



► A Natural Resource Officer confirms that authorizations have been obtained for construction and changes below the high-water mark and on foreshore areas of Crown land.



► A Natural Resource Officer inspects recent harvesting activities to ensure that environmental, revenue and fire hazard abatement requirements have been met.

WHO ARE NATURAL RESOURCE OFFICERS?

Natural Resource Officers represent the enforcement arm of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development. You can easily identify us by our uniforms, insignia, badges and marked vehicles.

Natural Resource Officers have the authority to enforce a broad range of environmental and natural resource laws.

There are about 130 Natural Resource Officers working in the field throughout the province. Since the Compliance and Enforcement Branch operates throughout B.C., all Natural Resource Officers work on provincial priorities regardless of their geographic location.



► Trespassing and constructing unauthorized structures (which are often unsafe) on Crown land is illegal and presents a risk to the public.

HOW TO FILE A REPORT

Report natural resource violations by calling:

1 877 952-7277 toll-free

(or **#7277** on most cellular networks)

or by submitting a report at:

www.gov.bc.ca/natural-resource-officers

For information about natural resource authorizations, please visit or call (toll-free) the FrontCounter BC office in your area, or visit the website at:

www.gov.bc.ca/natural-resource-officers

Report wildfires, unattended campfires or open burning violations to the BC Wildfire Service at:

1 800 663-5555 (or ***5555** on most cellular networks).

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU FILE A REPORT?

Natural Resource Officers review every report of a natural resource violation to determine its priority and the appropriate response. A Natural Resource Officer may contact you for additional information relevant to the investigation that could assist in any related prosecution or administrative hearing.



Ministry of
Forests, Lands, Natural
Resource Operations
and Rural Development

NATURAL RESOURCE OFFICERS

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO



MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS,
NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS
AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Compliance and Enforcement Branch

REPORT A SUSPECTED VIOLATION ONLINE

www.gov.bc.ca/natural-resource-officers

OR CALL THE TOLL-FREE HOTLINE

1 877 952-7277



▶ Natural Resource Officers often inspect timber operations, foreshore developments and water authorizations by boat.



▶ Natural Resource Officers discovered the unauthorized harvesting of trees and the illegal construction of a mountain bike trail and ramps.



▶ Irresponsible use of off-road vehicles (ORVs) can cause serious environmental damage.

WHAT DO NROs DO?

Natural Resource Officers help protect our land, water, forests and cultural resources for future generations. They are involved in public education, inspections, investigations and the enforcement of natural resource legislation, including the *Forest Act*, *Forest and Range Practices Act*, *Land Act*, *Water Sustainability Act*, *Wildfire Act*, *Great Bear Rainforest (Forest Management) Act* and *Heritage Conservation Act*.

The Compliance and Enforcement Branch's mandate is to protect the environment, prevent revenue loss, protect economic and social interests, and improve health and safety standards. An NRO's role is to maintain a public presence by raising awareness of natural resource legislation, educating people about their legal responsibilities, completing compliance inspections, investigating alleged instances of non-compliance, and taking enforcement actions when necessary.

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

- ▶ landslides
- ▶ streams and fish habitat
- ▶ community watersheds
- ▶ soil conservation
- ▶ productive forests, biodiversity and sensitive ecosystems

PREVENTING REVENUE LOSS

- ▶ unauthorized harvesting and special forest products
- ▶ land use authorizations
- ▶ forest revenue and cost recovery related to human-caused wildfires

PROTECTING ECONOMIC OR SOCIAL INTERESTS

- ▶ protection of recreation site facilities
- ▶ fire use and land use prohibitions
- ▶ use of resource roads
- ▶ protection of water and streams
- ▶ integrity of resource roads

NROs DEAL WITH ISSUES RELATED TO:

- ▶ damage to cultural heritage sites
- ▶ human-caused wildfires (fire investigations)
- ▶ alterations to foreshores or riparian areas of lakes and streams
- ▶ road maintenance and protection of fish habitat at resource road crossings
- ▶ water management and/or making changes within a stream
- ▶ damage to the environment, including irresponsible ATV or motorbike use
- ▶ unauthorized harvesting of trees and firewood
- ▶ unauthorized construction of recreation trails
- ▶ burning restrictions and fire bans
- ▶ unauthorized wells
- ▶ logging operations and transport of timber
- ▶ rangeland use and cattle management
- ▶ unauthorized cabins or structures, and the unauthorized occupation of Crown land

ENFORCEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCE LAWS

Natural Resource Officers have an array of tools and discretion at their disposal to deal with alleged contraventions of B.C.'s natural resource laws. During a compliance inspection, Natural Resource Officers may initiate the following:

- ▶ written compliance action (letter or inspection notice) or a written warning
- ▶ violation ticket
- ▶ order to vacate a recreation facility
- ▶ trespass notice (to vacate Crown land)
- ▶ seizure of evidence
- ▶ Stop Work Orders
- ▶ further investigations

ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES OPTIONS

If a contravention is found and the natural resource legislation allows it, the Natural Resource Officer can present the information to a designated decision-maker, who can then schedule an "Opportunity to be Heard" meeting. Once a decision is made, that decision can be appealed to an outside commission for a re-determination. A determination could result in a penalty and/or a requirement to remediate any damage that was done.

Possible outcomes of administrative options include:

- ▶ administrative remedy (usually a penalty to address cost recovery for the Crown, plus a deterrence penalty)
- ▶ remediation order (to restore a damaged site)
- ▶ suspension of the tenure or licence under which a licensee or client may be operating
- ▶ cancellation of a tenure (the person or company may no longer operate on the site)

PROSECUTION OPTIONS

- ▶ violation tickets
- ▶ provincial prosecution (the charge is processed through provincial Crown counsel in the B.C. court system)

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE OPTIONS

Restorative justice is a process in which the offender, representatives of the affected community and enforcement staff collectively decide on appropriate restitution or repair of the harm caused by the contravention.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT: www.gov.bc.ca/natural-resource-officers