

# 2009 Award Winner



## Distinguished Forest Professional – David Wilford, PhD, RPF, PGeo

Dave Wilford, PhD, RPF, PGeo, credits his grandfather for inspiring him to choose a career in forestry. His grandfather loved the outdoors and felt that a job working in the forest was one of the few admirable jobs one could have.

“Although my grandfather was too old to take us hiking and camping, he inspired us with his stories,” says Dave. “When he’d come for a visit he would tell us bedtime stories about canoeing and being outdoors.”

Those bedtime stories paid off as Dave has enjoyed a productive career as a forest hydrologist (someone who studies water in the forest—how water from rain and snowmelt moves through forests, forest soils and streams) with the BC Ministry of Forests and Range and was recently given the Association of BC Forest Professional’s highest honour – the Distinguished Forest Professional award for his prolific contributions to our understanding of forest hydrology.

“I am truly honoured and completely surprised by the award,” says Dave, who concentrates on research that has applicable results. “I’ve always focused on my job – doing research and getting it out to the practitioners. I admit that I am passionate about both forestry and hydrology.”

Dave’s current area of research is watershed management and he has seen many changes over his 35-year career. He has seen the attitudes of big companies, communities and the public change over the years. “I used to focus more on fish and fish habitat but now domestic water use is becoming more important,” he says. “People are definitely more aware of where their water comes from and with climate change, they want a bigger say in forest activities in their watersheds.”

Whether he is focusing his research on fish or watersheds, one thing is clear: Dave is passionate about his work. He is still excited about doing the research that helps forest professionals who are managing the forests. “I am fortunate in that I still get to do field work and I have been able to work with some great researchers and forest professionals.”