. The response rate was higher than that achieved in the 2013 industry survey (which had 46 participants) and the 2014 industry survey (which had 26 participants).
- **Survey of 907 current and former employees in the industry.** Respondents included 845 active and 62 former employees. It was not possible to develop a list of employees in the industry. Instead, we used several mechanisms to reach employees including working to promote the survey through various websites and social media sites; approaching employers and asking them to invite their employees to participate in the employee survey; and asking employees who had completed the survey to recruit others.
- **17 interviews with key informants who are familiar with the labour market issues associated with the sectors and specific occupations.** The purpose of these interviews was to obtain input regarding the major drivers of future employment growth, current labour market conditions and projected future conditions, skill shortages, strategies used to attract, develop and retain workers, available training, and recommendations regarding actions that could be taken to address various industry issues. The key informants included 15 representatives from industry (major employers) as well as representatives from the WFCFA and BC Forest Safety Council.

Phase 2

Phase 1 focused on identifying key industry issues, while Phase 2 focused on working with the industry, the Steering Committee created for the project, and the WFCFA to develop a strategy to respond to those issues. The strategy presents a series of strategic pillars, goals, and actions for strengthening the labour market for silviculture. The strategy also outlines an implementation plan and a performance measurement strategy for tracking the progress made.

In working with the WFCFA and Steering Committee to prepare the strategy, we:

- **Developed presentations summarizing the key findings of the LMI study relevant to each sector within the industry.** Each presentation provided an overview of the results of

the LMI Study relevant to that sector, detailing the labour market characteristics and key issues and priorities.

- **Hosted a series of four sector virtual focus group sessions with industry representatives and key stakeholders.** Separate sessions were staged for the tree-planting, brushing & spacing; nurseries; consulting foresters, and wildfire fighting sectors. In total, 36 employers and two employees attended the sessions. The purpose was to further discuss the key issues and challenges facing each sector, establish strategic priorities, and discuss potential actions that should be taken strengthen the labour market.
- **Conducted six additional interviews with key informants** who were not able to attend the focus group sessions or who had additional information to share.
- **Conducted a literature and document review of labour market strategies utilized by other sectors.** By consulting labour market strategies deployed by other sectors of BC's economy, including the mining, tourism, and agriculture sectors, we gathered insight into potential strategies, goals, and actions that could be applicable to BC's silviculture sector.
- **Met with the Steering Committee to further develop and refine the strategy.** In advance of the meeting, we provided a draft strategy. At the meeting, we walked through each element of the strategy. The Steering Committee provided feedback on the structure, key priorities, tactics, and actions that should be pursued to address the identified issues.
- **Met with the WFCFA Executive Director and the Chair of the Steering Committee to discuss strategy implementation.** The WFCFA will play the lead role in implementing the strategy. We met with Executive Director as well as the Committee Chair to discuss the priority actions, the plans for implementation and the strategy to track results.
- **Prepared the labour market strategy.** The results of the meetings were reflected in the strategy, including the decisions made regarding strategic directions and actions. We conducted some further research, as needed, to develop the implementation plan. The draft strategic plan includes detailed goals, objectives, and actions, a prioritization and implementation timeline for those actions, potential sources of funding, and a performance measurement strategy (PMS).

2. PROFILE OF SILVICULTURE INDUSTRY

2.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF FORESTS

Canada is the third most forested country in the world with over 347 million hectares of forest land (2020)³, of which approximately 60 million hectares are in BC.⁴ The forest sector continues to be important for BC's economy. In 2019, the forest sector was responsible for 27% (\$11.9 billion) of BC's exports and is the primary employer in many parts of the province. Forestry-related activities in BC directly support over 7,000 businesses and employ more than 50,000 people.⁵

Silviculture impacts the management, composition, health, quality, and sustainability of forests. Silviculture activities and practices are used to manage forests not only for the purpose of timber harvesting, but also to promote the sustainable management of wildlife habitat, forest ecosystem services, water sources and ecosystems, wildfire risk and restoration, and recreation areas.

Increasing recognition of the importance of forests in fighting climate change as well as the importance of effective forest management for ecosystem health is creating new opportunities for the silviculture industry. The critical role of forests in maintaining ecosystem health and climate stability moved reforestation objectives to the top of the global climate change agenda. A recent study by an international research team from Switzerland argues that the world can support a 25% increase in forested areas. In Canada, reforestation has become one of the important strategies towards achieving its climate goals. The Province of BC and the Government of Canada committed \$290 million to the Forest Carbon Initiative to help the province meet emissions reduction targets through "activities such as reforestation, fertilization, and tree improvement". Canada ranks amongst the top 20 nations in the world in terms of reforestation initiatives⁶.

Managing wildfire and other forest disturbances is going to remain a priority for governments. Extreme weather conditions, including increasingly hotter summers, are expected to require better preparedness with respect to wildfire management. New initiatives are being funded to investigate opportunities to de-escalate future forest fires while strengthening development of a forest-based bioeconomy in BC.

2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SILVICULTURE INDUSTRY

The major characteristics of the industry including current size, composition and characteristics of the labour market and workforce in the sector are outlined below.

³ <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/our-natural-resources/forests-forestry/state-canadas-forests-report/how-much-forest-does-canada-have/17601>

⁴ <https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfd/pubs/docs/mr/mr113/forests.htm>

⁵ <https://www.bcfii.ca/bc-forests-and-markets/bc-forest-sector-overview>

⁶ <https://www.uniguide.com/countries-planting-the-most-trees/>

An estimated 228 silviculture employers were active in BC in 2020. They employed about 4,000 people on an FTE basis, with peak employment reaching 10,000 in 2020.

Drawing from various employer lists, including the WorkSafeBC registry, we estimated that there were 228 employers active in the sector. As presented in the table below, the 77 surveyed employers that provided employment data accounted for 34% of the 228 companies, 64% of the projected industry employment of 3,935 FTEs, and 66% of the projected peak employment of 10,152 in the industry. Most of the projected FTE employment (about 85%) was confirmed through either the survey or WorkSafeBC data.

Given the seasonality of the industry, employment levels fluctuate widely during the year with over 10,000 people being employed during its peak times. The employment projections exclude the BC Wildfire Services, which employs about 1,600 seasonal personnel including firefighters, dispatchers and other seasonal positions.

Projected FTEs and Peak Employment in the BC Silviculture Industry

Categories	Employers	%	FTEs	%	Peak	%
Data Reported by Employers in the Survey						
Surveyed Employers	77	34%	2,515	64%	6,720	66%
Estimates for Employers That Did Not Participate						
Based on WorkSafeBC Figures	34	15%	823	21%	1,794	18%
Projected Employment	117	51%	597	15%	1,638	16%
Sub-total	151	66%	1,420	36%	3,432	34%
Projected Total	228	100%	3,935	100%	10,152	100%

The BC silviculture industry consists of a highly diverse group of businesses, which is reflected in the wide range of occupations within the industry. The most common position identified by the employers surveyed was tree planter. Other leading occupations are listed in the table below.

Peak Seasonal Employment in 2020 by Position

Position	Employees	
	#	%
Tree Planter	3,723	55.4%
Silviculture Nursery Worker	862	12.8%
Crew leader	422	6.3%
Forestry Consultant	416	6.2%
Spacer or Brusher	352	5.2%
Wildfire Fighter	184	2.7%
Supervisor or Project Manager	162	2.4%
Cook	157	2.3%
Other field staff	138	2.1%

Position	Employees	
	#	%
Administration staff	118	1.8%
Senior managers	103	1.5%
Other	83	1.3%
Total	6,719	100.0%

Silviculture organizations active in BC generated an estimated \$550 million in revenues in 2020 and paid \$291 million in wages.

The revenue and wage data reported by the surveyed employers was extrapolated based on the number of FTEs. As indicated below, 90% of the revenues are generated from silviculture related operations. Reported wage costs averaged 53% of revenues, expenditures on education and training averaged nearly 3%, and expenditures on other goods and services averaged 21% of revenues.

Economic Data Reported by Employers

Production Data Reported by Employers	Data Reported by Employers		
	Surveyed Employers	As % of Revenues	Industry Projections
Employers	77	--	228
FTEs	2,515	--	3,935
Financial Data			
Revenues (\$ millions)	\$352.0	100%	\$550.7
Silviculture Revenues	\$317.5	90%	\$496.8
Wages	\$185.7	53%	\$290.6
Training and Education	\$9.7	3%	\$15.2
Other Goods and Services	\$73.6	21%	\$115.2

Tree planting is the largest segment within the BC silviculture industry.

Most businesses in the silviculture industry (e.g., 61 of the 84 businesses surveyed) are active in more than one sector (e.g., forestry consulting and wildfire fighting or tree planting and brushing & spacing), which makes it difficult to estimate employment by sector.

We employed two different options for estimating employment by sector, both of which have some limitations. The first option was to use the survey results, which asked employers to provide a breakdown of their FTEs by sector, and assume the results are representative of all employers in the industry. The second option was to use WorkSafeBC classifications for the 228 employers. Fortunately, the two options yielded very similar results. As indicated below, using the second option, we estimate that tree planting accounts for 26% of the employers in the industry, 46% of the industry FTEs and 59% of peak employment.

Economic Data Reported by Employers

WorkSafeBC Classification	Employers	%	FTEs	%	Peak	%
Tree Planting	59	26%	1,803	46%	6,009	59%
Forestry Nurseries	23	10%	688	17%	1,320	13%
Consulting	40	18%	796	20%	967	10%
Brushing and Spacing	36	16%	242	6%	779	8%
Wildfire Fighting	55	24%	331	8%	658	6%
Other	15	7%	74	2%	420	4%
Projected Total	228	100%	3,934	100%	10,153	100%

A majority of employees in the industry are male and nearly 90% are employed seasonally.

Of the peak staff, only about 11% are employed year-round. The percentage of employees who work year-round varies across different positions from virtually all senior managers to two-thirds of administrative staff (65%) and half of the supervisors or project managers (50%), to very few wildfire fighters (11%) or tree planters (2%).

Employers provided a profile of the characteristics of their workforce on their busiest day. As indicated below, among the employers who provided data for that specific group, 34% of the employees were women, 5% were Indigenous, and 2% were Temporary Foreign Workers. Of the seasonal workers employed in BC, 35% reside outside of the province during the off-season.

Involvement of Selected Groups in the Labour Force

Group	Employers Providing Data ⁷	Employees		
		Group Member	Peak Employment	%
Female	77	2,316	6,719	34%
Indigenous	61	256	5,278	5%
Temporary Foreign Worker (working in Canada with a temporary work visa)	66	124	5,830	2%
Seasonal Workers Residing Outside of BC During Off-season	64	2,276	5,823	35%

There are some differences in the labour market characteristics across the sectors:

⁷ Not all employers were able to provide data on the number of people they employ with those characteristics. For example, 61% of employers reported data on the number of their peak employees who are Indigenous and 64% were able to provide data on the number of seasonal employees who reside outside of B.C. in the off-season. The Peak Employment includes only the employment associated with the employers able to provide data on that respective group.

- **Tree planting.** Based on the results of the employee survey, the tree planting labour force is gender diverse with approximately 55% of its employees identifying as male, 40% identifying as female, and 3% as non-binary. It is also a highly educated and relatively young group with 41% of its participants holding a university degree and 57% being under the age of 35. In terms of ethnic diversity, 5% of the labour force is a member of a visible minority, and 3% are Indigenous.
- **Forestry Nurseries.** The workforce appears to be gender balanced, with the results of the employee survey showing that 51% of the labour force identify as being female, 44% identify as being male, and 2% as non-binary. The sector also has the highest representation of visible minorities and Indigenous people in the industry at 7% and 9% respectively. Nurseries also have an older workforce than the rest of the silviculture sectors, with 62% of employees being over the age of 30.
- **Consulting.** The workforce is predominantly male with 62% of the employees surveyed identifying as such, 33% identifying as female, and 3% as non-binary. It is also a highly educated and relatively young workforce with 66% holding a university degree and 57% being below the age of 35. About 4% of workers are Indigenous and only 1% are members of a visible minority.
- **Wildfire Fighting.** The labour force is predominantly male (72%) with only 26% identifying as female and 2% as non-binary. It is also a relatively young workforce, with 65% under the age of 35. In terms of ethnic diversity, 7% are Indigenous and 5% are members of a visible minority.

Employment in the BC silviculture industry is expected to grow primarily as a result of growth in existing employers, as opposed to new businesses entering the industry.

On an aggregate basis, employers reported that the number of FTEs they employ has increased by 18.1% over the past five years (an average of 3.4% annually) and is expected to increase by 16.5% over the next five years (an annual average of 3.1%).

Sector Growth Rates (Historical and Predicted)

	Consulting	Wildfire Fighting & Other	Forestry Nurseries	Planting, Brushing and Spacing	Total
Employers	19	8	12	38	77
Average Annual Growth					
2015-20	2.9%	-4.3%	4.4%	3.2%	3.4%
2021-25 (projected)	8.0%	9.5%	2.7%	2.2%	3.1%

Most employers attributed recent and projected growth to changes in overall industry revenues (identified by 81% of employers), the market share held by their company (57%), the range of

products or services they provide (47%), the scope of their operations (e.g., more locations; 36%), and productivity (19%). Although projected planting levels are forecasted to decline somewhat over the next five years relative to 2020, the projected level of seedlings planted remains higher than in the previous four years (2016-19).

The factors contributing to growth vary somewhat across the sectors.

Factors Affecting Growth Rates Across Sectors

Sector	Growth Factors
Tree Planting and Brushing & Spacing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The growth has resulted from increased investments in reforestation in response to record breaking fire seasons, the impact of the Mountain Pine Beetle, and climate change. Somewhat slower rates of growth going forward reflect expected slowing in the demand for tree planting, however, the projected level of seedlings planted remains higher than in the previous 4 years (2016-19).
Forestry Nurseries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased seedling demand resulting from higher average yearly number of trees planted
Wildfire Fighters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impacts of climate change increasing wildfire frequency and intensity Increased emphasis on wildfire risk mitigation and planning
Forestry Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend towards more active management of forests Broadening of the range of products and services offered Increased market share

Over 70% of the key informants are positive about the economic outlook of the sector, attributing future growth to factors such as increasing public awareness of climate change, increasing recognition of the importance of forests in fighting climate change as well as the importance of effective forest management to ecosystem health, and continuing government support for reforestation. In addition, managing wildfires and other forest disturbances is going to remain a priority for governments.

However, key informants and industry representatives also expressed considerable uncertainty regarding the longer-term outlook, given difficulties in predicting changes in government policies, rising government debt, the impact of climate change, and overall economic conditions. Future demand will be impacted by changing policies around forest management and by increased involvement of First Nations communities in the industry.

3. THE LABOUR MARKET STRATEGY

The silviculture industry plays a critical role in developing, managing and maintaining healthy forests. The purpose for developing and implementing the labour market strategy is to ensure that the industry will be able to attract, develop and retain the people it needs to fulfill this critical function.

Through the field research and focus groups, four key areas (strategic pillars) were identified on which the strategy should focus. These pillars and accompanying success statements are provided in the table below.

Strategic Pillar	Success Statements
Recruitment	<i>Silviculture attracts the workers it needs to grow, diversify operations, and replace those leaving the sector</i>
Workplaces	<i>Employees experience safe, healthy, and enjoyable workplaces</i>
Development and Retention	<i>Silviculture offers the work and advancement opportunities needed to retain its valued employees</i>
Education and Training	<i>Education and training programs effectively prepare staff to safely and productively enter and progress in the industry</i>

Under each of the pillars, we have defined a series of goals and actions. The following sections describe the context for each pillar and then outline the associated goals and actions.

3.1 RECRUITMENT

Context

As a result of projected industry growth and expected ongoing staff turnover, the industry will require a steady flow of new labour market entrants. Even though most employees are satisfied in their experience in working with their employer and in the industry overall, the nature of the industry (particularly the physical demands) contribute to consistently high turnover rates. For example, of the 2020 field workers, 61% were seasonal workers returning to the same employer from 2019, 7% had worked previously for the employer, 11% were new to the employer but not the industry, and 21% were new to both the industry and the employer. The rate of turnover among permanent staff was 11%.

Attracting new entrants has been a challenge for this industry. While COVID-19 may have made it easier for employers to attract workers for the 2021 season, the industry considers that trend unlikely to continue. At the time of the survey, most employers had not experienced (or did not anticipate experiencing) significant difficulties in filling positions for 2021. However, 2021 is considered an anomaly in that many other industries faced significant uncertainty regarding how their demand for employment would materialize as Canada emerged from the pandemic. Sectors such as accommodation, tourism and the food and beverage sector, which are major employers for young people, were among those most impacted by the pandemic. The uncertain outlook in these other sectors likely increased the appeal of the silviculture sector to young people in 2021.

Employers in the wildfire fighting, forestry consulting and nursery sectors were those most likely to identify difficulties in attracting workers for the 2021 season. When asked about shortages, wildfire fighting contractors identified the need for both experienced and certified firefighters as well as entry level staff. Forestry consultants noted difficulties in attracting experienced professionals as well as field engineers, project managers and field staff interested in working towards professional certifications. Nurseries identified a mixture of recent college and university graduates in forestry and horticulture, seasonal leads and machine operators, and new and experienced nursery workers and labourers.

Skills in short supply ranged from technical skills (e.g., technological and analysis skills, forest management planning), on-the-ground fieldwork (e.g., navigation/mapping skills, driving on logging roads, operating a manual vehicle, running a chainsaw etc.) to critical thinking and management skills. When asked about soft skills in short supply, two-thirds of employers (63%) identified work ethic/attitude and commitment towards work. Other skills which were identified included leadership and interpersonal skills (identified by 44% of employers), critical thinking skills (41%), people management skills (41%), operations management skills (41%), technical skills (41%) and physical skills and endurance (38%).

Success Statement and Goals

The success statement for recruitment is "***Silviculture attracts the workers it needs to grow, diversify operations, and replace those leaving the sector***". Towards the end, we have established three goals and outlined a series of actions under each. As indicated below, these goals focus on increasing the appeal of the industry to youth, broadening the pool of potential applicants, and making better use of foreign workers, where needed, to address remaining gaps.

Goal #1.1: Silviculture is recognized by youth and other underrepresented groups as a great sector in which to work and develop.

The silviculture industry may not be for everyone, but it does provide work which is very appealing to many. Relative to other sectors in which they might work, employees saw the potential to develop close relationships with co-workers, the ability to make significant wages within a set

period of time, their ability to do the work, a sense of fulfilment from doing valuable, tangible work, and the outdoor setting as major advantages of working in the industry.

The challenge is not that the sector is unattractive for youth and other underrepresented groups (e.g., immigrants or Indigenous workers) but rather that not enough youth are aware of the opportunities and the unique benefits it provides. Programs need to be developed at the industry and sector level to increase awareness of the industry and the many opportunities that are available, promoting the appeal of the industry to younger workers (e.g., demonstrating how it aligns with their lifestyle expectations and promoting the desirability of physical labour), and creating greater awareness of the economic and environmental benefits of healthy forests.

To raise the profile of the industry, the WFCFA will implement targeted social media and other promotional campaigns and develop a one-stop shop online portal for career and HR information, resources, and tools. The portal will be targeted at both potential employees and employers. The portal will also be used to share best practices, tools, and resources.

<i>GOAL 1.1: Silviculture is recognized by youth and others as a great sector in which to work and develop.</i>	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Implement targeted social media promotional campaigns featuring the career opportunities, intrinsic value and benefits of the work	High
Provide a one-stop shop online portal for career and HR information, resources, and tools	High
Implement direct campaigns targeted at post-secondary and secondary students, career counsellors, and others (careers, curricula materials, presentations and job fairs)	Medium
Share best practices, tools and resources across employers regarding promotional, HR and benefits programs (e.g., marketing approaches and materials, career awareness tools and resources customized to targeted talent pools, and materials on best practices for employers such as health and wellness benefits, lodging, transportation, flex Fridays, remote work where possible)	Medium

Goal #1.2: Silviculture employs an increasingly diversified work force.

A factor, identified by both employers and employees as contributing to difficulties in attracting new workers, is the continuing reliance on traditional strategies to attract workers. The industry relies primarily on word-of-mouth from existing employees, friends, and acquaintances. As a result, most current and former employees reported that they first became aware of opportunities for them to work in silviculture from friends and acquaintances (62%) or others already in the sector (44%).

This has contributed to a largely homogenous workforce, which effectively limits the pool of potential workers from which the industry can draw. New entrants tend to be white and often are students attending colleges and universities who expect to work for only a limited number of years

in the industry. Increasing diversity would create a network effect in that, the more diversified a workforce becomes, the better able it is to attract a diversified range of applicants. The industry expressed a strong desire to increase Indigenous involvement in the industry, both at the contractor and employee level. An estimated 5% of workers in the industry are Indigenous. Some of the factors identified by key informants as constraining Indigenous involvement in the industry include low awareness of the opportunities available (particularly in smaller communities where there is no family history of working in the industry), the remoteness of some communities which can create barriers related to travel, and the lack of accessible programs that provide skills, certifications, and training desired by the industry. To increase involvement, the WFCFA proposes to develop a strategy to engage Indigenous communities and organizations, create awareness of the opportunities, and increase access to training and other support that will facilitate greater involvement. For example, there will be opportunities to establish a silviculture skills training program and sponsor, recruit and support Indigenous students. There are also opportunities to participate in job fairs such as the ABCFP Indigenous Forestry Career Fair, the BC First Nations Forestry Council Career Fair, and Aboriginal Business Match. In addition, there are opportunities for Indigenous entrepreneurs, businesses, and development corporations to set up contracting businesses; the engagement strategy will identify what guidance, training and financial resources will help to accelerate this process.

Other actions to further diversify the industry include developing outreach programs targeted at under-represented groups (ranging from social media programs to participation in job fairs) as well as working to create a more welcoming and safe work environment for under-represented groups through training and promoting greater diversity in management.

<i>GOAL 1.2: Silviculture employs an increasingly diversified work force</i>	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Develop an Indigenous engagement strategy by engaging with Indigenous engagement specialists to guide the process	High
Promote diversity in management by targeting underrepresented groups and training them for managerial positions.	High
Provide diversity sensitivity training that facilitates a more welcoming and safe work environment for under-represented groups	High
Develop and implement outreach programs targeted at Indigenous people, other under-represented groups and non-traditional sources (e.g., visible minorities, new Canadians, Parole Board), and regional communities.	Medium
Develop employee profiles featuring members of target groups for use in social media campaigns	Medium

Goal #1.3: Foreign workers are attracted, when and where needed, to fill gaps in the workforce.

During the focus groups, employers expressed a strong preference to hire local workers wherever possible. However, some employers (e.g., those in the nursery industry) have not been able to fully meet their needs locally. The federal government’s Temporary Foreign Work Program (TFWP) represents an important alternative source that can be used to augment local workers. According

to the employers surveyed, TFWs currently account for about 2% of peak employment in the industry.

Given that employers tend to not be very familiar with the TFWP, the WFCA can play an important role in linking employers to foreign labour (e.g., through the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and the Provincial Nominee Program). While this action is considered a lower priority at this time, the WFCA will continue to monitor the labour market and assist when needed.

<i>GOAL 1.3: Foreign workers are attracted, as needed, to fill gaps in the workforce (focus on nurseries, and potentially consultants)</i>	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Assist employers in attracting foreign labour through the TFWP and PNP and obtaining recognition of foreign credentials	Low

3.2 WORKPLACES

Context

The presence of safe, healthy, and enjoyable workplaces is key to recruiting and retaining the workers needed by the industry. Employers and employees highlighted the need to build on the advances made during the COVID-19, better address mental health, bullying and harassment issues, and continue efforts to improve camp conditions.

The industry responded effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic. Apart from a few instances, contractors and workers committed to working together to make necessary changes in operating procedures, practices and standards, maintain strong communications, and emphasize health and safety. The 2020 season featured a record number of trees planted and no infections. Key informants also reported significant improvements which are likely to continue in areas such as health and safety measures, hygiene in the camps, employment standards, training, adaptability, digitalization, and improved communication systems. Improvements were made in areas such as accommodation, meals, and hygiene. New positions were created, ranging from health & safety officers to mental health coordinators.

COVID-19 also raised the profile of mental health issues in the industry. These issues, which always existed, became more visible with the advent of the pandemic. While employees generally welcomed the new health measures and opportunities to be out in the field while most people were locked down in the city, many also reported increased stress and uncertainty, isolation, and pandemic fatigue which contributed to increased mental health concerns.

Harassment and bullying in the industry were raised as an important issue in the 2015 Human Resources Strategy. Early reporting of harassment led to WFCA setting up a panel for the 2017 Annual Conference that included victims of workplace abuse and harassment who bravely described their experiences. In 2019, a survey undertaken by the Northern Society for Domestic

Peace (NSDP) obtained feedback from more than 70 planters, mostly women and some men, who may have witnessed or experienced sexual harassment or assault in the tree-planting industry. The remote location and isolation of workers, mentally/emotionally challenging work, camp setting, vulnerable workers (young and diverse workforce), revolving door of industry participants, and lifestyle (parties, alcohol, drugs) are factors that contribute to the vulnerability of the industry to such incidents.

Since work is often located in remote areas, silviculture and forestry workers generally must travel and live at camp facilities for extended periods of time. As such, employees recommended that employers continue to work to improve camp conditions in areas such as food and accommodations, bathrooms and showers, laundry service, internet access, camp services, and safety as well as reduce camp costs.

Success Statement and Goals

The success statement for workplaces is “*Employees experience safe, heathy and enjoyable workplaces*”. While progress has been made, more work is needed to address harassment and bullying in the workplace, address mental health issues and develop more appealing workplaces. Towards that end, we have established three goals and outlined a series of actions under each.

Goal #2.1: The industry has ready access to mental health resources and support.

Some employers have made considerable progress in increasing access to mental health resources and support; establishing programs to improve employee mental health; providing training, access to extended health services including counselling and services related to drug/alcohol abuse; and establishing champions or ambassadors who can help employees.

Overall, however, the industry has further work to do. Of those surveyed, 42% of employees and 19% of employers identified increasing access to resources to support mental health as a high priority for the industry. The WFCA can take on more of a leadership role in encouraging employers to establish programming to improve employee mental health, facilitating access to mental health awareness training, resource materials, support and counselling, and developing a mental health awareness information package for employers and employees.

<i>GOAL 2.1: The industry has ready access to mental health resources and support</i>	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Promote and encourage access to mental health awareness training, resource materials, and support and counselling sessions with mental health professionals	High
Develop a mental health awareness information package for employers and employees	High
Provide information and encourage employers to identify and train health and safety champions or ambassadors to support co-workers through their mental health issues	High

Goal #2.2: Bullying and harassment in the workplace is being eliminated.

The WFCA and the sector's BC SAFE Forestry Program (BCSFP) have taken significant actions in response to harassment and bullying issues in the industry. Some of these actions include supporting NSDP in their efforts to educate workers in camps regarding preventing sexual assault and harassment in their remote work camps, understanding consent, and supporting others; developing tree planting supervision training that include instructions to reduce bullying and assault risks to workers; providing policies and training for managers and staff; and establishing principles of respectful conduct.

However, more work is required. Of those surveyed, 44% of employees and 26% of employers identified better addressing harassment and bullying in the workplace as a high priority for the industry. The major priorities are to further develop resources including protocols/procedures to identify, investigate and address instances of bullying and harassment as well as to continue to provide training and other support for managers and staff in the industry.

<i>GOAL 2.2: Bullying and harassment in the workplace is being eliminated</i>	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Develop, refine and continue to update resources including protocols/procedures that can be used to identify, investigate and address instances of bullying and harassment	High
Continue to facilitate training for managers and staff, including training on harassment and bullying for employees at the start of the season	High

Goal #2.3: Employees are satisfied with the places in which they work

The industry has made progress in improving employee engagement and satisfaction with their workplace. Most employees reported a high level of satisfaction in working with their employers and their experience in working in the industry overall. However, in the survey, employees frequently provide recommendations regarding how workplace, particularly camp, conditions could be improved.

While camp conditions are primarily the responsibility of the individual employers, the WFCA can encourage further improvements by promoting continued improvements in workplace practices (e.g., adherence to employment standards and addressing gaps in existing policies and structures; support for health & safety programs) as well as sharing approaches and best practices regarding camp design and management, and monitoring employee satisfaction levels in the industry.

<i>GOAL 2.3: Employees are satisfied with the places in which they work</i>	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Promote continued improvements in workplace practices (e.g., adherence to labour standards; support for health & safety programs)	High
Share approaches and best practices regarding camp design and management (including communications infrastructure and connectivity)	Medium

GOAL 2.3: Employees are satisfied with the places in which they work	
Conduct periodic industry-wide employee satisfaction surveys (every 2 to 3 years)	Low

3.3 DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION

Context

Finding ways to keep people in the sector longer (i.e., reduce the rate of turnover) was a top priority among employers as well as employees. Staff turnover increases the number of replacement workers who must be found, reduces the pool of employees from which the next generation of managers can be developed, and places increased pressure on management, crew leaders, other staff, and mentors. This pressure can contribute to burn-out and higher resignation rates among more experienced and senior staff.

When asked about the disadvantages associated with working in the industry, employees most commonly identified the working conditions, unpredictability as to how much work will be available, the transient or mobile lifestyle, the seasonality and physicality of the work, and the opportunities for advancement. The primary reasons why employees leave the industry are a desire to find better opportunities for career advancement and less physically demanding work, the seasonal nature of the work, and opportunities in other sectors.

While employers recognize that some level of turnover is necessary given the hard physical labour that is required, they also stressed the need to develop strategies to increase the average number of years people stay in the industry. For many employers, retaining trained workers long enough to be able to promote them into managerial positions is an issue. Options include finding ways to extend the operating season for the business, facilitating the sharing of workers between employers/industries with complementary seasons, and better supporting the advancement of seasonal workers into more permanent positions.

Success Statement and Goals

The success statement for development and retention is “***Silviculture offers the work and advancement opportunities needed to retain its valued employees***”. Towards that end, we have established four goals and outlined a series of actions under each.

Goal #3.1: Contractors extend their employment seasons through further diversifying their operations

The sectors within the silviculture industry, with the exception of forestry consulting, tend to be highly seasonal. The most obvious strategy for reducing seasonality and employee uncertainty regarding the level of work available is for employers to find ways to extend their employment seasons. Many already do, complementing their sector operations with other types of operations

(ranging from being involved in more than one silviculture sector to being involved in other non-forestry operations such as snow removal) or findings other ways to keep their core staff busy during at least part of the off-season. The WFCFA can support the efforts of employers to extend their seasons by advocating for increased government and forest industry investment in shoulder season activities, improved timeliness and efficiency during the contracting process, and by facilitating the sharing of strategies used successfully by businesses to extend their seasons.

<i>GOAL 3.1: Contractors extend their employment seasons through further diversifying their operations</i>	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Lobby for increased government and industry investment in shoulder season activities (e.g., fuel management, FireSmart and wildfire risk reduction, surveying, site preparation, cone picking, creek clearing, seismic, etc.)/advocate for additional investment in long term intensive silviculture programs	High
Share best practices and approaches used by various firms to extend seasons and diversify operations	Medium

Goal #3.2: Workers extend their seasons through working with employers from silviculture and other sectors

Extending the season does not work for all employers or employees, particularly those in more physically demanding positions who may need a less active off-season to recover and prepare for the following year. An alternative strategy to extend the employment season is for workers to move between industries; for example, working in the silviculture industry in the summer and the tourism industry in the winter. This already happens to some degree, with employees developing their own seasonal roadmaps (i.e., annual patterns of moving between industries or even between regions in the same sector). For example, one employer reported that a number of their employees work in silviculture during the summer and then as artists during the winter.

The WFCFA can facilitate the sharing of employees across industries by first developing an industry strategy and then creating tools and resources to facilitate the sharing of workers. In developing the strategy, it would be useful to first research the fit of seasons between regional components of the BC silviculture industry (e.g., tree-planters, fire fighters, nurseries, etc.), the sectors in other regions, and other industries (e.g., agriculture, fishing, vineyards, tourism, etc.) as well as annual roadmaps commonly followed by workers and employers in the industry.

<i>GOAL 3.2: Workers extend their seasons through working with employers from silviculture and other sectors</i>	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Develop an industry wide approach to assist workers to transition to off-season work	High
Create tools (e.g., seasonal employment charts and strategies; best practices guides, standard job board/site) to facilitate sharing of workers among forestry and silviculture sub-sectors	Medium

Goal #3.3: Current and prospective employees are aware of the opportunities for advancement in and through the silviculture industry

Many employees expressed interest in making a career in silviculture. For example, 23% of field workers and 40% of crew leaders, supervisors and managers surveyed would consider or definitely want to make a career in the industry. The primary motivators that encourage staff to move into management positions include an opportunity to gain management experience, the desire for greater responsibility, the potential to increase wages and extend the work season, and reduced likelihood of physical injury.

At the same time, however, employers noted that the industry has not been very effective in creating awareness of the opportunities for advancement which are available in the industry and preparing workers for those opportunities. According to key informants, a major reason the industry has not been very effective at developing managers is the limited pool of interested candidates within the sector (indicating that more needs to be done to promote silviculture as a career, not just a job for a few years).

The challenge is not limited to developing crew leaders and supervisors but also includes developing the next generation of senior managers and owners. Most contractors have been operating for more than 20 years and succession issues are emerging at both the ownership and senior manager levels.

The WFCAs will help to address these issues by updating its existing career map, using the portal and other materials to promote opportunities for advancement, and encouraging the further development of leadership training programs that can prepare people for these positions.

<i>GOAL 3.3: Current and prospective employees are aware of the opportunities for advancement in and through the silviculture industry</i>	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Update the existing career map detailing the opportunities for advancement, career ladders, skills and education requirements, common timelines and potential compensation. Share it with employers and post on the online portal.	High
Offer leadership training programs, incorporating topics ranging from management and interpersonal skills to personal workload, stress and time management skills	High
Provide assessment tools that assess potential fit with the field work and leadership roles	Low
Promote opportunities for advancement to existing and prospective industry participants	Medium

Goal #3.4: Employers apply innovative approaches, best practices and potential strategies in retaining valued employees

The results of the focus groups highlighted the significant interest that employers have in sharing information and learning from each other. A common recommendation is that the WFCAs become an important conduit for sharing strategies, best practices, guidelines, and approaches between employers related to staff retention as well as other topics such as recruitment, safe, healthy and

attractive workplaces, extending the season, and education and training which are noted under other goals.

<i>GOAL 3.4: Employers apply innovative approaches, best practices, and potential strategies in retaining valued employees</i>	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Research and share potential strategies, guidelines, and approaches across employers in areas such as remote work, benefits and bonuses, and differential premiums for field versus office work	Medium

3.4 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Context

Most positions in the industry do not require specific education, training, designations, and certifications. In the context of the silviculture industry, education and training typically pertains to:

- Hiring employees with required degrees or designations. A few positions require specific degrees (e.g., in forestry or horticulture) or designations such as Registered Professional Foresters (RPF) or Registered Forest Technologist (RFP). Employers noted that recent graduates tend to lack practical, hands-on experience to work in the sector, often have unrealistic expectations about job requirements and have limited exposure to the industry and type of jobs available.
- Hiring employees with desired or required licenses or certifications. Examples include first aid, driver licenses, silviculture surveying, certified faller, and fire training (e.g., FireSmart and basic fire suppression). Employers noted that it has become increasingly difficult in recent years to find qualified workers with the right certifications to do the job and meet the contracting specifications. Employers noted a particular decline in the percentage of applicants who have driver licenses and first aid tickets. In one focus group, employers also noted that more should be done to validate the certifications that are being provided by employers.
- Providing on-the-job training to employees. Employers commit significant time and money to training new graduates on technical and practical skills. Those most common types of training are health and safety training and onboarding/orientation training for new employees. Somewhat less common are multi-day technical training taken by employees from outside sources, technical workshops or seminars on topics relevant to particular positions, and formal mentoring programs. Most employers felt that these programs are useful (providing an average rating of 3.8. on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all useful and 5 is very useful). The focus group discussions identified opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the existing training by facilitating greater sharing of materials and

resources, and working towards a more flexible, competency-based training system that would better meet the needs of both employers and employees.

Success Statement and Goals

The success statement for education and training is “**Education and training programs effectively prepare staff to safely and productively enter and progress in the industry**”. Towards that end, we have established two goals, one that focuses on external education and training and one that focuses on on-the-job training.

Goal #4.1: Employers collaborate with the educational and training sector in building both technical and practical programs which effectively prepare and facilitate the transition of students into industry

Some employers, particularly those in forestry consulting, hire graduates from degree programs while others hire graduates from shorter-term training programs. For example, the Advanced Forestry Skills Training Program offered by Stillwater Consulting and funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia was identified as a particularly useful short-term program. It is a 19-week program, designed in collaboration with employers, that prepares students for sustainable employment within the forest industry by combining essential skills with the technical knowledge and certifications required in the workplace.

Employers recommended that the WFCAs could play an important role in increasing awareness of and access to the education and training resources that are available as well as advocating for improvements in existing programs. Awareness and access can be increased by providing employers and employees with information about available education and training options (through the portal) as well as advocate for increased government investment in related education and training programs. The WFCAs can also facilitate greater collaboration between employers and educators, which can contribute to improvements in the design, development, and delivery of programs.

GOAL #4.1: Employers collaborate with the educational and training sector in building both technical and practical programs which effectively prepare and facilitate the transition of students into industry (particularly important to Nurseries and Forestry Consultants)	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Provide employers and employees with information about available training options, funding, resources, programs, and best practices (for example, Employer Training Grant: https://www.workbc.ca/employer-resources/bc-employer-training-grant.aspx)	High
Advocate for increased government investment in related education and training programs that feed into the industry (e.g., Stillwater Advanced Forestry Skills Training program)	Medium
Facilitate greater collaboration between employers and educators in the design, development, and delivery of education, and the training and hiring of graduates	Medium
Increase the emphasis on technical, applied and practical skills which establish reasonable expectations and better prepare students for employment	Medium

Increase participation of industry in co-op, internship and apprenticeship programs, and summer employment programs	Medium
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Goal #4.2: On-the-job training and certification programs meet the requirements of employers, employees, and government standards

A major trend in the delivery of training is the movement towards more flexible, competency-based systems which incorporate micro-credentialing or badging. Usually co-developed with industry (to ensure that the credential reflects the needed skills and competencies), a micro-credential shows that the recipient has demonstrated the required skills and competencies. Those skills and competences may be demonstrated as part of a training program or secured through assessment only (without having completed formal training). Micro-credentials enable program requirements to be broken into smaller components, which can increase the flexibility and relevance of the training for both the employee and employer. The credentials may also be able to be stacked with other credentials to meet the requirements for larger qualifications. Training in most micro-credentials is available through online learning, although training may also be strictly in-person and or a mixture.

Given the varying needs for training across employers combined with a desire to increase professionalization in the industry, further development of a competency-based model will be a very effective approach for the silviculture industry. The WFCA will champion the adoption of that approach, work to increase access to funding for employer-based training, and facilitate the sharing of training programs and resources between employers and sectors. The WFCA will also examine whether there is a role for the organization in validating the certifications and credentials that are being provided by employers.

<i>GOAL #4.2: On-the-job training and certification programs meet the requirements of employers, employees, and government standards</i>	
ACTIONS	PRIORITY
Champion the creation of flexible, competency-based training, micro-credential programs, and alternative models that provide skills and certifications	High
Advocate for increased funding for employer-based training	High
Facilitate sharing of training programs and resources between employers and sectors (e.g., through online portal)	Medium
Examine potential benefits and costs of the WFCA getting involved in validating industry certifications and training programs	Medium

4. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

4.1 APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTATION

This section outlines the specific steps that will be undertaken by the WFCA in implementing the strategy. More specifically, it outlines actions that will be undertaken to establish the structure overseeing implementation as well the initial strategic actions which have been proposed.

- 1. Establish an on-going Steering Committee with a renewed Terms of Reference.** We anticipate that much of the existing Steering Committee will transition into an on-going Steering Committee which will oversee implementation of the strategy. The terms of reference will define the roles and responsibilities, membership, and meeting schedule for the Committee.
- 2. Approach the Labour Market Partnership Program to obtain funding to support implementation of the strategy.** Through the LMPP, funding may be available for activities which promote or support an increased understanding of labour market issues or employer awareness of effective human resource practices, sharing of best practices related to human resource planning and management, coordination of approaches to addressing labour market issues, building organizational or community human resource capacity, partnership development, and input into curriculum development.
- 3. Hire a project coordinator to lead implementation of the strategy.** The coordinator will be responsible for developing and implementing annual plans and will report to the WFCA and the Steering Committee.
- 4. Prepare an annual implementation plan which outlines the activities that will be undertaken, beginning in 2022.** The WFCA will prepare an annual implementation plan to be reviewed and approved by the Steering Committee. The plan will outline specific steps, allocate responsibilities, and identify partner organizations. In subsequent years, the plan will also report on the progress made in the previous years.
- 5. Approach other sources of funding, as needed, to support implementation of key actions outlined in the implementation plan.** Apart from the LLMP, potential sources of assistance that may be available for elements of the strategy include the Labour Market Solutions Program, the WorkBC Community and Employer Partnership Fund, the Community Opportunity Readiness Program, various training, internship and onboarding programs (e.g., Eco Canada, Canada Summer Jobs Program, First Nations Forestry Training Program, Forest Employment Program, WorkBC employment training grants and wage subsidies), and the Canadian Mental Health Association Psychological Health and Safety Champion Training program.
- 6. Implement the actions outlined in the approved annual implementation plan.** The following table summarizes a preliminary implementation plan including the timing of

various steps. This plan will be reviewed by WFCAs, LMS Committee and Project Coordinator and priorities and action plan will be established for each year.

Implementation Plan

Priority Action	Champion/Partners	Timing
Set-up a committee to oversee the implementation of the labour market strategy		
Recruit employers from the different sectors to form a Labour Market Strategy (LMS) Steering Committee	WFCAs	Jan – March, 2022
Develop a TOR for the committee	WFCAs/ LMS Committee	Jan – March, 2022
Hire a paid project coordinator/communication specialist		
Recruit a communication specialist who is familiar with the silviculture sector.	WFCAs/LMS Committee	Jan – March, 2022
Explore various funding options to support LMS committee’s work and fund the implementation of the strategy		
Access various funding sources to fund following initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One-stop shop online portal ▪ Employer resources, tools and best practices ▪ Career map and seasonal roadmaps & strategies ▪ Indigenous engagement strategy ▪ Recruitment campaigns ▪ Education and training 	WFCAs LMS Committee Project Coordinator	2022
Develop an online portal that will serve as a one-stop shop for resources, tools and best practices		
Create a portal by engaging web-developer	LMS Committee Project Coordinator Web designer/developer	2022
Create content and engage with the industry in the development and aggregation of resources, tools and best practices regarding recruitment, retention, career and seasonal roadmaps, training, bullying and harassment, and operating practices	WFCAs LMS Committee Project Coordinator Industry	2022-24
Develop social media presence to promote the opportunities and the values of the industry		
Develop a social media campaign, including content, and promote the industry and the portal to employers, employees, prospective employees, career counsellors, and under-represented groups	WFCAs/LMS committee	2022
Continue to develop content for portal and update resources for respectful workplaces, bullying and harassment policies and protocols, and mental health support for workers		
Update respectful workplace policies and procedures, and protocols	WFCAs/ LMS Committee Project Coordinator	Ongoing
Identify and create a list of mental health resources available to employees		
Share best practices for employee well-being		
Identify and offer Indigenous sensitivity training to employers and employees	WFCAs Project Coordinator	2022
Develop Indigenous Engagement Strategy		
Hire Indigenous consultant to develop a strategy for engaging with Indigenous communities	WFCAs Project Coordinator Indigenous organization or consultant	2023/24

Priority Action	Champion/Partners	Timing
Engage with the BC FNFC to create a strategy	WFCFA Project Coordinator Indigenous organization or consultant	2023
Promote the strategy amongst employers in the sector	WFCFA LMS Committee	2024
Participate in First Nations job fair programs (e.g., ABCFP Indigenous Forestry Career Fair, B.C. First Nations Forestry Council Career Fair, Aboriginal Business Match)	WFCFA Project Coordinator	Ongoing
Partner with educational institutions to promote the industry and provide students with practical experience and internship opportunities		
Direct campaigns targeted at post-secondary and secondary students, career counsellors, and others	WFCFA/Project Coordinator	Ongoing
Facilitate greater collaboration between employers and educators in the design, development, and delivery of education and training	WFCFA/Project Coordinator	Ongoing

The Gantt chart on the following page illustrate the timeline for each priority action.

4.2 BUDGET

The following table outlines the proposed budget for the strategy implementation.

Budget	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Coordinator/Communication Specialist	\$60,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$40,000	\$260,000
Portal Development	\$40,000				\$40,000
Content Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social Media/Media Campaign ▪ Career Mapping/Professional Opportunities ▪ Tools: assessment tools, recruitment tools, best practices, employment chart ▪ Diversity promotional activities (employee profiles) 	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	--	\$125,000
Indigenous Strategy (engagement with BC FNFC and Indigenous Consultant)		\$100,000	\$40,000	\$10,000	\$150,000
Education and Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diversity Training ▪ Indigenous Sensitivity Training ▪ Safety Standards ▪ Leadership Training ▪ Mental Health and Awareness Training & Resources 	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$37,500	\$187,500
Recruitment/Outreach Campaigns (outreach materials, marketing branding)	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$55,000
Overhead	\$7,500	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$32,500
Total (including in-kind)	\$202,500	\$310,000	\$240,000	\$97,500	\$850,000

Timelines for Priority Action

PRIORITY ACTIONS	2022				2023				2024				2025			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Set-up a committee to oversee the implementation of the labour market strategy																
Hire a paid project coordinator/communication specialist to lead implementation of the strategy and report to committee																
Develop an online portal that will serve as a one-stop shop for resources, tools and best practices																
Develop social media presence to promote the opportunities and the values of the industry																
Create content and engage with the industry in the development and aggregation of resources, tools and best practices regarding recruitment, retention, career and seasonal roadmaps, training, bullying and harassment, and operating practices																
Develop training and educational materials ('working in the sector', career advancement opportunities, safety procedures, leadership training, etc.)																
Continue to develop and update resources for respectful workplaces, bullying and harassment policies and protocols, and mental health support for workers																
Develop and promote Indigenous engagement strategy																
Undertake employment recruitment and outreach programs																
Partner with educational institutions to promote the industry and provide students with practical experience and internship opportunities.																

4.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VARIOUS PARTIES

The roles and responsibilities of WFCA, Project Coordinator and Communication Specialist and Labour Market Steering Committee for implementing the Strategy are outlined below.

WFCA role largely involves overall oversight of the strategy implementation and support, management of others internal and external personnel engaged. More specifically the WFCA will:

- Hire, train and oversee the work of the Project Coordinator/Communication Specialist
- Set-up a committee to oversee the implementation of the labour market strategy
- Participate in the Committee Meetings
- Develop TOR and manage various engagements (social media specialists, content developers, etc.)
- Host and oversee development of the portal
- Review materials, content developed and provide final approval
- Administer contracting arrangement

Project Coordinator/Communication Specialist role will involve coordinating activities and managing communication channels, reporting to WFCA and committee on the progress on strategy implementation, working with employers in the sector to gather information and build the content for the portal. The following table describes in more detail the roles and responsibilities of project coordinator/communication specialist.

Roles and Responsibilities	
Administration and Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop annual plans and report on the progress made ▪ Direct and administer the work of the Steering Committee ▪ Research and identify relevant resources and materials, adapt them for the Silviculture Sector ▪ Coordinate other activities such as portal development, content development, Indigenous Strategy development ▪ Manage communication channels related to various activities (WFCA, LMSC, employers, employees)
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oversee implementation of targeted social media promotional campaigns featuring the career opportunities, intrinsic value and benefits of the work ▪ Develop and implement direct campaigns targeted at post-secondary and secondary students, career counsellors, and others (careers, curricula materials, presentations and job fairs) ▪ Coordinate of sharing of best practices, tools and resources across employers ▪ Conduct outreach activities to underrepresented groups and mentorship opportunities

Roles and Responsibilities	
Workplaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify and promote mental health awareness training, resource materials ▪ Develop a mental health awareness information package for employers and employees ▪ Provide information and encourage employers to identify and train health and safety champions or ambassadors to support co-workers through their mental health issues ▪ Work with WFCA to update and develop new resources, protocols/procedures related to bullying and harassment ▪ Identify and promote workplace best practices
Development and Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update the existing career map detailing the opportunities for advancement, career ladders, skills and education requirements, common timelines and potential compensation. ▪ Promote leadership training programs ▪ Develop and promote assessment tools that assess potential fit with the field work and leadership roles
Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gather information about available training options, funding, resources, programs, and best practices ▪ Facilitate greater collaboration between employers and educators in the design, development, and delivery of education, and the training and hiring of graduates ▪ Communicate/promote co-op, internship, apprenticeship programs, and summer employment programs ▪ Facilitate sharing of training programs and resources between employers and sectors (e.g., through online portal)

Labour Market Strategy Steering Committee will have an active role in the implementation of the strategy by providing oversight, guidance, advocacy, and connections to the employers in the sector. More specifically, the committee will:

- **Review annual plans and reports**
- **Share best practices and approaches** used by various firms to extend seasons and diversify operations
- **Review and approve** materials to be included in the portal
- **Develop an industry wide approach** to encourage the sharing of employees/capacity
- **Lobby for increased government and industry investment in shoulder season activities** (e.g., fuel management, FireSmart and wildfire risk reduction, surveying, site preparation, cone picking, creek clearing, seismic, etc.)/advocate for additional investment in long term intensive silviculture programs
- **Advocate for increased government investment in related education and training programs** that feed into the industry (e.g., Stillwater Advanced Forestry Skills Training program)
- **Facilitate greater collaboration between employers and educators** in the design, development, and delivery of education, and the training and hiring of graduates
- **Increase the emphasis on technical, applied and practical skills** which establish reasonable expectations and better prepare students for employment

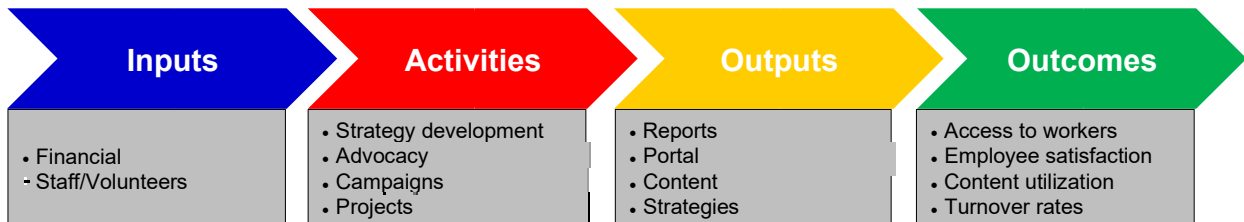
- **Examine potential benefits and costs** of the WFCAs getting involved in validating industry certifications and training programs
- **Champion the creation of flexible, competency-based training**, micro-credential programs, and alternative models that provide skills and certifications

4.4 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT STRATEGY

The WFCAs should report annually on the progress made in implementing the labour market strategy. There are four types of indicators, including indicators related to inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.

- Inputs incorporate the key resources that went into implementation of the strategy in the current year;
- Activities are the key activities which were implemented during the year, including a description of the extent to which the planned activities were implemented;
- Outputs are the products or immediate results that are generated by the activities; and
- Outcome indicators report on the intended results associated with the overall strategy and some of the specific activities. However, it should be noted that the labour market strategy activities are typically only one of many factors that may influence the outcomes.

The following graphic illustrates the types of indicators which can be included within each category.



The recommended performance measures and data sources for inputs, activities and outputs are outlined in the table below.

Inputs, Activity and Output Indicators

Type	Indicators	Data Sources
Inputs	• Coordinator/staff time	• Time records
	• Expenditures	• Budget and expenditure data
	• Sources of funding	• Financial data
	• Volunteer time	• Committee meeting
Activities	• Progress made against planned activities	• Reported by coordinator

Type	Indicators	Data Sources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other activities undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported by coordinator
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project outputs, campaigns, strategies, and content development and distribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported by coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impressions/views/downloads/bounce rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website/social media analytics

A primary focus of the evaluation activity will be reviewing the progress made against the goals of the strategy, focusing primarily on short and medium-term outcomes. The primary data sources will include:

- Biennial survey of employees
- Biennial survey of employers
- Website, social media and email analytics
- Secondary data (e.g., new articles, other studies, labour market data, etc.)

The outcome indicators and data sources to be used will vary depending upon the relative emphasis placed on the respective pillars and goals.

Outcome Indicators and Data Sources

Goals	Data Sources and Indicators
Pillar 1: Recruitment: Silviculture attracts the workers it needs to grow, diversify operations, and replace those leaving the sector	
Silviculture is recognized by youth and others as a great sector in which to work and develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biennial survey of employers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New worker attraction Perceived difficulties in hiring Characteristics of staff and management Biennial survey of employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perception of the industry Source of awareness Research/analytics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online portal utilization (clicks/downloads on resources, engagement) Social media (#of posts, positive stories, engagement)
Silviculture employs an increasingly diversified work force	
Foreign workers are attracted, when and where needed, to fill gaps in the workforce	
Pillar 2: Workplaces: Employees experience safe, healthy and enjoyable workplaces	
The industry has ready access to mental health resources and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biennial survey of employers and employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to/use of/satisfaction with mental health, bullying, and harassment resources, tools and best practices Changes in perception of the issues Improvements in camp sites and workplaces Level of satisfaction Research/analytics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online portal utilization (clicks/downloads on resources, engagement) Social media (# of related posts, stories, engagement)
Bullying and harassment in the workplace is being eliminated	
Employees are satisfied with the places in which they work	

Goals	Data Sources and Indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secondary data (e.g., new articles, other studies, etc.)
Pillar 3: Development and Retention: Silviculture offers the work and advancement opportunities needed to retain its valued employees	
Contractors extend their employment seasons through further diversifying their operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biennial survey of employers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Diversification ○ Average length of seasonal employment ○ Changes in turnover rates/contributing factors ○ Sharing of employees within the sector
Workers extend their seasons through working with employers from silviculture and other sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biennial survey of employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Average length of seasonal employment ○ Satisfaction with length of the season ○ Complementary employment within the sector and in other sectors
Current and prospective employees are aware of the opportunities for advancement in and through the silviculture industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Awareness of opportunities for advancement/interest in the opportunities
Employers apply innovative approaches, best practices and potential strategies in retaining valued employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research/analytics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Online portal utilization (clicks/downloads of related resources, engagement) ○ Social media (# of posts, positive stories, engagement)
Pillar 4: Education and Training: Education and training programs effectively prepare staff to safely and productively enter and progress in the industry	
Employers collaborate with the educational and training sector in building both technical and practical programs which effectively prepare and facilitate the transition of students into the industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biennial survey of employers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On-the-job training ○ Involvement in/satisfaction with existing education and training/opportunities for further improvement
On-the-job training and certification programs meet the requirements of employers, employees, and government standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Involvement in co-ops/internships/etc. ○ Access to funding for training and education ○ On-the-job training, internship opportunities ▪ Research/analytics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Online portal utilization (clicks/downloads of related resources, engagement) ○ Social media (#of posts, positive stories, engagement)
Pillar 5: Contracting and Economic Health: The economic returns support continued improvements in the effectiveness of silviculture sector	
Contracting structures and purchase criteria support development of a silviculture industry that meets the needs of its clients, employees, and employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Results of the financial analysis and benchmarking ▪ Biennial survey of employers ▪ Economic health of the industry ▪ Satisfaction with the contracting structures and purchase criteria
Return on investment is sufficient to support continued improvement in the effectiveness of the silviculture industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Actions taken to improve ROI ▪ Research/analytics ▪ Online portal utilization (clicks/downloads of related resources, engagement) ▪ Secondary data (e.g., new articles, other studies, etc.)