



Defined Forest Area Management North Coast Timber Supply Area

PUBLIC DISCUSSION PAPER 2004

Introduction

The Ministry of Forests (MOF) is developing a policy framework to establish the obligations and opportunities for collaborative forest management within the province's timber supply areas (TSA). This framework is commonly referred to as the Defined Forest Area Management or DFAM initiative. Under DFAM, Forest Companies and BC Timber Sales (BCTS) will assume collective responsibility for timber supply analysis and forest health activities within each timber supply area.

Although DFAM imposes a collective responsibility, it does not impact on harvesting rights or obligations associated with each forest license of forest tenure holder. The chief forester will continue to hold responsibility for the determination of the allowable annual cut (AAC) as per the current legislation. DFAM is intended to provide a foundation for more advanced stewardship activities such as strategic and tactical level planning, enhanced forest management and certification.

Under the proposed legislation, DFAM participants in each TSA will be required to collaboratively carry out a timber supply analysis at least once every 5 years.

The DFAM analysis will attempt to model current harvesting and silviculture practices using the best available inventories to determine how they affect short and long-term timber supply. Upon completion of the analysis, the Chief Forester will consider the results, public input, related economic, environmental and social factors in determining the appropriate allowable annual cut (AAC) for the North Coast TSA.

As part of his determination, the Chief Forester may identify areas where improved information is required for future timber supply forecasts.

Timber Supply Review Schedule

The North Coast DFAM *Data Package* was released in March 2004 and is available at the local MOF district office, the Prince Rupert library and available on the MOF website. The Data Package contains the specific details on the assumptions used to forecast timber supply. British Columbians are encouraged to submit comments on the Data Package during the 60-day public review period, which ends on May 20th, 2004

A detailed analysis of the Data Package assumptions will be completed following the public review. It is expected that the Chief Forester will determine the new AAC in the spring of 2005, after considering all relevant information, including public input. His determination will be put forward in a *Rationale Statement* at the end of the North Coast DFAM process.

Description of the TSA

The North Coast TSA is located along the coast of northwestern British Columbia and is administered by the North Coast Forest District office in Prince Rupert. The TSA covers approximately 1.91 million hectares and includes the communities of Prince Rupert, Port Simpson, Metlakatla, Kitkatla and Hartley Bay.



Forest Land Resources

North Coast forests are rich in natural resources including timber, water, fish and wildlife.

The rugged Coast Mountain terrain is dominated by western hemlock and western red cedar with rich valley bottoms along the Skeena River dominated by cottonwood.

This diverse landscape is home to a variety of terrestrial and marine wildlife, including black-tailed deer, grizzly and black bears, wolves, sea mammals, raptors, and sea birds.

Some of the most beautiful and productive rivers are located in the North Coast TSA, and are popular destinations for anglers pursuing Salmon, Steelhead, and various species of Dolly Varden char.

The Khutzeymateen Provincial Park, Canada's first grizzly bear sanctuary, offers exceptional wildlife viewing opportunities.

Other recreation opportunities abound in forest and marine environments, particularly salt water angling for salmon and halibut, along with ocean kayaking, scuba diving and big-game hunting.

The North Coast forms part of the Inside Passage, a world renowned cruise ship route enjoyed by almost one million visitors a year.

Regional Economy

The North Coast TSA is one of the few areas in the province, outside of the lower mainland where forest-based employment is exceeded by other industrial sectors. Historically the largest commercial sector has been commercial fishing and fish processing, followed by pulp manufacturing, lumber manufacturing and timber harvesting.

Within the last decade, the economy in the North Coast has been hard hit by a downturn in the commercial fishing sector due to catch restrictions and competition from farmed salmon.

A further, very significant blow to the Northwest economy occurred in 2001 with the temporary closure of the Skeena Cellulose Inc. pulp mill at Watson Island and associated sawmills and logging operations in Terrace and Hazelton.

Prior to the cessation of the New Skeena Operations, the forest industry's manufacturing and harvesting sectors generated over 500 direct and indirect jobs within the TSA, and over 1000 additional direct and indirect jobs in other parts of the Province.

Land Use Planning

There is currently a Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) in progress, which is expected to be presented to Government for review by August of 2004. Reduction of the legislative targets from the LRMP process will only be considered through sensitivity analyses until such time that cabinet has approved and implemented the higher level plans.

First Nations

The North Coast TSA lies within the traditional territories of several First Nations. During the past 10 years, First Nations within the North Coast TSA have expressed concern over the management of cultural heritage resources in timber harvesting areas. To address this concern, inventories have been carried out to identify areas with high or moderate *potential* for archaeological sites or resources. Within these areas, detailed archaeological impact assessments must be carried out prior to harvesting to ensure cultural resources are identified and protected.

In addition to these initiatives, traditional use inventories have been initiated by a number of First Nations. These have not been formally released due to the confidentiality associated with the highly sensitive information. The impacts of these inventories on potential timber supply are not known at this time but will be considered in future timber supply reviews.

The Nisga'a Treaty resulted in the formal removal of 104,273 hectares of land from the North Coast TSA. This land base reduction will be accounted for in this timber supply review process.

YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED

Establishing the AAC is an important decision that requires well-informed and thoughtful public input. The public is encouraged and invited to provide input on the Data Package by May 20th, 2004. These documents will be available at the office locations listed at the end of this document.

The *impact* of a change in the AAC to the local economy will depend on, among other things, the health of other industrial sectors such as commercial fishing and tourism.

A summary of public comments will be attached to the Chief Forester's AAC *Rationale Statement* and will be available from the Ministry of Forests, North Coast District office when the AAC determination is announced in the spring of 2005.



Background Timber Supply Review Information

The Chief Forester's Responsibility

Determining the AAC for public forestlands in British Columbia is the responsibility of the province's Chief Forester. Section 8 of the *Forest Act* requires the Chief Forester to consider the following factors:

1. The rate of timber production that may be sustained *from* the area, taking into account:
 - The composition of the forest and its expected rate of growth
 - The time that it will take the forest to regenerate
 - Silviculture treatments, including reforestation
 - Standards of timber utilization, and
 - Constraints on the amount of timber that may be produced due to use of the forest for other purposes.
2. The short and long-term implications of alternative harvest rates to the province.
3. The nature, production capabilities and timber requirements of established and proposed processing facilities.
4. The economic and social objectives of the Crown for the area, region and province as expressed by the Minister of Forests.
5. Abnormal insect or disease infestations, and major timber salvage programs planned for the area. Only those factors that can be measured will be included in the analyses.

DFAM Contact Information

For more information, contact and/or mail your comments to the following:

DFAM Chair

Viking Ecosystem Consultants
#202-257 3rd Avenue West
Prince Rupert, B.C.
V8J 1L2

Attention: Davide Cuzner
Tel. (250) 622-2302
Email. cuzner@citytel.net

For copies of the Data Package, please contact one of the following addresses:

Ministry of Forests

North Coast Forest District Office
125 Market Place
Prince Rupert, B.C.
V8J 1B9

Triumph Timber

729 – 2nd Avenue West
Prince Rupert, B.C.

International Forest Products

#206-4716 Lazelle Avenue
Terrace, B.C.
V8G 1T2