

# WHISTLER PUBLIC LIBRARY

**LOCATION**  
Whistler, British Columbia

**SIZE**  
1,350 m<sup>2</sup>

**COMPLETION**  
2008

**ARCHITECT**  
Hughes Condon Marler Architects

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**  
Fast + Epp Structural Engineers

**BUILDER**  
Whistler Construction Company Inc.

**ROOF PANEL FABRICATOR**  
StructureCraft Builders Inc.

**PROJECT OWNER**  
Resort Municipality of Whistler

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Nestled in the British Columbia mountains, the Whistler Public Library is cozy and contemporary, with hemlock as one of its prominent features.

The resort municipality's design guidelines have often resulted in the simple use of post and beam construction with bolt connections. It is a rustic and traditional look. The library, however, stands out as a modern building as it reinterprets these guidelines in a contemporary architectural expression.

The library provides state-of-the-art facilities for library patrons while showcasing the elegance of wood, which has

led to a very positive response from the community. Use has significantly increased since the new library was built, and library staff cannot keep up with the demand for programs and services, according to the resort municipality.

The exterior of the building is clad in stone, western red cedar siding and composite panels. The building allows natural light conducive to a good reading environment and is open to panoramic views of the neighbouring park and mountains. A stone fireplace is built into the north wall, and reclaimed Douglas fir millwork throughout enhances the warm feeling of the interior.



*“Hemlock is readily accessible throughout the coastal forests of British Columbia, but its potential has been largely overlooked. (The Whistler Library) roof system shows that hemlock can be a value-added product, as well as an inherently sustainable one.”*

**Duane Palibroda**, Senior Associate Engineer  
Fast + Epp Structural Engineers

## WOOD USE

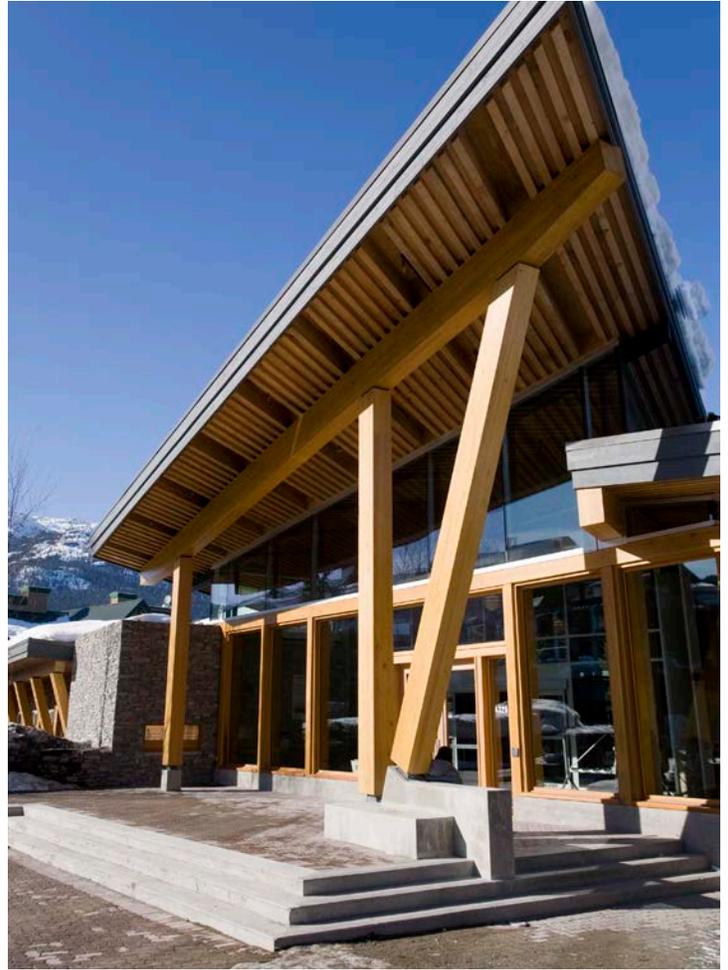
The library showcases the versatility and commercial viability of the hemlock species, which was used in many ways throughout construction. Its strength and stiffness make it a preferred material for use in horizontal components and longer spans.

During the planning and construction of the library, a strong emphasis was placed on innovative sustainable building strategies in which the use of wood played a dominant role.

The building features an innovative, solid wood roof system comprising prefabricated panels made of solid hemlock, which spans distances up to 13.5 metres. A combination of kingposts and tilted Douglas fir glue laminated timber (glulam) columns support the library

roof, which was built strong enough to retain the large amount of snow for which the mountain community is well known. The prefabricated, hemlock panel system used for the roof met all the needs for the form and layout of the building.

The roof panel system represents a precedent-setting application of hemlock that clearly demonstrates its commercial uses. Western hemlock is the most plentiful tree species on the coast of British Columbia. Hemlock is used for general construction, roof decking and plywood, as well as for laminating stock and the production of glulam solid beams. Whistler Public Library is the first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Gold certified library in Canada.



Photos courtesy of [www.naturallywood.com](http://www.naturallywood.com)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

This profile is published by Forestry Innovation Investment, the Government of British Columbia's market development agency for forest products.

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