

RCMP News Release

As a result of the combined efforts of the RCMP Forest Crime Investigation Unit and the Compliance and Enforcement Section of the Ministry of Forests and Range, two men from the Agassiz area were arrested in Chilliwack on July 11, 2007 for the theft of Western Broad Leaf Maple trees. Walter Phillips and Colin Phillips were subsequently charged with theft under \$5000 and possession of stolen property. The theft occurred on Vedder Mountain in Abbotsford, BC. The land where the theft occurred is the property of the City of Abbotsford, B.C. Both men were scheduled to appear in Chilliwack Provincial Court on September 25, 2007. Curly Maple wood originating from the Western Broad Leaf Maple is typically used for the production of musical instruments.

Compliance and Enforcement (C&E) staff at the B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range enforce forest management laws and combat forest crimes such as theft, arson and mischief. Officials conduct about 16,000 inspections a year to assess compliance with forest and range laws relating to environmental management and revenue protection.

The Forest Crime Investigation Unit is a three person provincial RMCP unit that works in conjunction and partnership with the B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range, Yukon Ministry of Energy, Mines and Resources, community and regional RCMP detachments, First Nations, B.C. Conservation Officer Service, other provincial and federal units, the forest industry and the general public. The Unit combats forest crimes and conducts investigations into such matters as timber theft, stumpage fraud and serial wildland arson investigations on a Criminal Code and provincial statute level.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding the above noted information, please contact Corporal Darren Kakuno from the RCMP Forest Crime Investigation Unit at (604) 543-4873 or Jennifer McLarty from the B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range at 250 387-4592.