Forest Service

Vol. 3, No 4 A newsletter for Ministry of Forests' employees April 1993

Kamloops to host suppression olympics

Sharpen your pulaskis, tune up your fire pumps and roll out your hoses; the games are about to begin. The Kamloops forest district is preparing to host the 1993 Fire Suppression Olympics June 11-12. The competition is designed to test a fire suppression crew's training and ability in a variety of simulated fire suppression activities. Events include a First Aid competition, Fire Pump Races, a Fire Pump repair event, physical fitness testing, creative Fire Camp Cuisine and much, much more.

The competition also provides an opportunity to share innovative operational techniques, while giving crews a chance to improve their overall performance.

The Kamloops district is planning for 25 teams to compete this year with hopes that crews from Alberta and the U.S. will also participate.

If you require additional information or are interested in entering a team, contact **Rick Swift** at 372-5832 or **John Flanagan** at 387-8734.

*The 1992 Fire Suppression Olympics Champions complete the grueling hill climb competition. The members of the Lilloet Initial Attack crew from left to right are: **Jack Verchor**, **Leanna Popowich** and **Dennis Heigh**, they turned in a record score of 49.*

*Photo courtesy of **Rick Swift***

Kamloops scientist named Agrologist of the Year

*On March 13 **Dr. Brian Wilkeem**, a scientist with the research branch, was named agrologist of the year by the BC Institute of Agrologists (BCIA), for his work on range management issues in the East Kootenay region over the past 13 years.*

The Award recognizes a member of BCIA who has made outstanding contributions to agriculture in B.C.

One of Wilkeem's current projects involves the use of biological agents in controlling knapweed. Knapweed impacts replanting and reseeding as well as cattle grazing and wildlife habitat. While knapweed can be controlled mechanically and with chemicals, cost and environmental concerns present problems for these methods. As an alternative, biological controls are the subject of increasing interest among a wide range of forest users.

For the biological control program, host-specific insects are collected in Europe and Asia and are brought to Canada only after several levels of screening. The insects are reproduced in Agriculture Canada's Kamloops research station.

Wilkeem was unable to attend the ceremony itself due to a family commitment. Staff at Agriculture Canada have organized a formal presentation ceremony for later this year.

Please distribute to all employees at their work stations

CISM Program goes full scale

With training and selection of a full complement of peer support persons now complete, the Critical Incident Stress Management Program (CISM) is now providing services in all districts.

The CISM program was initiated three years ago following a tragic incident near Victoria. Volunteer crews attended a house fire that claimed the lives of a young mother and two small children. The resulting trauma experienced by the fire fighters prompted a request from protection branch for development of a roster of mental health professionals. These would provide counselling to Forest Service members who were likely to be faced with similar situations.

A 'Critical Incident' is any event that can cause emotional reactions that have the potential to interfere with a person's ability to function at the time of the incident or later on. Critical incidents include the death or serious injury of a co-worker or acquaintance, or severe threatening situations faced by personnel.

In June 1991, the human resources branch set up a committee comprised of district, regional, and branch personnel to formulate a Ministry Critical Incident Stress Management Program. In September 1991, the deputy minister endorsed and supported the program.

After research and consultation with organizations and professionals specializing in critical incident stress, it was decided to develop a response system that incorporated mental health professionals as well as a network of trained peer support persons.

The program itself has a very specific mission, which is - *"To provide immediate support and assistance to Forest Service personnel exposed to a Critical Incident by specially trained and selected fellow employees working in conjunction with designated Mental Health Personnel."*

Any member of the Forest Service can access the program through a toll-free number. They will then be directed to a trained support person in their region. Immediate peer support is a key factor to helping people deal with the emotional after-effects of a critical incident.

CISM Program Manager **Jim Stobie** stresses that the program is built on confidentiality. "The only record we keep of interventions is for financial reporting. If we have to fly someone out of an isolated region to receive specialized counselling, that's paid for out of Human Resources' budget."

The front line of service is the Volunteer Peer Support Persons. These are regular members of the Forest Service who are known and respected by their colleagues. They are technicians, professionals, support staff and managers and are not connected with formal employee assistance programs. They are people who are good listeners who understand the need for a quick response and confidentiality. Each support person receives added training to enhance listening skills. They must be willing to make a commitment to be a part of CISM for a set period. A goal is to have at least three peer support persons in each region.

Professional support is provided by **Linda Van Cleave RN**, an Occupational Health Nurse with Government Employee Health Services.

Stobie says that much of the credit for the success of this program should go to the executive and Human Resources Director, **Harry Powell**. "They have backed us 100 per cent from day one. We wouldn't have been able to put together the kind of quality program we have without their support."

Special thanks to the six members of the development committee: **Whitney Numan, Nancy Davis, Bob Perchie, John Tigchelaar, Gill Kirk,** and **Jim Hilton**, whose efforts and dedication were endless and are most appreciated.

For more information contact Jim Stobie, human resources branch, Victoria at 387-8753.

Critical Incident Stress Managment Program Peer Support Persons

Doug Porter - Alexis Creek
Gwen Waugh - Clearwater
Lance Ollenberger - Fort St. John
Doris Laskey - Horsefly
Dave Nakashoji - Houston
Ina Nelson - McBride
Harry Anderson - Naksup
Shane Bowden - Nelson
Bob Perchie - Nelson
Sheila Howard - Nelson
Sharon MacDonald - Port McNeill
Judy Bye - Prince George
John Tigchelaar - Prince George
Darcie Annesley - Prince Rupert
David Wilford - Prince Rupert
Andre Kikkert - Quesnel
Jeff Redman - Rosedale
Gil Kirke - Salmon Arm
Whitney Numan - Smithers
Rob Moore - Vernon
Nancy Davis - Victoria
Shirley Robbins - Victoria
Jim Hilton - Williams Lake

Program Coordinator:
Jim Stobie - Victoria

Clinical Director:
Linda Van Cleave - Vancouver

If you have experienced a Critical Incident and need to talk to someone please call toll free 1-800-661-2476 (CISM) 24hrs.

Halkett brands Douglas-fir round to open new Merritt district office

A sunny day welcomed Deputy Minister **Philip Halkett** for the Merritt forest district's official opening ceremonies March 26.

In keeping with the western theme, appropriate to the ranching history of the Merritt area, Halkett presented District Manager **Tim Sheldan** with a plaque and branded a round of Douglas-fir.

Approximately 300 people attended the grand opening and toured the building enjoying displays prepared by local program staff. The local Native Unit Crew's display in a ranger tent proved to be very popular.

Smokey Bear made an appearance handing out balloons, posing for pictures and delighting kids of all ages. Other activities included: speeches by the local MP, mayor and MLA; cake cutting, videos, and refreshments for all guests.

The new $2.3 million complex has its own warehouse space and helipad. The 1948 square metre facility, which makes full use of wood construction and natural lighting, houses approximately 60 Merritt district employees. The modern building provides greater resources for the staff to deal with the increasingly complex demands of forest resource users within the Merritt forest district area.

*Deputy Minister **Philip Halkett** presents District Manager **Tim Sheldon** with branded fir round to officially open new district office. (Article and photo contributed by **Dan Eaton**, Merritt forest district)*

Getting to the root of the problem:
Plant nutrition problem at Surrey nursery corrected

Surrey Nursery has produced interior spruce transplants for reforesting difficult sites in interior B.C. for many years. Over the last five years production amounted to 14 million seedlings.

In the late 1980's shoot tip discolouration symptoms, which were sometimes visible in previous years, became a severe problem. The tips of the seedlings started to become yellow in August. By October, apical needles and even buds would die. This increased the cull level and reduced stock quality.

The nursery superintendent, **Tony Willingdon**, asked the Tree Physiology Section of research branch to examine the problem and find a remedy. **Bob van den Driessche** and **Dave Ponsford** first collected trees with and without symptoms from the transplant beds to grow some and analyze others. Trees with symptoms took longer to flush, grew less and had lower potassium levels than those without symptoms. Van den Driessche and Ponsford then conducted a formal experiment in the transplant beds for two years to see what levels of potassium and nitrogen fertilizers were necessary to correct the problem.

Suzanne Ronne, the bare-root grower at Surrey nursery, has been applying these new fertilizer levels and is now producing high quality stock without symptoms. Willingdon says, "this was a well conducted research project, and we expect to see the demand for this transplant stock increase."

*Contributed by **Bob van den Driessche**, research branch.*

Roles and responsibilities review underway

About 85 per cent of the land area of B.C. is designated as provincial forests. Nearly half of all British Columbians depend to some extent on the forest sector for their livelihoods. As the principal steward of this resource, the Forest Service is facing growing demands by individuals and groups who want to play a more direct role in how the forest resource will be managed.

Over the next several years, the Forest Service will be expected to take a greater part in: resolution of aboriginal issues; monitoring and enforcement; and, land use planning. These activities will require a substantial investment of ministry resources. Simultaneously, this increasing level of responsibility will need to be incorporated into application and implementation of the Forest Practices Code.

Consultant **Steve Spalding** was retained by the executive late last year to undertake a review of roles and responsibilities across the Forest Service. Spalding has completed several assignments for the Forest Service over the past 18 months. Before that, he worked for a major Canadian consulting firm conducting similar organization reviews and efficiency studies in government.

The project is divided into two phases, with the first phase - identifying the issues - nearly complete. From an initial approach of looking at existing perceptions of barriers and impediments, Spalding has expanded his study to examine internal and external communications, and organizational structures.

The second phase will be to develop strategies and recommend a plan of action that will help the Forest Service meet the growing demands for services.

Out of his information gathering for phase one, Spalding reports a number of recurring issues, foremost of which is matching activity levels to our client needs. "What I am trying to do," Spalding says, "is find ways for the Forest Service to be better property managers and to set up ways of operating so that we can truly provide the level of services that our clients demand."

A second issue revolves around traditional public sector control and accountability frameworks. These are built to control resources, and to make sure that certain administrative processes are followed. An ongoing challenge for the Forest Service is that, while following the rules of control agencies, there is a continued need to maximize output or results to meet public expectations. One goal of this review is to find ways to balance the resources devoted to these sometimes competing objectives.

A third important issue that has come out of Steve's research to date is the importance of continued training and career development opportunities for the staff. As the Forest Service evolves to meet changing demands, staff will need to be provided with opportunities to develop new skills and take on new activities.

Over the course of the next month Spalding will be reporting to the executive on his initial findings and recommendations. He will be working closely with branch, regional and district staff to present these recommendations and develop them into a workable plan of action.

Forest tech. reclassification

Forest Service members currently classified as FTs (Forest Technician) can expect to undergo position reclassification by August 1.

The master agreement effective from August 1992 stipulates that positions currently classified as Forest Technician Three, Four, Five and Six will be reclassified in the Scientific Technical Officer series effective August 2, 1993.

According to **Bill Fosdick** of human resources, "Since new jobs have been created and existing jobs have evolved we have to compare each position against the new plan standards. It won't simply be a roll-over from the old plan to a new one." While there has been a nominal reclassification for budget estimates, each position will still be going through a formal reclassification over the next four months. Guidelines for reclassification are currently under development.

Forest Service publication a Canadian best seller

The first 9,500 copies of **Plants of Northern British Columbia**, a Forest Service publication, (Lone Star Publishing, 1992) have sold out in just under a year. Co-authored by Forest Service staff in Victoria, Smithers and Williams Lake, this book is certain to become a standard reference for naturalists, biologists and recreational users of the forest.

This colourful 350-page book is the first of its kind specifically covering the flora of Northern BC. It includes sections on trees, shrubs, grasses, wildflowers and even mosses and lichen.

Plants of Northern British Columbia is available through most B.C. bookstores. For information contact **Andy Mackinnon** at 387-6536.

If you want it, the library staff can find it!

This could be a motto for the Forest Service library located in Victoria at 31 Bastion Square. At a casual glance, the library's collection might seem chaotic but a quick tour reveals a logical order. Most material is organized geographically by source and topic. Still, nearly every available surface is stacked with material that needs to be reviewed, catalogued or shelved.

Making order out of this avalanche of information has been **Susan Barker**'s job since 1978. When Barker joined the ministry, the library had been closed for a year. Her task was to catalogue, upgrade and expand the collection.

In the intervening years the library staff has grown to three. **Roxanne Smith** is the library technician, while **Pat Hedman** and **Kim Lauriente** job share the library assistant position.

The library itself has been an integral part of the Forest Service since the 1930's and has recently become a service of research branch extension. The library currently has more than 2000 registered users. While the majority are Forest Service staff, the library also serves the general public, students, industry, and advocacy groups. Lending is restricted to staff although browsers are welcome to use the small but comfortable reading area.

The library service is also responsible for all book and journal ordering for the ministry and boasts a widespread network of publishers and agents.

Suppose you're looking for the latest info on biodiversity from Ottawa. What about harvesting methods in Sweden or a study in tree genetics? There's a good chance Barker and her staff either have it on hand or can get it in short order.

"We subscribe to over 350 journals and have back issues of about 600 more," says Barker. "We also carry ministry materials going back to 1911. We can arrange for inter-library loans with the Canadian Institute for Scientific and Technical Information, the Royal BC Museum, university libraries, other ministries and other forest services across Canada and around the world."

Forest Service library staff, Manager ***Susan Barker****, Left, and Library Assistant* ***Pat Hedman***

Besides print materials, the library has access to international computer databases like DIALOG, RESORS, CANOLE, and DOBIS. Library staff will design and run custom database searches on a cost recovery basis. Inter-library loan requests and worldwide electronic messaging go via ENVOY on INTERNET. Barker plans to offer direct electronic access to library catalogues in the near future. Another plan is to provide library users with access to information on CD-ROM.

An ongoing job for a specialty library is gathering reports that only exist in limited quantity. "We try to collect anything written by anyone in the ministry. If it has been written in the ministry we want a copy. That includes reports where people give away their only copy and lose the original." Barker refers to these items as 'fugitive material.' If this makes being a librarian sound like detective work, it is! Barker recounts one incident where the library had a request for material on an obscure subject. "When our usual sweep didn't pick up anything useful we went to citation lists—lists researchers publish showing source materials. When we found a researcher citing articles on this subject we knew we had found someone working in the same area."

"The best part of our job here is the ministry staff. They are a great bunch of people."

The library is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

News in brief

Recent news releases

- Minister approves Fletcher-Teal transfer with conditions - #012
- Merrit forest district office officially opens - #013
- Forest license cancelled following suspension - #014
- Minister declines to approve applications for pulpwood agreement - #015
- Minister presents cheque to harbour society - #016
- Timber sale allows Prince George company to expand - #017
- Fire season starts April 15, but fires not waiting - #018

Uvic program honors Forest Service... and we do our part!

The B.C. Forest Service was one of nine recipients of a University of Victoria Director's Award for its contribution to Co-operative Education. The award recognizes employers who have consistently provided work experience of exceptional quality for co-op students for at least three years.

In accepting the award, Assistant Deputy Minister of Management Services **Thea Vakil** said that "as members of the employer community we have both the privilege and the obligation to host co-op students. We benefit from their energy and enthusiasm. As well, the opportunities we provide assist the students in finding work once their studies are complete."

The philosophy of co-operative education stresses employer participation in the educational system. A co-op employer provides not only a placement but is also responsible for developing a learning environment for the student and evaluating the student's progress.

The Forest Service is presently providing experience for a number of co-op students.

Jo Lui is a third year geography student working in the resource planning section at integrated resources branch. A Vancouver native, Lui chose to come to Victoria specifically to participate in the co-op program. "My other choice was the University of Waterloo, but I love the coast. Coming from a science background along with my environmental concerns, I wanted to be in an area where I could work directly in my field of interest."

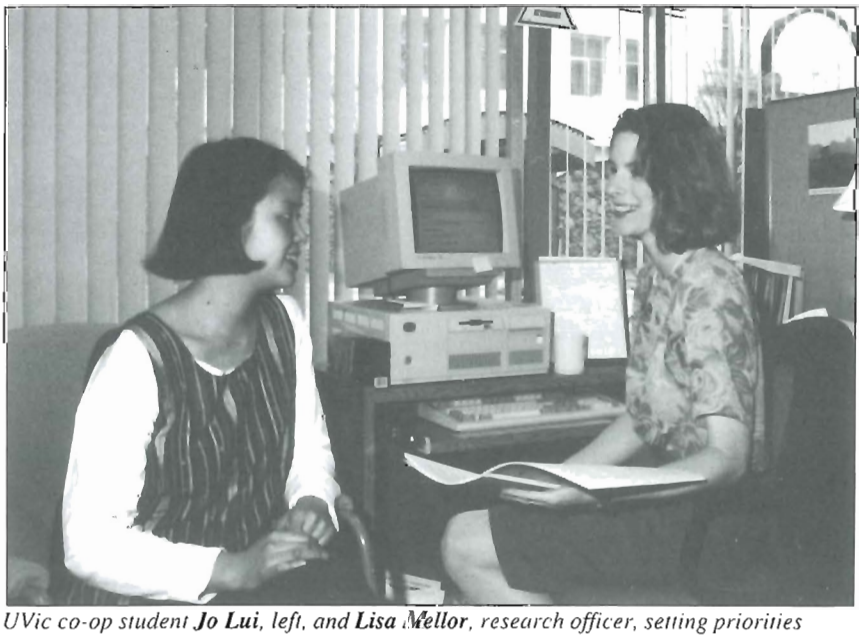
This is Lui's third stint out of the classroom. In a previous co-op term she worked for the Forest Service in Horsefly. "Doing field work at the ground level gave me a real sense of what the Forest Service is all about," says Lui. "I've been able to apply what I learned now that I'm working with HQ."

Research Officer **Lisa Mellor**, says that co-op students make a significant contribution to the department. "We generally have students working on a specific project," says Mellor. "A few weeks before the co-op term starts we [department staff] get together and come up with a list of projects we'd like to see done. Sometimes we'll work with the student to tailor a project to their interests as well as our needs. We try to focus on one or two major research projects and try to give the student something of their own."

By the end of her co-op term Lui will have completed a report on the role of local knowledge and expert opinion in resource planning in British Columbia. The report will be based on information derived from a research program Lui herself designed. The resulting document will be an invaluable tool for involving communities and individuals in the resource planning process.

Mellor, who has been responsible for overseeing the project, says that co-op students are usually very focused and self-directed. "We provide overall direction," says Mellor, "But we also let them have the opportunity to explore their project area and come to us when they need help."

A former co-op student, Mellor has high praise for co-operative education, citing many benefits and opportunities for all concerned. According to Mellor, the co-op program lets the branch take on projects that would otherwise have to be put on the back burner. As to quality of output, Mellor says the work the students do is always top quality and any lack of experience is more than made up for in energy and enthusiasm.



*UVic co-op student **Jo Lui**, left, and **Lisa Mellor**, research officer, setting priorities*

Timber harvesting branch also provides extensive opportunities for co-op students. Tree Farm Licence Officer **Reg Brick** has supervised seven students over the past two years and has hired an eighth for a special project over the summer term. Brick admits that co-op students represent the "cream of the crop" and that, of those who apply for positions, most would be capable of doing the job.

Students working in timber harvesting are more often exposed to a flow of work. "We keep a ledger of tasks that need to be done," says Brick. "When time is available I work

with the student to priorize and assign tasks." Brick also has each outgoing student take responsibility for orienting the incoming one. "This gives us continuity in the position for our ongoing work and long term projects."

Ann Murphy, also in her third year, is just completing a second co-op term with timber harvesting section. While the university normally discourages students from working for more than one term in the same location, Murphy believes that the exception made in her case has benefited both her and the branch. "I've been able to apply what I learned the first time I was here," says Murphy. "I've been able to accomplish a lot more this term."

Murphy has completed several different projects during her work term including two booklets on timber harvesting compiled from tenure and harvesting data. Murphy, whose main area of interest is tourism and recreation, sees learning about the Forest Service as an important step in the growing area of eco-tourism.

"One of the areas where I've really grown," says Murphy, "Is in seeing forestry issues from all sides, particularly the industry side. When I go back to talk to my fellow students in other fields I can use what I've learned here when we talk about environmental issues."

Another benefit for Murphy has been a personal one. "The people I've worked with are just great. I've learned a lot just from working with people who've had such varied careers and life experiences."

Both Lui and Murphy agree that one of the best parts of working with the Forest Service has been seeing the type of work that is being done and having access to the information available.

Lui suggests that more could be done jointly between the forest service. "The information and expertise I have access to here is far broader and more detailed than what I could get at the university. I think there are all kinds of ways universities could work with government and industry in co-sponsoring research projects."

Murphy would like to see more direct contact between the Forest Service and potential co-op students. "Maybe either the ministry or co-op students could conduct presentations so people would know more about the types of work being carried out and have a greater understanding of the co-op program."

Neither of the supervisors interviewed had any indication that having co-op students on work term resulted in extra work for themselves.

The University of Victoria currently has the third largest Co-operative Education Program in Canada with approximately 17 per cent of the student population enroled. In 1992, there were more than 1,700 student co-op placements.

*Co-op student **Ann Murphy** on a second term with timber harvesting branch*

Beginning with the April 1993 issue, you may notice a slightly different look in the newsletter. Susan Bannerman who has written the newsletter since last June is moving on to other ministry projects. **Gordon Williams** has been awarded a two year contract to produce the Forest Service newsletter.

Since graduating from the University of Waterloo in 1976, Gordon has worked in government, community service and trade union organizations for the past 15 years. He has authored and co-authored several publications on employment issues.

"A ministry staff is a community" says Williams. "In this community, a newsletter is something like a community newspaper. It provides people with information that effects them personally, that might effect their lives, or tell them more about happenings within the ministry.

"I have a strong interest in working with the Forest Service and I'm looking forward to the challenge of maintaining Susan's high standards for this publication."

If you have photos, articles or ideas for the newsletter, send them to Gordon at public affairs, Victoria or call him directly at 380-9959 in Victoria.

A pioneer passes

*Dr. **Joseph Garner Falconer**, the oldest surviving veteran of the ministry's research program, passed away on March 2, 1993, seven months short of his 100th birthday.*

A Manitoba native, Dr. Falconer's varied career encompassed teaching, homesteading and operating several small businesses. In 1922 Falconer entered the Faculty of Applied Science at UBC to study forest engineering. Graduating in 1926 at the age of 32, he worked for the B.C. Forest Branch's research division at the Aleza Lake Experimental Station near Prince George. At that time a comprehensive forest inventory was under way to develop a sustained yield forest management operation.

After returning to Manitoba and working for two years with the Dominion Forest Service, Falconer left to pursue further studies at Yale University. He obtained his Master of Forestry degree in the spring of 1929, when he returned to B.C. and joined the Forest Surveys Division on the Yahk Provincial Forest survey crew.

Further graduate studies at Yale, and fieldwork in Ontario, earned Falconer a Ph.D. in 1932. Dr. Falconer worked for the U.S. Forest Service at Rutgers University during this time but returned to Canada after graduating. As forestry jobs were scarce, he returned to teaching high school, this time in Swallwell, Alberta.

In 1935, Joe Falconer was once again in B.C., teaching agriculture at Chilliwack High School. After serving in the RCAF during the war, his endeavours in this province included managing a building supply business in Vancouver, operating a planer mill in Williams Lake, as well as teaching in Kamloops. He retired from teaching in 1958 at the age of 65.

Not content to rest on his laurels, Falconer went on to become a licensed realtor, specializing in ranch properties in the Kamloops area. His involvement in real estate continued until 1969 when he and his second wife, Etna, moved to Cranbrook where Falconer embarked on yet another career, that of a stockbroker. After a transfer to Victoria, he continued in the investment business until he retired at the age of 93.

Joe Falconer was the oldest surviving member of the Research and Inventory programs undertaken in the late 1920's. He was also among the first of the forest engineering graduates from UBC as well as one of the first Canadians to obtain a Ph.D. in forestry.

*Contributed by **John Parminter**, research branch*

Retirement

Gordon Hawkey, operations manager in the Quesnel district office has announced his retirement from the Forest Service effective May 28, 1993 after 34 years' service.

Hawkey joined the Forest Service in May 1959, in Alexis Creek as a Suppression Crewperson. After building his reputation in many districts, he arrived in Quesnel in 1975 and became Operations Superintendent in August 1980.

A dinner and dance will be held May 22 to honour Gord and Sandra at the Borealis Hall in Quesnel. For tickets and Information call **Karen Powell** in Quesnel at 992-4400.

Coming events

April 23
Silviculture branch open house,
1 p.m - 4 p.m., 31 Bastion Square, Victoria

May 2 - 8
National Forestry Week

May 30 - June 2
New Directions - First Canadian Urban Forests Conference, Winnipeg, Manitoba

June 3 - 6
International Forestry Trade Fair
Jonkoping, Sweden

June 4
The three billionth tree is scheduled for planting in Kamloops.

June 11-12
Fire Suppression Olympics, Kamloops

The B.C. Forest Service Newsletter is published by the Public Affairs Branch, Ministry of Forests, at 595 Pandora Street, Victoria.

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Submissions are welcome. Please send your comments, suggestions and contributions to **Gordon Williams** (phone/fax 380-9959) or **Paul Lackhoff** (phone 963-3142, PROFS PTLACKHO) at Public Affairs Branch.