BC INSTITUTE OF AGROLOGISTS

Issue 1 // May 2025

NEW: BCIA STRATEGIC PLAN

Unveiling the official Strategic Plan for 2025 - 2027

ROOTED IN REFLECTION

Supporting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples through ongoing eduction

YOU'VE GOT MAIL

The importance of email communications from BCIA

DIG IN: VOLUNTEERS MAKE BCIA GROW

Current volunteer opportunities for BCIA registrants

STAYING IN YOUR LANE

Understanding practice areas in Agrology

INAUGURAL ISSUE



CONTENTS







ARTICLES

03 SOWING THE SEEDS OF THE FUTURE: DEFINING OUR PATH IN A TIME OF CHANGE

Unveiling the official Strategic Plan for 2025 - 2027

06 ROOTED IN REFLECTION

Supporting reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples through ongoing eduction

08 STAYING IN YOUR LANE

Understanding practice areas in Agrology

10 YOU'VE GOT MAIL

The importance of email communications from BCIA

11 <u>DIG IN! VOLUNTEERS</u> MAKE BCIA GROW

Current volunteer opportunities for BCIA registrants

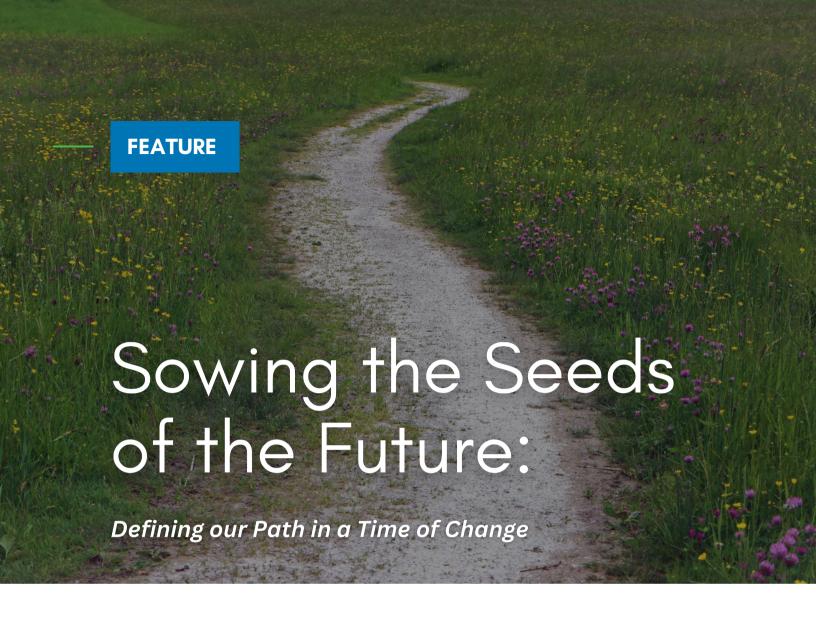
PUBLISHED BY

BC Institute of Agrologists (BCIA) 110-2800 Bryn Maur Rd, Victoria BC V9B 3T4 Telephone: 250-380-9292 OR Toll-Free: 1-877-855-9291

ABOUT US

The BC Institute of Agrologists regulates the profession of agrology in British Columbia to protect the public by ensuring safe, competent, and ethical practice.

BCIA acknowledges that our office is located on the lands of the Lekwungen (Songhees) and Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) ancestors and families.



The world is changing rapidly and BCIA is not immune from that.

During these pivotal times, it is more important than ever to establish a strategic plan that clearly aligns us all on BCIA's mission, vision, guiding principles and key initiatives over the coming years. On May 7th BCIA released its new strategic plan, titled "Defining our Path Forward" that not only will meet the demands of today but charts a course of our continued journey as an organization

that is solely focused on upholding the highest standards of professional regulation.

A Vision Rooted in Purpose

This new strategic plan isn't just a document—it's a road map. It sets out how as a regulator, we are ready to lead through complexity, embrace innovation, and safeguard the public interest with unwavering integrity. At its core, the plan reinforces our enduring commitment: to uphold professional and ethical standards, and maintain the trust society places in us and the profession as stewards of land, food, and the environment.

At the end of the three years of this plan, we will know we've achieved our vision if we can confidently say the following:

- Agrology professionals are engaged with our work, understand what is expected of them, and are committed, individually and collectively, to their role as stewards of our natural systems;
- Our regulatory programs are effective, fulfill our purpose and align with our guiding principles;
- As a regulator we are trusted and relied upon; we are seen as collaborators and invited to provide our expertise and unique perspective to influence broader policy and system change;
- Our governance and operational foundations are resilient and built to unite people in purpose and vision.

Collaboration as the Cornerstone

It is acknowledged that this plan was created through an expedited strategic planning process with the BCIA board. With a shifting external landscape and a clear need to align quickly, we committed to a values-based approach despite the accelerated timeline. Rather than rush through decisions, we focused on clarity of purpose, inclusive dialogue, and disciplined prioritization. The result was solidifying a shared purpose, rooted in the public interest, and shaped by trust, collaboration, and the courage to ask hard questions.

As we move forward, we remain committed to ongoing collaboration and feedback from all sectors, recognizing that this plan will evolve alongside the organization.

"This new strategic plan isn't just a document — it's a road map."

Guiding Principles: The Foundation Beneath Every Step

At the heart of the new strategic plan are a set of guiding principles—clear, enduring values that shape every decision and direction. These principles (below) act as a compass in a time of rapid change, ensuring that even as the organization evolves, its integrity remains constant.

- Accessible & Inclusive
- Aware & Equitable
- Clear, Transparent & Authentic
- > Informed & Proportionate
- Relational & Respectful
- System-Aware & Collaborative

How we define these principles is found on <u>page 5 of the document</u>. These principles are not just words on a page—they are the roots from which every initiative, policy, and program will grow.

Inspiring Confidence, Driving Change

Key overarching themes of the strategic plan are:

Stability - Establishing a strong foundation by reinforcing sound regulatory and operational practices.

Confidence - Building trust and credibility both within the organization and among external groups.

Impact - Deepening our regulatory effectiveness across all areas of our work.

These themes will guide how we prioritize our goals and key initiatives which are:

- Strengthen Cultural Connections
- Reimagine Regulatory Framework to Deepen Impact & Outcomes
- ► Grow Relationships
- Enhance Operational Practices

The agrology profession has always been grounded in science, but its power lies in its people. Professionals who wake each day committed to feeding the world, protecting ecosystems, and finding solutions where others see problems.

This new plan honours that spirit and elevates it, offering clear direction and renewed purpose.

As we look ahead, this is more than a strategic document—it is a call to action. A call to adapt boldly, innovate responsibly, and lead with integrity. In the face of uncertainty, the future of BCIA has never looked more promising.

Because when you nurture a vision rooted in service, innovation, and shared responsibility—you don't just weather change. You grow through it.

Read the 2025 - 2027 BCIA Strategic Plan HERE.





Agrologists and other natural resource professionals in British Columbia are bound by standards of conduct and competence that reflect their critical role in protecting the public interest. This responsibility includes a requirement under the Professional Governance Act* to engage in ongoing education that supports reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. It's not just a regulatory obligation; it's a meaningful opportunity to strengthen our understanding, evolve our practice, and contribute to a more equitable future.

As agrologists, our work is deeply connected to the land. With that connection comes a responsibility to reflect on the histories, relationships, and knowledge systems that shape our attitudes and practices. Indigenous and cultural safety is an ongoing process of

learning that helps individuals recognize and address power imbalances. It asks us to move beyond surface-level awareness and work toward creating environments where all people are respected, heard, and feel safe. Indigenous and cultural safety learning offers an opportunity to explore these deeper layers, to understand how colonial legacies continue to influence our practices, and to consider how we might approach our work differently with greater respect and awareness. It's not about having all the answers; it's about being willing to slow down, to listen, to learn, and to engage with new perspectives that can enrich our professional practice, our relationship with the people on the land, as well as the land itself.

Continual learning in Indigenous and cultural safety invites us to think critically about the future of agrology and the kind of legacy we want to create. It offers a

chance to build more meaningful connections with the land, with Indigenous communities, and within ourselves. Each of us has the opportunity to decide how we carry this knowledge forward in our work.

The journey begins with curiosity, openness, and a willingness to explore how our profession can evolve to meet the challenges and the possibilities of a more inclusive and sustainable future.

Reflection Questions:

- How can I continue learning and growing in ways that support a more inclusive and sustainable future for the land and the people connected to it?
- How does my understanding of the world and North American histories and knowledge influence the way I work with the land today?
- What assumptions or habits might I reconsider if I approach agrology through a lens of shared stewardship and reconciliation?
- In what ways, through my professional practice, could I build stronger, more respectful relationships with communities whose ethnicities are different from my own?

Exploring your options for Indigenous learning isn't just a requirement, it's an opportunity to grow. Visit the BCIA website <u>HERE</u> to discover accepted Indigenous course offerings, keep an eye on our upcoming events <u>HERE</u>, and consider seeking out meaningful learning experiences within your own community or practice area. The more you engage, the more you stand to gain, both personally and professionally.



Imagine you are driving down a busy multi-lane highway...

with friends on a sunny day, music is up and spirits are high. Suddenly, a truck pulls into your lane, cutting you off. As this happens, you realise that other vehicles are swerving and driving erratically all over the place. You need to make quick decisions: Slow down? Change lanes? Stay the course? Before making any move, you need to know where you are going, how fast the traffic is moving and whether your driving skills and vehicle are up to the demands of the situation.

In many ways, the profession of agrology operates the same. Our field intersects with biologists, foresters, engineers, geoscientists, hydrologists, and other natural resource professionals. Just as a driver shouldn't merge onto a freeway without knowing how to navigate high-speed traffic, professionals should not engage in work outside of their verified expertise. Practicing outside of your competence can risk public safety, harm the environment, and potentially lead to disciplinary action.

We're all navigating a multi-lane, high-traffic system of land and resource management, one that's constantly shifting and full of shared intersections. Knowing your practice area, or in simpler terms, your lane, is not just a guideline; it's a professional responsibility.

How do you know whether you are in the right lane? Some Quick Tips:

- Work only in areas that correspond to your professional training, education, experience and ability → stay in your lane
- Maintain competence in relevant specialties, including active participation in professional development
- Provide accurate information detailing your qualifications and experience
- Recognise practice area intersections with other professions
- Know your limitations → seek help when needed

Where it Gets Tricky:

Mixed Use Situation Examples:

- Wildland Urban Interface and Wildfire risk
- Resource extraction, farming and groundwater
- Erratic seasonal stream flows, fish stocks and irrigation for forage crops

Practice Intersection Example:

professional regulation the for Engineers and Geoscientists BC. identifies reserved practice in the area of "forest engineering" while the professional regulation for the Forest Professionals of BC identifies reserved practice in the area of "forest transportation systems". This structure provides that registrants of both regulatory bodies may practice in the area of forest roads and crossings.

Practice intersections identified in regulation may be further supported by practice guidelines jointly developed multiple regulators. An example Professional Practice Guidelines for Erosion and Sediment Control, jointly developed by the College of Applied Biologists, BCIA and Engineers Geoscientists BC in 2024.

Some of the most challenging situations arise in mixed-use zones, professional boundaries blur. In these areas, clear communication, mutual inter-professional respect, and collaboration are crucial. Recognizing where your expertise ends and where someone else's begins helps protect public trust and ensures better decision-making outcomes. Staying in your lane isn't about staying small, it's about staying responsible. On a freeway where land, water, and resource management are becoming more complex and interconnected, practicing within your scope is key to ensuring ethical, effective, and credible agrology work.

Stay tuned as this conversation continues with agrologists, biologists, foresters, engineers and geoscientists across BC and Canada, working together to clarify our interconnected lanes.

"Knowing your practice area, or in simpler terms, your lane, is not just a guideline; it's a professional responsibility."

Sources:

<u>Code of Ethics | BC Institute of Agrologists</u>

College of Biologists Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct <u>cab schedule 1 coepc feb13 23 v1.pdf</u>

<u>Standards of Ethical & Professional Conduct - Forest Professionals BC</u>

2023-06-05-FPBC-Code-of-Conduct-final.pdf

PP-Guidelines—Erosion-and-Sediment-Control.pdf

You've Got Mail



Can you remember back to the time that the 'ping' of an email notification was exciting and you rushed to log into your account to see who it was from? It's almost hard to believe that it used be something we looked forward to. Now it seems the flood of emails is never ending, the dread of the 'ping' sound is synonymous with companies trying to sell us products we don't need, or more work, and makes it easy to miss important information or notifications British Columbia from Institute of Agrologists (BCIA).

As pesky as a full inbox is, email is the most efficient expedient form and communication available to us to keep our Registrants up to date and informed on Professional everything from new Development course offerings, to reminder notices about the annual renewal deadline. providing the vital information you need to stay licensed and able to perform your duties as an agrologist.

As a regulated professional, you have not only an ethical obligation, but a bylaw

requirement to maintain current contact formation in your personal profile with BCIA in order to receive important communications from BCIA.

In addition, you are required to respond when BCIA requests further information or a response on a matter from you directly. BCIA will only send out communications that are necessary and relevant to out mandate and the Bylaw requirement to ensure our Registrants receive the information they need to stay informed and remain knowledgeable about their perspective areas of practice and guidance to ensure they remain compliant with the BCIA Bylaws and requirements set out under the Professional Governance Act.

The next time you hear that 'ping' and see the sender is BCIA, you can rest assured that there is no gimmicky sales pitch inside for the latest kitchen utensils, just important information to keep you updated on relevant information you need to know as a Registered Professional.



"As a regulated professional, you have not only an ethical obligation, but a bylaw requirement to maintain current contact formation in your personal profile to receive important communications from BCIA."



We want you!

Volunteers play a vital role in strengthening the integrity, fairness, and effectiveness of our regulatory processes. We're calling on dedicated registrants like you to volunteer your time and expertise in a number of areas.

Current volunteer opportunities are as follows:

Statutory committee members – we have four statutory committees that carry out key regulatory functions:

- Nominations: oversees the recruitment of committee members as well as the nominations process for the Board elections
- Credentials: oversees registration practices and standards
- Audit and Practice Review: oversees the professional development program, including the audit process
- Investigations: oversees investigations of complaints made to BCIA and makes takes action to resolve those complaints
- Discipline: should a complaint be referred to a discipline hearing, panels of this committee hold hearings and makes findings

Investigators – we are looking for registrants willing to be trained as a regulatory investigator. BCIA will cover the cost of the training. Once trained, investigators aid the Investigation Committee & Registrar in conducting fair and impartial investigations of complaints received by BCIA

Practice area advisors – with such diverse areas within the practice of agrology, from time to time we have a matter or a project that would benefit from the expertise and insight of a professional within that specific practice area. BCIA is forming a group of advisors who can be called upon on an as-needed basis by the staff team to provide expertise on a matter, policy, process or project.

Your insights help shape decisions that support high standards of practice, and protect the public interest. By getting involved, you also foster a culture of accountability, collaboration, and community service. It also offers you the opportunity for learning and professional growth. Join us in making a meaningful difference and enriching your own practice.

If you are interested in putting your name forward for any of these roles or would like more details, please send us an email to admin@bcia.com and put Volunteer Opportunities' in the subject line.

