



# NEWS RELEASE

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## North Saanich's Neil Hughes honoured with 2020 Professional Forester of the Year award

**Vancouver**—Neil Hughes, MSc, RPF, was presented with the 2020 Professional Forester of the Year award by the Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABCFP) at its annual forestry conference, held virtually last week.

The Professional Forester of the Year award recognizes a Registered Professional Forester for outstanding recent service to the profession of forestry and for furthering the principles of BC forest professionals.

“Neil demonstrated outstanding service to reforestation efforts during the 2020 planting season. The season was on track to be the largest single reforestation program in BC’s history with an objective of planting an estimated 300 million seedlings. But the COVID-19 pandemic threatened to derail everything,” said ABCFP president Trevor Joyce, RPF.

Hughes was integral in ensuring the success of the reforestation season, which, in part, aimed to support recovery from catastrophic 2017 and 2018 wildfires.

“Neil worked tirelessly behind the scenes to keep the 2020 planting season moving ahead. His tenacity and constant vigilance in getting the necessary guidance and policies in place to ensure that everyone remained safe and 300 million seedlings would be planted were instrumental to the success story we have today,” Joyce said

By October, more than 300 million trees were planted by 5,000 workers in 60 camps, without a single case of COVID-19.

Hughes, who lives in **North Saanich**, has spent the past five years with the Resource Practices Branch in Victoria, where he runs the Forests for Tomorrow program and deals with forest health issues.

Hughes has a master’s degree in environment and management from Royal Roads University, as well as a Bachelor of Science honours degree in forestry from the University of Aberdeen in Scotland.

He was one of one of five award winners honoured for their outstanding contribution to the profession and furthering the association’s principles.

- *Photo available on request.*

*The **Association of BC Forest Professionals** is responsible for registering and regulating BC's 5,500 professional foresters and forest technologists.*

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