



Future directions considered at AGM

By SARA GRADY

Licenseses from woodlots across BC gathered in Quesnel for the 13th Annual AGM to address issues ranging from invasive species to carbon credits and environmental stewardship and got some great hospitality and entertainment wrapped up in the deal.

It was a fitting venue for this year's meeting: the Cariboo Regional District was recently named 2010-2011 Forest Capital of Canada by the Canadian Forestry Association, an honour that recognizes the innovation and dedication of the area's forest practitioners.

Friday's agenda was chock full for delegates. After a hearty breakfast and warm welcome from Quesnel Mayor Mary Sjostrom – the first civic leader to pass a Wood First by-law – delegates dove right into business with committee reports and updates from all quarters.

The afternoon Keynote Speaker, Antony Marcil, delivered a thought-provoking talk on the merits of the Forest Stewardship Council, a certification program designed to harmonize economic, social and environmental imperatives in the industry. Members were interested to learn that a considerable number of standards set by this international watchdog are already entrenched practices in the BC Woodlot program.

Pat Bell, Minister of Forests and Range, was on hand to recognize three licensees from Williams Lake, Vanderhoof and Quadra Island for their lasting contribution to woodlot management. The honours, awarded at the Friday night banquet, came with a \$500 dol-



Ted Traer talks about the process of "sugaring off" — tapping his birch trees to produce syrup. Moose Meadows Farm, run by Ted and his family, is an extremely ambitious example of a value-added woodlot operation. SARA GRADY PHOTO

lar award for each recipient. Rob Blake, Anne Davidson and Alex Hartford were lauded by Bell.

"A woodlot licensee is a tree planter, harvester, miller and small business manager – all at the same time," said Bell. "While all licensees have long-term relationships with the forest they manage and the communities they live in, the three I recognized have cre-

ated true legacies."

Bell also announced that the first of the "Minister of Forests and Range Award of Excellence for Woodlot Management" will be presented in 2011, with a total of up to \$8,500 awarded across the three forest regions. Successful candidates will be recognized for accomplishments and contributions in site productivity, improved utilization and streamlined administration. Members can check out the details and get submission forms at www.woodlot.bc.ca.

Members of the Quesnel Woodlot Association were also handing out cash at Friday's festivities. The Quesnel Community Foundation, an organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for its citizens, was the benefactor of a \$50,000 donation from the local chapter of the federation.

Field tours on Saturday provided members with opportunities to enjoy the beautiful terrain

and examine the practices of local woodlot licensees. Guests on the West tour got a snapshot of some creative families pursuing value-added ventures on their property, while those going East explored woodlots dealing with fire management and invasive species issues, travelling north to Barkerville as storyteller John Massier entertained them with local lore along the way.

Licensee positive on long-term future

By DEBORAH GREAVES

In the fall of 2009, Quesnel woodlot licensee Chris Elden was permitted to take his first harvest of mostly Douglas Fir from his recently awarded woodlot, which occupies land that spreads over the shoulders of Chocolate Mountain.

There are many challenges for all forest managers in the Forestry Capital of Canada these days, even before the beginning of the many fires in the area this year. The log market has been poor in 2010, with low demand for saw logs at profitable prices, said Elden, and plywood can't be made from beetle-killed trees.

Despite both the smoke and uncertainty hanging over the entire Cariboo Regional District in which Woodlot 0527 lies, Chris Elden is hopeful for the future.

"I'm bullish on the forest industry. I believe it will change, evolve and survive. New economic bases are slowly being built."

That said, Elden worries that after the beetle-killed wood is no longer useable, BC may have problems providing the volume of wood that may be demanded by the US, and other markets such as China.

Quesnel's forests are 75% pine, much of which has been killed.

"The forest industry here will survive by doing more with less, and by diversifying, such as making more diverse products with smaller units of wood, and making products using new processes," said Elden.

The BC government, he said, is looking for ways to address the coming shortage of trees, and has begun to focus funding on



ELDEN: "I'm bullish on the forest industry. I believe it will change, evolve and survive. New economic bases are slowly being built." PHOTO DEBORAH GREAVES

growing more through innovative and intensive forest management.

As a Director of The Woodlot Product Development Council, Elden is committed to sifting through mountains of available information to determine what has potential, ask if it's applicable to woodlots and, if so, determine how the WPDC can support its development.

"How do we apply all of this information in a manner that benefits the environment and the species that it supports? The greatest advantage for survival of any system is diversity," he said. "Woodlots have this on both a micro- and macro- scale due to their spatial and biotic variability and the individuality of each licensee and their management style. There continues to be many forces that

work to decrease this diversity, but there are countering forces that can foster and increase it."

Though he holds a license to manage Woodlot 0527 on behalf of the people of all BC and to profit from the careful harvest of its trees, Chris Elden is clearly a man who feels the license to this forest area has values beyond the financial possibilities.

The Woodlot Product Development Council

The primary work of the WPDC involves:

- Guiding and supporting the Federation in the many initiatives that it undertakes to support the survival and prosperity of woodlots
- Leading and supporting the development or expansion of the products and services that woodlots/forests can produce or have the potential to provide
- Filtering through the almost endless potential of opportunities to find ones that have real potential for woodlots



FEDERATION OF BC WOODLOT ASSOCIATIONS

381 Pheasant Road • Williams Lake, BC, V2G 5A9
Tel (250) 398-7646 • Toll Free: 1-866-345-8733
Email: gen_manager@woodlot.bc.ca
www.woodlot.bc.ca

WOODLOT PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

THE WOODLAND ALMANAC
Box 10033, Prince George, BC V2K 5Y1
Tel 1-888-925-9995 • Fax (250) 962-9199
Toll Free 1-888-925-9995 • E-mail: cjmclary@shaw.ca