

Scientists study the future of BC's most treasured tree

An economic assessment of the Western redcedar

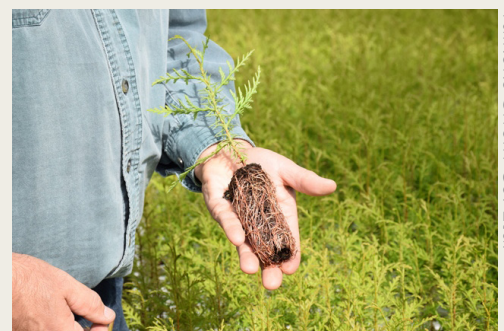
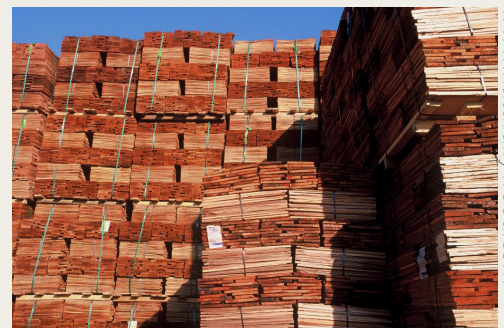


Cosmin Filipescu, a research scientist with the Canadian Wood Fibre Centre of Natural Resources Canada, is leading a series of projects to answer key questions about the future of British Columbia's Western redcedar, one of the province's most valued trees. Although Western redcedar has served a multitude of uses to society over thousands of years, scientists know little about it. That's the main reason a multi-year research project is looking at Western redcedar from a range of viewpoints covering economics, ecology, diseases, quality and value of forest products, and climate change.

Recently published, *An Economic Assessment of the Western Redcedar Industry in British Columbia*, shows Western redcedar is a \$1.3 billion annual industry, providing 1,900 jobs across B.C. It is also important for its cultural value to First Nations and for its ecological value as wildlife habitat and for biodiversity.

Key Findings

- British Columbia has the world's largest stock of standing western redcedar and is the largest producer of redcedar products in the world.
- Western redcedar represented 7% of British Columbia's 2014 timber harvest volume and 18% of the coastal harvest.
- Annual harvest levels of western redcedar have fallen since 1995 across all log grades.
- Western redcedar generates over \$1 billion annually; lumber exports dominate revenues, generating over \$750 million.
- Over 80% of redcedar lumber, shake and shingle, and siding exports go to the United States.
- The western redcedar industry accounts for an estimated 1,900 jobs in British Columbia.
- Nearly 30% of secondary manufacturing firms are heavily reliant on western redcedar.
- Secondary manufacturing use of redcedar has declined since 1997 and, as of 2012, has not seen a significant recovery.

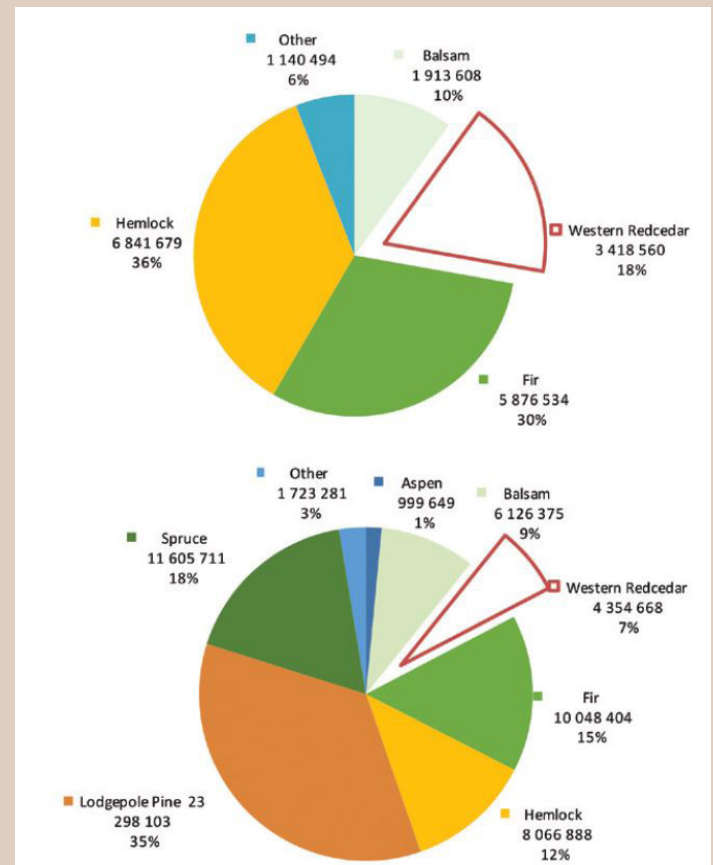


More questions

The research goal is to learn how to manage western redcedar as a long-term, sustainable, high quality resource for future generations. Researchers want to know:

- Can redcedar be grown to be naturally resistant to both deer browsing and diseases?
- Are second growth trees providing the same quality of wood and disease resistance as their forebears?
- What environmental conditions will redcedar need to adapt to in the future?
- What role does redcedar play in diversifying overseas markets for Canadian forest products?
- What are the best management approaches to promote regeneration and growth of redcedar?

A cedar research working group, brings together First Nations, industry, provincial and federal government, universities and other research groups to collaborate and share information about this valuable resource.



Total 2014 harvest volume by species (m3) and species percentage of the harvest for coastal British Columbia (top) and the province as a whole (bottom) (source: B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations' Harvest Billing System 2014b).

Links

- Research Report: An Economic Assessment of the Western Redcedar Industry in British Columbia <http://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/publications?id=39066>
- Canadian Wood Fibre Centre <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forests/research-centres/cwfc/13457>
- Pacific Forestry Centre <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forests/research-centres/pfc/13489>
- Cedar Research Working Group <http://cedargroup.blogspot.ca/>
- Ecology of western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*): Implications for management of a high-value multiple-use resource. <https://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/publications?id=36933>
- Decay of Living Western Redcedar: A Literature Review. <https://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/publications?id=38341>

