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Minister Wilkinson and Minister Ralston Announce Two-year Plan to Plant Over 37 Million Trees in British Columbia Under the Two Billion Trees Program and Kick Off 2023 Tree-Planting Season

From: [Natural Resources Canada](#)

News release

April 18, 2023 North Vancouver, British Columbia Natural Resources Canada

Forests and trees capture and store carbon, making them an effective natural climate solution. Forests also clean the air that we breathe, improve water quality, enhance biodiversity and help cool our urban centres. Planting two billion trees in the next decade is a crucial part of Canada's climate plan, and the Government of Canada is continuing to work with provinces, territories, local communities and Indigenous Peoples.

Today, the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Natural Resources Canada, joined by the Honourable Bruce Ralston, Minister of Forests of British Columbia, visited the Wild Bird Trust of British Columbia in North Vancouver to launch the 2 Billion Trees (2BT) program's 2023 tree-planting season and announce that Canada and B.C. have signed a Contribution Agreement under

the 2BT program. Under this two-year agreement, over 37 million trees will be planted in the province through nearly \$80 million in joint funding from Canada and British Columbia.

The reforestation project will be primarily focused on wildfire-impacted areas. Ecological benefits include converting severely burnt areas into future healthy forests, restoring wildlife habitat and reducing the hydrological impacts of disturbed areas. The estimated carbon benefit of this project is 2.1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, which is the greenhouse gas equivalent of taking 467,314 gasoline-powered passenger vehicles off the road for one year. The project is also expected to create and maintain around 810 direct and indirect jobs. Outside of the federal 2BT program, British Columbia has planted 1.6 billion trees since 2017. That record reflects provincial ministry-funded reforestation and the provincially-mandated silviculture obligations of forest companies as a condition of harvest.

Today's funding complements joint funding under the 2BT program to help prepare British Columbia for this year's planting season. This funding, for projects that took place in 2021 and 2022, supported survey work in the Cariboo and Thompson Rivers, the Okanagan and other interior regions of British Columbia impacted by wildfires. This preparation provided economic benefits to tree-seed orchards and tree nurseries, with trees to be planted from a wide range of seed sources in support of B.C.'s climate adaptation strategy and Canada's climate plan.

The project announced today with British Columbia is one of six recently signed multi-year Contribution Agreements between the federal government and provinces and territories under the 2BT program. Work to finalize additional agreements with provinces and territories to plant more trees across Canada is well underway.

Planting two billion trees over a decade is a crucial part of Canada's climate plan — this is a marathon, not a sprint. Planting numbers may fluctuate as the program ramps up. Last year's summer update reported that approximately 29 million trees were planted, amounting to about 97 percent of the 2021 season's planting projection. Minister Wilkinson will provide a further update with planting numbers from the 2022 planting season later this summer.

By working together with provinces, territories, local communities and Indigenous Peoples, Canada continues to combat climate change with all of the solutions at our disposal, including by planting two billion trees over the next decade.

Quotes

"Trees are essential to our lives — they capture carbon, improve air quality and support wildlife — and they are important allies in our fight against climate change. That's why Canada has committed to planting two billion trees. Through this investment to plant over 37 million trees in B.C., we are kicking off the 2023 planting season for the 2 Billion Trees program and showing how collaborative work between the federal government and our provincial partners can ensure that the right tree is planted at the right place at the right time."

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson

Minister of Natural Resources

“Healthy forests are critical in the global fight against climate change. Restoring our forests is so important to the health and well-being of us all. The millions of trees to be planted under this joint federal reforestation program will strengthen the province’s existing reforestation efforts, support employment, increase the carbon-capture capacity of our forests and reduce emissions in the province over the long term.”

The Honourable Bruce Ralston

British Columbia Minister of Forests

Quick facts

- In February 2023, the Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia signed an Agreement in Principle (AiP) under the Provinces and Territories stream of the 2BT program. Under this agreement, Canada and British Columbia are leveraging their shared commitment to delivering social, economic and environmental benefits for communities through tree planting.
- The Contribution Agreement between Canada and B.C. announced today is the first of several agreements under Canada and British Columbia’s overarching AiP that the federal government intends to sign with the province in the next decade. It will retroactively fund B.C. Forests to plant more than 37 million trees through the 2022 and 2023 planting season.
- Nearly \$80 million in joint funding from Canada and British Columbia (\$39.9 million each) will support this agreement.

- The six 2BT Contribution Agreements that Minister Wilkinson referenced today, including the agreement with B.C., stem from the seven overarching Agreements in Principle that the federal government has signed with provinces and territories in the last year. These Agreements In Principle outline the general parameters of federal, provincial and territorial collaboration on planting two billion trees by defining biodiversity enhancement, habitat restoration, carbon sequestration, permanency of forest cover and several monitoring activities post-planting as the objectives of each tree-planting project.

Associated links

- [Backgrounder: Minister Wilkinson Updates Canadians on Progress Under the 2 Billion Trees Program](#)
- [2 Billion Trees Program](#)
- [Our action: How we will get there together](#)
- [Planting the right tree in the right place for a better tomorrow](#)
- [2 Billion Trees working with provinces and territories](#)
- [2 Billion Trees Program ongoing call for proposals](#)
- [2030 Emissions Reduction Plan: Clean Air, Strong Economy](#)
- [Natural Climate Solutions Fun](#)
- [Province of British Columbia Ministry of Forests](#)

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Date modified:

2023-04-18