

The Balance

Inside B.C. Forests

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Photo: Doug Jury

Mountain caribou are a unique population of woodland caribou found almost exclusively in B.C.

BRITISH COLUMBIA GETS NEW CHIEF FORESTER

PRINCE GEORGE – Jim Snetsinger is British Columbia's new chief forester, an independent position responsible for ensuring the province's Crown forests are managed sustainably.

A professional forester, Snetsinger has worked for government and industry in B.C. and was most recently regional executive director for the Northern Interior Forest Region in Prince George. He will remain in Prince George where his office is located at the University of Northern British Columbia, a leader in forestry research.

The chief forester is an independent decision maker who determines at least once every five years how much wood can be harvested from each of the province's management units. A determination can be postponed for five more years if the annual allowable cut is not expected to change substantially. As well as his role as chief forester, Snetsinger will also be responsible for the ministry's Forest Science Program, and oversee the ongoing implementation of the new results-based Forest and Range Practices Act and regulations.

Snetsinger replaces Larry Pedersen, who is moving to another executive position in the Ministry of Forests after serving 10 years as chief forester, one of the longest terms since the position was created in 1912.

Watch the next issue of the Balance for a feature interview with Jim Snetsinger.

NEW OFFICE SUPPORTS SPECIES RECOVERY

VICTORIA — British Columbia's new species-at-risk co-ordinator has hit the ground running, and aims to accelerate progress on the recovery of endangered species such as the mountain caribou, spotted owl and marbled murrelet. Provincial co-ordinator Kevin Jardine will use his budget of \$800,000 this fiscal year to provide the resources needed to ensure the scientific research that is essential for any recovery plan is completed.

"With the mountain caribou, we will support recovery implementation groups so they can complete action plans for subpopulations, and then develop a provincial recovery plan" says Jardine. "Once we know what can be done biologically, we can add the socio-economic considerations so government is able to make decisions."

While the scientific research continues, the species-at-risk co-ordinator will also work with provincial government agencies and the forest industry to review what is being done to protect mountain caribou habitat now, and look for new opportunities. As a project management professional, Jardine has worked his way through complex issues in the past, including support for provincial treaty negotiations and development of integrated watershed restoration plans. "We know more about mountain caribou than almost any other species in B.C. yet we have not been able to bring together all the information so decisions can be made. My office will apply the resources needed to move processes forward."

Mountain caribou, an ecotype of the woodland caribou, live almost exclusively in the mountain ranges of southeastern and central B.C. Their preference for gentle mountain slopes creates the potential for conflicts with human activities such as timber harvesting and winter recreation, and their populations are declining. Just before the new species-at-risk office was announced, B.C.'s independent Forest Practices Board had called for urgent action to achieve long-term mountain caribou recovery, recommending a number of regulatory, research and communications measures to government, industry and recreation users.

The BC Market Outreach Network has posted information about the mountain caribou on its website at www.bcforestinformation.com/PDFs/FSA-039-E.pdf

INSIDE

BC responds to beetle epidemic	2
New CEO enthusiastic about FII's work	2
Network unveils new website format	2
TFL 14 certified under FSC-BC	3
Building green with wood	3
Audit shows sound practices	3
Promoting value-added products	4
Forest Briefs	4

NETWORK UNVEILS NEW WEBSITE FORMAT

VANCOUVER – The BC Market Outreach Network has a new look for its www.bcforestinformation.com website.

“Although the website is less than two years old, we added so much new information that the original format needed to be revised so visitors could find the information they need,” said Karen Brandt, vice-president of market communications for the Network. The website is available in English, German and Japanese, and most of the more than 90,000 visitors to date are from outside of Canada.

The biggest changes include:

- posting Forest Facts backgrounders under major themes;
- providing links to information about B.C.’s forest regions from the home page;
- featuring the popular interactive maps more prominently, and
- adding more than 150 images to the photo gallery featuring B.C.’s forest practices, its forest industry and the province’s breath-taking scenery.



The revised website went live in early November, shortly after five new fact sheets were introduced – mountain caribou, managing B.C.’s boreal forest, building green with B.C. wood, protecting scenic vistas and community-based land use planning. The Network also posted Japanese and German summaries of a recent comprehensive study that found B.C. has some of the most stringent forest policies on earth.

NEW CEO ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT FII’S WORK

VANCOUVER – Ken Baker, Forestry Innovation Investment’s new interim CEO, has a special appreciation for the work done by FII and its many partners.

“Our forests are fundamental to the environmental, economic, and cultural well being of British Columbia, which is why we strive to ensure long-term conservation of their many values,” says Baker. “FII activities support many aspects of this important work and, through the BC Market Outreach Network, we also make sure international customers and others know the facts about what is happening on the ground.”

Baker has worked for 33 years as a forester for industry and government in B.C., including five years as deputy chief forester. He has had a keen interest in FII’s progress since it was created in 2002. “FII’s partnerships with industry, the federal government, and others are invaluable, with innovative programs such as Dream Home China and the Network. We share a common interest in identifying the kinds of products our markets want, and in helping customers learn what we have to offer. I am very pleased with the opportunity to contribute to this effort.”

B.C. RESPONDS TO BEETLE EPIDEMIC

VICTORIA — British Columbia’s independent chief forester has substantially increased annual allowable harvests in the three north-central B.C. timber supply areas most impacted by the mountain pine beetle epidemic.



In announcing his decision, then-chief forester Larry Pedersen said the increased harvest will focus on those pine forests with moderate to high levels of mortality to capture economic value from dead trees, maintain the highest environmental standards possible, speed up regeneration and restore the productivity of impacted forests. The allowable annual cuts in the Prince George, Quesnel and Lakes timber supply areas increased 27 per cent to about 23.4 million cubic metres a year, effective Oct. 1.

Earlier, the province’s Forest Practices Board had recommended that in areas where the beetle infestation has reached epidemic levels, the harvest should focus on trees attacked by beetles one to three years ago to reduce beetle populations and maximize recovery of economically salvageable wood. This board’s special report included an audit that found activities in a beetle-infested landscape unit in the Vanderhoof Forest District complied in all significant respects with legislation.

The principal cause of the current catastrophic outbreak is a very abundant source of mature pine trees. Recent hot, dry summers and mild winters have allowed the infestation to grow rapidly in these host trees to become the most extensive mountain pine beetle infestation in B.C.’s recorded history.

High-quality wood can be harvested for a number of years after the beetles have killed a tree. It remains structurally sound although it may have a blue or grey stain as a result of the fungus carried by the beetles. Research has found that the fungus stain does not affect the wood’s strength, its gluing characteristics or its ability to be finished so it can be used for B.C.’s wide variety of high-quality construction grade products. There are no risks associated with transporting the manufactured lumber.

TFL 14 CERTIFIED UNDER FSC-B.C.

CRANBROOK – Tree Farm Licence 14 in southeastern British Columbia has become the largest forest in the province to be certified under the Forest Stewardship Council-B.C. standard.

The approximately 142,000-hectare (350,000-acre) forest, managed by Tembec under a Crown land tenure issued by the B.C. government, is part of the traditional territory of the Ktunaxa Kinbasket First Nation in the Rocky Mountain trench and borders the Columbia River and three distinctive protected areas.

Frank Dottori, Tembec president and CEO, says the TFL 14 certification brings the company closer to its goal of obtaining FSC certification of the more than 16 million hectares (40 million acres) of Canadian forest under its management by the end of 2005.

It also increases the amount of land certified in B.C. At the end of June 2004, about 22.4 million hectares (55.3 million acres), almost a quarter of B.C.'s total land base, was certified under one of three sustainable forest management processes – Canadian Standards Association's Sustainable Forest Management Standard, Sustainable Forestry Initiative and FSC. All involve independent, qualified third-party audits that measure the company's planning, practices, systems and performance against predetermined standards.

BUILDING GREEN WITH WOOD

CORVALLIS, Oregon – A recent study by the not-for-profit Consortium for Research on Renewable Industrial Materials (www.corrim.org) provides further evidence that wood is one of the most environmentally sensitive building materials for home construction. The research found that wood uses less overall energy than other products, causes fewer air and water impacts, and does a better job of the carbon sequestration that can help address global warming.

James Wilson, a professor of wood science and engineering at Oregon State University, and vice-president of the research consortium, said the information will help consumers and government agencies identify construction techniques and materials for homes and other structures that minimize environmental impacts.

After some experimentation with new building approaches such as concrete or steel in recent decades, Wilson said, it appears that for environmental purposes builders and consumers may return to one of the most ancient, tried-and-true materials of them all – wood.

The research showed that wood framing used 17 per cent less energy than steel construction for a typical house built in Minnesota, and 16 per cent less energy than a house using concrete construction in Atlanta.

The BC Market Outreach Network has posted a fact sheet on its website at <http://www.bcforestinformation.com/PDFs/FSA-040-E.pdf>, outlining the many environmental benefits of building with British Columbia forest products.

A FIRST-HAND LOOK AT B.C. FORESTS



VANCOUVER – *The BC Market Outreach Network's welcome mat is always out for customers who want to see for themselves how B.C. forests are managed and the versatility of wood products. Since last April, the Network has arranged 11 forestry tours for more than 100 international customers, media, government, architects and others from as far away as Germany, China and Japan. The tours included visits to active harvesting sites and mills on Vancouver Island, the Sunshine Coast, and the northern interior, as well as construction sites. If you are interested in visiting B.C. and would like to see our forests first hand, please contact us at 604 685-7507.*

AUDIT SHOWS SOUND PRACTICES

VICTORIA – A Forest Practices Board audit has found that Canadian Forest Products Ltd. demonstrated sound forest practices and was fully compliant with forest practices legislation in one of its licence operations near Chetwynd in British Columbia's boreal forest.

"Canfor's approach to harvesting is reflective of natural disturbance patterns, and is being planned and conducted to address biodiversity and visual quality values," board chair Bruce Fraser said. "The board commends Canfor for its performance, and for respecting the spirit and intent of local land-use plans on a voluntary basis."

The audit examined the company's planning, field activities and obligations related to operational planning, timber harvesting, road deactivation, silviculture and fire protection in the licence area in northeast B.C. where the boreal forest is shaped by natural disturbances, including huge wildfires.

The Forest Practices Board is required to carry out periodic independent audits of government and forest company compliance with forest practices legislation. More information on managing the boreal forest in B.C. is available on the BC Market Outreach Network's website at www.bcforestinformation.com/PDFs/FSA-038-E.pdf

FOREST briefs

B.C. PILOTS AREA-BASED HARVEST

PRINCE GEORGE – Tree Farm Licence 57 in the Clayoquot Sound area on the west coast of Vancouver Island is the first forest management unit in British Columbia to have its allowable cut based on the area harvested rather than the timber volume, which is expected to improve public understanding of harvest regulation and complement land use planning. The new allowable harvest for TFL 57, which is held by Lisaak Forest Resources Ltd. and covers 87,393 hectares (about 216,00 acres), is 381 hectares (941.4 acres) a year and reflects recommendations in the 1995 Clayoquot Sound scientific panel report for values such as biodiversity, scenery, old-growth forest, and species at risk such as marbled murrelet.

COASTAL FIRST NATION OFFERED LICENCE

BELLA COOLA – The Bella Coola Nuxalk Resource Society has been invited to apply for a five-year probationary community forest licence, providing 30,000 cubic metres of timber annually from the mid-coast timber supply area. The society is made up of members from the Central Coast regional district, local businesses and will be working with the Nuxalk First Nation. Nuxalk First Nation Chief Anfinn Siwallace called the opportunity “an important step in regaining our ancestral territory”, adding that control of forest management will help the whole community thrive. Through community forest agreements, the B.C. government transfers decision making to communities that wish to participate in the stewardship of local forest resources.

DREAM HOME CHINA CENTRE NEARS COMPLETION

SHANGHAI – Forestry Innovation Investment, in partnership with Shanghai-based development corporation Jin Qiao Group, is nearing completion of its 888-square-metre (about 9,560-square-feet) Dream Home China demonstration centre in Shanghai, with an official grand opening scheduled for Jan. 25, 2005. “The demonstration centre is going to be a beautiful showpiece illustrating structural and finishing applications of a wide variety of forest products from British Columbia,” says FII CEO Ken Baker. The multi-purpose demonstration centre, the centrepiece of the Dream Home China project, will house B.C. forestry associations and others from the forest sector, providing a central location of expertise on wood-frame construction and products. The Dream Home China project will also showcase single-family homes, townhouses and low-rise apartments in the near future. Information about the full project is available at www.dreamhomechina.com

PROMOTING VALUE-ADDED PRODUCTS

VANCOUVER – BC Wood is planning its second Global Buyers Mission, building on the success of the first event in September 2004 where more than 50 Canadian value-added wood products manufacturers met with qualified buyers from 12 countries.

“BC Wood’s Global Buyers Mission has been a tremendous success that outstripped our expectations,” says Bill Downing, CEO of the trade association. “International buyers learned about new products and new suppliers, and Canadian manufacturers forged new relationships with contacts from around the world.”

The three-day, invitation-only mission used a networking/tradeshow format to bring together 55 pre-qualified buyers from China, Japan, Korea, Europe, Canada and the United States and Canadian manufacturers of products that included finishing materials, building supplies and remanufacturing products. Translators were on hand to ensure smooth communication.

The 2005 Global Trade Mission will be held at the Telus Whistler Conference Centre in Whistler, B.C., from Sept. 15 to 17. Further information and travel incentives for buyers are available from BC Wood at 604 882-7100 or info@bcwood.com



RAIL LINE IMPROVES SERVICE

B.C. Forests Minister Mike de Jong (right) and Minister of State for Forestry Operations Roger Harris celebrate the new Chicago Express Line, which will integrate rail services and allow shippers to move goods from Prince George in northern British Columbia to Chicago in three and a half days – two days faster than before. The new line, a direct result of the \$1-billion BC Rail/CN Investment Partnership, will improve efficiency and reduce costs, which in turn will help to strengthen northern resource industries.

The Balance is produced by Forestry Innovation Investment Ltd.
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If you have an idea for a story you would like to submit, contact us at info@bcmon.ca
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www.bcforestinformation.com and www.bcforestproducts.com