

# MEDIA ADVISORY



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## Association of BC Forest Professionals Applauds Government

Vancouver – The Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABC FP) commends the government for allocating new funding to support the forest sector in yesterday’s 2016 budget. The investment will benefit the long-term health of our forests and bring new opportunities for forest professionals and other people who work and live in forest-based communities across BC.

An investment of \$85 million was announced to establish a Forest Enhancement Society of BC; a new organization that will work towards wildfire prevention and mitigation through forest fuel management, reforestation and habitat restoration. In addition, \$10 million was added to the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative which focuses on wildfire risk reduction within municipal boundaries. An uplift of \$12 million to the Ministry of Forest, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) land-based investment strategy will lead to a total of \$74.84 million being spent in 2016/17 to improve the health and sustainability of our forests. The budget announcement also included \$75 million for the Rural Dividend which launches this April to help rural communities strengthen and diversify their economies.

The ABCFP is hosting its 68<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting and Conference next week in Vancouver where the Honorable Minister Steve Thomson will address the attendees, potentially bringing more details about how these investments will be implemented. In addition to a full line-up of speakers on current topics such as the Great Bear Rainforest, wildfire management, community and urban forestry, the conference features an urban forestry tour and a social media workshop for its more than 300 registered participants.

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*The ABCFP forestry conference and AGM is held in different locations around BC each year. Attending are Registered Professional Foresters and Registered Forest Technologists who come to learn from the best, share ideas and best practices, and network with colleagues.*

*The Association of BC Forest Professionals is responsible for registering and regulating British Columbia's professional foresters and forest technologists. Today, it is the largest professional forestry association in Canada and the first to include forest technologists. Here in BC, the practice of professional forestry has been regulated since 1947 when foresters first agreed to help protect the public's interest in the province's forests in return for the exclusive right to practise forestry.*

### **For More Information:**

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