



# Future is bright for woodlot program

By SARA GRADY

The year is drawing to a close and it's been a rewarding one for BC's woodlot program. Thirty-three new woodlot licences (almost 75,000 m<sup>3</sup>) have been advertised to date bringing the total number in BC to almost 870. Recognition of excellent forest management practised on licensed woodlots was acknowledged at the Annual General Meeting in Quesnel this past September and holds the promise of even greater success in 2011.

Pat Bell, Minister of Forests, Range and Mines was in attendance at the AGM and, in addition to handing out honours to three long-time licensees, announced the introduction of an exciting new initiative, the Minister of Forests and Range Awards of Excellence for Woodlot Management.

Alex Hartford, Anne Davidson and Rod Blake were the first to be honoured by Bell during the AGM. They were each given \$500 in recognition of the "true legacies" they had created in woodlot management, a sector of the forest industry for which the Minister has advocated so strongly during his tenure in the Legislature.

Mark Clark, President of the Federation, said that, "For these woodlot owners, like most of us, their woodlots are a lifetime undertaking. They manage their woodlots for values that are important today, but also with an eye to the future."

This new, annual award program seeks to reward other woodlot licensees for similar contributions, and raise the standard of business practices for operations throughout the province. The successful candidates – one from the Coast, Southern Interior and North-



Anne Davidson receives one of the first ever Minister of Forests and Range Awards of Excellence for Woodlot Management from Minister Pat Bell. SARA GRADY PHOTO

ern Interior Regions – will each receive \$2500, with the 'top performer' receiving a further \$1000.

Licensees have the opportunity to nominate a fellow woodlotter or apply on their own behalf, and the submissions will be assessed based on three core categories: site productivity, improved utilization and streamlined administration.

**Site productivity** includes elements such as planting genetically improved stock, using innovative silviculture systems, reclaiming or rehabilitating old roads and landings to promote productivity, and incremental activities such as spacing and fertilization.

Under the category of **improved utilization**, the panel will consider such practices as sending waste wood to bio-energy facilities, selling wood to non-typical markets, as well as

harvesting and marketing non-timber forest products. Licensees operating a private milling site, accessing markets for different species, fully utilizing woodlot resources by harvesting on steep slopes, wet ground or accessing lumber from public interface zones will also be awarded points.

Finally, the evaluation committee will consider steps taken to **streamline administration**. Whether they've introduced time-saving measures in the management of your operation or in communication and reporting procedures with the Ministry, points will be awarded to licensees for increasing efficiency and cutting operational costs. If the procedures they've developed benefit other woodlots, or the delivery of the Woodlot program itself, their contribution will be given higher ranking.

# Forest research is critically important

By HAROLD MACY

For more than eighty years the Research Branch of the BC Forest Service has proudly served the province and the world with internationally-respected work. The ground-breaking research and development of the biogeoclimatic ecological classification system is cited and used around the globe, as are the growth and yield programs, the billion tree reforestation techniques and many others.



Harold Macy

Research into forests requires long periods of data collection, trials, experiments and replications to produce sound and reasonably accurate data. It is not something that should be influenced by the short-term goals dictated by the political process.

At a time when more research is needed to address issues of the day such as carbon capture, climate change, and an increasing demand for wood from a smaller land base, it has been decided to disband this venerable institution.

Research is not about short term economic gain, but rather long term economic drivers to address issues such as forests devastated by the mountain pine beetle. While the forest industry and the health of our forests may be challenged these days, we still must tend our forests so they are of value to the various stakeholders for a long time to come.

How will we be able to utilize our magnificent forests if we do not continue to unravel its secrets?

# Christmas trees a BC tradition

A real Christmas tree is part of the holiday tradition in BC. Did you know that BC produces about 900,000 Christmas trees each year? About 75 percent are harvested from native stands, mostly on private lands in the

Kootenay area. There are also about 450 growers who have plantations in the Fraser Valley, on Vancouver Island and the Okanagan, Thompson and

Kootenay regions, as well as on Hydro right-of-ways.

Christmas trees that are harvested from native stands are produced using stump culture. A tree is cut leaving the bottom 2 or 3

branches near the ground. A shoot may grow from near the cut or the uppermost of these remaining branches may turn up to form a new tree top. This type of culture has been practised in BC for 40 to 50 years.

Recently there have been improved cultural practices such as fertilizing and shearing to improve the look and marketability of the trees. Stump culture is a sustainable Christmas tree production system.

The number of trees produced on plantations is rapidly increasing in all re-

gions of BC. Seedlings are planted and grown to harvest in 6 to 10 years.

Story courtesy of Ministry of Agriculture and Lands: [www.agf.gov.bc.ca](http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca)



Shawn Flynn and Dave McBride of Greenmax Resources run a tree farm and woodlot that acts as a classroom for Grade 9 students participating in project-based learning, where students learn a broad range of subjects through hands-on training. Here students load their first Christmas trees for sale.



PHOTO BY WIM TWINKLE

## Merry Christmas!

*Wishing you all the happiness of the Christmas Season and Best Wishes for the New Year*



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