

## **Stillwater Timberlands Pilot Project – Executive Summary**

The intent of the Stillwater Timberlands pilot project is to design and implement a new legislated approval process that will move toward landscape-level planning, and shift public, agency and First Nations involvement from reviewing and commenting on proposed plans to participating in the planning process.

The pilot area is TFL 39 in the Sunshine Coast Forest District. The allowable annual cut (AAC) for TFL 39 is 450,000 cubic metres, which is approximately 2% of the coastal AAC and around 8% of Weyerhaeuser's portion of the coastal AAC.

The project proposes to develop a forest management planning process that allows licensees the flexibility to meet customer demand, encourages local community involvement, and shifts government focus from office approvals to field results. Building strong working relationships with government agencies, First Nations, the local community, and non-government organizations is fundamental to the success of the project.

All strategic and operational planning, approvals, and permit requirements governing forest management activities on Crown tenures will be examined. The number of plans and permits requiring approval will be reduced from five to one.

It is proposed that the timber supply analysis and management plan objectives be separated. Management objectives would be jointly developed by the licensee, Ministry of Forests (MOF) and Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks (MOELP), in consultation with a public advisory group and First Nations.

The permit to cut will become a notification document where cutting could commence after 24 hours, unless otherwise notified by MOF district staff. A mechanism to ensure communication between district staff and licensees during the 24-hour notification period will be developed jointly during the next phase of the project.

There will be no road permits -- roads will be constructed as per Standard Operating Procedures to standards that meet or exceed the Forest Practices Code.

Silviculture prescriptions (SPs) will become internal documents available to the public and government agencies on request. SPs will still require the signature and seal of a Registered Professional Forester, who will be accountable under the law. A team of Registered Professional Foresters, including representatives from Weyerhaeuser, independent SP contractors, other licensees, and the Ministry of Forests, will review existing SP content requirements and propose changes.

The planning focus will be shifted from the cutblock to a landscape-level approach. The new plan presentation will identify non-timber resources and constrained areas identified through consultation with local MOF, MOELP and Department of Fisheries and Oceans

(DFO) staff, taking into account the goals and values established for the TFL through a public advisory group.

The process will combine Draft Landscape Units and Biodiversity Emphasis Options developed by the MOF and MOELP with Weyerhaeuser's proposed Forest Stewardship Zones.

Standard Operating Procedures (SPOs) will be developed and geared specifically to the type and level of constraint. The SOPs will direct road construction and harvesting activities to ensure the environmental protection and forest stewardship objectives of the Forest Practices Code are met or exceeded.

This project will complement the Weyerhaeuser Coastal B.C. "Forestry Project" commitments, including landscape level zoning and variable retention harvesting. Weyerhaeuser is committed to achieving 100% variable retention by the end of 2003.

A key component of the pilot project will be the formation and participation of a Public Advisory Group (PAG). The 12-member PAG, comprised of a cross section of the community, including local government, contractors, local business, recreation groups, and environmental groups, will act in an advisory role, providing input into the development, implementation, monitoring and continual improvement of the project.

The proposal will shift agency, public and First Nations participation in the planning process from reviewing and commenting on proposed plans to active consultation during the planning process. The plan will be an ongoing proactive consultation process, updated as required, and open to public input at any time. It will not have a fixed term.

The new planning process will promote environmental stewardship, and meet or exceed the environmental standards of the Forest Practices Code. The plan will be placed on a webpage and made accessible in digital format.

Weyerhaeuser's Coastal B.C. operations are committed to achieving certification to the ISO 14001 environmental management system standard. Stillwater Timberland's target date for achieving ISO 14001 certification is Dec. 31, 2000. Stillwater expects to achieve CSA certification by Dec. 31, 2001.

Development of Environmental Management Systems and Standard Operating Procedures are an integral requirement for ISO certification. The public advisory group formed for the pilot project will follow guidelines established for public advisory groups under the CSA certification process. It is anticipated the same public advisory group will participate in the CSA certification process in the year 2001.

As provided for in the enabling legislation, the pilot project will include a review of forest practice regulations. This review may result in proposed changes to the regulations. The review will be a joint process involving MOF and MOELP to ensure that

the environmental intent of the Code is met or exceeded, and that the agencies can continue to meet their mandates.

Monitoring and evaluation criteria, and an associated compliance and enforcement regime, will be developed for the project. The proposed public advisory group will identify key community values and a set of indicators to measure results achieved. Results will be reviewed and reported annually.

Monitoring and evaluation criteria will be developed jointly with local MOF, MOELP and DFO staff. There will also be First Nations involvement, either through a seat on the public advisory group or through a separate consultation process. A compliance and enforcement regime will be built into the new regulations governing forest management operations over the proposed life of the project. A 10-year monitoring and evaluation period is anticipated after implementation.