BC forestry policies: what would change?

BC NDP • BC Greens • BC Conservatives | Updated October 6, 2026

A concise comparison of published commitments, the government's latest three-zone proposal, and an assessment using the New Forest Act (NFA) framework. Policies are promises or proposals unless identified as implemented. Numbered citations link to sources on page 3.

BC NDP: timber supply, industry support, and conservation

The NDP government is pursuing a Working Forest Landscape Model tied to an annual harvest objective of **45 million cubic metres**, alongside old-growth planning and its 30%-by-2030 land-protection commitment. The proposed zoning prioritizes commercial timber production in one zone and permits forestry in a multiple-use zone. [1, 2]

Its expanded BC Timber Sales mandate supports local mills, First Nations, and value-added manufacturers, including a commitment to allocate 20% of BCTS licences to the Category 4 value-added program. [3] Budget 2026 introduced temporary stumpage-payment deferrals; a September campaign pledge would favour BC and Canadian materials, including wood, in public procurement. [4, 5]

BC Greens: a new forestry plan released October 4

The Greens propose to reject the Working Forest Model, its 45-million objective, and its no-net-loss approach. Harvest levels would emerge from regional planning within ecological limits. They also propose to: [6]

• End conventional clearcutting on public forests; expand selective harvesting, thinning, and longer rotations; protect big-treed old growth and large second-growth forests; implement all 14 Old Growth Strategic Review recommendations with First Nations and conservation financing.

• Redistribute tenure toward First Nations, communities, and smaller operators; work toward 20% of AAC for community forests; remove requirements forcing community forests to maintain AAC; direct 30–50% of available fibre toward higher-value manufacturing; diversify processing, and end raw-log exports and minimal-processing loopholes.

• Share more forest revenue locally; ban glyphosate and other chemical herbicides; support worker retraining; publish maps and harvest data; strengthen enforcement, and amend the Private Managed Forest Land Act.

BC Conservatives: secure fibre and reduce industry costs

The detailed forestry commitments below come from the **2024 platform**, rather than a verified replacement forestry platform for 2026. They include: [7]

• Define timber-production and biodiversity-priority areas; replace stumpage with a value-added end-product tax; introduce "One Project, One Permit"; review industry costs, and change sawlog AAC to fibre AAC, and support workers and contractors with transition assistance and workforce training.

• Use more fibre for energy and secondary products; prioritize harvesting fire- or otherwise damaged forests; use selective logging and fuel management near communities; expand controlled burning and species diversity, and stop aerial glyphosate spraying.

The October 5, 2026 Wildfire Action Plan adds aircraft procurement, fuel reduction near communities, easier prescribed-fire approvals, faster deployment of qualified crews, and a prevention-technology fund. [8]

The NDP’s three zones and the 45-million target

The Working Forest Landscape Model is still being explored—not a completed province-wide zoning system.

Announced in August 2026, the model would operate alongside existing land-use and forest landscape plans. The first candidate area, announced September 15, is near Campbell River, in partnership with Nanwakolas Council and four member First Nations. Technical analysis is intended to identify potential legislative or policy changes. [1, 2]

Proposed zone	Government’s stated direction
Working-Forest	Prioritize commercial timber production and improve supply certainty.
Multiple-Use	Restore ecosystem functions while continuing forestry and other uses, including wildfire-risk reduction.
Conservation and Protection	Protect biodiversity and ecological integrity; support 30%-by-2030 and old-growth commitments.

The proposal also explores keeping the area of both working forest and conservation land stable through a **no-net-loss** principle. These details remain under development. [1]

45 million m³ is substantially above recent harvests

Measure and period	Million m³	Source
Actual total harvest, 2023	38.9	[9]
Actual total harvest, 2024	38.9	[9]
Crown harvest, calendar 2025, excluding waste	~32.0	[10]
Budget 2026 Crown assumption, annually, 2025/26–2028/29	29.0	[11]
Government’s annual harvest objective	45.0	[1]

45 million is roughly 41% above the reported 2025 Crown harvest and 55% above the February 2026 budget assumption. These are calculated comparisons. Total-land, Crown-land, calendar-year, and fiscal-year measures differ; budget assumptions are not actual cuts. The 2025 figure is forestry analyst David Elstone’s reading of provincial data. [10, 11]

NFA assessment: changing the map leaves the central problem

The BFWSS critique identifies what the announcement does not commit to: protecting all primary forests, ending clearcutting, restoring damaged forests without further timber extraction, or replacing corporate tenure with NFA governance. It does not establish NFA-style binding ecological thresholds that determine whether harvesting can occur. [12, 13]

The risks are concrete: multiple-use “restoration” can still involve logging; protecting 30% of the provincial land base does not itself protect all primary forests; and preserving a working-forest area could constrain future conservation. The published model does not quantify how much additional loggable forest would gain permanent protection. [1, 12]

NFA assessment of the parties: NDP and Conservative proposals retain timber-supply certainty as a central objective. The Greens’ new plan moves substantially closer to NFA principles, but does not commit to protecting all primary forests or replacing the four forestry statutes and existing licences through NFA’s 1–5-year transition. [6, 7, 13]

The NFA asks what the land can support first: protect primary forests, restore degraded landscapes without salvage logging, and harvest by selection only where ecological thresholds allow. [13]

Sources

All web sources accessed October 6, 2026. Citations [1]–[13] correspond to the report's claims. Policy summaries and NFA assessments are presented separately.

[1] BC government. Working Forest Landscape Model announcement and three-zone backgrounder, updated August 27, 2026.
Open source

[2] BC government. First candidate area announced for Working Forest Landscape Model, September 15, 2026.
Open source

[3] BC government. BC Timber Sales to increase fibre access, strengthen long-term forest outcomes, protect jobs, 2026.
Open source

[4] BC Ministry of Finance. Budget 2026 highlights: forestry support and temporary stumpage-payment deferrals.
Open source

[5] BC NDP. Eby pledges new "Built in B.C. and Canada" buying rules, September 24, 2026.
Open source

[6] BC Greens. Plan to reform forestry sector, protecting forests, jobs, and communities, October 4, 2026; includes full forestry policy brief.
Open source

[7] Conservative Party of BC. 2024 Policy Platform, printed pages 24–29, "Saving BC Forestry."
Open source

[8] Conservative Party of BC. Wildfire Action Plan, October 5, 2026.
Open source

[9] BC Ministry of Forests. 2024/25 Annual Service Plan Report, printed page 7: actual total harvest in 2023 and 2024.
Open source

[10] David Elstone, RPF, Spar Tree Group. The 2025 British Columbia Crown Timber Harvest…Did Not Get The Memo, January 14, 2026. Analyst's report of provincial Crown harvest data, excluding waste.
Open source

[11] BC Ministry of Finance. Budget and Fiscal Plan 2026/27–2028/29, February 17, 2026, Table 1.5.1 (printed p. 41) and Table A5 (printed p. 156). Forecasts and assumptions, not actual harvest.
Open source

[12] BFWSS. Changing the Map Doesn't Change the System: BC Government's New Forest Plan Is Not Reform, August 28, 2026. Source of the NFA critique.
Open source

[13] BFWSS. New Forest Act Proposal Update March 2026, executive summary (printed p. 3), legislative transition, and PRH sections; New Forest Act Executive Summary, March 2026, pp. 1–2. Documents supplied for this report; proposal resources available online.
Open source

Comparison scope: current government announcements, the Greens' October 2026 forestry brief, and the Conservatives' detailed 2024 forestry platform plus their October 2026 wildfire plan. This report does not treat older platform promises as implemented policy.