

# THE WOODLAND ALMANAC

Summer 2007

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WOODLOT ASSOCIATIONS



THE WOODLOT PRODUCT  
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

## A family for the trees: Carving a future out of the forest

by Sage Birchwater

*Sage Birchwater is a reporter with the Williams Lake Tribune who freelances in his spare time. He's the author of several books on the culture and history of the Cariboo Chilcotin. His e-mail address is [sagebirchwater@shaw.ca](mailto:sagebirchwater@shaw.ca).*

The Zirnhelt brothers — Damon, Sam, and Robin — have one thing in common, their love for Beaver Valley, that rich pastoral wetland east of Williams Lake on the road to Likely.

They were raised there on land their grandfather, Clarence Zirnhelt, purchased on a whim one day back in 1942, and they grew up learning how to balance the best of both worlds, rural and urban.

Their parents, David and Susan, settled in Beaver Valley in 1974, when like many young people in those days they “went back to the land.”

David grew up around Williams Lake, where his parents owned the store at 150 Mile House, and met Susan at UBC where he was student council president. They were married and both equipped with university degrees when they decided to return to David's roots in the Cariboo to try their hand at ranching. Damon was an

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## Letters to the Editor

### **The Editor, *Woodland Almanac*:**

It is with much dismay that I have been recently denied withdrawal of my private land component from my woodlot licence. This denial process took over a year despite private land withdrawals in the coastal region.

Secondly, the about-face by the Minister of Forests last Christmas on the tabular rate system is, in my opinion, a huge blow to interior woodlots. This would have indeed streamlined the woodlot licence appraisal process and created cost efficiencies for both parties. Mr. Minister, it's time to get the woodlot program up and running again. Regards the above, it seems the Ministry of Forests is creating two forms of woodlot licensees, one coastal and the other interior.

In conclusion, I think the FBCWA executive should much more strenuously lobby the Minister to allow private lands to be withdrawn as per the FBCWA policy paper on this subject and to re-instate the tab. system.

I will continue to pursue my goal of removing private land from the woodlot licence as I see that my private land has a much higher use and value than being tied to a woodlot licence. In the meantime, I will be requesting a levy refund until such time as the above two issues are resolved to my satisfaction.

— George Dore W0475

### **The FBCWA's response to George Dore's letter:**

#### **Dear Mr. Dore:**

After giving every woodlot licensee in the province an opportunity to comment, the Federation finalized its private land policy and submitted it to the Deputy Minister of Forests and Range on July 24, 2006.

Following discussions in October 2006 and then again in March and May 2007, the Federation received a written response on May 8, 2007 in the form of a revised 'draft' policy regarding private land exchanges and deletions.

The policy revisions address, in part, that circumstances change over time and a licensee may wish to delete or exchange all or a portion of the private land, which was included at the time the WL was awarded. The draft policy is a good first step.

However, in the Federation's view the policy needs to be more substantive and provide clear guidance to decision-makers. For example, concise wording is required to ensure that private land's higher use and value is viewed from a licensee's perspective – not just government's.

The Federation will continue working on achieving a policy that meets the needs of licensees. It is acknowledged that this is taking longer than we would like. However, rushing and endorsing a policy that won't work and only serves to prolong private land withdrawal and deletion issues is not an acceptable option.

Many licensees were disappointed with the Ministry's decision to stand down on the tabular stumpage rates last December – none more than the Federation executive and directors who dedicated so much time and effort!

The good news is that the Federation has received confirmation from the Minister and Deputy Minister of the provincial government's desire and commitment to move to tabular rates as quickly as possible.

The administrative savings, cost efficiencies and fair stumpage rates

are the motivating forces for both parties. Work is ongoing although progress is slow, as this is a complex and difficult task. A protocol and methodology to create a base table (commonly referred to as table 6.1) is under development.

Once the table is done, then work will begin on figuring out how to arrive at the tab rate factor for WLs. It is impossible to state with any certainty when tab rates might get resolved. The Federation is diligent, meeting its commitments to provide information and input, and is pushing for the earliest possible resolution.

Initially the analytical work will focus on the interior and shift to the coast afterwards. Whether the same or different approaches will be required remains to be seen. For good reason, the coast and interior have had different appraisal manuals for a very long time!

Levy funds provide the Federation with the resources to work on behalf of woodlot licensees and resolve issues such as tabular stumpage rates and private land disposition. To effectively represent small woodlot tenure issues, the Federation's executive committee requires the financial, volunteer and moral support from licensees!

Neither of the two issues noted in this letter are the Federation's fault or the result of its inaction or lack of effort. To the contrary, it is the Federation's commitment that has gotten them this close to being resolved.

Would the Federation like to see things get fixed faster? Absolutely! Will regulation and policy reflect small tenure needs or happen faster without levy support and funding? Absolutely not!

— Brent Petrick, President,  
FBCWA

— Brian McNaughton, General  
Manager, FBCWA

*(Continued on page 4)*

The following letter was originally submitted to the Association of BC Forest Professionals and appeared in the March-April 2007 issue of the BC Forest Professional. It is reprinted here with permission of the author and the ABCFP. To read the article by Robert Kozak, PhD, that is referred to in the letter, please see the January-February 2007 issue of the BC Forest Professional, or visit [www.abcfp.ca](http://www.abcfp.ca).

### **What does the SLA mean to me?**

In the January/February 2007 issue of BC Forest Professional you asked the editorial question "What does the latest softwood lumber agreement (SLA) mean to forestry in BC?" As a woodlot licensee, a citizen, and a forest professional, here is what it means to me:

It means that we have temporarily secured a market for our forest commodity products. To be successful in a commodity market, one must sell increasing volumes (business growth) at a decreasing rate (price competition). The SLA means we are now free to follow this path to its logical conclusion.

We have achieved this at the price of gradually relinquishing control of our living forest resource, first to government, then to industry, and now ultimately, to a foreign power.

It means that the Minister of Forests and Range is no longer free to implement creative regulatory solutions, agreed to by all parties, for fear of triggering another SLA challenge.

This also means that most of the excellent suggestions proposed by Robert Kozak, PhD, will likely not be implemented.

It means that, as a small-tenure holder, I am now regulatory road-kill.

It means that the door has swung wide open to those who would advocate the sale of our precious

publicly owned forests into private hands so that we can be more like our current trading partner.

It means that log exports and reducing government control of the timber supply are seen as solutions rather than parts of the problem.

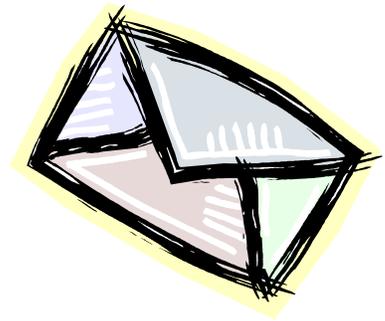
And, tragically, it may also mean that our American friends have been right all along. We are selling too much wood, too cheaply on the world market. The problem lies, not in that assertion, but in our response to it.

Rodney Krimmer, RFT  
Big Lake Ranch, BC ♦



### **Please note:**

*The opinions expressed in the Almanac do not necessarily reflect those of the Federation, the Council, or their members.*



### **We want to hear from you!**

Letters to the editor are an important way for licensees to raise issues or concerns. Licensees are encouraged to express their opinions about Federation or Council business and small-scale forestry issues.

#### ***What concerns you may also concern others!***

Keep letters to 200 words or fewer, and please include your name and woodlot licence number.

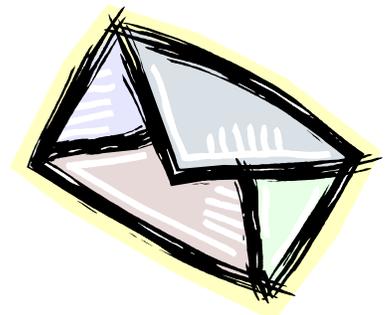
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## Message from the President of the FBCWA

# So close we can almost taste it



by Brent Petrick

With the spring comes new hope . . . I think that's the way it goes. It's a long journey that woodlots have endured since the implementation of FRPA, the new woodlot regulation, FRPA transition, MoFR downloading administrative duties and costs, forest health disaster, WARRT process and tabular rates, WLPs, temporary blanket salvage fixes, culture shift, e-business, flooded log markets, reduced competition in some log markets, uncertain future, SLA, tenure rights in question, and long, long promised expansion . . . etc.

It seems the only thing consistent in the years since the Forest Revitalization Plan, which was touted to make our small tenure world easier to administer and

operate, is the endless amount of change, interpretation and confusion.

Our woodlot program is caught in the now-famous McNaughton "back eddies" of the MoFR bureaucracy, caught in a cycle of reactionary decision-making. Mr. Minister . . . we just want out!

In the past year I have spent countless hours in regional meetings and discussing individual issues like private land, woodlot vision, tab rate options, etc.

Through all of the noise in my mind, however, there are some features that I believe permeate the woodlot licensee world: a belief that woodlots are a privilege to manage, licensees truly believe this tenure is tied to the land, and that woodlots provide a long-term benefit for licensees and local economies.

The problem is that we just cannot get the MoFR to believe in and champion woodlots anymore.

Do not get me wrong, the MoFR has the duty to and does, in a manner, administer woodlots; it's just that we have a very hard time getting on the "To Do" list.

When an issue like the MoFR standing down on the tabular rate agreement results in a political reaction, the MoFR can and did create a temporary fix in short order.

The temporary fix was successful in pockets of the province where policy, dramatic forest health impacts and depressed log markets converged to make managing our woodlots impossible.

(Continued on page 18)

## Message from the President of the WPDC

# Strategic planning: we welcome your ideas



by Paul Galliazzo

The month of March is a fairly busy one with Council and Federation Business. Steven Wright and I attended the Federation directors' meeting in Kelowna to participate in the initial drafting of the 2007-08 work plan.

At the end of March all of the Council directors got together in Prince George to review and approve the work plan. [*Editor's note:* The budget and work plan are presented on page 16 and 17 of this issue of the *Almanac*.]

The discussions at each meeting are lively and I sometimes feel like I'm not up to the task of conveying the spirit of the message from the

Federation meeting back to the smaller group at Council.

With help from Steven and Cathy, I think we did manage to explain the intent behind the workplan proposals from the federation.

The main highlights of this year's work plan are a continued emphasis on providing support to the General Manager position. This is meant to make more effective use of the General Manager's time. A significant increase to the communications budget is aimed at continuing the process begun last year.

Council has also committed to conducting a random sampling of licensees as a supplement to the annual questionnaire.

Our efforts to examine the strategic plan for Council are proceeding slowly. We did some investigation into other councils established under the Farming and Fisheries Industry Development Act in B.C.

Apparently there are six, including salmon, grapes and various other products. We are looking at their organizational structure to search for ideas.

Any suggestions you might have regarding the process would be welcomed. Our plan is to hold some sort of strategic planning session during the AGM in Port Alberni this fall.

See you there! ♦



## General Manager's report

# Discussions on tabular stumpage rates continue E-business also a hot topic

by Brian McNaughton

Discussion between the Federation and Ministry of Forests and Range regarding tabular stumpage rates has resumed.

Deputy Minister Doug Konkin attended the Directors' meeting in Kelowna at the beginning of March and confirmed the Minister and Ministry are still very interested in this initiative.

No one has forgotten that achieving tabular rates for WLs clears the way for the full implementation of all the WARRT recommendations, which will ease the administrative burden and result in significant efficiencies and savings for licensees and the Ministry.

We know a lot of licensees are anxious to get on with tab rates. Your continued patience and support while we work through this complex and difficult task is appreciated. As for a status report, at the time this report was being written, databases were being constructed and analyzed.

While the MOFR's having to stand down on the pre-Christmas tabular rate decision was extremely disconcerting, the Federation does acknowledge the Ministry's decision to allow the use of blanket salvage permits within salvage beetle management units from January 15<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

A substantial quantity of wood was harvested during this period, particularly from the more northern woodlots, which had been most heavily hit by the

Mountain Pine Beetle.

After some initial issues were resolved, things seem to run quite smoothly from an administrative perspective.

However, many licensees were not able to move any or all of their wood due to limited buying, limited contractor availability, limited number of trucks, early onset of spring break-up, road restrictions, etc.

That said, the question of the day from woodlot holders is — what do we do now? A return to the pre-January 15<sup>th</sup> world has left many licensees in limbo — excessively high stumpage rates which don't relate to log prices and the unwillingness of the MOFR to grant salvage permits for dead pine.

This brings us back around to the tabular rates discussions that are currently underway and the importance of stumpage rates relating to actual log prices.

Tab rates will also make the blanket salvage permit issue disappear because, under tab rates, BSPs will no longer be needed. Since stumpage for BSPs and CPs, the MOFR can do away with BSPs altogether.

E-business, including acquiring BCeIDs, annual reports, waste and residue reporting, and RESULTS submissions, remains a hot topic as licensees continue to be frustrated by increased and more complicated reporting requirements into systems which are not woodlot-friendly and don't work well.

What was supposed to enhance

business has turned into a nightmare as the workload and costs associated with meeting the MOFR's e-business information requirements continue to escalate. To make matters worse, licensees cannot readily or easily extract information from these systems. A strange occurrence, particularly in the case of RESULTS!

The province conveys the obligation to manage, reforest and achieve free growing onto licensees, then creates an electronic system which is of virtually no use in achieving the obligation. Go figure!

On a positive note, kudos to Jim Snetsinger, Chief Forester, for recognizing system shortcomings and cutting some slack around annual reporting. At least now licensees can meet their annual report obligations and not be subject to administrative remedies for failing to submit an annual report!

Coleen Marlow, with assistance from others in the know about such things, is working to make RESULTS more WL practical and friendly. Coleen's suggestions and recommendations are contained in a PowerPoint presentation which can be accessed by going to Electronic Forest Management on the Federation web site.

Don't forget to sign up for the AGM in Port Alberni – it promises to be a fun and informative event. ♦

## Interior timber pricing portfolio

### New Interior Appraisal Manual and market pricing system formula



by Dean Daly

The Ministry of Forests and Range plans to implement a new Interior Appraisal Manual (IAM) as well as a new Market Pricing System (MPS) Formula on July 1, 2007. These are two very significant events for woodlot licensees to consider in their planning for near-term cutting permit needs.

The new IAM replaces the existing version, which has been in place since November 2003. The manual provides the new policy information for estimating administration, operating costs and stand values for cutting permits based on the latest cost survey data, lumber recovery factors and

manufacturing costs available from the major licensees.

Unfortunately, the MOFR has not updated the Low Volume Cost Estimate because they have discontinued collection of new cost survey data from woodlot licensees for the past two years.

New formulas and cost estimates for all phases including road building, harvesting, hauling, and overheads will change July 1, and will impact new cutting permits applied for or reappraised after that date.

The new MPS formula is also scheduled for implementation July 1, 2007. The new formula was developed incorporating the latest BCTS auction data set (January 1, 2002 to December 31, 2006).

In addition to being used to establish the Interior Base Rate within the stumpage formula specified in Chapter 5 for tenure holders, it will also replace the current formula in IAM Chapter 7.

The specific impacts on individual cutting permits will need to be reviewed by each licensee so that they can make informed decisions regarding timing of their cutting permit submissions and approvals with respect to the July 1 date. The new manual and formula will be circulated to FBCWA Directors as soon as they are available for distribution. ♦

### Continued work toward interior tabular rates Work still at early stages

by Dean Daly

The Ministry of Forests and Range and the FBCWA Executive have resumed work on the interior tabular rate initiative.

Depending on the results of this work, coastal licensees may decide to explore further options regarding tabular rate models for the coast. As the interior work is at a very early stage, there is little to report at this time.

Based on an agreement reached with the FBCWA in February 2007, the MOFR has committed funds to support the technical analysis required to summarize woodlot and major licensee stumpage information.

A consultant will be hired to complete the technical analysis and report the findings back to the MOFR and FBCWA steering

committee for further review.

Although it is the FBCWA's hope that this work can be completed quickly to allow for implementation at the earliest possible date, we will continue to proceed with caution and diligence to ensure that any potential tabular rate system provides a durable and sustainable alternative to the status quo.

In the meantime, ensure that your cutting permit planning is based on our current Market Pricing System, and the stumpage rates are manageable within the context of your log market.

As always, use the tools available to forecast your potential cutting permit stumpage rate prior to submission to the MOFR to ensure that the cutting permit is economically viable. ♦

For more information on either of the articles on this page, please contact Dean Daly, Interior Appraisal Representative:

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Fax: 250-847-1884

E-mail: [lynx@bulkley.net](mailto:lynx@bulkley.net)





by John Marlow

## Coastal timber pricing portfolio

### MOFR consultant addresses timber pricing methodology

In stark contrast to the roller-coaster world of timber appraisals for interior woodlot licensees, change to timber pricing has been relatively quiet on the coast for the last quarter.

Following the introduction of a tabular timber pricing policy in the interior, and then the retraction of that policy, a consultant has been hired by the Ministry of Forests to investigate tabular timber pricing opportunities to help build a strong and defensible methodology to simplify woodlot timber pricing.

The intent is to first investigate opportunities for the interior and then to apply that methodology to the coast if successful. Both myself and my interior counterpart (Dean Daly) will be working with the Ministry of Forests consultant as this project continues.

The rewrite of the Coast Appraisal Manual (CAM) and introduction of new coastal stumpage determination equations has been delayed as industry, the Ministry of Forests, and the FBCWA work together to fine-tune appraisal costs and allowances.

The new CAM was scheduled to be in place by April 1, but this date has been delayed until June 1.

Minor changes expected in the new manual include an allowance (approximately \$1100/ha) for stump removal for root disease control, as well as a revised Market Logger Road Cost Estimate and a revised cruise variable (cost associated

with cruise grades versus supply block grades in woodlot appraisals).

As the final manual has not yet been released, there is no guarantee that these cost variables will be in place as these issues remain under negotiation.

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“The intent is to first investigate opportunities for the interior and then to apply that methodology to the coast if successful.”

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#### Coast Timber Pricing Advisory Committee (CTPAC) / MPS Technical Subcommittee

The Federation continues to participate on both these committees. As indicated in the previous *Almanac*, two policy changes have been implemented which change the way information is collected for CP submissions:

- Cut Bank Height Method for road costing
- Call Grade / Net Factoring (CGNF) cruising (a revised method of timber cruising).

These two systems are now in place and information (road and cruise info) must be collected accordingly.

#### Appraisal Forecasting

*Disclaimer: The following estimates are based on current available Vancouver log market sales ending on January 31, 2007, as well as future predicted log trends.*

Generally, demand for all coastal species is strong at present and log prices are generally on the rise. Licensees can expect appraised stumpage rates to increase over the next quarter, subject to the introduction of the new CAM and possible revised allowances).

Three-month average Fd log prices have remained relatively stable over the last quarter, with demand increasing.

Prices into the Vancouver log market are expected to increase over the next quarter, with corresponding increases in Fd stumpage rates, depending on grades harvested.

Cw prices continue to rise, including small diameter gang logs, and demand remains high. Subsequently, Cw stumpage rates are expected to increase over the next quarter.

Demand for western hemlock has now increased, particularly Hw pulp, with increased demand also happening for gang and sawlog sorts.

Expect appraised stumpage rates for Hw cutting permits also to increase.

If there are stumpage issues that should be discussed at the CTPAC meetings, or if clarification of issues is required, I can be reached at [jmarlow@oberon.ark.com](mailto:jmarlow@oberon.ark.com) or (250)285-2544 (Rockview Resources Limited). ♦

## Nic Williams wins FBCWA scholarship

by Kathy Mayes, FBCWA Treasurer



I am pleased to announce that Nic Williams of Revelstoke is our 2007 FBCWA scholarship winner.

Nic, shown at left, is a very deserving candidate with a variety of outdoor interests.

He is graduating from Revelstoke Secondary School this June and plans to attend the University of Victoria in September. Nic is the son of

woodlot licensee Del Williams, Woodlot 1834.

To read Nic's winning essay, please see page 14. ♦



### WPDC Directorship positions: Two vacancies

Please consider letting your name stand for a position on the Woodlot Product Development Council.

We need a full complement of seven directors for Council to function as intended under the Farming and Fishing Industries Development Act and keep the levy operating as a funding mechanism for woodlot-licence-related activities.

There are two director positions available for the 2008 year. If there are more than two nominees, Council will conduct an election. The last election for directors was in 2002.

Nominations must be received by July 13, 2007. ♦

### Nominate your community for 2008 Forest Capital of BC!

The Forest Capital program, established in 1988, is an important opportunity to celebrate the economic, cultural, natural and historic contributions forests make to community life and health of the province.

Our forests are important to every community in BC.

The deadline for nominations is November 15, 2007.

For more information, contact the Association of BC Forest Professionals by phone: (604) 687-3264 or e-mail [info@abcfp.ca](mailto:info@abcfp.ca) ♦





ATTENTION, STUDENTS!

## Program offers opportunity to learn forest science ... but don't forget to wear your gloves!

by Lynda Chambers, CFS

VICTORIA -- Watch out if you visit Paula Rajkumar at the Canadian Forest Service's Pacific Forestry Centre (PFC) in Victoria!

Leaning with bare hands on the bench she sits at in Dr. Abul Ekramoddoullah's lab could alter your DNA!

"We use ethidium bromide as a nucleic acid stain to help us screen different families of trees for resistance to a disease called white pine blister rust," says the University of Toronto grad who learned of the opportunity to work at PFC from a friend who told her about the Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program.

Ethidium bromide is a mutagen (à la Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles) and binds to DNA so it glows a red-orange color under ultraviolet light, helpful if you are — as Paula is — extracting and examining fragments of DNA.

Needless to say, she wears gloves. (And so will I next time I visit Paula!!)

Sponsored by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and delivered in partnership with the YMCA, the Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program places interns in host federal government organizations enabling unemployed or under-employed young Canadians between the ages of 15 and 30 to acquire the experience and skills they need to enter and fully participate in the labour market.

"For me, this program has worked really well because by reaching out and teaching young

talented people about biotechnology and the research being done at Natural Resources Canada, we are not only able to provide students like Paula with necessary skills to enter the job market but are also creating a potential source for our own recruitment," says Dr. Ekramoddoullah.

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**"Ethidium bromide is a mutagen (à la Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles) . . ."**

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That's the good news. The bad news, he says, is that the duration of the program, in his particular case, is often not sufficient for good training.

"It used to be twelve months long, then it was reduced to nine months and now it's six months", he says. "A year is ideal."

For Paula, the experience, though short, has been a great one.

"I've learned so much and would recommend the program to many others. It gives a realistic view into the real world and provides loads of experience," she says.

Following her internship, Paula will remain at the Pacific Forestry Centre for an additional four months and then plans to continue working in the field of biotechnology.

- More on Dr. Ekramoddoullah's research: <http://scf.rncan.gc.ca/news/300>
- More on the Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program: <http://youth.gc.ca/yoaux.jsp> ♦



*Correspondent Chambers*

*(Continued from page 1)*

infant when they turned the first soil at their property in Beaver Valley, and they stayed, balancing busy professional and political careers and raising their three sons.

Damon, Sam, and Robin grew up without television and with the wilderness at their back door.

Their daily life included working with cattle and horses, and helping out on the family woodlot. They weren't strangers to town life either, attending high school in Williams Lake, an hour and a half away.

Following in their parents' footsteps, all three brothers went away to university once they graduated from high school.

Damon, 33, was first, attending Malaspina College in Nanaimo where he got a Liberal Studies degree through the University of Victoria. A program, he says, that taught him how to think, read and write critically. Then he went to Dalhousie University in Halifax and got his Master's in Development Economics.

Sam, 31, was next, getting a degree in forestry at the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George., then a Master's in Forestry from the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Robin, 25, graduated in 2005 with a civil engineering degree from UBC.

Family has always been big with the Zirnhelts. Maybe it comes from growing up in the relative isolation of a rural setting, but the brothers have always done things together.

In 1993, the year Sam graduated from high school, he and Damon got a portable Woodmizer bandsaw sawmill and began cutting lumber on a contract basis.

"We dragged that portable mill all over the countryside, from Mackin Creek to Puntzi Lake to cut people's logs on site," says Sam. "We were looking for a way to pay our way through university while living at home."

Robin, who was quite a bit

younger, helped out as well, especially when the mill was set up at home cutting wood from the family woodlot.

You have to understand the lure of home.

Beaver Valley cuts a slash through the Cariboo hill country draining in a northwesterly direction from Horsefly to the Quesnel River. Beaver Creek meanders some 70 or 80 kilometres through woodlands, cultivated fields, willow scrub and beaver dammed lakes. The valley is a lowland that affords a microclimate rich in ecological diversity.

The upper half of the drainage is more accessible, dotted with ranches and homesteads and connected by a road running between Horsefly and the Likely Road.

But the lower half of the valley from the Likely Road to the Quesnel River is more on the wild side. Road access only penetrates a few kilometres before petering out into ranchers' fields, rangeland and raw bush wilderness.

It's here on the section of Beaver Valley less traveled by that the Zirnheld brothers grew up, and where they see their future unfolding today.

Zirnheld Timber Frames is a relatively new business, but its origin dates back to those days of the portable sawmill some 13 years ago. In fact it's a natural outcome of that business.

"We found it disappointing processing trees into a limited set of products," says Sam. "Your ability to reinvest in sustainable forest management ultimately depends on how much you are able to get for the end products. The amount you get for logs these days really limits what you can do as forest managers."

They were looking to add value to the trees beyond spitting out custom orders of lumber, when Damon, Sam and Robin built their first timber frame structure. It was a simple affair, small and compact, but had all the component parts.

The principle of timber framing is triangulation. A sturdy freestanding frame, mortised, tenoned and pegged together with triangular braces, is hurricane strong.

The practice of timber frame construction was developed in several parts of the world. The Zirnhelts opted for a "piece-en-piece" wall infill system that originated in Northern Europe and was brought to Eastern Canada by the French.

Like the triangular principle of timber frame, like the legs of a three-legged stool, the three Zirnheld brothers each play a unique and vital role in the new business. Damon is the full-time builder and focuses on product development, Sam is the marketing and project manager, and Robin is the engineer/designer.

In the shelter of his workshop on the family ranch where the brothers were raised, Damon gently taps his chisel along a penciled line with a mallet. A ribbon of fir shaving drops to a thick carpet of other shavings on the floor of the shop as he eyes up the angle of his cut in the smoothed timber, already inscribed with other mortise holes.

"It's a nice way to spend some time," he reflects.

Damon and his wife Cherie Lynn Bailey live in the house he and his brothers were raised in, within eyeshot of the shop. The house was dragged there by a bulldozer, several hundred metres across the field, and set up on a new foundation when his parents, David and Susan, had their new log house built at the original site.

The house has no electricity yet, and Cherie Lynn works as a dental assistant in Williams Lake, so for the winter the couple rented a place in Williams Lake. For the time being Damon makes the long drive every day to work in Beaver Valley where they both see their future unfolding more and more.

With a friend, Cherie Lynn has

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taken on her own seasonal project in the thick birch forest surrounding the ranch.

In late March, when the birch sap is running, she takes a few weeks off from her job in town and renders thousands of litres of sap collected from the trees into a sweet nectar of birch syrup.

"We've got two wood-fired maple syrup evaporators set up in the bush," says Cherie Lynn, who markets her Sweet Tree birch syrup commercially.

It's a small return from the forest, considering the amount of labour involved, but at least it's sustainable.

Though there are no laws saying you have to, Damon registered the extracting of birch sap from trees on crown land with the Ministry of Forests, thus putting this land use on the public radar screen. It's thinking ahead, he says. Taking a proactive approach.

Damon definitely has a holistic perspective to the environment of the ranch.

"I'm really interested in alternate energy and biofuels," he says. "Dad

uses the sawdust from the mill to mix with manure and make compost. It's amazing how fast it works. One of the challenges for me is dealing with the wood waste."

Back to the subject of timber framing, Damon admits he is basically self-taught.

"I basically learned on my own. Reading and talking to people who were experienced. It's hard to learn on your own, but I picked it up quickly."

As he works quietly with hand tools or precision power equipment in his shop, Damon constantly refers to a clipboard of computerized three-dimensional drawings. That's younger brother Robin's contribution to the enterprise.

"Each piece is drawn out. If you do it right, it all fits together."

In the mill yard, premium quality Douglas fir logs await processing beside the Woodmizer mill, now set up on a permanent foundation with its wheels removed. The logs are thick-barked, long and straight, and at least two feet in diameter. Important to the Zirnhelts, the logs come from a sustainably managed forest.

"We live next door to some of the best second-growth fir there is," Damon says.

In early February this year, the brothers decided it was time to go public with their timber framing business and they hosted an open house at their display cottage in Beaver Valley where Sam and his wife, Jill Zimonick have lived since last October.

They were hoping for 50 or 60 visitors but three times that number showed up. It didn't hurt that they offered horse-drawn sleigh rides and the weather was mild.

The 850 square foot display home is all about family. Damon hand-crafted all the component pieces in his shop seven kilometers further down the valley, carefully following the detailed three-dimensional plans designed by Robin who works for a structural engineering company in Canmore, Alberta, with a specialty in timber frame design. Then all three brothers assembled the basic timber frame structure in five days.

Jill's dad, Scott Zimonick, built all the cabinets and doors using clear fir lumber that Damon milled and kiln dried. Cousin Hayes Zirnheld blacksmithed the intricate door hinges and steel spring strapping used to attach the sliding panels at the tops of the walls.

The load-bearing posts and beams are all Douglas fir, with seven-by-seven-inch beetle-killed jackpine timbers laid horizontally for infill between the posts. The timber infills are all double-splined together to minimize twisting, and in combination with flexible insulating gaskets, ensure a tight seal. Each wall panel is vertically bolted together with ready rod that can be cinched down as the timbers shrink.

"The timber frame construction offers the best of both worlds," says Sam. "Like log construction, timber infill provides a solid wood, radiant warmth, but is easier to finish than logs because of the flat surfaces."



Photo: Sage Birchwater

*Sam Zirnheld (left) and his brother Damon discuss joinery in the timber construction shed on the family property at Beaver Valley near Williams Lake.*

Half the battle with timber framing is understanding wood, Sam explains.

“I studied wood science in university. Each piece of wood reacts differently.”

With so much beetle-killed pine in the country, it only makes sense to make as much use of it as possible.

“We’re basically salvaging it,” Sam says. “The pine isn’t load-bearing. The fir frame can stand on its own.”

He says the timber frames can be insulated with conventional framing between the posts for those who prefer that method.

“We are constantly researching environmentally friendly options for the siding, insulation and interior paneling to compliment this method.”

Kiln-dried tongue and groove birch flooring is another locally produced product in the show cottage. Jill and Sam got it from Quesnel where it is manufactured. They treated it with a half a dozen coats of water-based glossy urethane.

“We sanded it and painted it, and sanded and painted it six times,” says Jill. “The water-based finish is harder to do than the oil base, but it’s not as toxic.”

That’s important to the Zirnhelts. Sam says they want to be more than just another timber frame company. They want to define themselves by using sustainable building products, and some of these products like recycled denim cotton for insulation are only just becoming available in Canada.

But something they can do locally is track and certify all their wood products.

“Our sawmill and dry kiln have ‘chain of custody’ certification from the Forest Stewardship Council,” explains Sam. “Forest Stewardship Council certification is the highest international standard for sustainable forest management. Our certification means we can process the wood that comes from FSC certified forests.”

There are two certified woodlots in the area, one owned by Rod Blake of Spokin Lake, and the other by Rod and Barb Krimmer of Big Lake.

“We get some of our wood from them, and we have the systems in place to prove wood is eco-certified.”

They still get wood from their own woodlot and from small scale salvagers around the region. The key is being comfortable with how the wood is procured.

A feature of the Zirnheldt design is the visibility of the timber frame both inside and outside the cottage.

“We’re designing buildings using local materials that will last for centuries,” says Sam. “Using products we can live with.”

He insists the timber framing doesn’t have to be an elitist building system.

“The quality helps to make it affordable, particularly in the long run by avoiding the need for expensive renovations. We keep costs down by using beetle-killed timber and designs that aren’t so big.”

Sam is critical of many houses in

subdivisions that he says have features which just don’t make sense.

“They appear to be designed from the outside looking in, rather than to fit the lifestyle of the inhabitants and the surroundings in which they are built.”

The Zirnheldt brothers expect their buildings will really hold their value, whether they are cabins, chalets or homes.

Though Robin is just launching his professional engineering career in Canmore, Alberta, there is speculation that he will move home some day as well.

Walking back from the birch sap harvesting operation last spring, David points to the ridge above the south side of the valley.

“Robin may build up there,” he says.

As the world shrinks with high-speed internet, satellite technology and fibre optics coming on stream, the feasibility of working as a professional in the remote isolation of Beaver Valley isn’t out of the question. ♦



Photo: Jill Zirnheldt

*Sam and Jill Zirnheldt’s house, which is also their demo home. The eight-foot deck on the front of the house is covered with a roof that protrudes an extra four feet. The big overhang preserves the wood and the building’s overall integrity.*

## What is the history of the woodlot program in British Columbia and why are woodlots so important today?

by Nic Williams, 2007 FBCWA Scholarship Winner



A woodlot is a portion of Crown land, less than 1200 hectares in area, for which the permission to harvest timber is granted to an individual or family forest operation. The lands must be kept stocked with commercial timber species, which must be managed on a sustainable yield basis, and a small amount of the revenue of harvesting must be paid to the government. Woodlots are part of the Timber Tenure System, a term which refers to the collection of legislation and regulations that define a person's right to harvest timber in the province of BC. Many contracts and agreements fit under the umbrella term of "timber tenure," but woodlot licenses, although small, are important because they help to promote small-scale logging operations – which generate far more jobs for the amount of wood harvested than large-scale operations, and are generally more benign environmentally and socially.

In order to fully understand how woodlot licenses affect our province today, we must also understand how woodlots were first formed. When settlers originally began to move into western Canada, the government realized the nearly untouched timber resources of British Columbia could be easily tapped if the appropriate infrastructure was developed. In order to achieve their goal, the government began to grant Crown land outright to railways and timber companies, with the hope that they would open the way for more companies to move in. This approach worked, and later, with more and more timber companies demanding land, the government was able to sell timber through what was then known as timber leases, while retaining rights to the land.

In 1912, the *Forest Act* was introduced, which established "forest reserves" and a Forest Service to administer those areas. Also introduced was the timber sale license, which was a tenure that granted companies the right to harvest a specific stand. Timber sale licenses were the only means of providing access to Crown timber until 1947. By 1947, many concerns were being voiced over the management of harvested land, and the *Forest Act* of 1912 was altered to better support a growing forest industry. Forest management licenses were introduced, and were the next step towards the modern system of sustainable forestry. These tenures ranged from large tree farm licenses to very small woodlot farm licenses, the precursors to modern woodlot licenses. The *Forest Act* was once more revised in 1978, leading to several new licence agreements, one of which was the woodlot license.

Private forest lands are critical to BC's economic and ecological health. Woodlot licenses make up a significant portion of this private land, and serve as carbon sinks, improve soil quality, and shelter non-forested land. Individuals who manage woodlots can do so in the way they see fit, and are not constrained by the need to make money fast, as larger companies usually are. This leads to a sustainable approach to logging, and therefore less ecological damage. In a world where bigger is often seen as better, woodlots give us a refreshing glimpse into the success of small industries. ♦

## FBCWA key issues — prioritized

*These issues were identified at the Directors' Meeting, Kelowna, March 2-3, 2007.*

### High priority

- Stumpage (Alternative Pricing)
- Admin (WARRT) Benefits –
  - Regulation improvements
  - One (1) CP
  - No CP block size parameters,
  - Ability to manage take or pay
  - No CPs on private land
- ESF submissions (ESF) – annual reports, RESULTS, ECAS, waste and residue, etc.
- Woodlot Licence Plan approvals

- MOFR culture shift to results-based and building relations
- Safety
- Communications plan
- Program expansion — secure candidate areas, new awards, monitor effectiveness of new award regulation and policies.

### Medium priority

- Waste and residue Surveys
- Extension and outreach
- Private land policy (Sch. A land withdrawal)
- Survival strategy and future options for beetle-devastated WLs

- Promoting small forestry businesses
- Relationship building, incl. other organizations with similar goals and objectives

### Low priority

- Non-Timber Forest Products
- Road jurisdiction
- Single plan consisting of MP and WLP
- WARRT program vision and goals
- Future forest ecosystems ♦

## New database of log and lumber buyers

The Marketing Committee has compiled a new log/lumber buyer database, (which is enclosed with your *Almanac* and is posted on the Marketing page of the Federation website: [www.woodlot.bc.ca](http://www.woodlot.bc.ca)) to give licensees more options when selling their products. All the names listed are current as of April 2007. The database is divided into three regions – Coastal, Northern Interior and Southern Interior, but many companies will purchase logs and lumber province-wide.

When contacted for updated information, many buyers asked that woodlot licensees put their contact information on the Marketing page of the Federation Website. This is because small producers are often looking for specialty products that licensees may be able to provide. These specialized items often command a much higher price. The format for supplying information is shown below. It is strictly voluntary but could be very advantageous to the licensee.

Woodlot # 138  
 Poplar Park Farm and B&B  
 David & Kathy Larson  
 Box 23 Site M RR#1  
 Hazelton B.C.  
 V0J 1Y0  
 Ph-250-842-6406  
 Fax 250-842-6412  
[ppf@bulkley.net](mailto:ppf@bulkley.net)  
[www.kispiox.com/poplarpark](http://www.kispiox.com/poplarpark)

For Sale:

Logs- Hemlock, Spruce & Cedar Sawlogs, Pulp & Cedar Poles  
 Lumber- From 1x2 8' to 16x16 45' in Hemlock Cedar & Spruce  
 Last Updated April 2007

The lumber buyers, and in particular the cedar buyers and brokers, asked that licensees call them before starting to cut so they could discuss the most desirable sizes and lengths. Many said that they would very much like to work with the licensees on a mutually beneficial cutting program that would enable the licensee to sell all the lumber produced in a given cut, not just the higher-end products. The small companies contacted were very eager to work with woodlot licensees and many commented that woodlots and small sawmills are a good fit because they speak the same language and understand one another's way of doing business.

Please review the database and contact Kathy Larson (see above) for any errors or omissions, or to have your woodlot featured on the Marketing page. ♦

FBCWA/ WPDC 07-08  
budget goes here

FBCWA/ WPDC 07-08  
workplan goes here

## Criteria for WPDC project proposals

A portion of the Woodlot Levy Fund is allocated annually to small-scale project proposals. The Woodlot Product Development Council (WPDC) encourages local woodlot associations and individual woodlot licensees to put forward proposals for funding that are specifically directed towards meeting regional licensee priorities. Funding is available directly to the local association or individual licensee.

Proposals may include initiatives such as training and education programs, improving communications amongst woodlot licensees and within associations, and small-scale research projects.

Proposals which have the objective of increasing the profitability of woodlot licences or testing marketability of new woodlot products will be considered.

Project results should be applicable to a number of licensees and must be made available for use by all woodlot licensees. Initiatives to assist Associations in activities to support the woodlot expansion program will be eligible.

Woodlot Product Development Council funds are **not** available for projects that aim to meet licensee obligations arising out of harvesting operations or through commitments made in a management plan.

Funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Preference will be given to projects that are not eligible for funding under other programs such as the Forest Investment Account (FIA).

The applicant is required to submit a Project Proposal form to the Council, prior to the initiation of the project. Retroactive funding will not be considered.

A copy of the application form

is in the Annual Report and on the website at [www.woodlot.bc.ca](http://www.woodlot.bc.ca).

Copies are also available from the Council Coordinator at 1-888-925-9995.

Once a project is complete, the applicant is expected to provide an article explaining the results of the project for publication in the *Almanac*.

The total budget for projects is \$10,000.00, and equitable distribution of the funds will be a guiding principle.

A subcommittee of the WPDC evaluates all proposals that request funding under \$1000.00.

If the request for funding is more than \$1000.00, Council directors assess the evaluation by a vote. ♦

*(Continued from page 5)*

The blanket salvage fix was not so successful in other areas, where it resulted in policy outcomes that impeded salvage harvesting. The Executive genuinely thanked the Deputy Minister and his Operations staff repeatedly for this fix, which was greatly appreciated by many northern licensees. In short, if there is a will, there's a way!

When I say to the Minister "we want out," I mean that we want out of the bureaucratic shuffle.

Together, we need to settle tabular rates, initiating an incentive to move into an administrative regime we both need and can benefit from.

Licensees just want to manage their woodlots. Woodlot licenses are not high-risk; they had the fewest enforcement actions per

million m<sup>3</sup> in 2005. They provide support for non-profit organizations, as well as economic benefits to local communities.

For many years, woodlot tenures have been generally viewed as centers of excellent forest management in the public arena regardless of the regulatory and/or policy environment.

The Federation believes in the good things that can come out of the FRPA woodlot regulation and the WARRT recommendations developed by the MOFR . . . we are so close we can almost taste it.

The Federation is doing everything possible to get over the hump, but as the old saying goes "it takes two to tango."

The table is set, Mr. Minister . . . if we could just get someone to the table, then we could dance. ♦

### New mission statement

At the FBCWA Directors' Meeting in Kelowna on March 2-3, 2007, the FBCWA adopted the following mission statement, prepared by Harold Reedy and Lisa Marak:

**The FBCWA promotes the economic and social interests of woodlot licensees, private forest landowners and others involved in small-scale forest management in British Columbia. The FBCWA's mission is for all its members to practice exemplary forest and natural resources management in a socially, economically and environmentally responsible manner. ♦**



## The Wildfire Act and Wildfire Regulation

### Questions and answers for woodlot licensees

This article was provided by the BC Ministry of Forests and Range.

In the spring of 2004, the provincial legislation passed the *Wildfire Act (WA)*. This legislation was two years in development prior to the firestorms that hit the interior of the province in the summer of 2003.

Following the 2003 fire season, the government commissioned the Filmon Firestorm Review and subsequently incorporated many of his recommendations into the final drafting of the *Wildfire Act*.

The *Wildfire Act* and the *Wildfire Regulation (WR)* were brought into force on March 31, 2005. On March 31<sup>st</sup> of last year the government made amendments to the *Act* and *Regulation* that provide clarity to a number of provisions.

This brief document, through a question and answer format, will identify some of those provisions and requirements that affect the small tenure holder and will provide some insight on how best they can be managed at the operational level.

The paper will look at three specific areas: fire prevention and preparedness; fire suppression responsibilities; and due diligence.

Previously, provincial fire prevention and fire control responsibilities and powers were embedded in the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act (FPC or the Code)* and the *Forest Fire Prevention and Suppression Regulation*.

**NOTE: This document is provided for general information only, and does not constitute legal advice.**

#### Fire Prevention & Preparedness

##### 1. Is there a “fire season”?

One of the concepts that was changed in the *Wildfire Regulation* from the old *Forest Practices Code* is “fire season”, which under the FPC (see above – reference to abbreviation) was defined as being April 1<sup>st</sup> through to October 1<sup>st</sup>, and determined when certain obligations such as fire tools were required.

In the *WA* this concept is replaced by the term “there is a risk of a fire starting or spreading” to determine when many of the fire prevention and preparedness obligations kick in.

The intent is to recognize the potential risk of wildfire outside of the traditional definition of “fire season.”

In the March 2006 amendment to the *Wildfire Regulation*, when “there is a risk of a fire starting or spreading” was clarified (for the purposes of section 5, 6, and 8) to mean when the area is snow-free and the daily fine fuel moisture code value exceeds 75; the duff moisture code value is exceeds 6; or the drought code value exceeds 15.

This change affects when fire-fighting tools are required on site for all industrial activities (section 5), the obligations on high-risk activities (section 6), and the fire prevention requirements for engines (section 8).

This change clarifies when a woodlot operator is required to comply with the requirements of sections 5, 6, and 8 of the regulation.

For example, under Section 5

(carrying out an industrial activity) when you would be required to have sufficient fire-fighting hand tools on site is determined by when “there is a risk of a fire starting or spreading” using the new definition.

The March 2006 amendments to the *Wildfire Regulation* re-introduced the concept of a “fire season” but only for the purposes of section 6 of the regulation for high-risk activities.

However, unlike the old FPC use of the term, its use in the *Wildfire Regulation* is limited to determining when a person carrying out a high-risk activity is required to determine the Fire Danger Class under section 6 (2).

Fire season is defined as beginning on the third day after the area is snow-free or in areas where snow cover is often absent, the third consecutive day that the temperature at noon is at least 12 degrees.

Fire season ends at noon on the first day on which the area becomes snow-covered or on the first day after October 1 when each of the following is present: the daily fine fuel moisture code value is 75 or less; the daily duff moisture code value is 6 or less; and the daily drought code value is 15 or less; whichever comes first.

It is during the “fire season” that you must determine the Fire Danger Class for the location of your high-risk activity by reference to representative weather data for the area.<sup>1</sup>

For persons carrying out high-risk activities, you must comply with the requirements of Schedule

<sup>1</sup> To obtain a fire danger class, go to <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/protect/>, click on “detailed danger class”, and select your region and the representative weather station. Accurate locations and elevations of stations are to be found under “General Weather and Lightning Information”.

3 of the regulation. (See *Question 5*)

## 2. The Act and Regulation refer to both an “industrial activity” and “high-risk activity”. How are they distinguished?

“Industrial Activities” are broadly defined in the regulation (*WR 1 (3)*) to include timber harvesting, silviculture treatments, road construction, wood milling, and the use of a power saw or equipment on roads or landings.

A person who carries out an “industrial activity” has certain obligations and responsibilities. These will be examined later in this paper. (See *Question 3*)

“High-risk Activities” are specified in the Definitions section of the regulation, but can be summarized as those specific activities that carry a higher risk of creating sparks or an ignition source in forest or grass land fuels.

For example, the operation of a power saw, other than on a landing or road is considered a high-risk activity, but is not necessarily an industrial activity (e.g., may not be associated with timber harvesting).

By contrast, the operation of a power saw on a landing or road is considered an industrial activity.

If you are carrying out a high-risk activity within 300m of forest or grassland, there are added obligations and restrictions (in addition to those of an industrial activity) that govern your operations that recognize the inherent higher risk. These are specified in section 6 of the *Wildfire Regulation*. (See *Question 5*)

## 3. What are my responsibilities as an “Industrial Activity”?

First and foremost, Section 6 of the *Wildfire Act* stipulates that as an industrial activity you must conduct your activities at a time

and in a manner that can reasonably be expected to prevent fires from starting as a result of that activity.

This is a catch-all provision; however, it is suggesting that you must incorporate a substantial measure of fire preparedness and prevention in the planning of your operations.

Section 6 goes on to state, that as an industrial activity, if a (unattended) fire starts at or within one kilometer of the site of your



industrial activity, you must report the fire and take fire control action and extinguish the fire (if practicable).

This is an obligation of persons carrying out industrial activities within 300m of forest land or grass land. The only exception to this provision is that if the fire is on private property (not yours) or within a protected area (park); then you need only report the fire.

As an industrial activity, working in, or within, 300m of forest land or grassland, you are required to have sufficient fire-fighting hand tools on-site if there is a chance of a fire starting or spreading (note the new definition of this term in question 1).

Sufficient fire-fighting hand tools are newly defined as being a minimum of one shovel, axe, pulaski, hand tank pump or fire extinguisher for every person

working at the site of the activity.

As a preventive measure, and as the fire danger increases, you may wish to revisit your complement and combination of fire-fighting hand tools to best suit the predicted fire behavior.

A number of sections that affect industrial operators (s. 5, 6 (3), and 8) within the regulation begin by stating when ‘there is a risk of a fire starting or spreading,’ then certain provisions must be met.

As previously noted, the regulation now explains that “there is a risk of a fire starting or spreading” on an area only when the area is snow-free and the daily fine fuel moisture code value exceeds 75, or the duff moisture code value exceeds 6, or the drought code value exceeds 15. This clarification stipulates when you must carry sufficient fire-fighting hand tools and when precautions must be taken to ensure an engine doesn’t start a fire.

## 4. Am I required to notify the Ministry when I am operating?

If you will be operating between April 1 and October 31, as a forest tenure holder you are required to provide the Ministry of Forests and Range (Fire Center) with a 24-hour contact telephone number.

This is for emergency contact only and it is in your best interest to ensure that the Fire Center knows how to get in contact with you in case there is a fire on your holdings.

## 5. What are my responsibilities as a “high-risk activity”?

Section 6 of the *Regulation* requires that a person carrying out a high-risk activity must determine the Fire Danger Class for their location and conduct operations in accordance with the

(Continued on page 21)

(Continued from page 20)

requirements set out in Schedule 3 of the Regulation (for the fire danger class).

In other words, you must comply with the fire watcher, early shift and shutdown provisions set out in this Schedule.

Again, these requirements apply only to high-risk activities. For example, you can still load out logs from a landing in the afternoon when on early shift.

You should, however, consider additional fire prevention measures (extra tools, inspections) during this time.

You must also ensure that the weather station (your own or available through the MOFR-Protection web-site or Fire Center) that you are using to determine the Fire Danger Class is representative of the area in which you are carrying out the high-risk activity.

Of note, the requirement for the fire watcher is strengthened from the old provisions; however, the requirement for the fire watcher is attached to the high-risk activity only and not to the industrial activity or completion of the work day.

Therefore, once the high-risk activity ceases, then the fire watcher requirement commences.

Section 6(3) requires that if you are carrying out a high-risk activity when “there is a risk of a fire starting or spreading”, you must have sufficient fire-fighting hand tools and a fire suppression system that can suppress a fire by delivering water, a suppressant, or a surfactant.

The regulation doesn’t specifically define the size or components of a fire suppression system; however, it does state that a “water delivery system” must be

able to fight a fire of a reasonably foreseeable size and deliver water to any place reasonably adjacent to the site of the high-risk activity. You must determine your compliance to this provision.

The old *Code* regulation specified a certain category of pump and water capacity etc., that was required from April to October.

The new *Act* opens your options as to the type of equipment or system you use, giving consideration to the fuel type, weather, aspect and activity.

In low or moderate fire danger, in most fuel types, a pickup-truck-mounted water delivery system would probably suffice, as would a gravity-feed system, as long as you had sufficient hose and pressure to reach the high-risk activity.

Obviously, more fire suppression system capacity is required as the risk of a fire starting or spreading increases.

#### **6. Are exemptions or variances available from the Ministry?**

Yes. The *Act* provides for an exemption or variance from most provisions of the *Act* or *regulation*. A person can apply for a specific exemption (for example: requesting that the horse-skidding of logs not be considered a high-risk activity) and an official may grant the exemption, with or without conditions.

As well, a person can request a variance from the legislation, outlining alternative requirements, which the Ministry can then approve. For example, varying the two-hour fire watcher requirement to one-hour while working in a deciduous stand.

These exemptions/variances should be applied for in writing to

the local Fire Center manager, or in some situations, to the local Forest Protection officer (discuss first with your local protection office). Approvals must also be in writing.

### **Fire Suppression**

#### **7. Have my fire suppression responsibilities changed from the *Code*?**

Not really. As noted above, you still have to fight an unattended fire that starts in or within one kilometer of the site of your industrial activity (section 6 (3) of the *Act*).

You must fight the fire until the fire is extinguished, it is impractical to continue, or you are relieved in writing by an official. If the fire starts on Crown land, you must make available to fight the fire all your workers<sup>2</sup>, fire suppression systems, and heavy equipment that are within 30km by road.

Should the fire start on *your* private property, you must make available to fight the fire, all the workers, fire suppression systems, and heavy equipment working on the property on which the fire started.

In both instances, personnel being supplied to the fire must also come with sufficient fire-fighting hand tools (*see Question 3*)

#### **8. Are there any training requirements attached to Fire Suppression activities?**

As there is a legal obligation to fight an unattended fire, then there is an obligation under the *Workers Compensation Act (OH&S Regulation 26.19)* to ensure that your employees are trained in fire suppression safety.

It is important for you and your

2 A worker does not include individuals working at a non-portable mill, on a tug or barge, or clerical or administrative staff.

employees to be familiar with suppression practices. The Board has indicated that the training should be to the **Ministry S-100 Basic Fire Suppression and Safety** standard or equivalent. There are numerous consultants, trainers and colleges that offer the two-day S-100 course.

### **9. Will I be compensated for fighting a fire?**

Yes and no. The government must compensate you for taking action on a fire that you are legally obligated to take action on (*see Question 3*).

The government may compensate you for taking action on a fire that you volunteered to take action on, including compensation for equipment loss or damage.

However, if you started the fire or contributed to the spread of the fire (e.g., failed to abate a hazard within the specified time frame and that led to the spread of the fire) then the government *may not* compensate you for fighting the fire.

Also, the government will not compensate you for fighting a fire (regardless of fire cause) on your private property, or on Crown land leased by you from the government.

When Ministry staff arrive on the fire scene, you should provide them with the pertinent information about the fire (land status, cause, personnel and equipment on the fire) and ensure you receive written instructions from them as to your role and responsibilities. Make certain you document all discussions with Ministry staff.

If the government is legally obligated to compensate you for taking action on the fire, that compensation will include reimbursement for your expenses, equipment, tools and those

workers that you supply.

### **Due Diligence**

#### **10. Do I have to submit a fire preparedness plan?**

There is no longer a legal requirement to prepare or submit a fire preparedness plan.

However, it is in your best interest to prepare and implement your own fire management plan.

Simply put, the plan should incorporate a risk assessment and outline your prevention measures, preparedness contacts, assets and values at risk, fire control strategies, and hazard assessment and abatement procedures.

Having a fire management plan that is implemented and revised as required will likely improve your insurance options, will provide support to any certification process, and will demonstrate a stronger due diligence defence to any legal or administrative action.

#### **11. How else might I exercise due diligence with respect to fire issues?**

As noted previously, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your employees are properly trained and equipped to fight a fire.

It is also imperative that you pay strict attention to your weather readings and the fire danger restrictions that come with increasing hazard (if conducting high-risk activities).

Reviewing your complement of fire tools and fire suppression system requirements during increasing fire danger is also a smart idea.

The cost of a fire can be significant, both legally and administratively. Document and be diligent.

#### **12. What does the 10¢/m<sup>3</sup> annual rent buy me?**

The 10¢/m<sup>3</sup> was established in

2003 as a fire preparedness levy attached to all Woodlot licences. It was apportioned to the annual allowable Crown cut.

The Ministry has indicated in their Wildfire Management Policy, and in the regulation, that they will not bill their fire-fighting control costs for a fire resulting from forest harvesting, silviculture treatments or road building, maintenance or deactivation activities regardless of compliance/non-compliance issues.

In other words, as long as the fire was not a willful act on your part, and you are not in arrears of your annual rent levy, you will not be billed the Ministry's suppression costs.

It should be noted, however, that the Ministry may pursue damages to Crown timber and assets, administrative sanctions and possible prosecution if you were negligent in causing the fire.

At this time, the Annual Rent preparedness levy also covers fires originating on private land held under a woodlot licence.

### **References:**

- *Wildfire Act and regulation:*  
<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/protect>
- MOFR Wildfire Management Policy:  
[www.for.gov.bc.ca/tasb/manuals/policy/resmngmt/rm9-1.htm](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/tasb/manuals/policy/resmngmt/rm9-1.htm)
- Annual Rent Regulation:  
[http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/F/Forest/122\\_2003.htm](http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/F/Forest/122_2003.htm)
- *Worker Compensation Act—OHS Regulation:*  
[www2.worksafebc.com/publications/OHSRegulation/Part26.asp](http://www2.worksafebc.com/publications/OHSRegulation/Part26.asp) ♦

**DO YOU BELIEVE  
WOODLOTS CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO YOUR COMMUNITY?**

**IF SO, DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!**

**NOMINATE A WOODLOT LICENSEE FOR  
THE WOODLOT STEWARDSHIP RECOGNITION PROGRAM!**

**GOOD WORK DESERVES RECOGNITION!**

**2007 Woodlot Stewardship Recognition Program Call for Nominations**

The Woodlot Product Development Council promotes an annual *Woodlot Stewardship Recognition Program*.

Council is seeking nominations for deserving *woodlot licensees* who, in the last five years:

- Have done an excellent job of managing their woodlot licences; and/or
- Have promoted the woodlot licence program in their community.

The *Woodlot Stewardship Recognition Program* is unique to woodlot licensees because it recognizes:

- *Shorter-term achievements of woodlot licensees and/or*
- *Contributions at a local community level.*

*Do you know a fellow woodlot licensee who has recently improved the quality of the management on their woodlot licence, has contributed to their community, and/or has promoted the interests of woodlot licensees through volunteer efforts?* If so, let us know.

*Nominate the licensee* for the *Woodlot Stewardship Recognition Program* by sending in the nomination form on the facing page. Nominations are accepted from individuals, Woodlot Associations, and/or Ministry of Forests and Range staff.

Nominations are requested by July 6, 2007. The executive of the Woodlot Product Development Council selects up to six woodlot licensees to be featured in video productions.

**Presentation**

Nominees will be invited to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) as guests of the Council. Selected nominees will be featured in a video promoting their woodlot that will be viewed in a recognition ceremony at the Annual General Meeting. The video may also be used to promote the woodlot licence program. The videos will be distributed to every local woodlot association. The videos provide an excellent opportunity to show the public the contributions from woodlot licensees who work in your community. Recognition to the individuals may appear in the local newspapers.

For further information, or to receive a nomination form, call Cathy McClary at 1-888-925-9995 or e-mail her at [cjmclary@shaw.ca](mailto:cjmclary@shaw.ca)

## Registering in the SAFE Companies Program

by Brian McNaughton

Many Woodlot Licensees have received letters from majors advising that they will not purchase their wood unless they have registered in the BC Forest Safety Council's SAFE Companies Program.

In the SAFE Companies Program there are three (3) registration categories – the **INDEPENDENT** (still under development), **SMALL EMPLOYER**, and **LARGE EMPLOYER**. Selecting the correct category is important, as registration fees, training requirements and the safety audit/certification process are quite different.

When deciding which category to register in, remember to consider any non-WL related forestry businesses which could affect your classification; i.e., logging, planting, field surveys, etc. For the time being, only forestry/field work needs to be considered. Milling and manufacturing are not under the auspices of SAFE Companies at this time.

If you are unsure in which category you belong, please contact the Council at 1-888-632-0211.

Please note that the Independent Program is still in the developmental process and the FBCWA is working with the Council and other stakeholders to ensure that training and audit requirements are appropriate for WLs and other small operators.

### Independent

You should register as an 'INDEPENDENT' if you are an individual owner/operator and

- I. You only have one (1) forestry worker - which is you! You may also have an off-site admin employee, or
- II. You have 1 – 2 peak season workers or dependent contractors<sup>1</sup>.

In both cases (Types I & II) – the registration fee is \$132.50. A Type I registrant will likely have to attend a one-day Individual Owner/Operator training session then complete an Individual SAFETY log<sup>2</sup>. A Type II registrant must attend a two-day Small Employer OHS training course and conduct a self-administered SEBASE audit in order to become SAFE certified.

### Small Employer

You should register as an 'SMALL EMPLOYER' if you typically have 3-19 peak season workers or dependent contractors.

The registration fee for the Small Employer category is \$636.00. You or a designate must attend a two-day Small Employer OHS training course and conduct a self-administered SEBASE audit in order to become SAFE certified.

### Large Employer

You should register as a "LARGE EMPLOYER" if you typically have more than 20 peak season workers or dependent contractors.

The registration fee for the Large Employer category is \$1272.00. To become SAFE certified, you must retain an external auditor to audit your operations and

the BC Forest Safety Council must approve the auditor's report.

To register, or obtain more information please go to the BC Forest Safety Council website at: [www.bcforestsafe.org](http://www.bcforestsafe.org) or call 1-888-632-0211. ♦

## Woodlot Licence Plan reminder

Woodlot Licensees are reminded that FDPs with expiry dates on or before December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007, will expire on that date AND that there is no avenue for extension.

So if you have an expiring FDP but intend to apply for a new cutting authority (cutting permit, road permit or salvage permit) in 2008, you will need to prepare and submit a Woodlot Licence Plan.

Getting a WLP approved, like an old FDP, takes some time. There is a 30-day public review period and most licensees will have to share information with local First Nations.

You are encouraged to prepare and submit your new WLP with as much lead time as possible.

Existing cutting authorities issues under an FDP run to the permit expiry date. They do not expire or terminate when the FDP expires!

With over 500 WLPs yet to be approved, there will likely be workload issues within district offices. Please get your WLP submitted as soon as possible. ♦

1. A dependent contractor is a contractor that is completely dependent on your company for work, even though it may have its own legal status and WCB account. In other words, they don't work for anyone else; they are fully integrated into your day-to-day activities including your safety program, and their employees are treated exactly the same as your employees when it comes to training and safety.

2. The original SAFETY log is still in draft form. It is not expected that it will be complete until early this fall (2007).

## Forestry on the edge

by Del Williams

*This article first appeared in the May/June 2007 issue of the BC Forest Professional is reprinted with permission of the author and the Association of BC Forest Professionals.*

Several years ago, a new woodlot licence was advertised on the outskirts of Revelstoke. This woodlot was composed of several parcels, all of them close to town, most with private homes or acreages adjacent, and one sandwiched between Revelstoke and Mount Revelstoke National Park.

The residents adjacent to the proposed woodlot were worried, the City of Revelstoke had some concerns and a major water licensee was miffed. I think it made for some interesting times at the forest district office.

After much ado, my business partner and I became the proud new licensees for this woodlot. We, along with our families, have now been managing the woodlot for six years and the interesting times at the district office have continued. Although the times have been interesting, they have not been too difficult.

We have managed to coexist amicably with our neighbours and the multitude of forest users and still run a successful woodlot operation. The list of issues, other resources and other licensed and unlicensed users is long.

They include adjoining private landowners (about 15), water licences (about 20), a major Nordic ski area, tenured mountain bike trails (2), an adjacent trail ride B&B, an adjoining National Park, the adjoining city of Revelstoke, interested people (hundreds), and people who live within sight (about 8,000).

Needless to say, when it came time to cut our first tree, I was worried.

It was obvious from the start that our management of this area would have to go well beyond the trees. We would have to excel in timber resource management and ensure that other users' needs were met as well.

To help us with the latter, we have an advisory committee. This committee is composed of a regional district representative and several residents who live near the woodlot.

The committee advises us on operations and planning and helped create our management plan and Forest Development Plan.

The advisory committee has been productive at bringing to light many potential issues so they can be dealt with before becoming contentious issues.

However, it is not a substitute for contact with affected clubs and individuals.

Revelstoke has always been an outdoor sports mecca and that has translated into lots of recreational use of the surrounding lands. One group of users, the Nordic ski club, maintains a large and popular cross-country ski area that overlaps a portion of our woodlot.

Our relationship with the ski club has not been challenging at all. We consider the needs of the skiers in all of our harvest plans. It can create some small difficulties – particularly in ruling out winter logging on part of our woodlot – but for the most part, small-scale forestry and Nordic skiing are compatible and even mutually beneficial, as the ski club helps us maintain roads.

We have several bike trails built and maintained by a local mountain bike club in our woodlot. With minor changes to our harvest plans,

we have been able to maintain a good relationship with this group. This arrangement has not created any significant forest management challenges.

Being close to town also means we are highly visible from town, so our operations must be governed by stringent visual quality objectives. We deal with this by using partial cut silviculture systems – mostly group and single tree selection – to minimize visual impacts.

There are lots of other potential issues too. Some that come to mind immediately are managing fire hazard, disposing of landing debris, public liability concerns, visual quality on a small scale (for example, the view from across the road on a neighbour's driveway rather than from an 'official' viewpoint in town)

While most of our interactions with our neighbours and other resource users have been good, being close to town invites abusers as well.

We have picked up many loads of trash over the years. Some dumpers are incredibly blatant – who would have the gall to take multiple truckloads of old asphalt shingles and dump them?

We also had a case of a midnight, help-yourself gravel operation in a plantation!

And, we have to watch for "wood whackers" – those endearing individuals who take firewood and leave beer cans and fast food wrappers in return.

Our six years of forest management on the edge of town has produced several thousand cubic metres of wood without confrontation and bitterness.

This can be largely attributed to communicating with the affected parties and making changes to accommodate their needs.

*(Continued on page 26)*

(Continued from page 25)

In addition, there are many little things we do that help our relationship with our neighbours. We cooperate with the school forestry class, we provide field trips for teachers' professional development days, we lay out firewood on our landings for clubs and individuals, we ensure that our roads and landings are 'landscaped' to avoid an industrial look.

Being on the edge of town creates some uncertainty for the future. While we continue work with the advisory committee and local individuals, the town continues to grow. Will it eventually engulf our woodlot?

Will our lovely spaced and pruned stands make way for condos? Time will tell, but we feel the best way to prevent this is to do the best work on the woodlot that we can. ♦

## Purpose of the Woodlot Product Development Council

The primary purpose of the WPDC is to ensure that levy fees are spent on woodlot licensee priorities that will benefit and promote the woodlot industry throughout BC.

Funds are collected through the powers granted to the Council under the *Farming and Fishing Industries Development Act*. ♦

## Woodlot for Windows AAC calculation

by Mike Bandstra

As most woodlot licensees are well aware, Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) determination by the District Manager (DM) is crucial to the long-term stability and economic success of any woodlot. Key parts of this determination are

- An analysis of current timber composition and growth rates
- Social, economic, and environmental constraints
- Past and planned management activities.

To aid in the AAC determination process, the Ministry of Forests (MOF) and the Federation of BC Woodlot Associations, in cooperation with an independent contractor, developed a Windows-based computer simulation program that can model the rate at which timber is made available for harvesting in response to various constraints for individual woodlots.

The program was originally developed in 1996 and has undergone substantial upgrading and refinement since then. The latest version (version 3.222),

along with a Users' Manual and downloading instructions, is available on the MOF Woodlot Licence website (<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hth/woodlots/woodlot-program.htm>).

The Federation recognizes the value of the Woodlot for Windows program to woodlot licensees and since 2001 has funded a technical support help line.

Regular inquiries include installation difficulties, methods of modelling various constraints (i.e. deciduous stands, riparian reserves, unstable terrain, etc.), interpretation of output graphs and tables, and data input techniques.

The help line is available to all woodlot licensees and woodlot consultants who have questions, comments, or "technical difficulties" in regards to the program. In the wake of the Mountain Pine Beetle impact, the number of licensees required to propose new levels of harvest is expected to increase dramatically over the next few years. ♦

**Technical support for Woodlot for Windows can be obtained from**

Mike Bandstra  
 Mountain View Silviculture Ltd.  
 3244 Old Babine Lake Road  
 Box 3849, Smithers, B.C.  
 V0J-2N0  
 Phone: (250) 847-4822  
 Fax: (250) 847-4211  
 E-mail: [mview@bulkley.net](mailto:mview@bulkley.net)

## Change to timber mark on Crown lands

Due to the limited number of letters used to identify cutting permits, a change is being brought into effect in June 2007.

The new timber mark will have two parts:

1. A 3-letter or number code that starts with W; e.g., W12, WA3, or WAB;
2. A 3-letter or number code for the cutting permit; e.g., CP 123, CP abc, or CP 1ab.

This came into effect on June 1, 2007, with the release of FTA version 4.0 for all districts, even for those districts that have not run out of letter marks.

Existing marks continue for current harvesting operations (including amendments), but new operations (cutting permits and road permits) will be issued a new mark.♦



## Thank you to our contributors



Mike Bandstra  
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Brian McNaughton  
John Marlow  
Brent Petrick  
Del Williams  
Nic Williams  
Jill Zimonick

## Steaming into the Future: Ride the Woodlot Train

Federation of BC Woodlot Associations 20<sup>th</sup>  
*and*

Woodlot Product Development Council 10<sup>th</sup>  
Annual General Meeting and Conference

September 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
Port Alberni, B.C.

Hosted by the South Island Woodlot Association

See the registration brochure enclosed with this issue.  
Early-bird deadline: September 1, 2007.

## Links of interest

- MOFR annual report information: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hth/woodlots/woodlot-annual-report.htm>
- 1 & 3 Month Coast & Interior Log Market Reports:  
<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca.hva/timberp/amv.htm> ♦

## For sale: A coastal woodlot

400 ha woodlot in two parcels is located 50 miles north of Campbell River in Loughborough Inlet; 20 miles by sea from Kelsey Bay.

Contact: **Dane Campbell, Blind Channel, BC V0P 1B0**  
**250 949-1159** or evenings after 7 p.m.: **250 949-1211**  
**E-mail: dane@xplornet.com**

Asking price for woodlot and company: \$400,000.00

Also available is 50 ha of private forested waterfront property with log dump and road connecting to the bulk of the woodlot.

Asking price for private property: \$400,000.00



Line No.	Product	Species	Class	Top (in)	Length (ft)	Size (cm)	End
1	B	MA	L A	S	B	105	8 N
2	B	MA	L A	6	B	17	7 N
3	I	FI	L A	6	D	52	12 E
4	B	HE	L A	6	B	74	10 N
5	I	FI	S U	13	U	2	U
6	I	HE	L A	10	B	73	15 E

**Top End Code**

none	N	Natural
B	Barked	C Barked
P	Pencil	
C	Cut (bucked)	
U	Undercut	

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