

Port Alberni, B.C. public group wins sustainable forestry award

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The West Island Woodlands Advisory Group were awarded the first ever CSA SFM User Group Chairman's award today for their leadership and commitment in advancing the sustainable forest management objectives of the Canadian Standards Association(CSA) forest certification standard.

"The West Island advisory group is one of over 55 dedicated multi-interest public groups in forest communities across Canada that provide advise on locally adapted performance indicators for sustainable forest management" said John Dunford, Chairman of the Forest User Group representing the CSA certified forest companies in Canada. "What really stood out about the Port Alberni public advisory group was their dedication and commitment of over 9 years and 4000 volunteer hours to continuously improve forest management in forests on the West Coast of Vancouver Island".

The West Island Woodlands Advisory Group has made great strides in advancing commitments required by the CSA standard to ensure local forests provide multiple benefits to the community. Among other things, Group members spent countless hours, designing and building a world-class recreational trail system.

"This is great news!" said Kerry McGourlick, Chief Forester at Western Forest Products Inc. upon learning of the award. "Considering that this group is one of our longest standing Advisory Groups, has endured through several company acquisitions and restructuring and has had to deal with challenging tenure reforms that have affected the size of the Defined Forest Area, this is a much deserved award. There is little glamour in all the work these groups of volunteers do. This recognition is well merited."

CSA is Canada's national forest certification standard and the world's largest national standard with over 83 million hectares certified. Now even better, it has a suite of mandatory core indicators for measuring sustainable forest management across the country. It also requires ongoing public dialogue with local advisory groups, reflecting the Canadian context where over 94% of forests are publicly owned.



John presenting Harold Carlson with the plaque



Left to right back row: Rick Avis, Jack McLeman, Mayor Ken McRae, Harold Carlson, Dave Chitty, Steve Chambers, Jim Creighton, Arne Magnusson
Kneeling and Front (left to right): Jennifer Dyson, Stefan Ochman, Judy Carlson , Barbra Baker, Jane Morden,