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MEDIA RELEASE

Forestry professionals recognize SFU professor's contributions

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Contact:

Ken Lertzman, 778.782.9236, kenneth_lertzman@sfu.ca (email best contact)

Carol Thorbes, University Communications, 778.782.3035, cthorb@sfu.ca

Photos: Available upon request

The [Association of B.C. Forest Professionals](#) (ABCFP) has awarded Simon Fraser University professor [Ken Lertzman](#) in the School of Resource and Environmental Management (REM) an Honorary Membership — its top honour.

Lertzman, who received the honour during an ABCFP conference on Feb. 19, is being recognized for his significant contributions to forestry knowledge and dedication to mentoring the next generation of forest professionals.

Responsible for registering and regulating B.C.'s professional foresters and forest technologists, the ABCFP is the largest professional forestry association in Canada and the first to include forest technologists.

The ABCFP award acknowledges how Lertzman's research on natural disturbance dynamics, and the structure and composition of old forests has improved forest ecology knowledge globally.

"Many forest practitioners have benefited from Ken's desire to create practical solutions for forest management strategies," says Dan Graham, ABCFP president.

One of Lertzman's nominators underscored the significance of his work in advancing understanding of how global climate change affects our ecosystems. The nominator called Lertzman "an innovative and critical thinker who has applied scientific inquiry to forest management and conservation."

Lertzman researches how climate impacts forest-based disturbance regimes such as catastrophic wildfires and low-severity surface fires and shapes forests' evolution over time. Lertzman uses his discoveries to help design better strategies for forest management and conservation primarily in B.C.'s coastal rainforests and dry southern interior forests. In collaboration with various colleagues, Lertzman's published research includes documenting the impact of climate changes on ecosystems and their impact's implications for indigenous people in the past.

Lertzman was a primary architect in 2010 of the [Hakai Network for Coastal People, Ecosystems and Management](#), now the [Hakai Institute at SFU](#), and since then has been the director of the network's activities focusing on B.C.'s central coast. He collaborates closely with the [Tula Foundation](#) on its Hakai program and with Eric Peterson, the Hakai Institute's founder, in developing field-based research and teaching programs.

The Hakai Institute embodies a set of interlocking initiatives in ecological, physical and archaeological research, and education that focus on B.C.'s coastal margin.

"My students and I work closely with researchers from many disciplines, as well as representatives of government agencies, industries, and other non-governmental groups in applying varied research methods to address forest conservation and

management challenges,” says Lertzman.

The ABCFP award also recognizes Lertzman’s achievements as an educator at heart. A regular teacher in the SFU Faculty of Environment’s [Haida Gwaii Semester program](#), Lertzman helped shape the program and taught the first grad class in forestry management offered in partnership with Haida Gwaii people.

“It is an absolutely fantastic community-based program that gives senior undergraduate students an amazing experience immersed in the communities and ecosystems of Haida Gwaii,” says Lertzman. “Think of it as ‘a semester abroad at home.’”

The program takes in about 40 students of mixed backgrounds annually for a full semester. They learn about forest resource management while living in a small forest-dependent community.

As Canada's engaged university, SFU is defined by its dynamic integration of innovative education, cutting-edge research and far-reaching community engagement. SFU was founded almost 50 years ago with a mission to be a different kind of university—to bring an interdisciplinary approach to learning, embrace bold initiatives, and engage with communities near and far. Today, SFU is a leader amongst Canada's comprehensive research universities and is ranked one of the top universities in the world under 50 years of age. With campuses in British Columbia's three largest cities—Vancouver, Surrey and Burnaby—SFU has eight faculties, delivers almost 150 programs to over 30,000 students, and boasts more than 130,000 alumni in 130 countries around the world.

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8888 University Drive
Burnaby, B.C.
Canada V5A 1S6

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