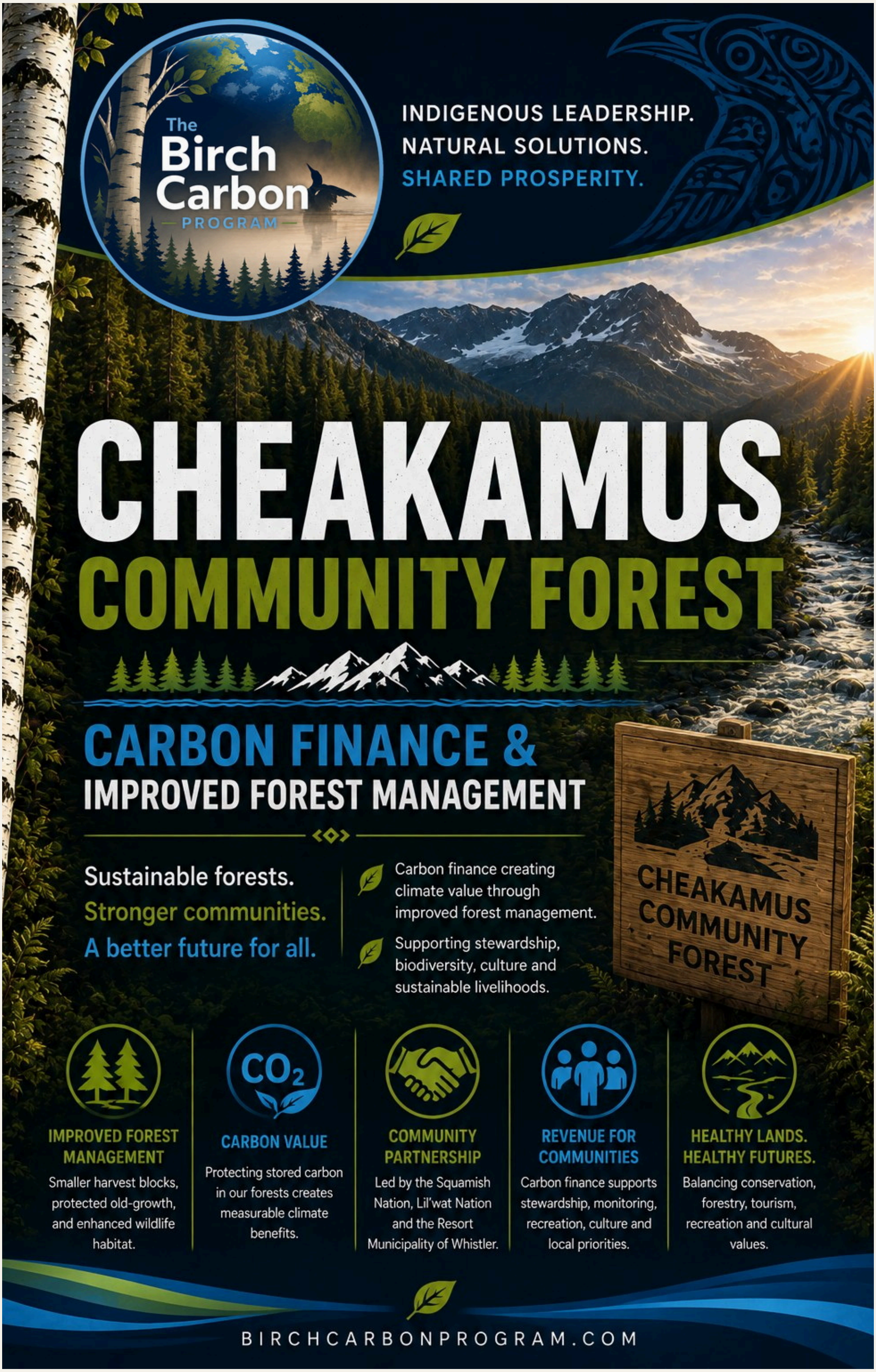
The Birch Carbon PROGRAM
INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP.
NATURAL SOLUTIONS.
SHARED PROSPERITY.
CHEAKAMUS
COMMUNITY FOREST
CARBON FINANCE &
IMPROVED FOREST MANAGEMENT
Sustainable forests.
Stronger communities.
A better future for all.
Carbon finance creating climate value through improved forest management.
Supporting stewardship, biodiversity, culture and sustainable livelihoods.
CHEAKAMUS COMMUNITY FOREST
IMPROVED FOREST MANAGEMENT
Smaller harvest blocks, protected old-growth, and enhanced wildlife habitat.
CO2
CARBON VALUE
Protecting stored carbon in our forests creates measurable climate benefits.
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP
Led by the Squamish Nation, Lil'wat Nation and the Resort Municipality of Whistler.
REVENUE FOR COMMUNITIES
Carbon finance supports stewardship, monitoring, recreation, culture and local priorities.
HEALTHY LANDS. HEALTHY FUTURES.
Balancing conservation, forestry, tourism, recreation and cultural values.
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BIRCH CARBON PROGRAM SUMMARY

KEY INSIGHTS. REAL IMPACT. STRONGER COMMUNITIES.

Birch Carbon Program Summaries provide Indigenous Nations with quick, easy-to-understand insights from important resources — highlighting what matters most and how it can support environmental stewardship, community priorities, and long-term prosperity.

WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE

KEY TAKEAWAYS
The most important points from the original resource.

INDIGENOUS FOCUS
Why it matters to your Nation, your lands, and your future.

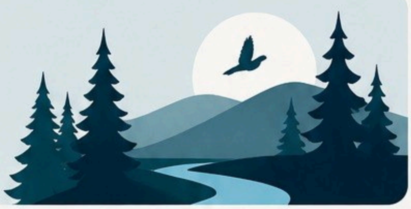
BIRCH CARBON PERSPECTIVE
Our insights on opportunities, benefits, and real-world impact.

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES
How this information can create value for your people and territory.

ORIGINAL SOURCE
Direct links to the full document and official resources.

OUR COMMITMENT

We are committed to making complex information accessible and relevant for Indigenous Nations so you can make informed decisions, protect your lands, and build prosperity for future generations.



PROTECT OUR LANDS | SUPPORT OUR PEOPLE | BUILD PROSPERITY | SECURE OUR FUTURE

BIRCH CARBON PROGRAM SUMMARY

About This Summary

The Cheakamus Community Forest Carbon Offset Project was developed by the Cheakamus Community Forest Society with Ecotrust Canada and Brinkman Group.

It covers a 33,018-hectare Crown forest tenure around Whistler, within the traditional territories of the **Squamish Nation** and **Lil'wat Nation**. The Society itself is a partnership of both Nations and the Resort Municipality of Whistler.

Original Publication

Cheakamus Community Forest Carbon Offset Project
Ecotrust Canada

This Edition

An educational companion prepared by the Birch Carbon Program for Indigenous Nations.

THE STARTING POINT

Why This Matters

A standing forest can have economic value beyond the timber that can be removed from it.

Traditionally most of a forest's financial value comes from harvesting. Cheakamus created a second source of value by keeping more carbon stored in the forest for longer.

WHY IT MATTERS TO INDIGENOUS NATIONS

Carbon does not necessarily replace an existing economy. It can help reshape and diversify one.

CONTENTS

What's Inside

The Birch Carbon PROGRAM

KEY CONCEPTS EXPLAINED

AT A GLANCE

The Project at a Glance

33,018 ha

Community forest tenure surrounding Whistler.

65,546

Carbon offsets created in the first five years.

58,911 sold

The remainder held in reserve to help ensure sequestration targets were met.

~10,000 t/yr

Approximate annual reductions through avoided and modified forestry.

KEY CONCEPT 01

Improved Forest Management

The project applied Improved Forest Management within an Ecosystem-Based Management plan, through four main approaches:

- Increasing the representation of old and mature forests
- Smaller harvest blocks of roughly 1 to 5 hectares, retaining older structure
- Wider buffers around ecological, cultural and riparian areas
- Protecting important wildlife habitat

KEY CONCEPT 02

Reducing the Harvest

The reported forest-carbon reductions were achieved by cutting the baseline harvest by **50 per cent**, while keeping forestry as a source of sustainable livelihoods.

THE FINANCIAL PROBLEM THAT CREATED

Harvesting less timber meant giving up conventional forestry revenue. Carbon offsets supplied an alternative income that made the lower-harvest approach possible.

KEY CONCEPT 03

How Carbon Finance Worked

- Manage the forest differently
- Keep more carbon stored
- Measure the climate benefit
- Verify the carbon outcomes
- Generate and sell offsets
- Reinvest in better forest management

FIRST VERIFICATION PERIOD

2009 to 2013, with offsets issued in spring 2015 and verified under British Columbia's Emission Offsets Regulation using the BC Forest Carbon Offset Protocol.

KEY CONCEPT 04

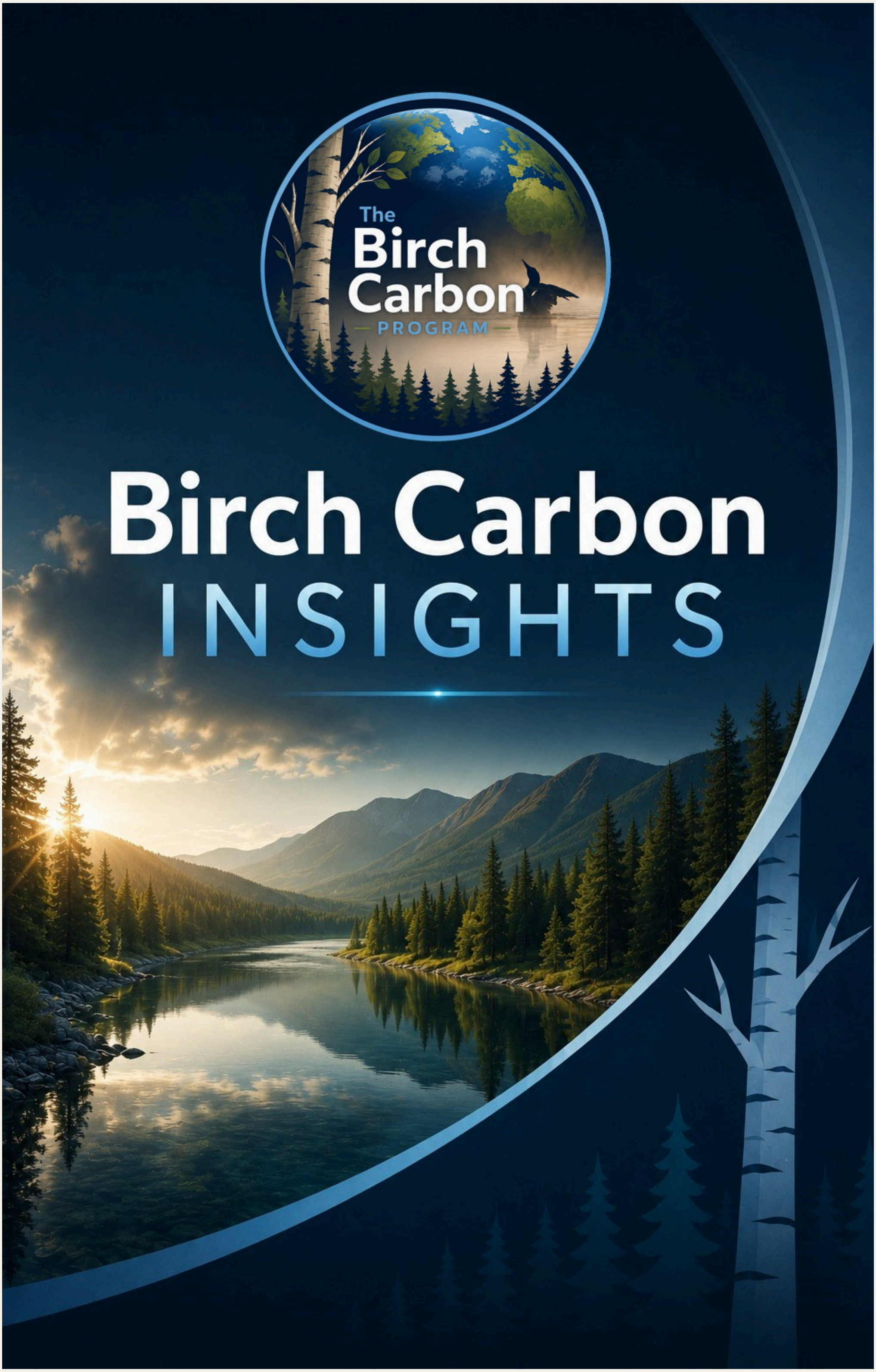
Where the Revenue Went

The briefing reports that carbon funding supported real activity on the land:

- Improved forest monitoring
- Conservation and smaller harvest blocks
- Improved recreational opportunities
- Fire and climate-mitigation strategies

AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION

The credits were not an abstract environmental commodity. The revenue financed a different way of managing an actual forest.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Birch Carbon
INSIGHTS

BEYOND TIMBER AND CARBON

Culture & Community Values

The Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation identified the importance of maintaining resources, cultural practices and culturally important areas for current and future generations.

The management model therefore weighed carbon alongside culture, wildlife, biodiversity, recreation, tourism, forestry and community, rather than reading the landscape through a single economic lens.

A CANADIAN FIRST

Ecotrust Canada describes Cheakamus as the first carbon offset project completed on a British Columbia forest tenure, and on a Community Forest tenure in Canada.

BIRCH CARBON PROGRAM PERSPECTIVE

Carbon Can Change the Economics

Instead of relying entirely on extraction for revenue, measurable carbon benefits can provide another mechanism capable of supporting conservation, improved management, monitoring and long-term stewardship.

WHAT A CREDIBLE PROJECT STILL REQUIRES

More than counting trees. A defensible baseline, measurable changes in management, credible greenhouse-gas outcomes, verification, and a recognized mechanism for issuing credits.

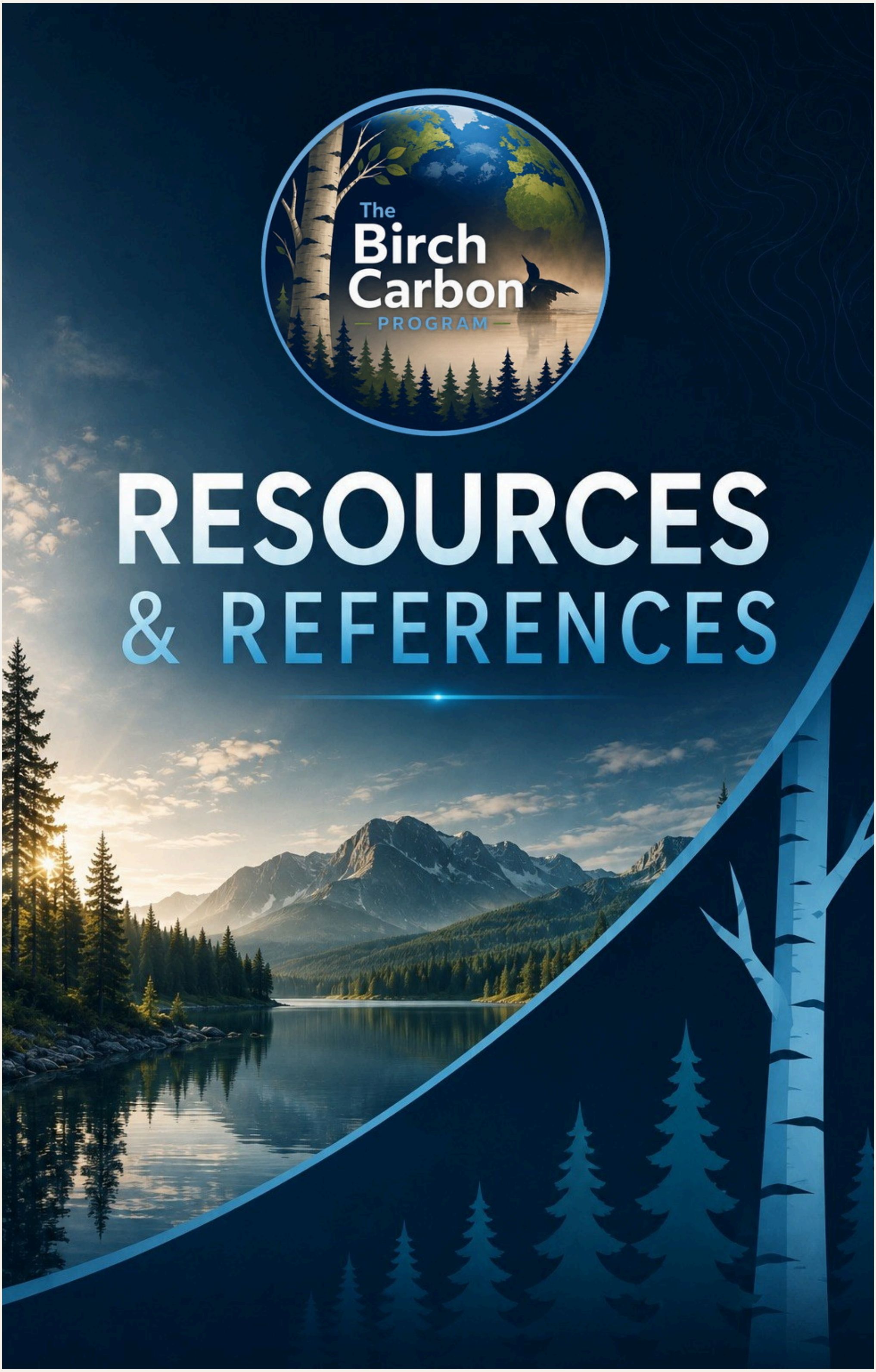
THE KEY TAKEAWAY

Carbon finance can change the economics of forest conservation.

Reducing conventional harvesting did not mean eliminating economic opportunity. Placing measurable financial value on improved management and carbon storage funded practices that served climate action, cultural values, biodiversity, recreation, tourism and livelihoods at the same time.

THE LARGER LESSON

The economic value of a forest does not have to begin and end with harvesting it.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RESOURCES
& REFERENCES

ORIGINAL SOURCE

Resources & References

ECOTRUST CANADA

Cheakamus Community Forest Carbon Offsets

Read the original publication ↗

ECOTRUST CANADA · BRIEFING

Cheakamus Community Forest Carbon Briefing

Open the briefing PDF ↗

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About this summary. This Birch Carbon Program Summary has been prepared as an educational companion to the original publication. It is intended to improve accessibility and understanding while encouraging readers to consult the complete original materials. It is not legal, financial, or technical advice.

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Part of the Indigenous Carbon Knowledge Centre. Plain-language summaries of the publications that matter most to Nations.

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