

MEDIA RELEASE

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Coastal forest workers in high demand

Limited seats now available in NIC’s tuition-free Coastal Forest Resource program

Registration is now open for NIC’s tuition-free Coastal Forest Resource program in Campbell River this October. The four-month program prepares students with applied skills, work experience and industry connections to work in the forestry sector.

“We hire a large number of NIC’s Coastal Forest Resource grads,” said Tracy O’Malley, human resources manager at Strategic Natural Resource Consultants. “They come to us with industry-relevant training and certifications that are very applicable in the field. As the largest timber cruising team in coastal BC, we have an ongoing need for qualified entry-level timber cruising assistants who love working outdoors. Many stay with us long-term gaining new skills and professional designations for a successful career.”

The program is provided tuition-free to eligible participants, thanks to grants from the provincial and federal governments.

NIC students learn basic skills, safety knowledge and job readiness through a combination of classroom and in the field studies.

“Lots of our stuff is in the field,” said graduate Emma McGrath. “I got to go fly around in a helicopter and do a bush landing, then we got to play on the ATV’s and understand them. We also had time with the chainsaw bucking trees. It’s practical, hands-on, getting out there and doing it. It doesn’t feel like school at all.”

On graduation, she worked for Strategic as a wildfire fire fighter in BC’s interior – for a summer she’ll never forget.

Students graduate with an understanding of a wide range of forestry topics including resource management, health and safety, field skills, silviculture and industry certifications to work as entry level compassers, timber cruisers, field assistants, wildfire fighters and junior field engineers.

“It’s a chance for students to be introduced to the technical end of forestry and some jobs they may not even have known existed,” said instructor Barry Ostrand. “There’s strong demand for forest technicians and forest technologists.”

The Truck Loggers Association and Canada-BC Labour Market Development project more than 4,000 in coastal forestry and logging operations over the 10-year horizon. During this time, the industry also expects to replace 10 per cent of its work force.

The next four-month certificate begins in Campbell River in October. For more information or to register, visit www.nic.bc.ca/program/coastal_forest_resource.



NIC Coastal Forest Resource graduate Emma McGrath worked as a wildfire fighter last summer and is now continuing her studies in Resource Management in Nanaimo.

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