

# COWICHAN LAKE SPORTS ARENA

**LOCATION**

Lake Cowichan,  
British Columbia

**COMPLETION**

2010

**ARCHITECT**

CEI Architecture

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER**

Fast + Epp

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR**

Venture Pacific Construction  
Management Ltd

**PROJECT OWNER**

Cowichan Valley Regional District

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

For more than 30 years, the original Cowichan Lake Sports Arena was a valuable community resource, hosting hockey, figure skating and other community events. When the time came to revitalize the facility, the Cowichan Valley Regional District conducted a community consultation process to set priorities for upgrading and expanding the facility. What emerged was a desire to create a range of new spaces in the arena, including warm-viewing areas and large multi-purpose rooms, using a contemporary aesthetic that would also reflect the history and heritage of the region.

Wood is a prominent feature in the 1200-square metre addition. The design team maintained the contemporary wood aesthetic throughout the building in the selection of finishes and detailing to provide warmth and desirable acoustic qualities.

The dramatic new entrance is warm and welcoming with the use of exposed 2x6 timber decking and glulam beams. Sprung hardwood floors in the gymnasium create versatile surfaces for many functions from square dancing to childcare. Also notable is how wood was incorporated in the new change rooms for hockey and curling, where stained plywood lockers and heavy timber benches create a warm and inviting space for visitors and regular users alike.

Since the opening, new groups upon hearing about the facility have come to host hockey camps. The completed project resulted in a community-driven facility that proudly showcases the product, and that prominently reflects the mill town origins of Lake Cowichan.



Photo courtesy of Ed White Photographics

“One of the highlights of the upgrade to the Cowichan Lake Sports Arena has been the use of wood throughout the project which was donated by various businesses in the community. This was truly a successful community project.”

**Linda Blatchford, Manager, Cowichan Lake Recreation**

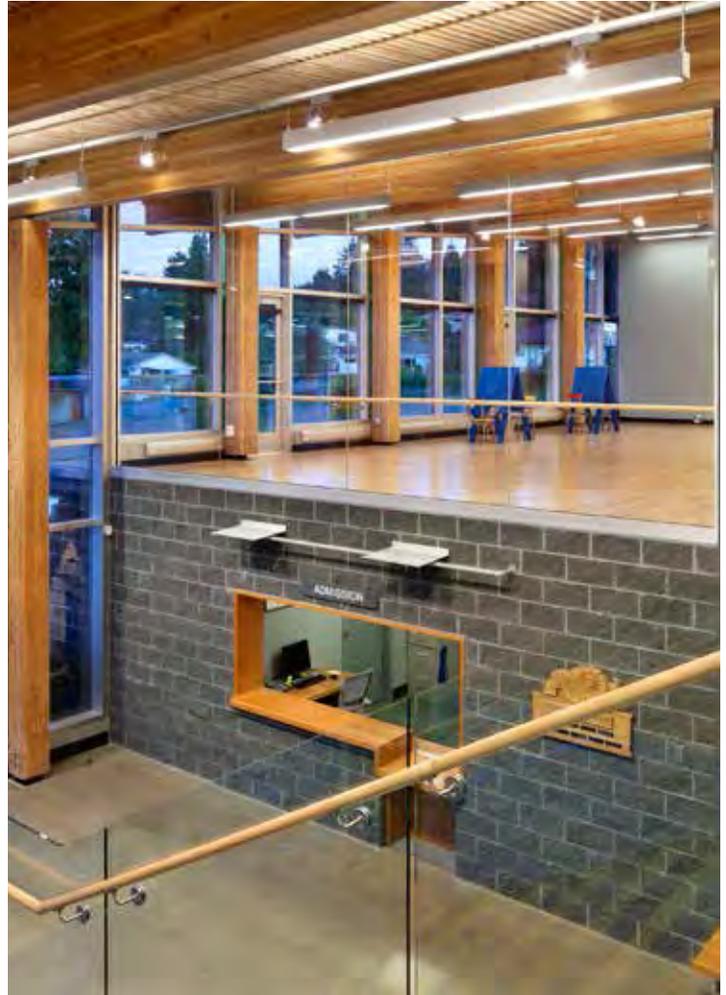
## WOOD USE

Community leaders and the design team shared a vision that this facility should have a ‘wood focus’. By featuring wood products that were regionally sourced and manufactured, the project would maximize the environmental and economic benefits to the region. An inspiring level of community involvement helped plan and secure material contributions. Local logging companies and distributors donated the equivalent of 15 truckloads of wood products.

The building has a hybrid structure with a concrete

masonry main floor and a heavy timber upper floor. The roof structure consists of glulam beams with 2x4 and 2x6 solid wood decking. Interior partitions are framed with conventional wood studs. Externally, the concrete masonry is exposed at the lower level, and elsewhere the exterior cladding is tongue and groove western red cedar.

The interior features sprung hardwood floors in the gymnasium and birch plywood millwork throughout the building.



Photos courtesy of Ed White Photographics

## 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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