For employees

MINISTRY OF FORESTS

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New forests minister

Dan Miller, MLA for the North Coast, was appointed Minister of Forests on November 5.

Miller served as the opposition critic for forests before the October 1991 election, and earned a reputation in the legislature as an informed and forthright advocate of sustainable forest management in B.C.

He was also a member of the legislature's Select Standing Committee on Forests and Lands.

Miller, who lives in Prince Rupert with his family, was a former Prince Rupert alderman, and was elected to the Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District.

As a former Prince Rupert pulp worker, he served as an officer for the Pulp and Paper Workers of Canada and sat on the provincial negotiating team.

Land-use policy

The Forest Service and the Forestry Association of B.C. are jointly sponsoring a Native Silviculture Contractor Training Program, which will hold information sessions in each forest region during November and December.

"The purpose of these sessions is to provide information from the ministry and industry to native leaders on silviculture contracting opportunities," said **Larry Gilbert**, manager, native programs.

Another objective is to determine from native leaders the training needs of their communities, Gilbert says. This information will be used to design the second part of the training program — a set of workshops in each forest region to train native silviculture contractors.

"This training will focus on developing business skills needed to establish a successful native silviculture industry," Gilbert said.

For session dates, contact **Carol Scott** at 479-8847.

Critical thinking

In 1990/91, several high-profile magazines, including *The New Yorker* and *Time*, published articles that were critical of B.C. forest practices. While some valid points were made in the articles, some contained misleading or inflammatory statements.

Chief Forester **John Cuthbert** decided to counter the misinformation by sending a point-by-point analysis of each article to its publisher and distribute them to Forest Service staff.

The opinions of staff, with expertise in the areas criticized in the articles, were gathered and synthesized by **Terry Chantler**, executive coordinator, forestry division.

"I think the main benefit of these technical analyses is that we let the publishers know where some of their authors are less than credible.

"In many cases, they listed the problems but not the hard-work solutions. In others, like the *Time* article, they were wrong about the level of harvest by a factor of 10. So we invited the publishers to get in touch with us and verify the contents of prospective articles," Chantler said.

The first technical response addressed "The Ancient Forest" by **Catherine Caufield**, published in the *New Yorker*, May 14, 1990.

"Our analysis was not published by the magazine, which stood by its author to the extent of defending her allegations of 'clearcuts on 90-degree (vertical) slopes,'" he said.

Analyses of other articles and productions are available to staff and the public through regional and district offices as well as the public affairs branch. Here is a short-list of those covered:

- "British Columbia's Big Cut," *Sierra Magazine*, by **Joel Connelly**, May/June 1991;
- "Voices in the Forest," on **David Suzuki's** The Nature of Things, written by **Alan Bailey**, aired February 3, 1991;
- "Paradise Despoiled," WDR Studios, **Hans-Gerd Wiegand**, broadcast on ARD Television (Germany), March 4, 1991; and,
- "Canada's Troubled Trees," *Time Magazine*, by **William Stewart**, July 8, 1991.

Halkett is back

Philip Halkett, is once again our deputy minister.

For the information of newcomers to the Forest Service, Halkett previously held this position from January 1, 1990, until April 15, 1991, when he was appointed deputy minister, Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism.

He has spent 18 years in the public service with the B.C. and Saskatchewan governments. His first job with the B.C. government was in 1979 as senior Treasury Board analyst, and in 1988 was appointed deputy minister, Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations.

Halkett has a B.A. honors degree in economics, University of B.C.

Silviculture branch

A little-known committee is trying to find a way to save wildlife tree habitat (snags), without endangering the safety of people who work in the forests.

"We're trying to come up with alternatives to maintain wildlife habitat without compromising worker safety," said **Frank Barber**, intensive silviculture forester, who initiated the committee in 1985 along with **Mike Fenger**, habitat forest specialist, integrated management branch, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks.

Jim Allman, regional manager, Workers' Compensation Board, also played a pivotal role, says **Todd Manning**, who coordinates the committee which now has 18 members representing the Forest Service, the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, industry, the Workers' Compensation Board, and the Canadian Wildlife Service.

The committee has released a video, titled *Wildlife Trees: More than Dead Wood*, which looks at the species dependent on wildlife trees and asks questions about silviculture and timber-harvesting practices.

"We have also formed two sub-committees to look at research priorities, including biological research into primary cavity-nesting species, mainly woodpeckers," Manning said. "We want to find out how many birds can use an area."

Our other major thrust is to look at potential timber harvesting practices and guidelines and how they relate to wildlife tree management. A third major thrust involves improving integration of forestry, wildlife and WCB concerns.

The committee is also undertaking a pilot snag assessors course in December, which would allow fallers, planters, or others to make pre- and post-harvest assessments of snags.

For more information, contact **Frank Barber** at 387-8910.

Comparing notes

Valuable contact was made with U.S. foresters who were invited to take part in recent field trips in the Penticton, Vernon, and Boundary forest districts, along with district, regional, and branch staff from silviculture and other programs.

Partial cutting systems, such as selection, shelterwood, and seed tree, were the main topics of discussion.

"What's really fascinating is that the U.S. foresters are dealing with the same issues as we are in B.C.," said **Bruce Fraser**, forest practices officer, silviculture branch.

"Clearcutting, as an issue, erupted simultaneously in both north and south of the border. So in terms of the technology associated with alternatives to clearcutting, we are at about the same level, and comparing notes.

"One thing that struck me about the U.S. foresters, is that they take a long-term view of their forests. They look at the entire rotation and the ecological processes that are working. In B.C. we tend to think about new forests — our time frame is the first 15 years because we are aiming to get to the free-growing stage.

"Individually, U.S. foresters tend to have more experience, and there are way more of them. Often, in B.C. we don't have the luxury of contemplation, because we are working so hard to meet our operational goals."

But the 1990s will be an exciting decade, Fraser said.

"What it boils down to is taking a more ecological approach and incorporating a wider array of values. All around us we see attitudes and practices changing."

The field trips were initiated by **Paul Diggle**, assistant silviculturist, and organized by **Rosalind Penty**, program management assistant, and staff in the three districts visited.

Posters

Reforestation in B.C. "is all good news" and there are posters available to help show it off.

"We've really solved the problem of reforestation in the province — it's just that people don't know about it," said Fraser.

Here is a list of posters intended for use in public presentations and schools:

- *Natural Regeneration* (FS 202);
- *Silviculture Systems* (FS 593);
- *Silviculture* (FS 594);
- *Reforestation* (FS 595); and,
- *Reforestation . . . it's the law in B.C.* (FS 296, FS 297).

They can be ordered from administrative supply, 387-8687.

Manual

Recently, the enhanced Seedling Survival System on PROFs was made available and a user manual published. Authorized users can access the system through the PROFs main menu system using INFOSYS or by typing GSSS at the PROFs command line.

Anyone wishing to receive authorization to use the SSS, can contact **Steve Hunt** (SHUNT).

For more information, contact your regional surveys and assessment coordinator.

The term "snag" is commonly used to describe all dead or deteriorating trees. The Wildlife Tree Committee uses the term "wildlife tree" which specifies snags that are valuable to wildlife.

Wildlife trees are a unique habitat of great ecological significance which is particularly threatened. More than 90 animal species in B.C. depend on this habitat, including some rare and endangered birds and mammals.

The greatest loss of wildlife trees occurs during timber harvesting, mainly because all snags must be felled to comply with safety regulations. Also, higher use standards have increased the cutting of deteriorating live trees, which previously would have been left standing.

Current safety standards also require snags to be felled before silviculture operations, such as planting, spacing, and fertilization. This situation is aggravated by management practices, like thinning and short rotations, which do not allow trees to mature, die and serve as wildlife trees.

Source: ***Wildlife Trees: Their Role in British Columbia's Forests***

Recreation

Recreation branch just released the *Outdoor Recreation Survey 1989/90: How British Columbians Use and Value their Public Forest Lands for Recreation.*

"This is a landmark survey — the first ever of its kind," said **Tom Hall**, acting director, recreation branch.

"There have been many surveys that have looked at specific recreation activities, such as wildlife viewing, or specific portions of the landbase, like provincial parks. But never before has the full spectrum of recreation activities been looked at over the whole provincial forest landbase."

The survey measured recreation use in provincial forests, as well as how much the public spends on recreation activities and values recreation resources.

Here are the key findings:

- more than 40 million visits are made to provincial forests per year, far more than previously estimated, and double the recreation use in provincial parks;
- more than $1.5 billion is spent annually by British Columbians as they take part in recreation activities in provincial forests;
- people are willing to pay more than $100 million per year to have these recreation resources maintained; and,
- scenic viewing of forest landscapes is the single, greatest, recreational use of provincial forests.

The report also contains extensive information on recreation activities by forest region. This will be of use to recreation staff throughout the ministry, government, and other agencies.

"I hope that all managers will be interested in the survey results, which provide information about the importance, nature, and extent of recreational use of our provincial forests," Hall said.

For more information, contact **Ted Murray**, recreation analysis specialist, at 387-8480.

The ministry's new *Recreation Manual* has also just been released. This manual revises, completes, and replaces the former *Ministry of Forests Recreation Manual* that was developed from 1979 to 1986.

The nature and scope of the revisions, changes, and additions between the two manuals is testimony to the recreation program's basic changes and significantly expanded responsibilities over this period.

The manual is the primary documentation of all procedures, responsibilities, standards and guidelines pertaining to the ministry's recreation (including landscape and wilderness) program.

It provides a comprehensive, though not exhaustive, description of the recreation program and serves as a framework for any further descriptions that may be developed for individual program components.

For more information, contact **Tom Hall** at 387-8475.

Climate change

The idea of global climate change usually gets one of two reactions from people, says **Dave Spittlehouse**, climatologist, forest science research branch. They either don't want to believe it, or they think it's too big to do anything about.

But Spittlehouse is one climatologist who is trying to deal with the unknowns of climate change and keep forest managers informed about what might happen and what is being done now.

"The theory of global warming is a fact," Spittlehouse said. "There are some naysayers with valid points regarding the extent of the warming, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't do anything.

"Certain actions can be considered as 'insurance' against climate change, somewhat like taking an umbrella with you in case it rains.

"We must respond now to this long-term threat, since forest management is long term."

Scientists have predicted that increases in greenhouse gases will cause the earth to warm and disrupt weather patterns. This may drastically affect forests in the next 50 to 100 years — the speed of change expected is much faster than in the past and some species may not be able to respond quickly enough.

Changes in species suitability, productivity, disease, fire occurrence, operating windows, and non-fibre resources are expected.

Along with other staff from forest science research, protection, silviculture and policy and planning branches, Spittlehouse attended the Symposium on the Implications of Climate Change for Pacific Northwest Forest Management.

Here is a preliminary summary of the recommendations:

- accept that change is inevitable and develop response strategies for managing the forests under a changed climate;
- adopt a 'no regrets' strategy as a minimum first step — that is, make changes in management that have benefits now as well as under a changed climate;
- use the Pacific Northwest as an example to the world of wise practices to manage for climate change, i.e. adopt measures for adaptation, mitigation, and protection to maintain healthy forests and 'undisturbed' ecosystems, and for carbon storage;
- establish an extensive 'biomonitoring' program to monitor the climate, growth, and health of Pacific Northwest forests;
- establish a Canada-U.S. committee on 'natural areas' to foster the selection, monitoring and protection of natural areas in the Pacific Northwest; and,
- improve communication/education between the public, scientists and forest managers to recognize that while global change may accelerate a shift in public values — public values drive global change.

Spittlehouse is preparing a short synopsis of the symposium for Forest Service staff. He can be reached at 387-3453.

FRDA publications

The fall 1991 issue of *Renewal*, the newsletter of the Canada-British Columbia Partnership Agreement on Forest Resource Development (FRDA II) is now available.

The eight-page newsletter contains a variety of articles of interest to anyone who wants to be brought up to date or learn more about FRDA II.

The next issue should be out by March 31, 1992, and will contain details of the FRDA II communications strategy, now being developed from research based on the communication needs of Forestry Canada and Forest Service staff.

For copies, contact **Brad Harris**, FRDA programs officer, silviculture branch, at 387-8911.

The FRDA 1992 calendar has a new look this year with eye-catching photographs by **Zbigniew Olak** and design by **Soren Henrich**.

About 25,000 copies will be distributed and each Forest Service employee should ensure they receive their copy by mid December, says **Ben Pires**, manager, publications and writing services, public affairs branch.

Forestry Canada staff will also receive copies, and the rest are given to ministry clients throughout the province.

Public information

The first of six new regional public information officers has been hired, and soon there will be more.

"These new positions will fill a need at the regional and district level," said **Laura Stringer**, director, public affairs branch.

Nancy Argyle was hired October 22 in the Vancouver forest region.

"I'm really excited about this position. It's not just issues management — it's also education and forestry awareness," she said.

"Our first task is to pull together a communications strategy for our districts. And I hope to visit all of them by Christmas," she said.

Argyle has a print-journalism background. Recently she was managing editor of *Canada This Week*.

You can call her at 775-0662.

The public affairs branch also has two additional public information officers: **Wendy Stewart** and **Shannon McAmmond**.

Stewart joined the branch a year ago — and brought with her 15 years of print and radio journalism experience and a B.A. degree (English/psychology) from the University of Victoria.

"Our branch is a terrific ministry resource. We have an energetic and talented team who want to help get the message out in the best way possible," she said.

McAmmond joined the branch on June 1, 1991, and specializes in writing advertising copy for print and radio media.

Her background includes a communications degree from Simon Fraser University and several years experience in visual arts and advertising.

"I think the regional public information officers will be really valuable," she said. "Every region is so unique, and this will allow them to field issues locally with personal attention and set up media relations."

Mutual support

The Forestry Continuing Studies Network held a two-day workshop November 7-8, bringing together old and new players to support the creation of a forestry education and communication strategy for B.C.

"I was really encouraged by the response of the delegates and the diversity of interests represented at the workshop," said **Cindy Pearce**, network director.

"It brought together people from environmental groups, industry, government and other agencies," she said. "It's seldom that you get that kind of participation. It indicates the potential of the program to bring these groups together.

"We are going to respond quickly to the strong support shown for the organization of regional advisory committees to identify educational needs and set up a delivery network."

Forest Service staff continue to play a strong role in developing the strategy — five staff were part of "The Group of Seven" who took on the responsibility for major objectives at an inaugural workshop last year.

One of them, **Dave Wilford**, research forest hydrologist, Prince Rupert region, recognized the need to solicit active participation, representation, and support from *all forest resources* (timber, wildlife, aesthetics, and recreation) *stakeholders*.

He says, the bottom line is that a diverse range of people need to come together at the local level, either formally or informally, to:

- recognize that forest resources stakeholders have many common educational needs;
- overcome the "us and them" syndrome by sharing in the organization, delivery, and "consumption" of events; and,
- evaluate events and define new topics together.

Susan Barker, librarian, public affairs branch, was one of the many interesting speakers at the workshop. She talked about accessing electronic forestry databases.

"I thought the most important aspect of the workshop was the networking that went on," she said. "There was a real recognition that we need a strategic plan — a concrete strategic plan is essential if it is to be self-sustaining down the road," Barker said.

Alison Nicholson, research vegetation ecologist, forest science research branch, moderated a well-received session "Looking Ahead," which included presentations on: lifelong learning, perspectives from the Forest Resources Commission, lessons from the Endangered Spaces Project, and initiatives in the U.S.

John Drew, regional director general, Pacific and Yukon regions, Forestry Canada, and Chief Forester **John Cuthbert** closed the workshop. They indicated the provincial and federal governments' support for the program.

For more information, contact **Cindy Pearce** at 822-9278.