

2009 Award Winner



Jim Rodney Memorial Volunteer of the Year – Phil Blanchard, RPF

Phil Blanchard knows even the most interminable committee meetings can make a difference. He knows because he played an integral role in developing policy for the Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABCFP). For this excellent volunteer service over the last fifteen years, he was recently awarded the Jim Rodney Memorial Volunteer of the Year award by the ABCFP.

Phil was instrumental in the ABCFP's inclusion of Registered Forest Technologists (RFTs), the development of the professional competency program and in the creation of the Joint Practice Board, a committee where engineers, geoscientists and forest professionals work together in forest resource management. All three of these achievements have played a big role in shaping where the ABCFP is today.

"I volunteer for two reasons," said Phil. "The profession was good to me for a long time and I feel it is important to contribute back to it." Phil worked for MacMillan Bloedel for twenty years before joining a consulting firm in Victoria and then starting his own forestry consulting firm five years later. Phil's other reason is a little more selfish. "It's impossible to volunteer without continuous learning and broadening your associations. It's very rewarding in that sense. And it keeps you more current in areas where you don't practise regularly. I don't think there's anything wrong with being selfish in your volunteering. It's good to get something out of it."

Despite all his work over the years, Phil was surprised when he found out he'd won Volunteer of the Year. "When I was apprised of the breadth of support, it was a bit humbling actually," said Phil.

Phil got into forestry through his best friend, neighbour and Boy Scout buddy, Bob Craig. "I'd been considering chemical engineering and pharmacy when, in second year, I realized I didn't like chemistry and I didn't want to be tied to an office every day," said Phil. Bob was two years ahead of Phil in school and he had chosen to study forestry at UBC. He convinced Phil to join him and Phil has worked in forestry ever since.