

Riverside Pilot Project – Summary Description

The purpose of the Riverside Forest Products Limited project is to develop a sustainable total resource management model that will improve forest land stewardship and make the *Forest Practices Code of B.C. Act* (FPC) more efficient without increasing environmental risks.

The objectives of the project are to:

- a) develop, implement and field test a dynamic ecosystem-based, sustainable, total resource management model that will make it possible to operationally manage all forest and non-forest resources in the most efficient and cost-effective manner, while maintaining or enhancing the productivity of the land base.
- b) operationally field test the administrative and regulatory flexibility inherent in the FPC, as well as different methods of applying the FPC; and
- c) field test amendments to the FPC.

The term of the project will initially be five (5) years, recognizing that the impacts of some strategies will not be fully determined for several years. The project study area is Riverside's TFL 49 (approximately 145 000 ha), which is located on the west side of Okanagan Lake in the Southern Interior.

The Riverside project will be managed by a 'Project Management Team' comprised of representatives from Riverside Forest Products Ltd., the Ministry of Forests, and BC Environment. The Project Management Team will be assisted by a local Advisory Panel.

The Project Management Team will be responsible and accountable for:

- a) collating existing forest and non-forest resource information relevant to TFL 49;
- b) preparing a 'Project Management Plan' in conjunction with the local Advisory Panel;
- c) providing public access to planning documents and assessments, and other records that the regulations require to be prepared for the project;
- d) providing for public review and comment regarding forest practices carried out under the project;
- e) providing for monitoring and evaluation criteria for the project;
- f) reviewing recommendations from the local Advisory Panel for implementation; and
- g) managing, monitoring and making provision for auditing the project.

The local Advisory Panel will be responsible for:

- a) appointing and assigning sub-working groups and specialists for the project;
- b) establishing the criteria, monitoring, auditing and evaluation systems to evaluate project results and ensuring that adaptive management is applied;
- c) communicating the results of analyses, and providing ongoing advice, recommendations and guidance to the Project Management Team;

- d) communicating with the public and other interested parties on the activities being carried out under the project, including preparing a local 'Public Involvement/Communication Plan' and sponsoring stakeholder reviews.

The local Advisory Panel will be comprised of local representatives of forest users and forest user groups (local environmental groups, outdoor recreation, naturalists, the ranching community, Irrigation Districts, etc.); labour; the City of Kelowna; the Westbank, Okanagan and Upper Nicola First Nations; UBC; the Canadian Forestry Service; ecological and hydrological consultants; operational staff from Riverside; BC Environment; the Ministry of Forests; and stakeholders.

Project deliverables will include:

- a) 'Project Progress Reports' submitted annually throughout the term of the project to the Ministers of Forests; Environment, Lands and Parks; and Energy and Mines, and, upon request, to the public;
- b) A detailed 'Total Resource Management Report' that outlines:
- the total resource management model, community watershed management strategies, and the administrative and regulatory framework adopted for implementation in the project study area;
 - the results of operationally field testing the administrative and regulatory flexibility inherent in the existing FPC to achieve project objectives;
 - the results of operationally field testing changes to the FPC and other legislation and policies to provide incentives for practicing ecosystem-based, sustainable, total resource management; reduce operational costs; and progress from a process-oriented FPC to a less complex, results-oriented FPC.
 - a 'picture' of the forest estate in the project study area in 10 year increments over one rotation;
 - socio-economic, environmental, and wood supply analyses of the total resource management model, and identification of the administrative and regulatory framework that will improve the management and administration of area-based tenures;
 - a listing of implementation costs for the total resource management model, community watershed strategies, and anticipated changes to the administrative and regulatory framework for area-based tenures; and
 - the anticipated operational and other cost savings and benefits as a result of achieving the objectives of the project.

Implementation of the sustainable total resource management model and the proposed administrative and regulatory framework will commence in the spring of 2000 and be incorporated into Forest Development Plans for TFL 49, and the SBFEP within TFL 49, as soon as it is practical to do so.

Ongoing monitoring of the project will occur using a bench marking approach that will outline project objectives and track achievement of the objectives through the use of performance measures. An independent consultant will audit and report performance annually in the Project Progress Reports.