Forest Service News

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Top exam marks to Merritt forester

A Merritt forest district silviculture forester scored top of the class among the 216 people who wrote the Association of B.C. Professional Foresters registration exam last fall.

Michael Henry achieved what is said to be the highest mark in several years — an average score of 89.5 per cent on the two components of the exam.

"It was a real surprise to me," he said. "I was quite concerned about the exam. I had heard about how difficult it's supposed to be and of the high failure rate." Only 151 applicants earned the 60 per cent or better required to pass each component.

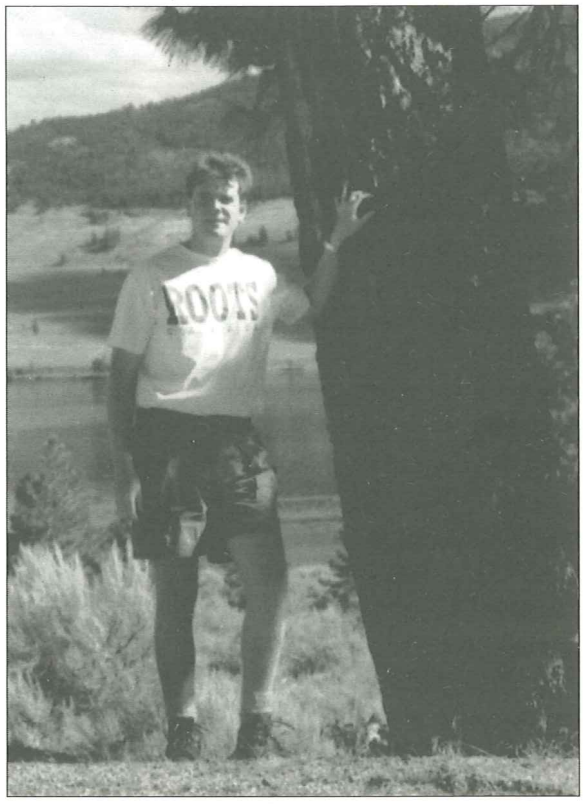
Henry's performance earned him the honor of addressing new inductees and delegates at the ABCPF annual general meeting in February. He used the occasion to emphasize the challenges facing professional foresters and their obligation to the public, communities, wildlife and biodiversity.

Henry was among the 41 Forest Service staff who received their professional accreditation at the AGM. Others included **Nona Phillips**, a vegetation resource inventory officer in the Cariboo forest region, and her husband, Blake Foster, a timber tenures forester at the Williams Lake forest district.

All three devoted many hours to preparing for the exam. Despite having studied part-time since last spring and full-time for 10 days just prior to writing, Phillips still found the exam a challenge.

"I walked in very confident, but I didn't feel that comfortable walking out," she said. Her concern was unfounded.

The three new RPFs recently relocated to B.C. after practicing forestry in Ontario for several years. The influx of out-of-province foresters is largely responsible for the record number of people who wrote the exam. About 150 applicants wrote in 1995, and in previous years, the number was around 100.



Henry: RPF exam anxiety turns to elation

Benskin new ABCPF president

Forest practices branch Director Henry Benskin has been appointed president of the Association of B.C. Professional Foresters. He took over the position at the association's AGM in February.

Benskin joined the association's executive three years ago, and served as vice-president last year. He is a strong proponent of quality assurance measures, such as mandatory continuing education and practice reviews.

Farewell and thank you

Spring of 1997 will be remembered as a time of sweet sorrow, of farewells to friends and colleagues, fond remembrances of things past, and anticipation of new opportunities just around the corner. The season marked the departure of many Forest Service staff.

Throughout B.C., people gathered at luncheons and dinners to wish their colleagues well. Many of the retirees dedicated their working lives to the Forest Service and B.C.'s forests. Their stories are myriad, spanning good times and bad.

They witnessed a profound transition in the Forest Service, one that reflects the equally profound shifts in attitudes toward our natural resources and their management. Though sometimes lost in the passage of time and events, their contributions have made a difference.

Following is a partial list of those people leaving the Forest Service this spring. We wish space permitted more appropriate recognition of their work with the Forest Service. But let us simply extend a sincere thank you and best wishes for a rewarding future.

Nelson forest region

- **Ken Arnett**, district manager; Arrow forest district; 34 years
- **Derm Gorsuch**, resource officer, engineering; Invermere forest district; 29 years

Vancouver forest region

- **Paul Pashnik**, district manager; Port Alberni forest district; 34 years

Prince George forest region

- **Laverne Merkel**, resource tenures team leader; 33 years
- **Howard Willis**, planning officer; 33 years
- **Erna Ford**, accounts receivable clerk; 23 years with the Forest Service, 40 years with the provincial government

Vancouver forest region

- **Fred Amos**, appraisal officer; 31 years
- **John Johnson**, tree farm licence forester; 6 years
- **Andre Letain**, residue measurement coordinator; 28 years
- **Lis Milton**, data coding clerk; 16 years
- **Ed Riddock**, financial services supervisor; 28 years
- **Jerry van der Burch**, human resources officer; 18 years with the Forest Service, 21 years with the provincial government

Public Affairs Branch

- **Doug Adderley**, manager, information services, outreach, 34 years

Technical and administrative services branch

- **Don Beaton**, mechanical coordinator, 32 years
- **Mike Dodd**, coordinator, 25 years
- **Nick Downs**, coordinator, 37 years
- **Frank Marion**, supervisor, inventory control, 16 years
- **June Mecredy**, administrative clerk, 22 years
- **Dave Wegelin**, coordinator, electronics development, 27 years.

Island hockey tournament scheduled

Organizers of the Vancouver region hockey tournament are inviting players from outside the region to sign up for their annual contest.

The tourney generally draws from six to eight teams, said organizer David Dolson, a business plan analyst. Although priority in the past has been given to districts within the Vancouver region, Dolson has reserved two spots on the line-up for teams from other regions.

All Forest Service staff are invited to enter, either as complete squads or as individuals, who will be added to other groups. Dolson said he likes to see several complete lines on every team, to prevent exhaustion and resulting injuries.

The tournament runs April 18 to 20 in Nanaimo. Registration of $500 per team guarantees four games and includes six passes to a Saturday-night dinner.

For more registration or to register, call Dolson at 751-7071, OV dhdolson, or fax 751-7198. Registration and full payment must be received by March 31.

Legendary golden spruce down but not out

Kaupp at the scene of the crime

True to its near mythic proportions, the golden spruce of the Queen Charlotte Islands lives on.

The tree, a 300-year-old sitka spruce that grew on the banks of the Yakoun River near Port Clements, had a genetic defect that caused the breakdown of chlorophyll, giving its upper foliage a gold color.

The oddity gave the tree special status among the Haida, who wove it into their legends generations ago. More recently, it had become a favorite attraction for tourists. But the golden spruce met an ignoble end last January, when a disgruntled transient cut it down as part of a personal crusade.

The act of vandalism shocked the community and rallied a rescue effort to preserve the tree's genetic make-up. In cooperation with Haidas, staff from MacMillan Bloedel and the Queen Charlotte Islands forest district collected samples from the felled tree and sent them to the Cowichan Lake Research Station for cloning.

Several grafts are now progressing well, reports station Manager **Don Carson**. Although it will be at least two years until they can be replanted, the successful rescue brought relief to concerned citizens of the Charlottes.

"It was an emotional thing for everyone," said **Leanne Kaupp**, a resource assistant with silviculture. "We wanted to do whatever we could to help."

Although rare, the golden spruce was not unique. Kaupp knows of several others in the Charlottes. But none, she said, are as healthy or as accessible as the original, which towered some 50 metres in height and measured two metres in diameter.

The incident made headlines across Canada. Carson even fielded questions from a *New*

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Climate change poses challenge

Scientists from the research branch have teamed up with American and Swedish colleagues to begin identifying the impact of global warming on B.C.'s forests and ways to manage it.

Working with **Dr. Gerry Rehfeldt**, an ecological geneticist from the U.S. Forest Service, and **Professor Dag Lindgren** of the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, the research branch's **Cheng Ying** and **Dave Spittlehouse** have developed computer models that help predict the effect of climate on the growth of lodgepole pine in B.C.

The models are based on data gathered since the 1960s, when lodgepole pine seedlings were transplanted into areas with climatic conditions that differed from those of their origin. Over the years, the effects of climate variables, such as temperature and precipitation, on tree survival and growth were recorded.

Although further testing has to be done, the new models can help match seed stock with optimum climate conditions and predict the effects of climate change on native trees. The next phase will expand the application of the models to other commercial species.

Projected climate change due to the greenhouse effect poses serious challenges to the long-term health of B.C.'s forest industry and the forests. The computer modelling project is one of many inquiries underway in the Forest Service to predict and minimize the impact.

Mackenzie rink wins upset, takes curling title

It took the final rock of the final end to decide the Forest Service provincial champions at the annual bonspiel in Kamloops.

Tied at six with the **Steve Doubinin** rink from Salmon Arm and Chilliwack, **Andy Pakrastins** had one rock left to knock out the opponent's counter and stave off defeat for his Mackenzie team. Complicating matters were the guards, protecting all but a small crescent of the target.

Could he do it? Yup.

"I thought I didn't chip his rock far enough out, because my guys weren't jumping up and down," recalled Pakrastins of the final moments. "But neither were the other guys."

The shot clinched the Holmberg Trophy for Pakrastins, **Frank Lennard**, **Ross Knudson** and **David Coulas**. A veteran of 10 provincial bonspiels, Pakrastins had curiously loaded his team with newcomers to the event, all of whom had relocated to B.C. from Ontario during the cross-Canada recruitment.

The skip vehemently denied a rumor circulating at the bonspiel that curling talent had somehow become a required skill during the job competitions.

The **Albert Kowalski** rink of Kamloops, the perennial favorite at the provincial tournament, captured third place in the A event, followed by the **Barry Alexander** team from Campbell River and Williams Lake.

(From l. to r.) Pakrastins, Lennard, Knudson and Coulas: winners of the A event and infamous Seagull Trophy

The early February competition marked the 30th annual Forest Service provincial bonspiel. Bonspiel organizers **Bruce Noble**, **Sharon Berkey**, **Ken Westfall** and **Jim Massey** hoped to attract a capacity 74 rinks to help mark the milestone. However, attendance was down slightly from last year.

But that didn't stop anyone from having fun and contributing to the contest's overall success. Fundraising efforts from around the province — notably **Curt Clarke** of Victoria, **Larry Martin** of Penticton, **Chris Betuzzi** of 100 Mile House and **Darrin Halloran** of Prince George — generated an additional $650 for prizes.

And **Cindy Reveley**, wife of Vancouver forest region Silviculture Forester **Hal Reveley**, donated on behalf of her business, Truck West Ltd., a portable boombox, complete with CD player, cassette and radio, as the grand doorprize. The happy winner was Chris Betuzzi.

Other winners included:

- the **Heather Kjelgren** rink from 100 Mile House, who won the Carl Chantler Memorial Trophy for being the last team to lose prior to the finals;
- the **Kelly Thomas** rink of Merritt won the Best Bonspieler Award for best personifying the spirit of the bonspiel;
- **Kevin Wilson's** team from Mackenzie won a prize for travelling the furthest to attend — a combined total of 5,752 kilometres;
- **Brian Conlin's** Nanaimo team won the Best Dressed Trophy, for their hats based on Dr. Seuss characters;
- and Pakrastins' team won the much uncovetted Seagull Trophy for knocking the last Victoria team out of contention in the A Event.

Next year's bonspiel will be held in Kamloops on February 13 to 15. Can Pakrastins and his imports do it again?

Please see page 8 for other bonspiel results.

Compliance and enforcement:

Policing becomes part of Forest Service culture

The increased emphasis on compliance and enforcement under the Forest Practices Code is changing the look and culture of the Forest Service.

With the implementation of the code beginning June 15, 1995, the Forest Service gained a number of enforcement tools — options ranging from the forestry equivalent of a traffic ticket to administrative remedies (such as remediation orders, stop work orders and administrative penalties) to prosecutions in criminal court.

Such enforcement provisions were designed not to beat up on licensees, but to give the Forest Service leverage that would foster wide-spread compliance. And compliance remains the overwhelming priority under the code.

Ideally, 90 per cent of the resources allocated to compliance and enforcement (C&E) will be devoted to ensuring compliance, said branch acting Director **Roberta Reader**.

By most accounts, it's working. Of over 55,000 inspections conducted from June 15, 1995 to December 31, 1996, nearly 53,000 (or 96 per cent) were problem-free. Fewer than 700 contraventions have been confirmed, although other problems still under investigation could raise that total.

"Generally, people are doing a pretty good job," said Reader, "but we can't sit back and rest on our laurels. Compliance and enforcement will emerge as one of the Forest Service's most important functions."

Incorporating an efficient program delivery structure into all levels of the ministry is one of the challenges facing the Forest Service. The C&E mandate casts staff as monitors, investigators, enforcers, expert witnesses and adjudicators.

It's a role that affects the job descriptions of many district staff. It requires new expertise and a modified organizational structure that formally assigns compliance and enforcement responsibilities and reporting lines.

Various structures have been tried at the region and district level, with greater or lesser success.

"We're getting more structure at the regional level," said **Marc von der Gönna**, Forest Practices Code Coordinator in the Kamloops forest region. "Kamloops has been proactive in getting the districts together to discuss the issues and ensure consistency."

Penticton forest district has separated C&E functions, assigning compliance and "small e" enforcement to certain personnel and "big e" enforcement to others.

Enforcement Supervisor **Leo Gillich** explained that approach provides consistency through specialization.

"Compliance inspectors can build and maintain a good rapport with

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Golden spruce, continued from page 3

Forestry Technician Luanne Palmer grafts golden spruce cutting.

York Times reporter, who learned of the story while visiting B.C. on another assignment. The Discovery Channel also reported on the rescue effort.

Just what will happen to the clones, once ready for transplant, has yet to be decided. "The Haida are interested in keeping track of the clones and possibly replanting several," explained Kaupp.

Compliance and enforcement

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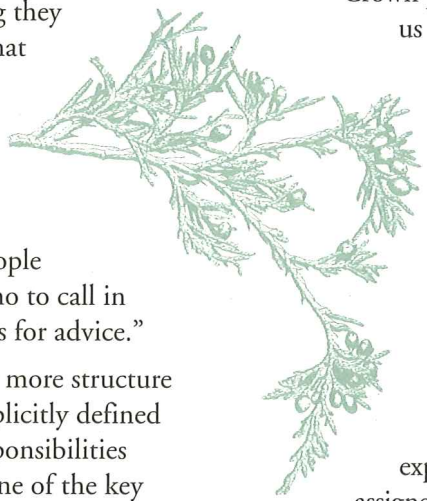
licensees to smooth operations," he said. Gillich's enforcement unit gets involved in major investigations, and can mete out appropriate remedies without sacrificing the compliance staff's relationships with the licensee.

Although the record attests to good performance province-wide, a lack of consistency limits efficiency and makes tracking and performance evaluations difficult.

"We need to be able to tell who's doing what and what training they need to do that job," said Reader. "As well, with a more formalized structure, people will know who to call in other districts for advice."



The need for more structure and more explicitly defined roles and responsibilities emerged as one of the key themes in a recent task force report.

Several recommendations delivered by the compliance and enforcement task team — and adopted by the operations division management team — deal with district organization and the priority assigned to C&E.

They included recognizing C&E as a high-priority program, having districts develop organization charts depicting C&E roles, responsibilities and reporting lines, and merging forest revenue inspectors with C&E.

"By this summer, I expect operations division will be able to circulate an organization chart showing exactly who is responsible for what," said Reader.

The need for standardized qualifications and related training, particularly for enforcement specialists, also rated high among the recommendations.

Over the past decade, environmental prosecutions have emerged as a new area of law. Problems have been identified and mistakes made.

"Crown prosecutors are telling us to learn from the mistakes of others," said Reader. "We need effective specialists with the right responsibilities."

Such specialists, who will be trained as professional investigators and expert witnesses, may be assigned new job titles. Less specialized staff will have to know when to act on their own and when to call in the experts.

The emergence of compliance and enforcement as a central theme in forest management should come as a surprise to no one. The public demands not only sound forest practices, but also accountability.

Licensees are accountable for their actions, and the Forest Service is accountable for effectively monitoring those actions. The ability to deliver — with certainty and confidence — is about to reach its critical mass.

Traffic heavy on ministry off-ramp

Traffic is getting heavy on the electronic superhighway's off-ramp to the Forest Service.

During its first 19 months of operation, the ministry's home page has logged over 196,000 hits, or visits from Internet subscribers. That total translates into a total of 2.6 million files "served," or accessed by website visitors.

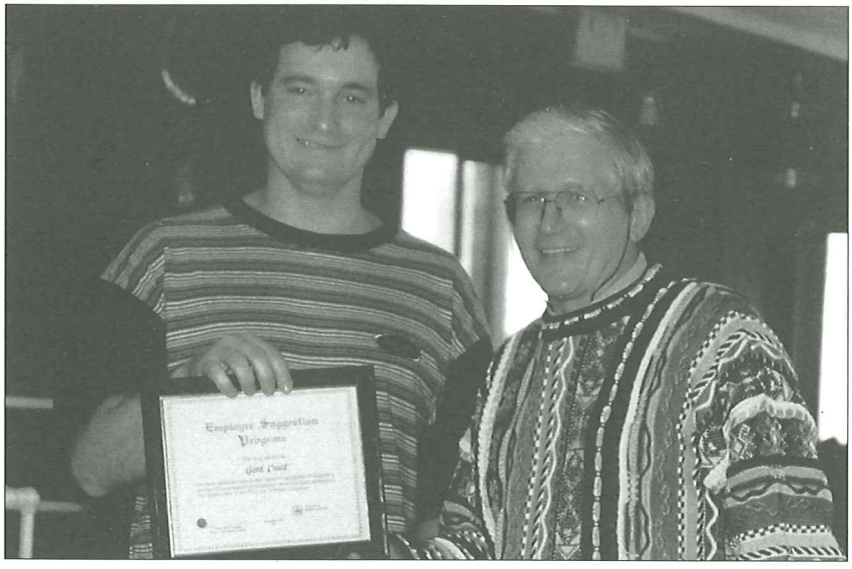
Average number of users each week now stands at about 5,000. Some 15,000 files are now served on average every day.

Only about a third of all visitors are Forest Service staff, reports the public affairs branch's Special Projects Manager Jim Challenger, who manages the website. The others are mostly professionals, scientists and educators.

For those who don't yet have their motors running, the home page address is http://www.for.gov.bc.ca

The Forest Service's Intranet site is also up and running. Accessible only to staff, the site contains ministry documentation about internal matters. The address is http://wwwinternal.for.gov.bc.ca

Inventory data fix among award winning ideas



Creed (l.) receives his award certificate from Gilbert.

A member of the forest resources inventory branch is $200 richer, thanks to his money-saving idea.

Gordon Creed, a data input and report coordinator, recommended a mechanism for recording and fixing errors in electronic forest inventory data.

Creed proposed an electronic clipboard file be attached to each map sheet. If users find any mistakes in the graphics, overlays and attributes, they can enter their discovery on the clipboard. The clipboard file stays with the corresponding map sheet, making that information available to future users.

As well, any errors noted on the clipboard would be fixed the next time the map sheet is updated.

The suggestion was evaluated by **Anthony Britneff**, strategic planning specialist with the resources inventory branch. "Implementation and electronic storage costs are small when compared to the benefits of improved quality control and saved time," he said.

Resources inventory branch Director **Dave Gilbert** awarded Creed with his cheque at a branch luncheon.

Bob Timbers, a compliance and enforcement field operations supervisor in the Campbell River forest district, also earned some cash.

Given the increase in paper flow resulting from the Forest Practices Code, Timbers proposed that an "approved" stamp be used to indicate an approved amendment to a logging plan or road permit.

The stamp, imprinted on the amendment applications letter, eliminates the need for district staff to write a letter of approval. District staff estimate 50 per cent of amendment approvals are now handled this way.

The idea earned Timbers $139.

Also recognized for their good ideas were:

- **Todd Powell**, a forest officer in the Campbell River forest district, who suggested a system to prioritize inspections; and
- **Richard Prill**, special tenures forester, and **Robin Orser**, resource clerk, who proposed duplexing Boundary forest district documents to reduce paper costs and storage requirements.

New DM for Island district

The new district created in the Vancouver forest region by merging Duncan and Port Alberni forest districts has a new district manager.

Tim Sheldon, formerly assistant regional manager, will take over in the new district March 27. Prior to joining the Vancouver forest region, Sheldon was district manager at Merritt.

A name for the new district is expected to be announced shortly.

Former Port Alberni forest district Manager Paul Pashnik is scheduled to retire on March 27. Jerry Kennah, formerly district manager in Duncan forest district, will take over in the same role in Chilliwack.

ISB has low cost option for 'Net communications

With new technology coming on-stream at an overwhelming pace, it's little wonder that some great new tools go virtually unnoticed.

But **John Mullane**, business planner at the information systems branch, knows of at least one Internet-based program that is too good to miss.

It's called FTP, for file transfer protocol. It enables anyone within the Forest Service to exchange electronic documents with anyone connected to the 'Net. For most Forest Service staff, this capability has been limited to internal communications. When it comes to outside clients, they've had to rely on such archaic methods as fax and snail-mail.

That not only means delays, it also eliminates all the benefits of digital data, or the ability to alter a document electronically and return it to the sender.

FTP came available in the Forest Service about nine months ago. It's readily available, easy to use and cheap to buy. The information systems branch purchased and distributed 1,000 copies throughout the Forest Service late last year, making FTP available in most offices.

There is one catch: to use FTP, your intended recipient must have a 'Net connection and a copy of the software. Mullane advises anyone wishing to get connected with their clients via FTP to contact their technical support person, who can then talk techno-jargon with the client's technical support person, and (as the Chevron man says) Alakazam, you're either a rabbit or you're linked.

For more information, contact Mullane at 387-8420, john.mullane@gems1.gov.bc.ca or **Fred Beinhauer** at 953-4871, fred.beinhauer@gems7.gov.bc.ca.

Curling results, continued from page 4

B (Canadian Helicopters) Event

First: **Russ Knutson, Bruce Pamplin, Dianne Knutson** and **Maureen Pamplin**; Chilliwack and Kamloops

Second: the **Robin Brown** rink of Victoria

Third: the **Archie McConnachi** rink of Revelstoke

Fourth: the **Tim Giles** rink of Kamloops

C (Conair Aviation) Event

First: **Darrin Halloran, Wayne Cook, Jason Regnier** and **Lorne Wood**; Prince George region and Kamloops district

Second: the **Carl Brugger** rink of Kamloops

Third: the **Bonnie Robertson** rink of Duncan and Nanaimo

Fourth: the Ken Westfall rink of Kamloops

D (Chemonics Industries) Event

First: **Kevin Bertram, Scott Cole, Phil O'Connor** and **Rose Burgess**; Bella Coola

Second: the **John Cruickshank** rink of Revelstoke

Third: the **Heather Kjelgren** rink of 100 Mile House

Fourth: the **Kevin Wilson** rink of Mackenzie

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