



The British Columbia

Forest Service

Newsletter

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A newsletter for Ministry of Forests employees

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Forest Service helps control Galapagos fire

British Columbia's fire suppression expertise gained worldwide attention during a recent fire on Isabela, the largest of the Galapagos Islands, off the coast of Ecuador. The six thousand-hectare fire, which was burning in a UNESCO World Heritage Site, threatened an important tortoise habitat area and the Ecuadoran government requested international assistance.

In 1985, waterbombers from eastern Canada had proven effective against a fire on the same island. Through the Department of External Affairs, Canada agreed to donate \$50,000 to the fire suppression effort. The request was referred to the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC), which coordinates mutual aid agreements between provinces and territories. CIFFC put out a call for experts and the B.C. Forest Service responded.

Prince Rupert forest region Fire Suppression Coordinator **Bruce Hutchinson** flew to Ecuador on April 19 along with two other Canadian fire suppression specialists to work with the Ecuadoran military to develop an attack plan and establish what equipment would be needed. Once a plan was developed, Hutchinson stayed on as an advisor. "They had a sound attack plan," Hutchinson says. "They had the basic concepts. They were being very cautious and I was urging them to take steps to get control of it quicker. The best thing about using the military was that they had an organization in place to support the people on the fireline."

Getting the equipment on site was a challenge in itself. "We were hampered by the fact that the Galapagos are a thousand kilometres off the coast – they are in a different time zone from Ecuador. There's one airport, there are no roads."

"We ordered the equipment through CIFFC on a Friday. It all came from the Abbotsford warehouse. People worked all weekend and got the equipment to Quito by air freight on Tuesday morning. We were really impressed. On Wednesday morning the military provided a Hercules aircraft and flew the equipment to the islands' airport. That was less than 100 kilometres from where I was but it took from Wednesday until late Saturday evening to get to us by land and boat. In some ways it was kind of a refreshing attitude. I learned something from their pace of life."

The equipment included 'bambi buckets' for carrying water by helicopter, relay tanks, drip torches and backpack pumps. This was a water-specialized attack plan because, as Hutchinson says, "There are no real trees, its mostly all brush. There is very little soil. There

is no dirt to use on the fire. You have to use water or put in fire guards and let it burn off. It was burning into the ground a bit because the lava is all fractured and vegetation had fallen down in between the rocks."

Hutchinson's attack plan, developed in cooperation with the local authorities, used helicopters to take sea water from the ocean and transfer it to the relay tanks on the fire guards. Hutchinson showed the helicopter pilots how to get the buckets hooked up and how to use them. The equipment was left behind as a donation to Ecuador.

Hutchinson believes that the international exposure will have positive results for B.C. in future relations in Latin America and he is currently developing a proposal for an exchange program (see related story page 8). "In B.C. we're used to doing more with less. We're known worldwide for getting to fires quicker, keeping them smaller and spending less money and burning fewer hectares. So, because I was down there, when they want help they are going to come to Canada."

For others who might be working in a similar situation, Hutchinson also has some advice. "Go into it with an open mind and remember you are there to help. It's their problem, you're not there to take control. You have to work within their system and, in Latin America, it's going to take a lot of patience."



Prince Rupert forest region Fire Suppression Coordinator **Bruce Hutchinson** (left) worked with the Ecuadoran military to develop an attack plan for a six thousand-hectare fire burning on Isabela, the largest of the Galapagos Islands.

Photo courtesy of Bruce Hutchinson.

Please distribute to all employees at their work stations

Deputy minister speaks out on Forest Service reorganization

In January 1994, as the result of a year-long project designed to find ways to help the Forest Service do a better job of managing forest and range lands, the Forest Service executive adopted the Roles and Responsibilities Report. Reorganizing the Forest Service is a tremendous undertaking, one that will affect every level of the organization. Deputy Minister Gerry Armstrong offers some candid thoughts on what this reorganization means and why it is so important.

Why does the Forest Service need to reorganize?

"Given the length of time since the last major reorganization of the Forest Service, and given the kind of changes taking place – the public expectations and the challenges we face; the valley-by-valley challenges that are generated as a result of the value conflict out there – we needed the capacity in the Forest Service to do two major things.

One is to have a central policy capacity to deal strategically with Forest Service-wide and, in many ways, government-wide issues. We haven't had that capacity before. It's been in large measure parcelled out to different levels of the organization. The executive has dealt with those issues at times, but I haven't had a whole lot of comfort that those major policy shifts have had the kind of attention that they need to have.

The second thing driving the reorganization is the sure knowledge that, whatever the level of resources being put to implement the Forest Practices Code on the ground – to do a good job and be credible about it – the present fiscal situation the government faces is such that we are not going to be given all those incremental resources as new resources from the outside. We have to find some from within, and the reorganization is going to help us to do that."

What kind of reaction did you get from people in regions and districts when you went on your tour after the adoption of the Roles and Responsibilities Report?

"I saw a number of different reactions. First, it was obvious that the people who came to the meetings were well briefed, well informed, had read the material, and were really interested in what was going to happen. They were not just interested in what would happen to their personal jobs but also in how the Forest Service is going to operate.

There were people at those meetings who are relatively new to the Forest Service and there were people who are forty-year veterans. They brought different but equally important perspectives.

The thing that impressed me most was the willingness that people have to undertake the work that will be involved in actually redesigning and implementing the reorganization. There is a tremendous appetite out there and a willingness, despite all the other things people are being asked to do, to take this on.

I know what is involved in trying to get the Forest Practices Code ready for implementation – the number of people who are working 12-hour days, seven days a week to do that. I know the kind of pressure people in the districts are under to

deliver basic cutting permits in the face of new public consultation requirements. I know what LRMPs are doing and how much time they consume. Notwithstanding all that, people are clearly determined to participate in this process."

There seems to be a lot of room for staff participation in the process.

"That was intentional. We had two choices. We could have hired another consultant to do it all for us. My experience in the past with doing any major project in that way is not very positive. Consultants tend to come in with a certain perspective, advise us, and then walk away before all the problems are solved. I wanted to take advantage of the knowledge people in the Forest Service have about what the jobs are, what the major objectives are, and what works and what doesn't.

There is a lot of room for personnel participation in this process, but it isn't a blank chequebook. One of the concerns I heard when I went around the province was from people who, on the one hand, saw that we are trying to provide lots of opportunity with the working groups and with the advisory committees to get input, and on the other hand saw that while that was going on, the executive was making decisions. Those decisions constituted the framework within which the advisory groups and the working groups would be working. I don't see any contradiction there.

Basically, I decided that we needed to have some reorganization decisions made very quickly because there is nothing worse than that kind of personal uncertainty, not just from a point of view of what it does to people's efficiency on the job but what it does to people's lives. To extend the process by putting those basic decisions out to some sort of lengthy discussion would be just the wrong thing to do.

If the executive doesn't have a clear idea of what it needs to accomplish as a result of this reorganization, then we're all in trouble."

What is the organization going to look like at the end of all this?

"If we take full advantage of this opportunity we will have a flatter organization. There will be fewer reporting levels. There will be a much clearer understanding at all levels of the organization of what people are accountable for, how they are being held accountable and what decisions they are responsible for making. Wherever there is joint accountability that will be very much more clearly spelled out than it is now.

So we'll have an organization that is more responsive – one that is more flexible and accommodates change better than the somewhat rigid and clearly hierarchical structure we have now.

That is not to say it will be so different that it won't be recognizable, that's far from true. The basic elements of the Forest Service will be recognizable. The regions and districts will be recognizable and the ministry's Report on Reorganization (May 1994) sets out what the kinds of responsibilities will reside at each of those levels."

Continued on facing page.

When will people be able to find out what the staffing implications are for the reorganization?

"The timetable we have adopted calls for all the detailed decisions to be finalized by September of this year. That gives us one year to actually implement the changes.

The good news is that this is happening when the size of the Forest Service is increasing, which puts a whole new complexion on this reorganization. It ought to remove a lot of the fear that tends to be associated with reorganization that has been in the past a cover for downsizing. Clearly that is not what this is."

Do you have a set of priorities of key changes you want to get to first?

"Recognizing that we are going to be proclaiming the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act* this fall, and that the transition provisions in the Act demand attention to certain kinds of things first and others later, we'll have to focus on getting certain kinds of capacities into the field – into the districts – sooner rather than later.

But we're going to look very carefully into the human side of this. I have kids, I know when the school year starts, I know what's involved in trying to move families from one area to

another when the kids are in school. We're going to pay a lot of attention to those kinds of issues. We're not going to let blind adherence to some particular timetable override the human concerns."

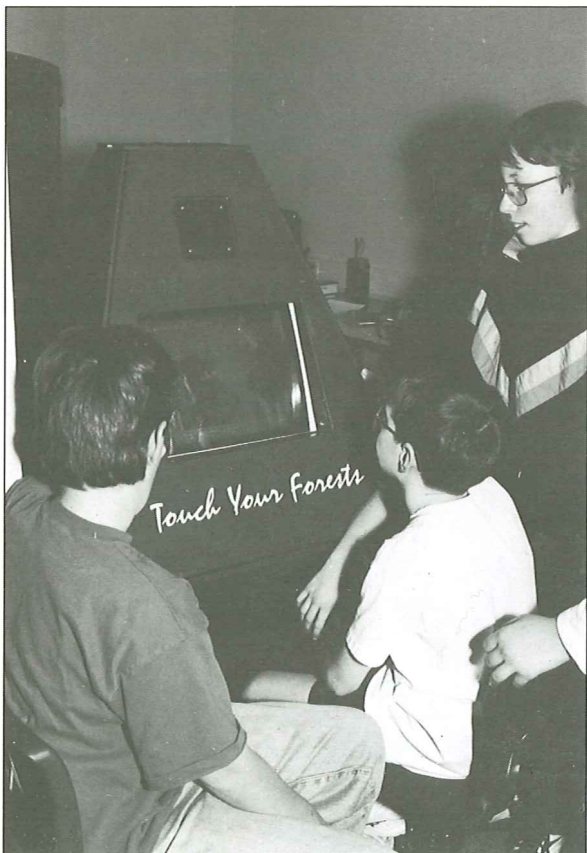
There is a lot happening at once – the Forest Practices Code, The Forest Renewal Plan, CORE – Is this the time to reorganize?

"It's because of those things that the Forest Service needs to reorganize.

It would be nice if we could pick our issues and deal with them one at a time and put reorganization on that list, but we just don't have that luxury. Without a reorganization of this kind, without being able to redeploy people and dollars, the Forest Service would fail in large and important and visible ways in delivering the government's priorities.

We're moving very quickly from the decision in January to the situation that we're in now. Many people thought it wouldn't be possible to get as far as we've got as fast as we've got. And it wouldn't be, without the willingness of the people in the Forest Service to contribute as they have done. I see people willing to continue that work because they know what they are doing will influence their jobs for the long term."

New directions planned for Touch Your Forests



While primarily targeted at adult audiences, *Touch Your Forests* has proven popular with all age groups. During a recent stay at Bayside Middle School in Brentwood Bay, TYF was in almost constant use by both teachers and students.

Touch Your Forests (TYF), the interactive, multimedia computer forestry information system, has been in place for just over one year. It has been a busy year and the 10 units are in almost constant demand. New kiosks and shipping cases have improved portability and the computers are all up and running thanks to a direct help line to BC Systems Corporation.

Touch Your Forest is popular wherever it goes. TYF project manager **Kelly Hutton** says the regional coordinators have done an excellent job in promoting and managing the system. Recently TYF was featured at Globe '94, where it drew international attention. A unit on display at the Merritt Forestry/Forest Fire Information Centre is expected to be used by as many as ten per cent of the 150,000 visitors to the centre this year. The centre's one-millionth visitor is expected in June. Touch Your Forests has also been invited to B.C. House in London, England.

While pleased with the fact that the content has held its own, Hutton sees a number of new directions for TYF. One is to upgrade and expand the content. "People are always asking for more detail," Hutton says. "Our user stats show 'Voices on the Clearcut' is the one section most people will access over anything else. Plans are also under way to include information on the Forest Practices Code and Clayoquot Sound."

The other major shift in direction will be to take advantage of emerging multimedia technology. When the project began more than two years ago, it was decided to use a Macintosh platform because that was the best available at the time. In a joint project with the BC Systems Corporation, Touch Your Forests is being converted to a CD-ROM format that could be used on any suitably equipped Mac or PC system. This shift would have significant potential to broaden distribution and availability as well as combine TYF with other multimedia products.

For more information, contact **Kelly Hutton**, TYF project manager, silviculture branch, telephone: 356-6214.

Forest Service staff will work closely with Forest Renewal BC

Forest Renewal BC is an essential part of the Forest Renewal Plan. The Crown corporation has been established under legislation to manage and direct forest renewal investments that are eventually expected to total \$400 million a year. Forest Renewal BC's board of directors will include representatives of government, the forest industry, workers, communities, First Nations and environmentalists. While the establishment of Forest Renewal BC is based on a partnership between the government and other stakeholders, the Forest Service will have a leading role to play in the development and implementation of the Forest Renewal Plan.

During legislative debate on the B.C. *Forest Renewal Act*, the minister of forests stressed that this agency is not going to replicate structures already in place within the Forest Service or the forest industry. It is meant to be a small agency that will primarily be a contracting organization with delivery systems outside the agency.

Forest Service staff will have many roles, including:

- developing new policies to be used by Forest Renewal BC's board in implementing the Forest Renewal Plan;
- a continuing role in the planning and regulatory approval processes for forest management activities that are started through Forest Renewal BC;
- providing advice to Forest Renewal BC on priorities for intensive silviculture and identifying specific projects;
- advice and input from headquarters and regional staff on priorities for environmental rehabilitation;
- forest district and regional staff support and participation in Forest Renewal BC's community consultations;
- district and regional staff acting as the local contact point for the Forest Renewal Plan and Forest Renewal BC;
- Forest Renewal BC contracting the Forest Service for delivery of certain programs and activities under the Forest

Renewal Plan (e.g. research and development, timber growth and yield information); and,

- participating in and implementing government policy changes that accompany the Forest Renewal Plan (e.g. community forests, selective harvesting, and greater access to wood supply for value-added businesses).

Forest Sector Strategy branch director **Sue Stephen** says not all of these activities will take place in the first year and that Forest Renewal BC has a number of important tasks to complete before any projects can begin. "One of the first things the board will have to address," Stephen says, "will be what the sustainable level of funding will be. This agency will not be allowed to run up huge operating deficits. We think that the average amount of money coming in is about \$400 million annually, but some years it may be higher and some years it may be lower. They will have to determine what the appropriate expenditure level is."

"Four hundred million dollars is quite a lot of money and all the partners have made it clear that they are anxious that this money be spent effectively and wisely. We don't expect to see a whole lot of money spent in year one. The first year activities are more likely to be prototype spending in watershed restoration, road rehabilitation, and silviculture activities that can be easily started. There will be a lot of consultation and discussion around what the level of programs should be and what kind of delivery mechanisms might be used."

"Right now it is really in a communication phase – telling people about the plan. There is still a lot to be told and I'm sure the regional and district offices are getting people phoning them and asking them about forest renewal and the Forest Renewal Plan. Certainly we're going to be relying on them, especially at the local level, to advise communities how they can become involved."

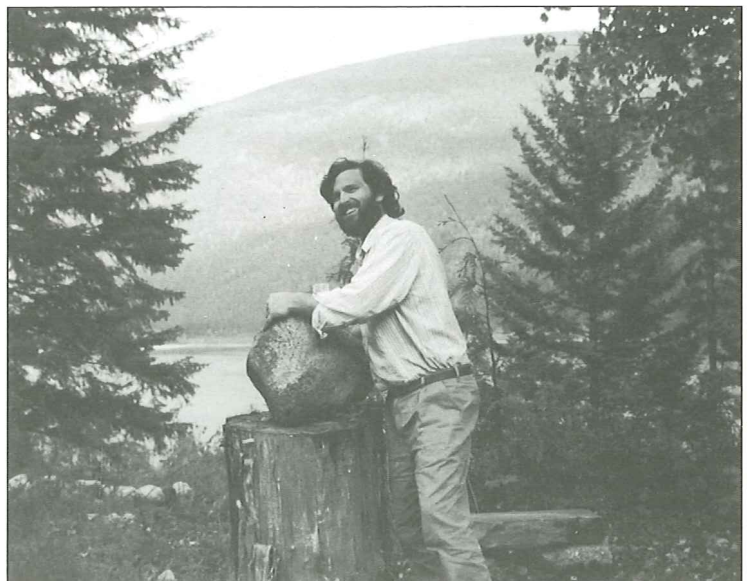
Integrated resources takes the Great Kootenay Lake Lift-off

A friendly (most of the time) rivalry has sprung up in the Kootenay Lake forest district. It all began when the harvesting section began to refer to the integrated resource management (IRM) section as 'The Far Side.' IRM staff responded by labelling the harvesters as 'The Dark Side.'

To defuse tensions, it was decided to settle these differences using the Viking Manhood Stones. This ancient tradition is also known as "lifting the heavy rock."

There are actually five rocks weighing in at 50, 100, 150, 200, and 250 pounds – the tradition predates the metric system. The idea is to lift each one onto a stump without damaging oneself, onlookers or downslope values.

Once all the grunting had subsided, IRM took the field by a cumulative score of 20,100 pounds to 11,011 pounds. The victors grudgingly commend three worthy opponents: **Tim Scheitel**, for becoming the first Dark Sider to lift the heaviest stone; and, **May Mehain** and **Coleen Crow** for proving this can be an event for everyone.



District Planner **Peter Lewis**, lifts the winning 250-pounder in the Great Kootenay Lake Lift-off.

Article and photo contributed by **Dale Anderson**, resource officer, planning and range, Kootenay Lake forest district.

Task force studies management strategies for wild mushrooms

Gathering non-timber products for sustenance has been a part of every culture since the beginning of human existence. From the gathering of food, medicinal herbs and other materials for sustenance, cultures have progressed to the commercial harvesting of these materials. Edible mushrooms; medicinal plants; floral greenery; wild fruits and berries; herbs and vegetables; landscaping plants; and, craft products are important sources of revenue and employment in the Pacific Northwest.

While most of the Forest Service is busy managing timber, recreation and range resources, one small group is examining the issue of non-timber forest products.

Over the years, the Forest Service has developed individual policies on the commercial harvesting of a variety of barks and foliage. In 1993, the integrated resources section undertook a study to examine the harvesting of all non-timber forest products (or botanical forest products) in the province.

The draft report – *Agroforestry Industry in British Columbia: Identification of Issues, Responsibilities and Opportunities for the Ministry of Forests* – listed 175 unregulated botanical products that are commercially harvested in B.C.'s forests. The report recommended developing a regulatory framework and starting a research program that would help the Forest Service establish sustainable harvesting practices for all commercially harvested botanical forest products.

By far, the harvesting of wild edible mushrooms, particularly the pine mushroom, is the most serious and urgent concern. Mushroom harvesting is a multi-million dollar industry in British Columbia. Available data suggests the annual pine mushroom harvest, which is almost entirely exported to Japan, can be as high 500,000 kilograms (1988) with a value of more than \$12 million. Despite its commercial value – the top grades can fetch more than \$200 per pound – little is known about pine mushroom ecology, distribution, or the effects of harvesting on other plant and animal species.

As a result, a multi-agency Pine Mushroom Task Force was struck in September of 1993. The membership included representatives from the ministries of Forests; Environment, Lands and Parks; Small Business, Tourism and Culture; Aboriginal Affairs; Agriculture Fisheries and Food; and, Agriculture Canada.

At a January 1994 workshop, task force members examined the issues, established goals and proposed a framework for developing a sustainable pine mushroom industry. The issues included: conflicts with other forest resource uses; the impact of regulating harvesters; the problems associated with unregulated camps, garbage and shanty towns; conflicts with First Nations rights; the potential for violent confrontations; and, damage to forest resources from over-harvesting, forest floor raking and soil compaction. All task force members agreed that the current status of an unregulated pine mushroom industry is unacceptable and action is needed.

The task force originally recommended licensing mushroom buyers for the fall 1994 pine mushroom harvesting season. However, to ensure full participation in the development of the

strategy, input will be sought over the next six months.

In addition, a five year provincial research project will be undertaken starting this year. Voluntary industry reporting will also be encouraged to help improve our knowledge and understanding of the pine mushroom industry.

The *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act* enables the future development of licensing regulations for botanical forest products. With public input and information gathered from the industry, the Forest Service expects to implement regulations for licensing buyers of wild edible mushrooms for the spring of 1995.

IRM forester **Melanie Milum** says that the reaction to regulation has been mixed. "There are some people in the industry who are very anxious to get some kind of management strategy in place because they see things getting out of hand – conflicts between harvesters, even violence. They see excessive litter and environmental damage. They know intuitively that something has to be done. So there are many people ready to support some type of strategy. Many buyers realize that, for their safety and for the longevity of the industry, some form of management procedure has to be started."

There are also people who would just as soon see government stay out. "For mushroom harvesters," Milum says, "it is fast, easy money. You can go out in a day and make \$1,500 cash."

At this point, the task force is most concerned about developing standards of practice and resolving some of the outstanding issues. "We're not asking harvesters to purchase a permit," Milum says. "We would, however, like to enforce current legislation such as fire prevention, litter and health standards where there are problems. A pine mushroom harvesting guideline pamphlet which explains the current standards of acceptable practices and conduct will be available this fall."

"The task force recommended legislation and standards focused at the buyers' level, requiring them to disclose certain information about the industry. They would have to tell us the volume of mushrooms they are purchasing, the grades, the general location and the number of harvesters involved. All that information will better our understanding of this industry."

"Five years down the road we may have regulated harvesting practices, we may have some kind of bid system for the best proposal for harvesting. On the other hand, we may find it is not a big issue in the province. However, we don't want to be in a situation where harvesting of botanical forest products is really having a big impact and it is uncontrolled because government did nothing."

A full report on the Pine Mushroom Task Force workshop results was released in early June and distributed to district offices and various other locations. Task force members will be touring the province this summer and fall to seek input into the final recommendations.

*For more information, contact **Melanie Milum**, integrated resources section, telephone: 953-4134.*

Best Wishes to Forest Service retirees!

Dick Giske, supervisor of right-of-way acquisitions with the property services section, timber harvesting branch, is leaving the Forest Service after a career spanning 38 years. After summer jobs with MacMillan Bloedel and the Forest Service, Dick shifted his university specialty from architecture to engineering. He began his Forest Service career as an engineering aide in the engineering services division of the department of lands and forests in May 1956.

At that time the engineering division had a staff of more than 200, with as many as 100 students hired in the summer. The division had its own construction projects and equipment and the push was on to develop a major arterial forest road system.

Dick worked on the Mica and Peace River pondages and as a survey party chief on the Willow Main, Naver, Swift, Cayoosh, Duncan and Slok Forest Service roads in the interior and at Port Hardy. In 1970 he transferred to what was then known as the land titles office of the engineering branch where he began working on right-of-way acquisitions for Forest Service roads throughout the province.

During those years Dick enrolled in the Appraisal Institute of Canada and the International Right-Of-Way Association, an organization that deals specifically with acquisition of rights-of-way, whether it be roads, pipelines or hydro

development. He took the necessary courses and became an accredited senior right-of-way agent.

Acquiring rights-of-way through private property is never a simple task. Dick takes pride in dealing fairly with property owners. "It's very challenging and rewarding," he says, "to work with property owners, deal with their concerns, and be in a position to solve some of them and come to an amicable agreement without going through litigation. We've seen a lot of changes in 38 years. We've learned how to adjust to different statutory authorities. Very few of our acquisitions have gone into litigation. Very few have resulted in expropriation."

Julius Juhasz also began his career with the Forest Service as an engineering aide. He joined the engineering services division in May 1959 and progressed through a variety of engineering positions. In February 1972 Julius joined the forest management division and was promoted to the position of manager, appraisals, in December 1972. In May 1981 he was appointed director, timber management, and in June 1991 he was appointed to the position of executive director, timber administration, the position he held until his retirement in May of this year.

Watch for a feature interview with Julius in the next issue of the Forest Service Newsletter.

National Forest Week 1994: two more reports

We ran out of room in the May issue for all the reports we received on National Forest Week 1994 activities. Here are two more.

In 100 Mile House:

Building on last year's success, the 100 Mile House forest district's National Forest Week events filled a local arena with more than 20 displays from government, licensees and local businesses. In addition to the school tours during the week, more than 800 people turned out on Saturday, May 7 for the pancake breakfast, lunch, horse logging display and contests.

In Chilliwack:

The Chilliwack forest district's National Forest Week events kicked off on May 1 along with Chilliwack's Country Living Days Extravaganza. Smokey Bear brought along helium balloons and stole the show. 'Little Red' – the district fire response vehicle – carried Smokey in the Country Living Days parade.

Grade 3 and 4 students from Cultus Lake Elementary School visited Vedder Mountain for

interpretive tours. Free bus transportation and tours were also provided to the public.



Grade 3 and 4 students from Cultus Lake Elementary School learned about forest protection during tours of Vedder Mountain courtesy of the Chilliwack forest district as part of National Forest Week activities.

Photo by Brenda Cosgrove, Chilliwack forest district.

Protocol agreement will clarify cultural resource management roles

The responsibility for managing cultural heritage resources has been unclear for many years. A draft protocol agreement between the Forest Service and the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC) has been developed to clarify roles and responsibilities in the management of these resources.

Cultural heritage resources are archaeological sites; and, other cultural heritage resources – structural features, heritage landscape features and traditional use sites. Because assessment requirements differ for archaeological sites and other cultural heritage resources, the agreement separates the assessment processes for these two types of cultural heritage resources.

Under the agreement, overview assessments for archaeological resources will be undertaken during the Land and Resource Management Planning process. Traditional use studies and impact assessments will be done during operational planning processes.

This protocol agreement assists the Crown in meeting legal requirements that stem from the Court of Appeal decision in *Delgamuukw v. Her Majesty the Queen in the Right of the Province of British Columbia* (1993), which places added responsibilities on the Forest Service to consult with First Nations, accommodate aboriginal rights and prevent or minimize infringement of these rights where a forest management activity is proposed.

The protocol will ultimately assist in meeting cultural heritage resource requirements as they are developed under the Forest Practices Code.

Before being finalized, the protocol will be reviewed by Forest Service branch, regional and district staff and branch staff at MSBTC. An implementation strategy is also being developed to address concerns about funding, training, procedures and communication.

For more information, contact Freda Jung, land use analyst, resource planning branch, telephone 356-5946.

Bear essentials covered in new training package

"And as they went searching around where the bear attacked me, they found an elk kill. It was a three month old calf and he had buried it there and we had walked right by it. So when we came along the trail he figured that we were going to take his elk and that's how we got into trouble..."

Fred Vandenberghe, grizzly bear attack, 1980.

"I looked up and saw a huge black bear about 15 feet from me. I tried to remain calm and remember what to do. Trouble was, I didn't really know."

Bruce Marshall, black bear attack, 1991.

Do you know what to do when confronted by a bear? In North America, about half a dozen people die every year in encounters with bears and there are dozens of injuries. In British Columbia there have been fewer than ten bear related deaths in the past decade even though this province has half the country's grizzly bears and a quarter of the black bears.

Whenever people come into contact with bears in the wild there is a risk of an attack. Bears are complex animals and their behaviour is not always predictable. Avoiding and surviving bear attacks is the focus of a training kit now available from public affairs branch. The package is intended as a self-teaching guide but can also be used in an instructional setting.

The major topics include: planning to avoid encounters; recognizing the risks and consequences; knowing what to do when bears are in an area; and, knowing what to do in a

confrontation with a bear. The video also provides detailed information on the need for cleanliness in the bush; how to recognize different species of bears; bear behaviour and warning signs; bear diet and feeding habits; and, the use of deterrents.

The training package is designed for anyone who will be spending time in bear country. It will be of interest to people who work in the wilderness, campers, hikers and people who live in or near bear country. It includes a pre-test, an instructional video, printed material and a final test to be completed after viewing the video.

For more information, contact Jim Challenger, manager, audio-visual communications, public affairs branch, telephone: 387-8487.

Have you had a close encounter?

You can assist **Stephen Herrero**, professor of environmental science at the University of Calgary in updating his book, *Bear Attacks: Their Cause and Avoidance*. Herrero is looking for case incident records from 1980 through 1993 of all aggressive or otherwise behaviourally interesting interactions between people and black or grizzly bears. If you have any such experience, please submit your accounts directly to: Stephen Herrero, professor of environmental science, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4.

Protection branch increases international activity

The B.C. Forest Service is recognized as a world leader in fire protection. Through the support of the United Nations, the World Bank and other international agencies, developing countries are now building fire protection programs involving computers, fire weather prediction, lightning detection, aerial attack and firefighter training. The Forest Service can play an important role in shaping these programs.

Over the past year, several international exchange programs have taken place and delegations from Russia, China and Italy have visited B.C. The hope is that these will lead to cooperative efforts and exchanges of information and technology.

International Development Manager **Steve Grimaldi** says that British Columbia forest types and terrain are very similar to those of other countries that have forest fire problems. "They may not have the lightning problems we have," Grimaldi says, "but they do have the problems of lack of water and access. Like B.C., other countries are interested in developing programs using helicopters and rappel techniques."

"B.C. has a lot more to offer than the rest of Canada because we have such a diverse terrain. Because our techniques and technology have been proven under varied conditions, they appeal to many other fire agencies and other countries."

Grimaldi receives a large volume of unsolicited requests ranging from simple requests for information to proposals for exchange programs and trade missions. Not everyone is looking for high technology solutions. Many countries are interested in training in basic fire fighting and fire equipment

use. Some countries are just looking at how to repair and maintain their hand tools.

British Columbia businesses also benefit from these international activities. As a result of Forest Service training, the Mexican government has purchased \$15,000 worth of rappel equipment.

In 1991, the Forest Service provided assistance in developing a complete rappel program in South Africa. This was 100 per cent financed by the South African Fire Fighting Association, which has subsequently purchased fire suppression equipment valued at \$150,000 from British Columbia suppliers.

Coordinator offers suggestion tips

Have you got a great idea? Suggestion Awards Program coordinator, **Marilyn Seifert** has some suggestions for you:

Electronic suggestion forms are available on BCSC02 and VAXBCSC systems. On VAXBCSC, use the command SUGGESTION. On BCSC02, use the command FORMS, then select "Ministry of Finance," and select FINESP.

Suggestions from government contractors, employees of crown corporations and Treasury Board staff are welcome, but are not eligible for awards.

Whenever possible, a collaborative approach should be taken on the submission of suggestions, particularly if the idea relates to the local work area. Subject matter experts or more senior personnel can often: provide additional

information; help assess costs and benefits; identify errors or omissions; suggest potential evaluators; and, generally increase the likelihood of suggestion adoption.

The following ideas have already been submitted and evaluated. Suggestions not to be awarded again include:

- casual dress day;
- donut day;
- bulk purchase of airline tickets for employee travel;
- eliminate or reduce the size of fax cover sheets;
- include "Originals to Follow: YES/NO" (only mail when required) on fax cover sheet;
- recycle laser printer cartridges; and,
- use the computer to generate letterhead at the same time a memo or letter is printed.

Ex-Forest Service vessels gathering off Nanaimo

Rendezvous '94 – the third annual gathering of the Ex-Forest Service Vessel Squadron – will take place this year from July 1-3 at Newcastle Island off Nanaimo.

The squadron formed in 1992, with the purpose of preserving a unique period of coastal history. Several boats are still in commercial use along the coast and many have been restored to original condition. All the boats will be open to the public and visitors are welcome.

For more information, contact **Ken Morely** at (604) 245-7034.

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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.

The deadline for contributions to the next issue of the Forest Service Newsletter is June 30, 1994.

