



The British Columbia

Forest Service

Newsletter

Vol. 5, No. 1

A Newsletter for Ministry of Forests' employees

January 1995

Forest education report completed



Youngsters get an early lesson in forest ecology.

From receptionists to district managers, Forest Service staff speak to young children about forests, lead public tours through interpretive forests, plant trees with youth groups, work booths during National Forest Week and wear Smokey Bear costumes.

All these activities — and many others — fall under forest education. And for the past six months, a task force on forest education, designated by the executive subcommittee on communications, has been exploring the topic and preparing recommendations on the future role of the ministry in this area.

Forest education is one of those tasks that, as the saying goes, many staff do from the sides of their desks. What does your office do when you're asked to give a school talk, offer a field trip or provide career information?

The task force soon discovered the Forest Service is involved in a great variety of projects and activities, large and small. You may have participated in the survey conducted

last August by Insight Research. The firm was contracted to find out what kinds of forest education activities Forest Service staff are doing, and how much money and time we spend doing them.

A total of 47 staff in 33 district offices, four regional offices, eight branches and one field office were interviewed. Survey participants were asked about the benefits of forest education and whether they thought the Forest Service should be involved. They were also asked about their personal views on forest education and the success of their various activities.

The survey confirmed what task force members already suspected: respondents were interested, enthusiastic and actively involved in forest education. And there's involvement and cooperation with people outside the Forest Service, too. The B.C. Forestry Association, naturalist clubs, forest companies, schools, youth and environmental

groups and other government agencies such as the Ministry of Environment, are players.

Comments from survey respondents, including one from Tasmania, and people on the review committee were incorporated into the task force's report.

The report, which contains specific recommendations, a business plan and suggested pilot projects, will be presented to executive in early 1995.

Members of the task force included **Blanche Congdon**, human resources branch; **Ruth Eppele-Dickens**, public affairs branch (chair and bringer of coffee and donuts); **Harry Drage**, Salmon Arm district; **Jeff Elder**, Prince George region; **Meggin Messenger**, silviculture branch; **George Sranko**, recreation branch; **Sandra Thomson**, research branch; and **Walter Vohradsky**, Chilliwack district.

*— Submitted by Jeff Elder, communications officer,
Prince George forest region*

It's official!

Dignitaries from the Forest Service will be on hand February 10 for the official opening of the new Vancouver forest region headquarters in Nanaimo.

Forests Minister Andrew Petter and ADM Janna Kumi will join civic officials for the 2:30 ceremony. The public will also get an opportunity to tour the new facility during an open house, which runs from 2 to 6 p.m.

Watch for a complete report in the next Forest Service Newsletter.

Protection branch restructures

Re-engineering of the protection branch is an integral part of the Forest Service's restructuring initiative. As the Forest Service undertakes key initiatives, such as the Forest Practices Code and Timber Supply Review, staff who formerly helped with fire suppression are fully committed to other projects.

As a result, protection is realigning its resources, becoming more efficient and facing the challenges ahead. This is being done by streamlining operations, shifting resources and flattening the organization. Decisions will be made on the ground where they are needed.

The program's goal is to continue to provide the province with effective wildfire control service while using fewer resources. Here's how protection plans to meet the objective:

Initial attack: Forty-three of the existing 51 initial attack bases are located at or near Forest Service district offices. Until now, these bases used a combination of district field staff and dedicated fire crews to handle fire situations. District offices, however, are not located closest to fire demand.

In 1995, strategically-located bases will be in place and operated independently of district offices. Relocating these initial attack bases will:

- reduce the return travel distance from the base to fires;
- allow for a quicker response to fires; and,
- result in a more effective use of fire fighting resources and improve coordination.

Warehouses: The Forest Service spends an average of \$4 million on equipment purchases and maintains a \$40-million inventory of equipment in 43 district and three central warehouses.

Under the new program, equipment will be centralized in two warehouses — one in Prince George and one in Abbotsford — to streamline transport and maintenance.

A new computerized tracking system will also:

- optimize inventory levels;
- assist with dispatch and tracking of equipment; and,
- provide opportunities to sell surplus equipment.

Air tankers: Air tanker management will be consolidated from six centres to one over the next two fire seasons. This reduction will permit more efficient pre-positioning and use of expensive air tankers.

Improved aircraft management will:

- likely reduce the number of air tankers needed; and,
- reduce the time from detection to air attack.

The resource tracking system now being developed will provide up-to-the-minute information on the location and status of all aircraft.

Fire control centres: Beginning this year, dispatch of crews and logistical support will take place from seven fire control centres, down from 50. This will ensure a more coordinated use of resources and will eliminate duplication of services.

Air tanker improvements: In 1992, the protection program began a competitive process for the acquisition of air tanker services. The objectives were to:

- improve safety;
- improve cost effectiveness through competition; and,
- look at new technology and business arrangements.

Over the next five years, new types of air tankers will be introduced into the fleet.

More modern and efficient air tankers will improve the capacity, flexibility and effectiveness of the fleet. In addition, the new fleet will be faster and have more capacity, resulting in quicker arrival at the fire.

Purchasing cards: The protection program has been involved in a pilot project using a Visa credit card for some purchases. This sys-

tem puts a large number of transactions on one invoice, which is paid by an electronic transfer of funds.

In a one-month period, the volume of payable transactions was reduced by 67 per cent, and more efficiencies are expected as the program is expanded.

Preparedness: Like all suppression organizations, the protection program is preparing to ensure that, for seven years out of 10, the workload is handled with minimal outside support. For the eighth worst season, the mutual assistance resource sharing agreement through the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre will provide adequate assistance.

Support through other arrangements with additional agencies will be needed in about one in five years.

Centralized accounts and payroll: The re-engineering of the branch will result in all accounts payable and payroll functions being centralized at the Victoria office. An internal transfer of full-time equivalents will provide the necessary staffing levels in the administration section to take on this added workload.

Task teams: Seventeen protection program task teams have been established to tackle various re-engineering issues and recommend strategies to move the program into the re-organized Forest Service.

The teams are examining everything from detection, reporting and expanded attack to prescribed fire, stocking levels, regulations and legislation.

Each team comprises a leader and between four and six members from the protection program. The groups began meeting in November and have begun to file their reports on specific strategies and recommendations for the re-engineering.

— Submitted by Wendy Stewart, protection branch

FORT NELSON DISTRICT

Manager praises local contractor



Fort Nelson resource assistant Brian Fertuck (left) and Canadian Chopsticks Manufacturing Company technician Kevin Kuhn.

A logging contractor and the company they work for are getting a pat on the back from the manager of the Fort Nelson forest district.

Bob Read said he's pleased with the special care taken during aspen harvesting east of the town adjacent to the Sierra Highgrade road, a main route used by forest companies and the oil and gas industry.

An operational trial was set up in the area last fall by the Canadian Chopsticks Manufacturing Company (CCMC) and the Canadian Forest Service. The experiment was to find the most effective way of retaining young spruce trees which grow up under the canopy of older aspen.

The hope is that, by leaving the spruce, it will eventually mature and become useful for timber. Not only does the site look better, but there are benefits for moose, birds and other wildlife.

"The loggers have played the most important part in this trial," said Read. "They took a lot of pride in this. I'd like to pat them on the back."

Brian Fertuck, the resource assistant for the area, is also pleased with the new techniques used by loggers. Although about 64 hectares (158 acres) have been harvested, smaller spruce and aspen trees are everywhere. To the untrained eye, it's almost hard to tell the area was harvested.

"I think it's great, especially along roads where the public sees the harvesting. There are also wildlife habitat benefits," he said.

Kevin Kuhn is the area technician for CCMC. He explained the results of the trial so far, which compared the use of designated skid trails (paths through the forest used to drag logs to a central location) with those selected by the operator.

"Random skidding, where the skidder operator actually picks the trails worked best. The skidder can pick his way through the spruce, which is quite patchy. They can weasel through these areas, which means less site compaction," he said.

While it may be a little more work, Kuhn said he likes what he sees, now that harvesting in the area is complete. "It breaks up the visibility of the cutblocks. But we are a little concerned about the ability of spruce to sur-

In the past decade, hardwoods have become a B.C. cash crop, promising to generate new revenues — and jobs — for British Columbia. Story on page 7.

vive without the canopy of aspen to protect it from damage by wind, snow and frost."

Read agreed it will take a while to determine whether the experiment will work. But he's optimistic about the new, more careful harvesting technique.

"The early indications are it's successful, but we still have to see how the wind and snow affect the small spruce trees which were left standing. We won't know for about five years. But from what I've seen, everybody — the Forest Service, loggers and the forest industry — is encouraged. We're going to be expanding this at every opportunity."

— Submitted by Jeff Elder, communications officer,
Prince George forest region

Hardwoods workshop scheduled

A review of current knowledge of the silviculture of temperate and boreal broadleaved-conifer mixtures and the consequences of growing mixed stands will be the focus of a workshop scheduled for February 28 and March 1 in Richmond.

Sponsored by the BC Forestry Continuing Studies Network, the workshop will feature several guest lectures based on experience in North America and Europe. As well, volunteer papers will present results experienced in B.C. and neighboring areas.

Registration is \$125 before February 16 and \$150 after. For more information, call Phil Coméau at 387-3299 or Dwight Yochim at 822-9282.



Halfway up the long grade before the office, I shifted the bike to a lower gear. Silence surrounded me, broken only by the occasional chatter of the bike sprocket. I inhaled deeply, reveling in the early morning exertion. Despite the fact that I had to push the bike to a service station to inflate a flat tire, I was getting an early start to a long day that was to include 500 kilometres and a half-dozen inspections.

It was 5 a.m. when I stowed the bike in the empty parking lot and realized my office keys still hung on the rack at home. "No big deal," I told myself, practicing an exercise from a motivational tape. "This is not going to ruin my day." Fortunately I had loaded all my gear the previous day and had extra keys for the truck and compound.

As usual, the gate and lock offered resistance. Emptying the contents of my backpack on the pavement, I groped for a solution. Folding pocket knife . . . bug spray . . . binoculars . . . sunscreen . . . **SUN-SCREEN!**

I coated the key with oil and inserted it. Instantly the lock snapped open and I hesitated with a vision of a well-paid me in a promotional sunscreen ad. Okay, okay, maybe I've been listening to too many motivational tapes. I loaded the ATV and was on my way.

Statistics suggest it's improbable that each of five sets of traffic lights between the office and edge of town would turn red precisely as I arrived. Sitting through five red lights with no opposing traffic shortly after 6 a.m., I had time to contemplate probability. Near the edge of town I pulled into my favorite fuel station with fast service and free coffee. The attendant and I exchanged greetings and I wandered into the station to learn they were out of coffee.

Back outside the attendant explained that the propane pump wasn't working. I thanked her and found another station that served propane before 7 a.m., but not before I sat through four additional red lights. They had my coffee too, for 75 cents.

I took a route out of town with no traffic lights. Shortly past the airport, I glanced at my watch. It was 7:15; I should have been at Stony Lake.

Feeling hungry, I groped in my pack for the extra apple and muffin I'd packed, but couldn't find my lunch bag. Thinking back, I didn't recall seeing it when I emptied my pack on the parking lot. In fact, I didn't remember taking it out of the refrigerator. I pulled over on the shoulder to verify what I already knew. Next time I'll have breakfast before I leave so that when I forget lunch, I won't forget breakfast, too.

I cranked open the window, activating the manual air conditioner. Several kilometres further, a powdery film had collected on the truck interior and I realized an 18-wheeler was forming a great dusty shroud ahead of me. I cranked up the manual air conditioner and turned on the heater fan to reverse the air flow. As I approached the truck, fine, gritty soil particles were dancing on the floor of my lungs. Gasping for air, I pulled over in a convulsive coughing fit. Within a few minutes, the dust had settled and I was able to breathe normally.

I continued south aware that I would likely be late for my first appointment since it was impossible to pass the slow moving truck. Seventy-three kilometres later, I approached my turn-off and began overtaking the truck. Naturally it turned off at my exit. Since the trucker had

switched his radio to that road frequency, I did what any normal, law abiding citizen would do — I begged for mercy. At the next available turn-out, the driver let me pass and I drove as if possessed for the next 60 kilometres, arriving on time for my first appointment.

After fine-tuning the third in a series of backlog inspection reports, 45 minutes had passed and my client still hadn't arrived. This didn't surprise me because I was on "licensee time." When I'd finished the fourth report, I radioed the office and the receptionist informed me that my client could not keep our appointment. Back on the main road, I noticed the truck pulling hard to the right. Twenty minutes later, I had the tire changed and was enroute to my next inspection.

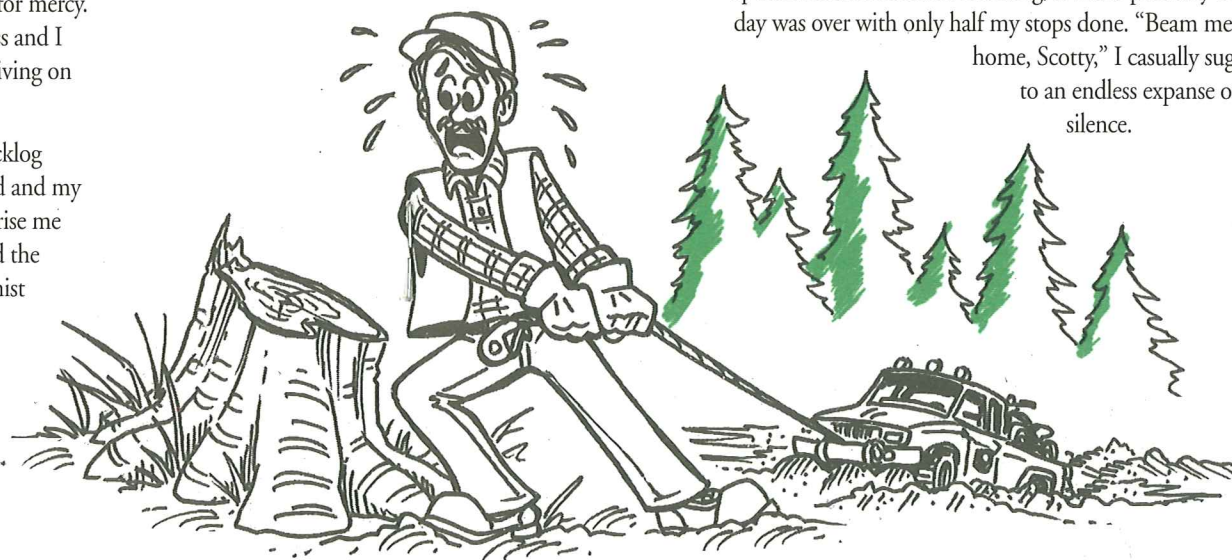
Just One of those days!

BY WADE CHMELYK

Activating the ATV starter shattered the silence. I backed the machine down the ramp, destined for a cutblock limited to winter access for vehicles. After a final check for maps and equipment, I applied tension to the shifter for first gear. Instantly it snapped and dropped to the ground. I stared at it with that "deer in the headlights" look. Since a five-kilometre round trip in reverse didn't appeal to me, I backed the machine up the ramp, grabbed my pack and started hiking. On the way I thought positively: it could have broken half way to the block . . . this is good exercise . . . this pack is much lighter without my lunch. Within two hours I was back in the truck with thoughts of lunch over-riding the gentle influence of the local Top 40.

My next inspection was completely uneventful and I was feeling great. Near the long, deep mudhole I had negotiated on the way in, I activated the four-wheel drive. Because of an inherent need to explore, I selected the side opposite to the one I'd taken earlier. Like a fly on a spider web, I could feel a sticky, slow, sluggish feeling overcoming my frantic clutching and shifting antics. When all forward motion had ceased, I realized defeat. While unwinding the winch cable, I chuckled at the radio station's selection of the Eagles' "Take it to the Limit."

The end cable tightened on the spool 20 centimetres short of the nearest stump, leaving me muttering "this happens to the other guy, this doesn't happen to me!" Two hours of innovative trial and error resulted in securing a log from which I could winch. My watch sounded as the last of the cable spooled and seated in its mooring; it was 3 p.m. My 10-hour day was over with only half my stops done. "Beam me home, Scotty," I casually suggested to an endless expanse of silence.



Who invented the 10-hour day anyway? They couldn't have worked in zone seven.

An hour from town a young black bear provided me with an excellent chance for a photograph. At an ideal distance I parked and eased out of the truck with camera in hand. It seemed totally unconcerned, sat back teddy-bear-like, and peered at me curiously. I zoomed out to get all of it in the frame. Everything was perfect: aperture set, shutter set, focus . . . out of film.

Casually I meandered back to the truck, frantically changed film and returned to the bear who had remained to observe. Aperture, shutter, focus . . . where did he go? He left for more exciting company, leaving me with a loaded camera. I photographed the truck and headed back.

Once I had informed the answering service that it was an employee who had accidentally activated the alarm in the warehouse, I unloaded the ATV, parked the truck and locked the compound. I was the last one in. As I settled onto the bike seat, I noticed the half-deflated tire and made a run for it. Pushing the bike the final four blocks to home gave me time to reflect on the day's events.

As I started up the stairs to the house, my two-year-old girl flung open the door and threw herself at me, blurting, "How was your day, Daddy?" Something of a bad hair day flashed through my mind. She squeezed her little body into my arms. I smiled and replied, "It was absolutely phenomenal."

Wade Chmelyk is a resource assistant in the Dawson Creek forest district office and a budding writer.

Forests history back in bookstores

One of the best-read histories of early forestry in British Columbia has been reissued — 86 years after it first appeared.

Woodsmen of the West, a personal account of the experiences of M. Allerdale Grainger, hit the bookstores in October, and copies are moving very well, according to Marlyn Horsdal, of Victoria publishers Horsdal & Schubart.

Grainger emigrated from Britain and worked as a logger in Knight Inlet around the turn of the century. In 1917 he became B.C.'s second chief forester, and during his tenure drafted the province's first *Forest Act*. "He was very far ahead of his time as far as

conservation goes," says Horsdal.

Since its original publication in 1908, *Woodsmen of the West* has been issued several times as a paperback, most recently in the 1960s. But the edition excluded the photographs which appeared in the original and copies were becoming hard to find.

The 1994 edition is a larger format (5.5 by 8.5 inches), features a full-color cover photograph of Grainger and includes all original black and white photos.

A copy of the original edition of the book is on display on the fourth floor at ministry headquarters. The book was initially presented by Grainger in 1909 to H. Ross,

then minister of lands. It has been passed down to succeeding chief foresters ever since.

New Grainger biography published

Grainger is also one of the subjects of a biography published this year by Horsdal and Schubart. Written by Victoria historical writer Peter Murray, *Home from the Hills* features three pioneers of early 20th century B.C. Also included is Warburton Pike and Sir Clive Phillipps-Wolly.

Both volumes are available in most bookstores.

Tour impresses Chinese foresters

Integrated resource management, forest conservation and protection initiatives, and the extent of public consultation in planning processes impressed a group of 20 Chinese foresters who recently toured Vancouver Island.

The visitors were mainly interested in recent changes in forest practices on the B.C. coast, specifically in policy and planning process on disturbance management, soil conservation and site rehabilitation.

Research branch and MacMillan Bloedel jointly organized the tour, which included Clayoquot Sound.

Andy MacKinnon and Marty Osbert hosted a half-day indoor orientation on forest land classification and the Forest Practices Code. The group visited logging operations in Nahmint Valley, road deactivation and a protected area of old growth reserves at Kennedy Lake, second growth and watershed management at Nanaimo River, and manufacturing facilities at Chemainus.

The three-day field tour, hosted by David Clark of MacMillan Bloedel, let the group link field practices to the background information provided by MacKinnon and Osberg.

Both the Chinese delegation and the General Bureau of Industrial Forestry, Heilongjiang province, are hoping to con-

tinue the forest management technology exchange with the Forest Service. In addition to being one of B.C.'s largest offshore markets, China has a long history in management of high-yield plantation forests, giving them expertise which could benefit B.C.

— Submitted by Cheng Ying, research branch

Chinese forester completes B.C. training

Hong-bo Ju, a visiting forester from Harbin, just completed six month's training in forest pest management, seed orchard pest management and the use of genetically resistant stock. The training program covered forest pest survey, control and management regulations (Cariboo forest region), control of nursery pests (Green Timbers extension nursery service), and seed orchard pest management (Kalamalka forestry centre and Red Rock tree improvement station).

He also participated in a survey of pest damage of lodgepole pine provenance trials. Ju much appreciated the help, hospitality and friendship extended by Forest Service staff.

— Submitted by Cheng Ying, research branch

HARDWOODS:

An emerging B.C. cash crop

The harvest of aspen for use in a Fort Nelson chopsticks factory is only one example of a remarkable transition that has crept over the B.C. forest industry in the last decade.

What was once a negligible commercial harvest of alder for use in furniture has blossomed into a significant component of B.C.'s forest industry.

Hardwoods — primarily aspen and cottonwood — are now a cash crop, used in the production of chopsticks, oriented strand board, wafer board, furniture and pulp. Just over one million cubic metres of hardwoods were harvested in B.C. in 1993. Although the value of hardwoods to B.C.'s

B.C.'s hardwood resource could support an annual harvest of seven million cubic meters, generating 19,500 jobs and employment income of \$475 million.

economy pales in comparison to softwoods, that could change as hardwood markets heat up and demand increases.

A 1993 FRDA study titled *An Assessment of the Strategic Importance of the Hardwood Resource in British Columbia* concluded that B.C.'s hardwood resource could support an annual harvest of seven million cubic meters, generating 19,500 jobs and employment income of \$475 million.

Forest Service research is now examining how to improve yields and stand management.

"Within the last five or six years, we're seeing a movement toward resource treatment for growing rather than controlling hardwoods," says Phil Comeau, of research branch, forest biology section.

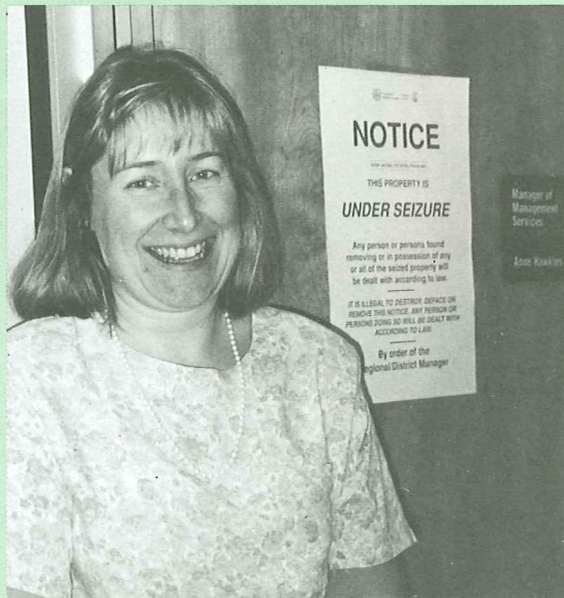
Several studies on the ecology and management of hardwood stands are underway in B.C. Undertaken by headquarters and regional research personnel, the work focuses on the interaction between hardwoods and softwoods, replanting and density management, and managing for biodiversity and wildlife habitat.

At the same time, the research branch forest productivity and decision support section is developing models on stand productivity and growth patterns.

"These models will enable us to predict how fast they grow and to develop regimes for better management," says section manager Tom Niemann.

THE GRINCH WHO STOLE CHRISTMAS

'Twas a night (or two) before Christmas . . . and Prince George forest district Management Services Manager Anne Hawkins (pictured below) and Resource Administration Officer Linda Fitzsimmons were working late. Sensing an



opportunity, the women seized the moment.

They also seized the Christmas tree from a display which the office services section had created as part of an inter-office competition.

When their unsuspecting colleagues arrived at work the next morning, it didn't take them long to track down the missing conifer: behind locked doors in Hawkins' office.

Resourceful staff immediately posted an "Under Seizure" notice to ensure they would recover their "stolen" property.

The office services section got the tree back in time to win second prize in the Christmas decorating contest. The accounts section won first place and scaling won third.

Happy New Year everyone, from Prince George district staff.

— Submitted by Gloria Wahl, data entry clerk, Prince George forest district

Sad news for forest workers

Sad news came to all members of the forest industry with word of the passing of two men who were instrumental in shaping B.C.'s forest industry. **John Stokes** and **Henry Pogue** both passed away last December 1.

A career public servant, Stokes joined the Forest Service as an assistant ranger. Before retiring in the late 1970s, he rose to the rank of assistant chief forester and then deputy minister.

He was one of the architects of the 1979 *Forest Act*, the *Ministry of Forests Act* and the *Range Act*.

Pogue, known to friends and colleagues as Mickie, also dedicated his life to the Forest Service. As forester in charge of inventory in the 1950s, he completed B.C.'s first province-wide inventory, and later, with the plans division, helped establish allowable cuts. In 1965 he became district forester in Prince Rupert, then moved to Vancouver before retiring in 1978.

A tragic accident on December 14 brought more bad news to the Forest Service. A motor vehicle accident took the life of

Kamloops forest district Forest Technician **Henry Woensdregt**. Woensdregt had worked in the district for the last seven years, and will be missed by friends and col-

leagues there and throughout B.C. On behalf of all members of the Forest Service, we offer condolences to family and friends of all three men.

Kootenay forest training program winds up



Christine Sallis (left) and Monte Stefanuk

After 23 weeks, the Forest Worker Development Program in Creston has drawn to a close. The crew completed various silviculture projects, including brushing in Placer Creek, juvenile spacing in Hawkins Creek and upgrading a recreation trail and site at Pebble Beach north of Riondel.

In addition to learning about silviculture, the crew received training in first aid, power saw safety and maintenance, forest science, pruning, firefighting, map and compass use, and beetle surveying.

Despite the rigors of the job, including staff turn-over, extreme heat, early snow and a rampant cold virus, **Christine Sallis** stuck with the crew throughout, achieving 100 per cent attendance.

Credit for the success of the crew as a whole is due to the hard work of supervisor **Monte Stefanuk**.

— Submitted by Susan Hoyle, Forest Worker Development Program, Kootenay Lake forest district

The B.C. Forest Service Newsletter is published on the second Monday of every month by the B.C. Forest Service, public affairs branch.

Mailing Address:

595 Pandora Avenue
Victoria, British Columbia
V8W 3E7

Phone: 387-5255, Fax: 387-8485

Contributions are welcome. Please send your comments, suggestions and contributions to: **Paul Lackhoff**, editor, (phone: 953-3142, PROF PTLACKHO) at public affairs branch, or **Ken Kolba** (360-2213 or fax 382-7631).

Nominations sought for B.C. awards

All British Columbians are invited to submit nominations for the Order of British Columbia award, the province's most prestigious award in recognition of excellence and outstanding achievement. Anyone who has made an outstanding contribution in their field is eligible. An independent advisory committee chaired by the chief justice of British Columbia considers all applications. Twelve recipients are selected each year.

Nomination forms are available from the Honors and Awards Secretariat, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, V8V 1X4 and from all Government Agent offices.

