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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations  
and Rural Development

### **Forest agreement to benefit First Nation, community**

PEMBERTON – The Lil’wat Nation and the Village of Pemberton have planted the seeds of a community forest partnership that will help grow local jobs and economic opportunities, while enhancing stewardship of local lands.

A new Community Forest Agreement also supports opportunities in areas such as recreation, wildlife and watershed management on 17,727 hectares of Crown Land.

“These agreements are the building blocks of a diverse and sustainable forest economy, creating opportunities for people in rural and Indigenous communities,” said Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development. “People in the Lil’wat Nation and Village of Pemberton will also reap the rewards of a forest that is managed for local priorities, including sustainability and recreation.”

The two partner communities in the Spelkúmtn Community Forest will have an allowable annual cut of 11,000 cubic metres.

“Managing the forested lands around our surrounding communities for joint benefit is something that I am truly looking forward to,” said Kúkwpi7 Skalúlmecw, Lil’wat Nation Political Chief Dean Nelson. “This long-term project will help us continue to build the bond between our two organizations and communities.”

Managing the forest according to local values and priorities means the recreation area near One Mile Lake Park will continue to be maintained for community recreation purposes.

“This partnership will benefit the communities of Pemberton, Lil’wat Nation and the whole Pemberton Valley – helping to foster the sense of community we enjoy in Pemberton, while also building economic, forest stewardship and other opportunities through sustainable forest management,” said Mike Richman, mayor of Pemberton.

#### **Quote:**

**Jennifer Gunter, executive director, BC Community Forest Association –**

“Community forests are facilitating a change in the form of engagement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous rural communities. They are supporting meaningful partnerships and creating mutual benefits for their communities. Congratulations to the Lil’wat Nation and Village of Pemberton on their exciting new venture.”

#### **Quick Facts:**

- A community forest agreement (CFA) is an area-based forest tenure managed by a local

government, community group, First Nation, or combination of local governments, First Nations and community groups, for the benefit of the entire community.

- To date, 59 CFAs have been issued in B.C.
- The name of the Spełkúmtn (pronounced spill koom tim) Community Forest comes from the Lil'wat name of a small hill near One Mile Lake (Signal Hill) that translates to "nuts stashed away by squirrel."
- The agreement between the Province, Lil'wat Nation and Village of Pemberton, which was signed in September 2020, will last 25 years and can be extended.

### **Learn More:**

Community Forest Agreements in B.C.:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/forest-tenures/timber-harvesting-rights/community-forest-agreements>

BC Community Forest Association: <https://bccfa.ca/>

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