The British Columbia
Forest Service
Newsletter

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Designer forestry comes to B.C.

Since the late 1980s, Forest Service planners have recognized that aesthetics are as important as science when it comes to public perception of forest management.

"You have to take into account what you see when you manage the forest," says **Jacques Marc**, senior landscape specialist with the range, recreation and forest practices branch.

Recreation staff developed a comprehensive inventory system, breaking the province into sections and prescribing visual quality objectives (VQOs) for each. One of five VQOs could be assigned, each defining a level of landscape alteration based on landscape sensitivity, viewer numbers and perceptions, and other values.

"The objectives give us a sense of how much alteration is possible while retaining some visual integrity," says Marc.

The most restrictive objective (preservation) precludes any visible forest harvest. At the other end, maximum modification means visual values are of little concern in forest management.

Once an objective is approved, forest harvest plans would have to adopt ways to meet it.

That's where the problem arose. No one had the expertise in landscape design to make the system work. "We knew what we wanted to do, but we didn't know how to do it," Marc admits.

In 1992 the branch turned to the British Forestry Commission for help. Having totally denuded their landscape centuries before sustained yield entered the lexicon, the British had begun replanting their forests shortly after WW II. However, the hard geometric lines forming the edge of a forest on an otherwise barren hillside appeared as unnatural to the British as the boundaries of a geometric cutblock amidst a lush forest appear to British Columbians.

Simon Bell, chief landscape architect with the British Forestry Commission, had become an expert in the field of design, developing techniques to make artificial forests appear more natural and blend with their surroundings. Despite the reverse situations, everyone agreed that the same techniques would work in B.C. The Forest Service decided to import the expertise.

During a series of four visits which began in the spring of 1993 and finished last fall, Bell worked with Forest Service experts to customize the technology for B.C.

The end result is a comprehensive landscape design manual, more than 160 pages of strategies, principles and concepts to help planners reduce the visual impact of forestry. The manual will become the core curriculum in workshops for industry plan-

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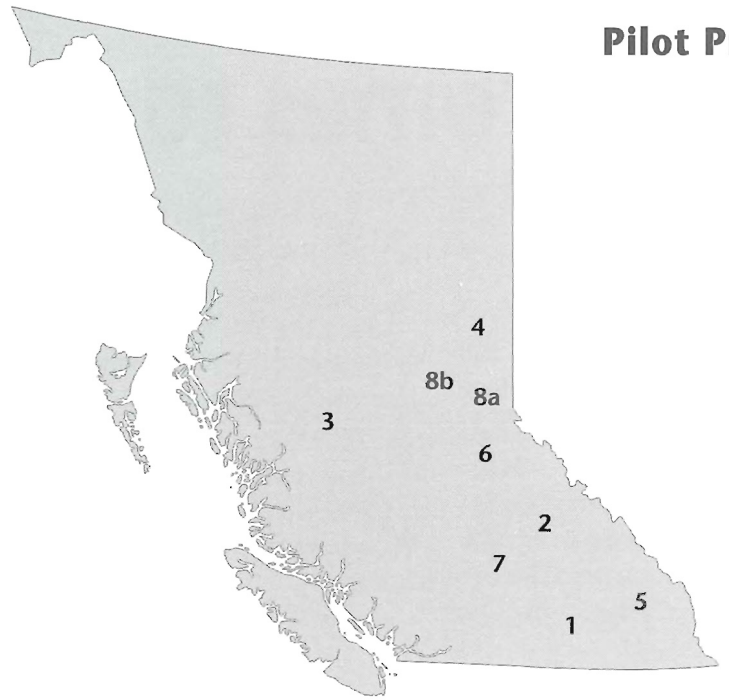
What is it about Robson Valley forest district Mapping Technician David Marchant that causes a hush to fall over every room he enters?

Find out on page 5.

Pilots aid Code implementation



Pilot Project Locations and Contacts

1. Cherryville, Vernon forest district; **Steve Carr**, 558-1716
2. Thunder/Blue, Clearwater forest district; **Max Tanner**, 587-6700
3. Whitesail, Morice forest district; **Jim Guido**, 845-6225 or **Andy Witt**, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, 845-6200
4. Lower Murray, Dawson Creek forest district; **Doug Russell** Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. 784-1240
5. Brewer Creek, Invermere forest district; **Sharon Robertson**, 342-4200
6. Penfold, Horsefly forest district; **Rodger Stewart**, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks 620-3213
7. Meadow Lake, 100 Mile House forest district; **Sandra Neill**, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks 395-7863

8a. Spakwaniko Creek and **8b.** Peculiar/Merton, Prince George forest district; **Jeff Burrows**, 565-4296 or **Dale Seip**, 565-6224

Although the legal framework for Forest Practices Code landscape unit planning has already been established, implementation mechanisms are now being developed through a series of pilot projects in eight district offices.

"The pilots represent a wide range of social situations and biophysical diversity," notes **Allan Lidstone** from resource planning section.

"Each project will produce a completed landscape unit and objectives document to guide operational plans."

Lessons learned will help refine and improve provincial policy and procedures, creating a system that is flexible and adaptable to local needs.

"These pilots are an excellent example of the kind of working relationship that the ministry's reorganization hopes to create," notes Allan.

"We're working between headquarters and districts, and between agencies, to expediently, carefully and innovatively implement the Code."

Key participants in the pilots are the forest ecosystem specialists which BC Environment has placed in every district office.

"Although the Code has set the framework for interagency cooperation," says BC Environment forest practices planner **Gordon Goodman**, "it is really up to staff in Victoria and the districts to grasp the responsibility and opportunity to make it work. We need to cooperate fully for better management on the ground."

A workshop was held in February to orient all staff involved with the landscape unit pilots, and a monthly newsletter is being circulated to offices of six ministries to explain the pilot process and progress.

Proposals are currently being considered for a pilot project on the Coast. For more information, contact Lidstone at 387-8372.

— Continued from page 1

ners, and Forest Service technicians and foresters.

While the Forest Service has sponsored the first workshops, the course is expected to become part of the B.C. Continuing Studies education program.

Within a year, says Marc, Forest Service policy will require all harvest plans developed for scenic areas to meet the prescribed visual quality objectives. Along with the plan, licensees will also have to submit illustrations showing how the site will look after the harvest — the forestry equivalent of an architect's drawing of a proposed building.

Produced by sketching, photo retouching or computer modelling, these simulations will become as critical to the approval process as reforestation now is.

TEN YEARS AFTER THE FIRES OF '85:

A regeneration success story

A lush young forest fills the foreground of this photograph, taken five years after the fires that swept over 40,000 hectares in the Invermere forest district, leaving a charred vista (inset).

The weather was extreme, and so were the fires. In the summer of 1985, a spring drought, followed by weeks of heat, low humidity and high winds, made for a challenging summer for the Forest Service. More than 3,600 fires across the province burned 236,252 hectares, and cost $134 million to extinguish.

In the Invermere forest district, where 40,000 hectares burned, plans for regeneration were underway even before the fires were out. Ten years later, the results are clearly visible, as the burned areas grow steadily back to a fully stocked stand.

"We knew we had to get started as soon as possible," says **Cliff Beliveau**, resource officer, silviculture. Grass seeding began immediately on unstable slopes to maintain stability, and a massive survey program was launched to gather site-specific information.

Logging of burned, but still merchantable, timber also began immediately. For areas that could not be logged, the Forest Service teamed up with the Workers' Compensation Board to develop a plan to deal with snags and ensure worker safety.

Site rehabilitation and preparation were necessary in some areas before replanting could begin. Local conditions dictated which of a variety of techniques were used.

Areas previously forested with pine were left to regenerate naturally. The degree of success, up to 300,000 stems per hectare (compared to 1,200 to 1,600 on a managed site), created some density problems. Over the next five years, the overstocked stands will be subject to juvenile spacing.

In the 10 years since the disastrous summer of 1985, 12.4 million seedlings — as many as 3.5 million in one year — have been replanted on 10,342 hectares in the Invermere district at a cost of $5.3 million.

Beliveau says that while there have been some failures, the establishment of a forest has been an overall success, and "a real challenge."

Chilliwack schools to tour Vedder Mountain

When the Chilliwack forest district hosted a tour of Vedder Mountain as part of National Forest Week last year, they knew they had a hit. But they didn't expect the response they got when they issued the same offer this year.

Within a week of their invitation to local Grades 3 to 5 classes, 18 schools signed on and requests continued pouring in.

Six schools will go up the mountain on each of three days this spring, learning about forest practices at six stations along the way. They will learn about plant identification at the forest ecosystem stop, determine the age of a tree in an unmanaged forest, see how trees grow in a managed forest, try out some foresters' equipment (radios, compasses, hip chains), make a fire guard at the forest protection stop, and plant two trees each.

Model forests: model partnership

Partnership. That was the main theme expressed during a Feb. 25 information meeting in Victoria on model forests.

Directors of the MacGregor and Long Beach Model Forest Societies, along with Canadian Forest Service staff, gave B.C. Forest Service staff an overview of the program, and the two model forests in the province. The goal was to give headquarters the opportunity to learn more about model forests and to start a dialogue between Victoria and the model forest societies.

Dean Mills, CFS model forest coordinator, got the meeting going by giving an overview of the Canadian Model Forest Program. The program has its roots in a 1990 Canadian Council of Forest Ministers meeting which identified some key issues and values associated with model forests.

Key issues were the respect of all values, an emphasis on cooperation and shared decision-making, and changes in attitude. Key values found in forests are employment and economic benefits; biodiversity; conservation of ecosystems; conservation of soil and water; wildlife habitat; and provision of recreational opportunities.

From these values and issues emerged a definition of a model forest as a "concept with a boundary that will function to develop, demonstrate and test advanced scientific methods, techniques and forestry practices — with different approaches in various regions across Canada."

The result is 10 Canadian model forests, including the two in B.C., covering six million hectares, five major eco-regions and involving more than 250 organizations. But the program is spreading over the globe, and at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, $10 million was put toward establishing an international network of model forests. There are now model forests in Malaysia, Russia, and two in Mexico, and several other countries have expressed an interest.

Whether in Canada or around the world, each model forest is unique because of the forest they're modelling and the communities around them.

Bob Nixon, a director of the Long Beach Model Forest Society (LBMFS), said an exciting feature of the model forest is the close involvement of First Nations. In fact, the model forest program must be coordinated with the Clayoquot Sound Central Region Board. The society's board represents 14 sectors and unanimous agreement is needed to carry out activities in the 400,000-hectare model forest. Reaching agreement hasn't been a problem, Nixon said, because the society emphasizes an "inclusive approach."

The main goal of the MMFA is to develop an information system to help people make ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially acceptable decisions . . .

"Including people" is also how things are done in the MacGregor Model Forest Association (MMFA). There are 28 partnership organizations in the 180,000-hectare model forest representing a cross section of the Prince George and area community. "Our common interest is our landbase and the management of it," MMFA President **Jim Burbee** said.

The main goal of the MMFA is to develop an information system to help people make ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially acceptable decisions about how the forest should be managed.

Wini Kessler, MMFA member and chair of forestry at the University of Northern B.C., talked about how societies world-wide were expressing new views about their forests. "In the past, forests were looked at in terms of what could be removed from them. Now, what matters is what we leave in the forest."

She added that management strategies and options for forests were being viewed in a new context: that which is economically feasible, ecologically sound, and politically and socially desirable.

Skeptics accuse the people in the MMFA of reaching for the brass ring — and they're right. **Dwight Wolfe** chairs MacGregor's Brass Ring Decision Support System for anlaysing forest management options. The system will include a data management system for forest reproduction, forest modelling, resource value assessment and socio-economic analysis.

It's this system that has Chief Forester **Larry Pedersen** excited. He said the Brass Ring is working on developing new tools and information to support decision-making. "The system is looking at ways to have the community play a larger role in how we use our information. And through the process, it's defining new information needs and strategies to meet them."

But partnership is equally important to Pedersen. Model forests allow the Forest Service, CFS and the private sector to "coordinate the development of new tools and new forest management approaches in a forward-looking way."

Pedersen called the LBMFS an "exciting experiment in social interface" because of how it is working with "defining the resource management roles of natives and non-natives who live in the model forest's communities."

And the Forest Service role in all this? Pedersen thinks there are opportunities "to learn from the multi-disciplinary teams and assist in guiding the development of new models and decision-support systems."

— Submitted by Paul Lackhoff, public information officer, public affairs branch

Cartooning as commentary

*When Robson Valley district Mapping Technician **David Marchant** shows up for work, his co-workers get a little nervous. It happens when he goes shopping in downtown McBride, too.*

That's because Marchant is a cartoonist for the Valley Sentinel, the weekly paper read by residents of McBride, Valemount and a dozen other small communities lucky enough to have the Rocky Mountains in their backyard.

Marchant takes inspiration for his material wherever he can find it, so no one knows for sure when they might find themselves unwittingly supplying that week's material.

"When I walk into a store, people say 'you better be careful what you say, here comes the cartoonist,'" he said.

"I enjoy the humor, and I have an inborn desire to be creative. It gives me an outlet. Rather than write letters to the editor, I can draw a cartoon," he said.

When he first arrived at McBride with his wife in the mid-70s, he contributed cartoons to the local paper on an occasional basis. Four years ago, they asked him to make regular submissions.

"Since then I've tried my hand at political cartoons, but most people like the everyday Robson Valley kind of humor. Weather, mosquitoes and mud are some of my favorite topics: the weather, because of the recurring strong gusts in the valley; mosquitoes, which affect all outdoor activities in the spring and early summer; and the mud, which for rural residents is a fact of life when the snow melts."

Marchant's love for cartooning goes back to his childhood. "I've always enjoyed drawing. I was a great fan of Mad Magazine. I liked (the artist) Don Martin."

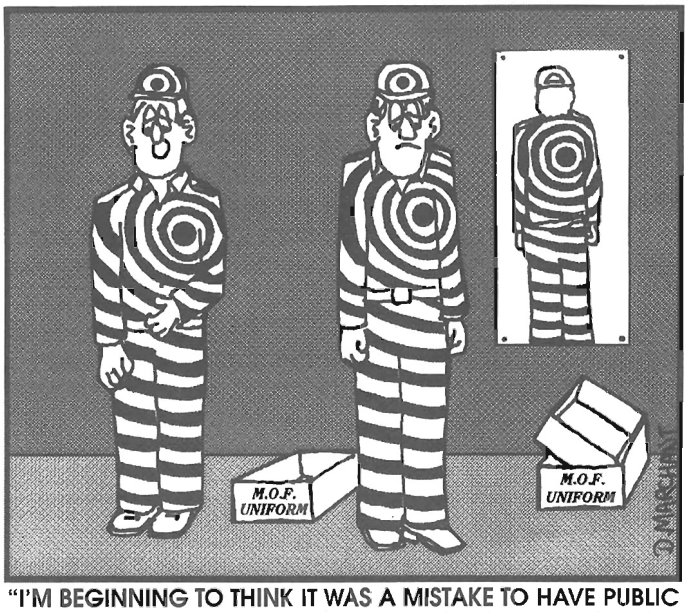
But when his hobby became a job, it also added new pressure. "The newspaper only comes out once a week, and I have to turn in my cartoons on Fridays. By Thursday I'm usually squirming."

Those demands have instilled in Marchant respect for cartoonists who have to come up with something every day. Then again, his counterparts don't have to divide their energies between a full-time job and cartooning.

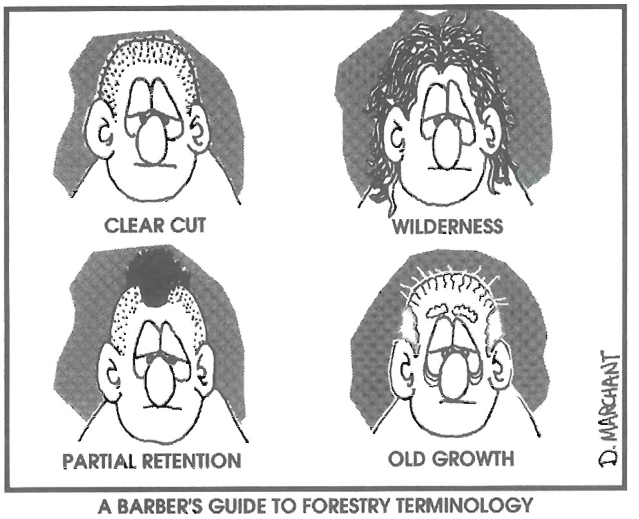
Marchant's recollection of his early days with the Forest Service would themselves make a good cartoon. His first experience was being called out on a fire. "It was a helicopter access fire. I had visions of holding an axe and seeing flaming trees everywhere. Instead they handed me some papers and told me I was the timekeeper. I didn't even see the fire."

Eventually he worked his way into his present position.

"The thing I like most about making maps is that you can see what you've created. In other jobs, you may not have anything material you can hold in your hand to show yourself what you've done."



"I'M BEGINNING TO THINK IT WAS A MISTAKE TO HAVE PUBLIC INPUT INTO THE DESIGN OF OUR NEW FORESTRY UNIFORMS."



A BARBER'S GUIDE TO FORESTRY TERMINOLOGY

When he's not working or thinking up ideas for his weekly submission, Marchant does other graphic art projects.

"I put out a calendar (featuring 12 drawings) each year, which I sell. I highlight events like the Friday before Valentine's Day, reminding people that they'd better be prepared."

He's also done a poster for the Robson Valley Tourism Association, a cartoonish map showing McBride, Valemount and interesting areas in the valley.

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

Business design branch gears up

The newly-formed business design group is gearing up to provide technical solutions and support for ministry operations. Many staff have been pulled together from other areas of the Forest Service — mainly timber harvesting, inventory, planning resources, technical and administrative services, and silviculture — to work with the new branch.

The business design branch, which officially began operation on April 1, will assist all levels of the ministry and external groups to develop and implement business systems and the technology on which they depend.

The branch consists of four sections.

The business design and development section

Is responsible for designing, developing and implementing new products such as business processes, applications and systems. The section will also work on major enhancements to existing systems.

The section is dedicated primarily to operational demands, and will work closely with operations and branch staff. All new products will be subject to approval by operations division.

The business maintenance and enhancement section

Focuses on maintenance and improvements to existing information systems and applications. Their work primarily involves ensuring databases, applications and tools remain operational; minor enhancements of existing applications and smaller development projects.

The technical development section

Provides training and support for the various applications which fall under the auspices of the business design branch. Their work will include staffing a client support centre and designing and implementing a performance support system.

The technical development section will work closely with other sections within the branch, other branches of the Forest Service, the districts and regions.

The business consulting section

This section assists operational staff and other sections within the business design by identifying and resolving issues or problems pertaining to current or proposed processes, applications and technology. The section will also provide operational information and experience.

The business design branch has established a bulletin board (BBDesign) to provide updates on the branch's activities.

— Submitted by business design branch communications working group

In remembrance of a forest genetics pioneer

Among the scores of researchers who worked in the Forest Service over the last seven decades, a handful made a major long-term impact.

Dr. Alan Orr-Ewing was one of them. Early in his career he dedicated himself to research in the field, despite lack of funds and —often — interest. Dr. Orr-Ewing died in February at age 80, but his work will continue to be a major influence on forest genetics in the Forest Service.

Born in England, Dr. Orr-Ewing immigrated to Canada to attend the Ontario Agriculture School in Guelph, Ontario. The curriculum included an introductory course in forestry. On graduating, he moved to B.C. to pursue what he had heard were the best job opportunities in the Young Men's Forestry Training Plan.

He worked his first day with the Forest Service in 1935. Remuneration was room and board, but no salary.

The following year, Dr. Orr-Ewing went to Scotland to attend the University of Edinburgh. He graduated in 1939, only months before the war began. He wound up in France the following January and was captured later that year. He spent the next five years in a Nazi prisoner-of-war camp.

In 1948 he returned to B.C., and began his career with the research branch. By 1950 he had made his decision to specialize in forest genetics. In 1956 he became the first recipient of a PhD from the U.B.C. forestry department.

Over the next two decades, Dr. Orr-Ewing pioneered genetics research in the Forest Service. He was largely responsible for organizing the Plus Tree Board, which brought industry together and culminated in the establishment of large scale clone banks and seed orchards.

His work earned considerable recognition. In 1971 he became the first recipient of the Distinguished Forester Award from the Association of B.C. Professional Foresters.

By the time Dr. Orr-Ewing retired in 1971, the tree improvement program was firmly entrenched throughout the province.

*— Excerpted from a biography by **Ralph Schmidt**, a colleague and friend*

B.C. WINTER GAMES

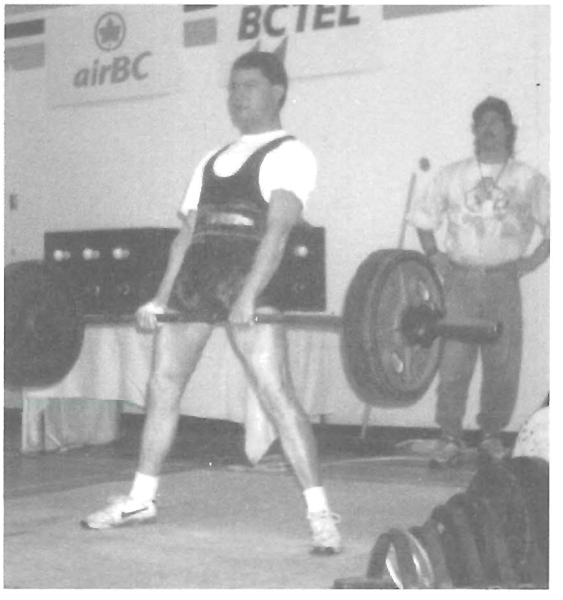
Morice employee wins silver medal

It's only his second year in the sport, but **Glenn Wood** is already in the medals. The Morice forest district resource assistant, small business, won a silver medal in powerlifting at the 1995 B.C. Winter Games in February.

Wood equalled his personal best in two of three lifts, for a combined total of 445 kilograms and second place in the 75-kilogram weight category at the Comox Valley event.

Powerlifting differs from weightlifting in that each competitor lifts three times instead of two, and does not raise the barbell above the head. The lifter has one minute to complete each lift — the squat, bench press and dead lift — and must show total control throughout.

Wood started powerlifting only last year, in preparation for the 1994 Winter Games. With only eight weeks' training under his belt, he placed third that year.



Glenn Wood demonstrates the strength, form and timing that enabled him to capture a silver medal at the B.C. Winter Games.

Another Morice forest district employee, **Brian J. Smith**, resource officer recreation, also competed in Comox, but didn't make the first lift in the 90 kilogram category.

Both Wood and Smith, who train together at the same gym, are planning to compete again at next year's Winter Games in North Vancouver. Based on his first two years' performance, Wood should have a shot at the gold.

Unfortunately, he won't be wearing Forest Service colors; he is leaving Houston this month for a private sector job in 100 Mile House.

More good ideas earn cold cash

Creativity and innovation continue to earn suggestion awards for Forest Service staff.

A proposal from **Bill Clifford**, property negotiator with the timber harvesting branch, eliminated the need to research B.C. Assessment Authority microfiche as part of the process in granting a timber mark under Section 65 of the *Forest Act*. Clifford suggested that a B.C. Assessment Authority notice be required documentation to accompany applications for a timber mark.

Rick Miller, administrator, forest land use and timber marks, recommended an award of $944.10. Clifford has received a cheque for $500 and the balance will be considered by the awards committee.

Clifford earned another $500 for a second suggestion. He suggested that the timber harvesting branch could help determine the status of land tenure applications by reviewing documents, making interpretations and recording it on computer diskettes. This "smart data" could then be distributed to district staff.

The approach takes advantage of the central office's knowledge of various document types, both current and historic, and avoids the need for costly and difficult training.

The initial award was based on intangible benefits, and Clifford may receive an additional amount once actual savings have been calculated.

A new timber mark application form and accompanying flow chart showing how the form is to be completed earned $500 for Port Alberni forest district Receptionist **Tracy Lambrects**. The new form resulted in faster service to the public and cut the amount of time staff spend on the phone helping people complete the form.

Miller evaluated Lambrects' suggestion and recommended the award.

Timber harvesting branch Systems Analyst **Lyle Woods** proposed that a new menu be added to the Office Vision electronic menu system to allow staff across the province to access and print project reports for property services. Previously, acquiring the information entailed a lengthy paper shuffle and considerable staff time.

Harvesting Systems Manager **Peter Spearman** reviewed the benefits of Woods' idea and recommended a suggestion award of $1,186. Woods has received the first $500, with an additional $686 subject to review by the awards committee.

Doggedly serving B.C.'s forests

Willing, able and easy to maintain — all the technology of a modern snowmobile was no match for a centuries-old mode of winter transport: the dog team.

They're a hard working team. They put in long hours during the short, bleak days of winter in northwestern British Columbia. They follow directions, respect their supervisor and are easily entertained. They do eat lots of food, but sleep blissfully unless the moon is strong.

They're typical of the innovative, problem-solving approach of Forest Service researchers, but Sheila, Frodo, Reno, Barley and Bliksem are dogs. Since last fall, the sled team has served **Marten Geertsema** and **Dirk Septer** with "superhuman" dedication.

Geertsema and Septer have been studying a large earth-flow in marine clays south of the Terrace airport. They needed to visit the site periodically over the winter, but access proved difficult. Heavy, wet snow and broken terrain rendered snowmobiles ineffective. So Geertsema enlisted his team of huskies, and they all pulled together.

Geertsema and Septer, both over two metres tall (without their toques and hardhats), helped out by loping behind the sled when the dogs struggled. Once at the site, the dogs settled contentedly into the snow while the two researchers busied themselves with probes and samples.

Upkeep was cheap. The dogs ate a lot, but required little maintenance (unlike a snowmobile), and preferred sleeping in straw in the bed of the pickup to a stuffy motel room.

Area woodsman **Ed Silcote** was impressed with the dogs' performance, though he "prefers 'coondogs in the bush, but they can't match the huskies in winter snow."

*— Submitted by **Jim Pojar**, research officer, Prince Rupert forest region*

First $1 million species billing printed

A new piece of history will soon grace the revenue branch boardroom walls. On March 14, 1995, the billing operations section printed the first ever seven-digit value for an individual tree species on an invoice. A copy will be framed and hung in the boardroom along with other historic documents.

Until recently, the section's computer system was unable to process amounts of $1 million or more for a species. The increase in stumpage rates last May, however, along with high-scaled volumes, resulted in invoices with some amounts exceeding $1 million.

Section staff had to cope with complex manual calculations to process split invoices, until the system could be modified to handle larger amounts.

"It was a major programming change," says **Eileen Thomson**, billing supervisor, billing operations section. Three months of intensive programming were followed by extensive testing.

The first million-dollar billing to be processed by the new system was for The Pas Lumber, with the magic number billed for spruce.

The eight-column invoice will stand in sharp contrast to other historic documents on the boardroom walls, such as a 1913 invoice for $11.13.

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