The British Columbia
Forest Service
Newsletter

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Janna Kumi named assistant deputy minister

Janna Kumi, the latest addition to the Forest Service executive, has come home.

After leaving her position as forest pathologist in the Kamloops forest region in 1983, Kumi taught forestry and biology at the University of Victoria. She was later hired by MacMillan Bloedel, where she worked as an environmental coordinator for the laboratory, forest pathologist, silviculture forester, silviculture research program manager and Land Use Planning Advisory Team manager. Kumi has been an active force in the Association of British Columbia Professional Foresters over the past several years and was elected president of the ABCPF in 1993. On February 21, 1994, Kumi rejoined the Forest Service as assistant deputy minister, operations.

Is this going to be a challenging time to be heading the operations division?

"The priority is really the Forest Practices Code, but to help us implement the code, it was plain that the Forest Service needed to reorganize. The roles and responsibilities report outlines a functional reorganization that decentralizes the responsibility for making field-level decisions to the district level.

There are some key issues that are causing a lot of frustration and discussion right now. The centralization of protection functions for one. Protection has been part of the Forest Service since its beginning. Now the intent is to take that away from the districts – at least the fire suppression part – and centralize it. It's causing a problem with the districts because they've traditionally seen their role and their interface with their community as being on the fire suppression side. As one person said to me, 'It's the one thing we've done well and now your taking it away.'

All these changes came about long before I came here, but the district managers and the regional managers had some valid concerns. My first job was to try to manage that. I asked the regions and districts to send me their concerns so that we could address them. We also have a working group dealing with some of the recommendations of the roles and responsibilities report, many of which were vague. One of the first things they tackled was the protection issue. We are confident that we will be able to meet the district managers' concerns while still centralizing the fire suppression activities. I think we are actually going to work that one out.

It's not an easy job, it's a huge job. One thing I need to do is begin to realize that I now have staff who will actually help me make those decisions. It's not just me.

***Janna Kumi** has rejoined the Forest Service as assistant deputy minister, operations.*

Other issues, like the Vancouver region office move, were also fast-tracked. We want to give these people something to hang their hat on quickly – maybe not as fast as they want – but my aim is to have something within the month. As someone involved in a move right now myself, I know there are family issues."

How do you feel about taking on the Forest Practices Code?

"It is probably the reason why I rejoined the Forest Service. I saw that initiative as an opportunity to play a role in laying the groundwork for sustainable forestry in B.C. The Forest Practices Code, as an evolving document, will put us among the best forest managers by the year 2000.

Nothing is going to come easy, but the challenges are not insurmountable. I think it is a great time to put the code in place because I think industry realizes that without the code we would be losing markets in the U.S. and overseas as well as losing the support of the public. I've read the reports in the newspapers that say it has been panned by industry and

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Please distribute to all employees at their work stations

KUMI - continued from page 1.

whoever alike, but I don't believe that.

We have a real polarization of forest issues in B.C. We need to come together in a working relationship with the 30 per cent of the population that feels we're not doing a good job and maybe 60 per cent that is ambivalent to whether we are or we aren't. We need to recapture the trust of the public in the Forest Service that forest management is moving where it should."

What do you think will be the hardest part of your job?

"The hardest part will be re-establishing and reaffirming the public's trust in forestry. That's everybody's job but it starts from the top. My style is not confrontational – it's to try to find the middle ground that keeps people satisfied – that's the tough part."

Do you think that there is a risk of your being perceived as pro-industry?

"Ironically enough, many within industry worry that I may be too green. I've worked hard within industry to make them move forward, not only with MacMillan Bloedel but also the Council of Forest Industries. There are many people within MB, COFI and industry who want to move forward. Actually, I think industry could look at me with just as much apprehension as the environmental groups.

People are going to be asking what I'm going to do when I'm here. Am I going to implement some of the things that I'm always talking about? The environmentalists might say 'we've been debating with this Kumi for a decade – she's a redneck!' So I'm probably a bit of an enigma to everyone as to where I'm coming from. I don't have any hidden agenda, just to do what's best for B.C. forestry."

Where do you want to be a year down the road?

"I'm hoping that people will settle down in Nanaimo; that the Vancouver Region will hit the ground running; that the Forest Practices Code will be well on the way to being implemented; and that environmental groups as well as those who are pro-industry, feel that they can come to the Forest Service and have their voices listened to."

You are coming here at a time when tremendous changes are taking place, how will that effect your approach?

"Change is always uncomfortable. Change does not mean we should forget what we've done in the past and just do something new because it's a change. We must always keep a sense of what was in the past because that gives direction. It's not just change for change's sake, it's maintaining a flow but realizing we have to do some things differently."

Plum Creek Timber case study has lessons for B.C.

Plum Creek Timber Company L.P., a Seattle-based company, is the second largest owner of private timberland in the Pacific Northwestern United States. The company owns 486,000 hectares of forest land in Washington, Idaho and Montana.

In 1990, the *Wall Street Journal* called Plum Creek Timber "the Darth Vader of the timber industry." Yet, within a few short years, the company has undergone a major change in its approach to forest management, aligning itself with the leading edge of forestry in the Pacific Northwest. A case study on this change process, produced under the Silvicultural Systems Program, examines Plum Creek Timber's environmental forestry principles and its associated forestry practices.

When the idea of new forestry (a concept that accommodates ecological values by retaining standing live and dead trees, and course woody debris) was first introduced, many company foresters were sceptical. However, as foresters began applying new forestry methods in the field, the anticipated problems were less insurmountable. By the end of 1990, 50 trial blocks had been harvested using new forestry techniques rather than the six that were originally proposed.

It is not simply a change in harvesting methods that made this shift successful. The company also developed innovative organizational structures. Under a unit manager, a group of foresters work as generalists, becoming involved in all forestry activities for specific sub-units of land. On some units, several foresters may operate together as a team, each contributing specific expertise to the group, but becoming involved in all activities.

On other units, one forester will be assigned to a sub-unit for generalist duties, but will also be responsible for coordinating planning and administrative activities for a specific area of expertise (such as silviculture or environmental analysis) on the entire timberland unit. A typical unit may have six foresters managing 60,000 hectares of land.

The foresters feel that this gives Plum Creek a definite advantage over other companies and agencies that favour the more traditional specialist approach. Plum Creek's organizational structure seems to provide a clear line of responsibilities that ties teams of individuals to certain geographic areas. In addition, the objectives of a particular prescription can easily be carried through all phases of forest management and foresters can more effectively learn from successes and failures.

The decision to "just do it" rather than spend years in cautious experimentation has already paid significant dividends for the company. In August 1992, Washington State introduced new regulations for forest practices on private lands that incorporated some of the very ideas that Plum Creek had pioneered. Within weeks, Plum Creek harvesting permits were being approved under the new regulations while other companies were still developing harvesting plans to fit the new requirements.

*The case study also documents impacts of various leave tree patterns that Plum Creek has experimented with. For more information and copies of the report, contact **Brian Murphy**, forest practices officer, silviculture branch, at 387-1168.*

New branch will coordinate Forest Sector Strategy

Sue Stephen has been appointed director of the newly established forest sector strategy branch.

The branch, which reports to **Don Wright**, assistant deputy minister for policy and planning, will co-ordinate the development of an integrated forest sector strategy. Work on various components is well under way, involving many people across the ministry, including **Bronwen Beedle**, **Julius Juhasz**, **Ken Baker**, **Mike Whybrow**, **Jim Maxwell**, and people in other ministries such as Employment and Investment, Skills Training and Labour, and Environment, Lands and Parks.

An important aspect of the government's work in this area is the Forest Sector Strategy Committee (FSSC). The committee was formed by the premier in April 1993 with representatives from industry, labour, environmental interests, aboriginal interests, municipalities, the Canadian Forest Service and academia.

The FSSC's task is to develop a long-term, environmentally sustainable industrial strategy that will enhance the social and economic benefits received from the managed forests of British Columbia. The committee reports to Cabinet through Forests Minister **Andrew Petter**, who also sits on the committee.

*Forest Sector Strategy Branch Director **Sue Stephen**.*

According to Stephen, the FSSC is fundamentally a 'high-level' committee. It provides a venue for senior management in government, industry and other interests to meet and discuss issues and overall policy directions. Stephen's hope is that these discussions will eventually lead to a series of partnerships or agreements that the parties develop on a number of issues.

To move the FSSC process along, external working groups were formed just before Christmas to work on five major themes: resource opportunities; industry structure; marketing; communities and jobs; and institutional change. The job of the working groups is not to make specific recommendations but to explore options and identify points of consensus and disagreement. Forest Service staff sit on these external committees, together with representatives of various interests sitting at the main FSSC table. Internal government committees have also been struck to feed into the FSSC process.

Stephen finds that her role in heading up the new branch has many similarities to her work of coordinating the government sector at the three regional CORE tables. Both present a tremendous challenge for government to respond on a wide range of fronts. "I have been working with issues around land use for a number of years," Stephen says. "This is a chance for me to focus on the really important and substantive issues in the forest sector."

"I hope that we will soon be able to start bringing out more information about the Forest Sector Strategy because it is really such an important initiative and it is part of a lot of changes going on in the ministry."

Stephen also notes that there is an atmosphere of cooperation at the table. "I have been really amazed and quite astounded to see the willingness of players to sit down and try to communicate with each other and talk about issues and wrestle with issues – that is a message of hope for all of us in the ministry that we can bring about some change. There really does seem to be a window of opportunity for an agreement on a set of actions that will bring about the changes necessary to ensure a healthy, sustainable forest sector for the future."

"As we proceed this spring to implement these new initiatives, there will be opportunities for everyone in this ministry to assist with the important changes that we hope will flow from this initiative."

The forest sector strategy branch is located at #2-333 Quebec Street, Victoria, BC V8V 1X4, telephone: 387-2811, fax: 387-2443.

Retirement

David Lawrie, harvesting engineer, timber harvesting branch, is retiring after 24 years of service.

Dave's first brush with the Forest Service was in the summer of 1952 as a location party chief on the Naver Forest Road. After several years working at the Burrard Dry Dock, where he was involved in the development, design and manufacture of steel spars and allied logging equipment, Dave returned to the University of British Columbia and graduated with a degree in Forest Engineering in 1964.

In 1970, Dave returned to the Forest Service as a development engineer. He became a Registered Professional Forester in 1971. Dave has been a special projects engineer with the resource development section, a senior special projects officer, acting regional engineering officer in the Prince Rupert region and, most recently, harvesting engineer in Victoria.

Time flies....

The January 1993 issue of the Forest Service Newsletter listed **Jim Nanson** of inventory branch as a recipient of a 25-year Long Service Award. In fact, Jim has been with the Forest Service for 35 years. It seems no one could believe Jim has been around that long. Our apologies.

27th annual Forest Service bonspiel another success

The Forest Service Newsletter is committed to keeping you up to date on important events. We sent ***Doug Adderley****, information service manager, public affairs branch, to Kamloops on assignment to cover this year's Forest Service bonspiel.*

What a weekend February 11, 12 and 13 was at the 27th annual bonspiel in Kamloops! When it comes to measuring success, there are four factors in my book. First, was it a good time for all participants; second, how many rinks participated; third, who won the prizes; and fourth, did the organizers succeed? You tell me.

With 50 rinks and more than two hundred people attending, good times are a given. After all, the curling is the reason to get together, BUT...when you mix staff, spouses, family, retirees and friends of the Forest Service from across far reaches of the province, you get conversation about what's going on in those far-flung regions and districts. And you get friends and family members meeting once again for some good-natured conversation, friendly jibes, catching up on news about other friends and acquaintances, and naturally, some earnest elbow bending. Yes, there is even some business talk as rivals meet on friendly ice.

The event continues to be a gathering place for retirees to catch up on happenings. We missed some of the older retirees; the **Robinsons** from Williams Lake, the **Nelsons** from Clearwater, the **Marshalls** from Victoria and the **Dixons** and **Marg Stevenson** from Kamloops.

We did see **Gary Ward** and **Brian Collins** from Kamloops, **Rai Thomas** from Victoria, and **Ted McArthur** from Vernon to name a few. I have lost track of who is retired and who is still working!

New faces from Victoria were welcomed – Deputy Chief Forester **Bronwen Beedle**, along with her rink of Assistant Deputy Minister **Thea Vakil**, Executive Coordinator **Shelley Sullivan**, and Human Resources Officer **Julie Acres**. Other senior personnel visible at the event included **Fred Baxter** from Kamloops, and **Mike Carlson** from Williams Lake. A few district managers also showed up.

Where did they come from? From Hagensborg, Dawson Creek, Cranbrook, Port Alberni, Victoria, Alexis Creek, Merritt, Quesnel, Salmon Arm, Mackenzie, Vernon, Penticton, Campbell River, Williams Lake, Revelstoke, Lillooet, Chilliwack, Clearwater, Prince George, Abbotsford and Kamloops. Some rinks were make-ups from various locations, others included spouses, ex-Forest Service staff and make-ups from other ministries.

The nightly dancing, the Saturday night banquet, and the good natured fun during the presentation of prizes all added to the success.

It took a map measurement to single out the rink that travelled furthest to the bonspiel. It turned out to be **Andy Pakrastins**, **Dean Chartier**, **Bryan Norkus** and **Jill Nesbitt**, who made the trip from Mackenzie.

An elimination draw had many rinks wondering why they were being eliminated from competition when, in fact, they were still curling. It was just that – a draw from a box – and the winner

The Harold Holmberg Memorial Trophy

Harold Holmberg *was a forest protection officer who prescribed curling as a great leveller that provides a friendly atmosphere for competition, especially for his first concern – Forest Service staff.*

Harold carved the current trophy from a piece of pine (which pine is still a matter of debate) and challenged Victoria staff to a friendly competition. Harold died not long after his dream was realized and the trophy, which became a memorial to his foresight, continued as the focus of Victoria inter-divisional competition until ***Bill Young*** *was transferred to Prince George as the district forester.*

With the support of ***Denny MacDonald*** *in Kamloops and others, Bill challenged Victoria to give up the trophy for a provincial competition. The rest, as they say, is history.*

This year, retired Forest Service staffer ***Ted McArthur*** *presented the Holmberg trophy to* ***Jim Massey, Wayne Fleming, Ken Shaw*** *and* ***Albert Kowalski*** *from Kamloops. Up until this year, Kowalski's name has appeared on the trophy eight times and Flemming four times as winning skips.*

was the Durell rink (**Rex Durell**, **Bob Threinen**, **Ron Stevely** and **Derek Ackerman**) from Cranbrook.

The First Rink Out Of Competition award went to the **John Donnelly** rink from Vernon, leaving them lots of time to party!

No one ever said getting the bird was a dishonourable achievement, however, the **Albert Kowalski** rink from Kamloops again dashed the last hopes of a Victoria rink of winning the A-event's Holmberg Trophy. The Seagull, which is mounted in a glass case and accompanied by the required provincial possession permit, will reside in Albert's office for yet another year as a friendly reminder from Victoria!

The Seagull award disappeared for a few years and the organizing committee would like to complete the record. It went missing in 1985 and the upper glass case is still unaccounted for. Please, whoever has it, give them a call.

Gary Clarke presented the Canadian Helicopters Trophy to **Steve Doubinin**, **Carol Sherwin**, **Brian McNaughton** and **Riaz Bassari**, the B-Event winners from Chilliwack. In the C-Event, **Walt Weslowsky** presented the Conair Aviation Trophy to **Ted McArthur**, **Garry Beaudry**, **Dalton McArthur** and **Ken Balaski** from Vernon.

The D-Event Chemonics Trophy, presented by **Ron Bradley**, went to **Rex Durell**, **Bob Therinen**, **Ron Stevely** and **Derek Ackerman** from Cranbrook.

It all came together again. A big thanks goes to the 1994 organizing committee – **Brian Morrison**, **Sharon Berkey**, **Bruce Noble**, **Nina Barber** and a host of others at the Kamloops regional office. **Jim Massey** and **Dave Dundson** made the presentation plaques for the main events.

Costumes have always played a part in the festivities. Unfortunately, there were fewer entrants this year. The winners for the best dressed curlers were the Tequila Shooters from Williams Lake: (left to right) ***Linda Alexander***, ***Bev Atkins*** *(skip),* ***Carol Hollis*** *and* ***Amber Nehring***.

Let's make it 64 rinks to Kamloops in 1995. Until then, good curling!

Article and photos contributed by ***Doug Adderley***, *public affairs branch.*

The 1977 Prince George Barons – where are they now?

During the 1970s, an annual Forest Service tradition was a display of hockey supremacy for the much-coveted 'Cariboo Cup' between the Cariboo forest district and the Prince George forest district (now forest regions). The event usually took place on natural ice at the Kersley Arena. The trophy consisted of a broken hockey stick jammed through a hockey helmet on a rough cut piece of 2x6 lumber.

While none of the champions quite made it to the NHL, we thought it would be nice to check up on the 1977 championship Prince George Barons. Present locations are shown in brackets.

Hank Cameron, cruising crew (present location unknown); **Pete Theurer**, cruising crew (field operations supervisor, Salmon Arm); **Russ Cozens**, Prince George headquarters (woodlot licence officer, Victoria); **Skip Walsh**, cruising superintendent (resource officer, protection, Castlegar); **Clark Roadhouse**, headquarters (timber coordinator, Kamloops forest region); **Andy Little**, cruising crew (forest industry, Fort St. James); **Howie McKamey**, summit lake (present location unknown); **Bruce Pamplin**, headquarters (audit forester, Kamloops forest region); **Dave Mitchell**, headquarters (businessperson, Prince George); **Bill Harvie**, Prince George ranger (contractor, Prince George); **Bill Dow**, Summit Lake (resource assistant, silviculture, Prince George forest district); **Les Damman**, Hixon (businessperson, Valemont). **Wayne Langlois**, headquarters (interface technician, Salmon Arm); **Jim Haley**, headquarters (deceased); **Russ Bell**, Hixon (air coordinator, Prince George forest region); **Bruce Paschal**, Ministry of Highways –the only team import; **Wally McCulloch**, Summit Lake (private industry, Kamloops); **Rich Hodson**, headquarters (resource officer, integrated resources, Merritt).

Contributed by ***Bill Dunbar***, *fire prevention officer, Prince George forest district.*

Land information management strategy – a new vision

"Better land information for better land management" sums up what the Ministry's new Strategy for Management of Land Information is all about. Developed by the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Steering Committee, the strategy proposes a long-term vision for the management and use of our land information and outlines a series of projects that will return practical, immediate benefits while helping to achieve this vision.

Up to now, we have mainly been using two tools for presenting and analyzing land data – the paper map and, to some extent, geographic information systems (GIS). Data has been fragmented and updating it is time consuming and expensive.

Paper maps can only show a limited amount of information before they become impossible to read. They are hard to change and there is no direct link between the map and other information about a forest polygon, tenure, an opening, and so on.

GISs have proven expensive and hard to use, and the data they need to perform at full capacity is usually not available. As a result, they have been used primarily on high profile planning projects and it has been hard to get value for money from them everywhere they are being used.

The vision of the strategy is to give everyone involved in forest management the ability to call on a well-organized array of data – graphical, image (eg. satellite), textual, and numeric – containing all the information they need about the forest they are responsible for. Eventually, everyone would have sophisticated but easy to use analytical tools to access this data.

The strategy has three components. The first, which is well under way, aims to improve the quality of our current data using the same Microstation computer aided drafting (CAD) technology that has been used to produce paper maps for more than a decade. Many people's needs can be met without resorting to a full function GIS station. You may have noticed the power drafting station in your office, or perhaps even an inventory update facility. Installing both of these is part of the first component of the strategy.

This component also calls for the further development of simple analysis tools like FIR and MapView. The new version of FIR will do proper colour theming of maps. The new version of MapView has, among other capabilities, the ability to link the map to information from systems like ISIS and FTAS through the new Info Access facility. (See the ISB newsletter for more about Info Access.) By the time this component is completed, we expect most people will have given up using paper maps, except for copies they make as they need to put on a clipboard and throw into the truck.

While this is going on, we will have to rely on our current full function GIS tools for overlays, corridor analysis, buffering, and other complex analysis, which is inefficient and complicated. This is because our Microstation CAD map files don't contain enough information to support it.

At some point the CAD and GIS worlds will need to be brought together. This is component two of the strategy. It will require a complete conversion of the huge map database as well as the purchase of new software and probably hardware as well.

Because the technology to work with this volume of information does not yet exist in an operational form, it is uncertain when this conversion will happen, but when it does, you can expect huge seamless databases, terrific analysis tools, and assorted other good things.

The third part of the strategy is to bring all the data into a well organized structure. This component – cooperation – is critical to the whole vision. Work is being completed on a corporate land data model that will incorporate data from across the ministry. Common data standards and a data archiving strategy are also being developed as well as a common update process that will coordinate all programs. Included in this component is the training and support for everyone to help them work in new ways, and the creation of district land information management teams to coordinate the storage and update of district data.

If you would like more information, a document entitled *The Strategy for Management of Land Information*, has been recently distributed to all branches, regions and districts.

*Contributed by **Dave Ford**, GIS Steering Committee.*

Inventory branch field tests GPS

The Global Positioning System (GPS) is just one of the emerging land information technologies that will have a major impact on Forest Service activities.

The remote sensing section of inventory branch conducted a 70 millimetre photography/digital frame camera project at the Alex Fraser UBC Research Forest in Williams Lake in July 1993. One component of the project was to test GPS technology as a way of georeferencing photo sample plots both from the air and on the ground.

The aerial test used a boom camera and GPS receiver mounted on a helicopter. A single receiver of this type would normally only provide accuracy to about 100 metres. For this project, the data from the receiver was corrected using a base station at Prince George.

Since the base station was at a known location, variations on its readings could be applied to the readings from the mobile receiver on the helicopter. Known as differential correction, this process improved accuracy to less than 20 metres.

In a ground test in the Horsefly forest district, two GPS receivers were again used. Accuracy was found to be less than two metres in latitude and longitude, and five metres in elevation. The field test showed that the equipment was easy to use and the GPS data collection was successful under typical interior conditions.

Xiaoping Yuan, remote sensing coordinator, finds these results encouraging. He says they illustrate the importance of differential correction of GPS data to ensure accuracy. Yuan sees a number of potential applications for GPS at inventory branch including locating sample plots, integrating remote-sensing and GIS data, and updating maps.

Salmon Arm hosts forest practices forum

More than 300 people turned out in Salmon Arm on February 2, 1994, at a forestry forum organized by the Shuswap Regional Public Affairs Committee (RPAC) of the Association of B.C. Professional Foresters.

Salmon Arm forest district Resource Officer **Paul Birzins** moderated the panel, which included Chief Forester **John Cuthbert**, **Patrick Moore** of the Forest Alliance of B.C. and **Ray Travers**, a forestry consultant nominated to the panel by local environmentalists. Shuswap MLA **Shannon O'Neill**, who was on hand to make opening remarks, told the audience she looked forward to hearing feedback from the public on forestry issues.

According to Birzins, past RPAC events have tended to be smaller and more focused on specific issues. "Something we have to be working on," Birzins says, "is communicating to larger groups so that we are reaching out to people who want more information about forestry. A lot of people don't have the time to devote themselves to different stakeholder tables but they want to be knowledgeable about major issues."

"At this point in time forest practices have a high profile, so we thought we would provide a public focus for the issue. In a smaller town it's a rare opportunity to have speakers who have a high profile on forestry issues and are endorsed by specific groups," Birzins adds.

With a panel reflecting such diverse perspectives, many observers expected conflict. However, all the speakers agreed that the key to the future of the forest industry is doing a better job in harvesting and silviculture.

Birzins describes the forum as "The biggest forestry event ever in Salmon Arm." All of the 112 people who returned questionnaires distributed at the meeting said they would be interested in attending either future forums or field tours. Many also said they had specific issues that they would like to discuss in person with a professional forester.

While in Salmon Arm, the chief forester also took time to meet with district office staff to talk about issues and address some of their concerns and questions.

It was a very successful event, and one that is not soon to be forgotten. The Salmon Arm forest district is in a good position to participate meaningfully in future dicussions about the Forest Practices Code, the Timber Supply Review and Protected Areas.

*More than 300 people attended a forest practices forum in Salmon Arm. Left to right are: **Shannon O'Neill**, Shuswap MLA; **Patrick Moore**, Forest Alliance of B.C.; **Ray Travers**, independant forestry consultant; and **John Cuthbert**, chief forester.*

*Photo courtesy of **Paul Birzins**.*

FPC technical info on line

TECSUB, an electronic bulletin board, has been established to provide periodic updates on the technical development of the rules, standards and field guides for the Forest Practices Code. It is available to OfficeVision and All-In-One users. For more information, contact **Craig Bush**, forest practices assistant, Vernon forest district, at 558-1753.

Forest Practices Code update

The Forest Practices Code Implementation Team is up and running!

Director **Ken Balaski** says "During the first three weeks on the job, it has become clear that a large number of Forest Service staff have worked very hard toward the completion of this project. With all of this effort, I am confident the Forest Service will be ready for the *Forest Practices Act*'s expected proclamation in October 1994."

Balaski adds that implementing the code is everyone's job. "The ITeam will not be implementing the code. Each of you, as a member of our 4,300-person implementation team will do that. Our role is simply to coordinate the exercise."

Introducing the FPC ITeam

Ken Balaski, director, is responsible for liaison with the Forest Service executive, telephone: 387-2477.

Bill Pearson will be responsible for training, telephone: 387-1966.

Lynda Currie is responsible for policy coordination and communications, telephone: 387-2005.

Holly McGunigle, office manager, is responsible for the real work, telephone: 387-2767.

The office is located at #2-333 Quebec Street, Victoria, BC V8V 1X4, telephone: 387-2767, fax: 356-0950. The ***Forest Service Newsletter*** will carry monthly updates on the activities and progress of the ITeam.

Staff workshop highlights aboriginal issues

An information session on aboriginal issues held on February 18, 1994, provided Forest Service staff in Victoria with insights into aboriginal culture and the process of treaty negotiations. The session was organized to familiarize staff with the provincial government's aboriginal agenda at a time when the province is entering into negotiations and agreements with First Nations that will have a significant impact on the Forest Service.

After an opening prayer by Songhees Band Chief **Norman George**, Forests Minister **Andrew Petter** told the group that it is vitally important to address the disparities that still exist between aboriginal people and the larger community. Petter said that treaty settlements will signify a new relationship with First Nations and that the Forest Service and other resource ministries will play a lead role in this process.

Petter also noted that there are significant changes in attitude taking place in the aboriginal community. "I met two days ago with the Chilcotin Tribal Council," Petter said, "and I can tell you that the attitude around the table two days ago was like night and day from when I first met with the Chilcotin and other tribal councils two years ago."

"Two years ago the basic attitude was 'We'll do things our way, leave us alone, we don't want anything to do with you, thank you very much just turn over the land.' Today the attitude is 'We still have aspirations, we know we have rights and we're determined to work towards them, but in the meantime let's sit down and find opportunities.' "

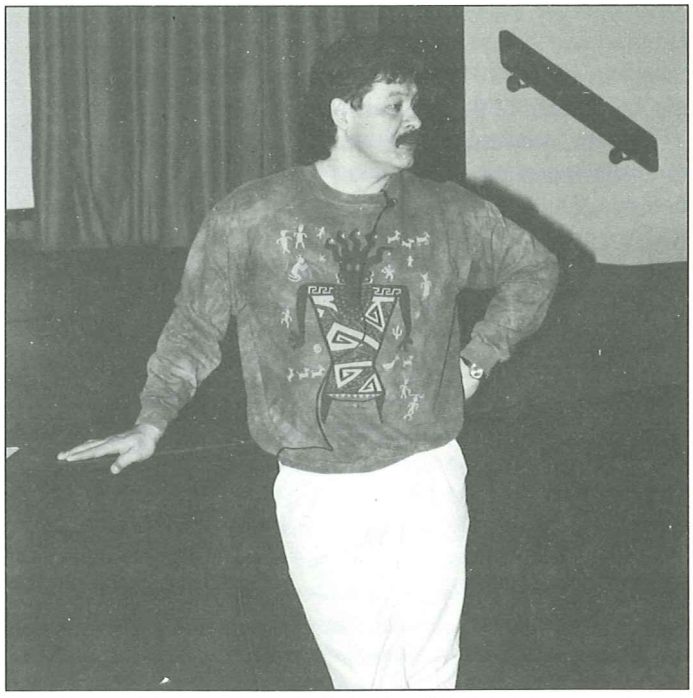
"It's going to be tough going because we have 125 years of bad history to overcome," Petter added.

When asked to provide an aboriginal perspective, First Nations Forestry Council Chair **Gary Merkel** said that cultural differences in world views can dramatically affect how First Nations relate to organizations like the Forest Service.

"Democracy as you know it," Merkel said, "is foreign to most traditional aboriginal societies. Our way of reaching a decision is to meet and talk until we reach an agreement. It doesn't matter how long that takes because the world will still be there when you are ready to do something. Our history has been to follow natural leaders but our culture is built on individual freedom of choice within a broad code of behaviour. The idea of electing leaders has caused great rifts within aboriginal communities."

Because of this, an important survival tool in dealing with First Nations, Merkel said, is to understand who you are dealing with. "Know who the bands and tribes are. Try to understand the historic alliances and conflicts, and the traditional and temporary structures of government – who the traditional leaders are and who the modern leaders are. You can't just walk into a community and ask people to make a decision on other people's behalf and expect that decision to stick. If someone doesn't like it they just won't follow it."

Most important when working with aboriginal organizations, Merkel said, is to be honest. "These are people who work on the basis of relationships. They are experts at picking up on intent. If you've got old people sitting in the room and they don't say anything, their job is to watch you. Be as honest as you possibly can. If you are in a position of power and you are dishonest, the word will travel quickly."



*First Nations Forestry Council Chair **Gary Merkel**: "If you are in a position of power and you are dishonest, the word will travel quickly."*

Other speakers at the sessions were Deputy Minister **Gerry Armstrong**; **Don Wright**, assistant deputy minister, policy and planning; **Grant Parnell**, manager of the treaty section, corporate policy and planning branch; and **Christie Brown**, manager, interim measures and aboriginal programs. More than 240 Forest Service staff attended the sessions.

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Contributions are welcome. Please send your comments, suggestions and contributions to: **Paul Lackhoff**, editor, (phone: 953-3142, E-Mail: PTLACKHO) at public affairs branch, or **Gordon Williams** (phone/fax: 380-9959).

The deadline for contributions to the next issue of the *Forest Service Newsletter* is March 31, 1994.

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