



Forest Service News Advisory Group Vision:

“True to our proud history, informing the Forest Service family through balanced and timely communication”

My Beijing Story by: Dianne Clearwater Management Assistant Southern Interior Forest Region

Even before I saw the ‘Expression of Interest’ to work at the BC Canada Pavilion in Beijing, my boss along with 2 other co-workers insisted that I go online “right away” to look at the email that had just come out from Annette Antoniak. Well I couldn’t believe my eyes, what an opportunity! For the next few days it seemed like everyone that knew me kept telling me, “that job is meant for you, you better be sure to apply...”

It wasn’t long before I heard from the other successful candidates in Kamloops and as it turned out, three of us would be on the same rotation.

We spent five days training in Vancouver in order to prepare us for the “culture shock” of a new country. It was the first time our rotation would be together and it really proved to be a week of learning and bonding.



On June 11th we were off. When we arrived in Beijing, I was surprised to see the changes at the Beijing airport, I had only been there one year previously, but what a difference a year can make in China!!

Those first days in Beijing were a blur, partly because of the time change, lack of sleep and culture shock. Within 2 days we were taken to the Olympic

Park where we planted a tree, visited the Summer Palace and took in the Pavilion and Beijing Planning hall, all for the first time.

I was glad we were provided a shuttle to get to and from work, because for the first few days I thought I would never be able to find my way around. Working at the pavilion was very interesting. I met people from all over the world. Most of the visitors were really impressed with the Pavilion and they really loved the high definition videopresentations, the RCMP officers, our student hosts, the hollow tree that smelled like home, the jade nugget and the impressive jade sculpture. The thing that impressed me most about Beijing was the people!

I have so many fond memories of my visit to Beijing. One of my biggest achievements while

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there was to take part in the 2008 Beijing Amazing Race, which was skilfully put together by some of our co-workers. I was thrilled to be on the winning team. Yahoo!!

I will always be grateful for the opportunity to work at the Pavilion; I was able to build many new bridges to the hearts of those I came in contact with. I truly believe I have become an Engineer, and the kind anyone can be, without any years of schooling. We all have the ability to build bridges to hearts. We just need to want to. I encourage all to strive to be engineers because it is so rewarding.

Now that I'm back home I'm surprised that so many people ask me about the air quality. We definitely noticed the lack of blue sky in China, but everything else was so intriguing we hardly even noticed. I would encourage all to add China to your list of travel destinations. I also want to say a big "Thank you" to all my co-workers in the Ministry of Forests and Range. They encouraged me to apply, they celebrated with me when I found out I was chosen, they kept in touch with me while I was away, and they decorated my office

for my home coming. What a great bunch of positive people to spend my prime time hours with!! TREE ON!



Dianne and friends celebrate in Beijing!

What Everybody Ought to Know about the Strategic Conversation

Submitted by: Christine Gelowitz, Manager, Strategic Policy, Strategic Policy and Planning Branch

Some say hard work can't be fun—the Strategic Conversation initiative has been challenging this statement for the last year. Thinking about the future is hard work—there are so many complex, interwoven variables that it becomes impossible to predict anything with much certainty. The Strategic Conversation acknowledges this head on and works to address it by bringing together staff from all across the organization in creative, interactive forums to share their perspectives and insights about where the trends of today might take us in the future.

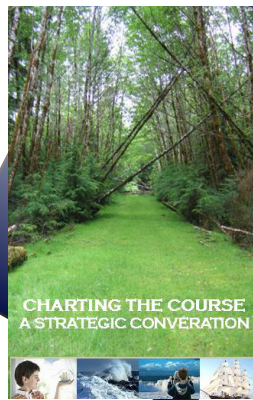
Over the last year many staff have taken the opportunity to spend time thinking about the future of the Forest Service by participating in a Strategic Conversation workshop. At workshops, participants are guided through an innovative process that provides the opportunity to engage in conversation with other staff about the future, and to create plausible scenarios of where the future may take us.

As a result of workshops, and input through our online site that replicates components of the workshop, more than 1600 future scenarios have been collected. Using a leading edge

in our long-term planning processes.

An important part of looking forward into the future involves being aware of what is happening in the world around us today—that is, scanning the horizon for emerging issues and trends. That is why researching, writing, and communicating new, emerging information is also a key component of the Strategic Conversation. As a part of this interactive scanning component we have established an Executive Blog, which features regular personal posts from the deputy and other executive members; discussion papers on feature issues like tenure and water (soon to be released); built a library of future oriented materials including snapshots, expert reports and videos; and initiated an online discussion forum.

software tool called Sensemaker we are now beginning to analyze the information to identify patterns, weak signals and blind spots in the collective input. This analysis will help us identify areas we need to explore further, and can help provide guidance to strategic thinkers and policy makers about early warning signals and strategic considerations



Get involved with the Strategic Conversation—take the time to think beyond our day to day work and push the margins of your current thinking—and as a result contribute to helping shape the future work of the Forest Service!

Warming Temperatures Ripe for 2008 Fire Season

Submitted by: Kim Steinbart, Provincial Information Officer, Protection Branch

If one were to summarize the fire season is one easy sentence it would be this: lots of fires, most of them small, no major problems. While this sentence isn't the most grammatically correct, it holds true. The season began slowly, thanks to cool spring temperatures. Once a few warming trends swept through the province, things were looking ripe for fire activity: long periods of little precipitation, hot temperatures, predicted dry lightning; however, the fires that started posed few problems and high pressure ridges were quickly replaced with troughs. Picture this cycle a few more times and you have fire season 2008.

In summary, the total number of fires recorded across the province so far this season is higher than the 10-year average (approximately 1900 compared with approximately 1800), while the number of hectares burned is well below average (approximately 12,100 compared with approximately 78,600). Although a few blazes came close to interface areas, fortunately there were no evacuation orders or alerts.

The most notable fires of 2008 were the Edgewood fire, near Little Arrowhead Lake between Nakusp and Castlegar, which grew rapidly to 350 hectares and came to within 1.5 kilometers from the town of Edgewood; the 330-hectare Fort Steele fire on Lakit Mountain; the 170-hectare Perry Creek fire, between Kimberley and Cranbrook; and the 130-hectare Jackass Mountain fire, south of Lytton, which closed both lanes of traffic on Highway 1 for several days.

During the fire season, Ministry of Forests and Range Protection Branch resources were deployed out of province under cost-recovery agreements to assist with fire activity

in California and Manitoba. When a warming and drying trend hit the province in mid-July and the risk for fire starts increased the province requested four aircraft from the Yukon to assist provincial crews, due to anticipated fire starts.

The total number of fires recorded across the province so far this season is higher than the 10-year average

Outside of the fire season, Protection staff were involved in two interesting experiences. The first was introducing Greek delegates to BC's training program. After a devastating fire season in 2007—which led to the over 67 deaths—Greece's Hellenic Fire Brigade committed to improve their safety and training by visiting the BCFS to learn, in

part, from the world's leaders in wildfire management. Secondly, the Kamloops fire centre received a visit from Rick Mercer to shoot a segment of CBC's "The Mercer Report." Rick joined an initial attack team to learn about wildland fire fighting and experienced it first-hand by helping to extinguish a staged fire (this segment is expected to air on CBC October 7, 2008).

Some fire seasons are invariably more exciting (at least for wildland firefighters) than others—2008 was not one of these. Where the season lacked in dramatic fire situations, it had its share of exciting and unique experiences.

All in all, it was another successful season for the Protection Branch.

Keep our province safe and report wildfires, call: 1-800-663-5555 or *5555 on most cellular networks.

HOW WELL ARE YOU AT CROSSWORDS?



Crossword



No cheating

Thank you!

The Forest Service *News* Advisory Group would like to thank Peg Ainsley, former Communications Advisor of the Organizational Development Branch for her invaluable contributions to the newsletter.

Peg has moved on to Health Services, Strategic HR Planning as an Internal Communications Coordinator.

Thanks again Peg—we wish her well in her new position!

Welcome New Advisory Group Members

Bailey Blencowe joined the Ministry of Forests and Range in August as the Internal Communications Coordinator in the Organizational Development Branch. She is a graduate of the University of Victoria where she completed her BA in Linguistics. Bailey is relatively new to government, starting in November



2007 at the Integrated Land Management Bureau, then a short round-about with the Ministry of Transportation before planting her feet at the Ministry of Forests and Range.

Her main portfolios will include Rewards and Recognition (including the Long Service Awards and Premier's Awards), the Ministry Orientation, websites, developing a variety of internal marketing and communication tools and of course a member of the Forest Service *News* Advisory Group.

Bailey enjoys running, biking, the sunshine, traveling everywhere and anywhere and a really, really good cup of coffee.

Dave Hails began his career with the Forest Service in Port Hardy in 1980. Since then, Dave has made significant contributions to the Forest Service with whistle stops in Bella Coola, Chilliwack, Victoria, Clearwater, Salmon Arm and Fort Nelson.



Since 2005 he has been the District Manager of the Squamish Forest District. Dave has traveled our province representing the Forest Service well, as he commonly states "we have a great organization with awesome people and a significant history and important future to be proud of."

When not on the job, Dave enjoys traveling with his family, watching his daughter play soccer and his son play hockey, and pretty much anything else that his family wants to do.

Russ Horton, P.Ag., joins the Forest Service Newsletter Advisory Group while working for Range Branch in the areas of strategic planning and range extension from Kamloops.



He previously worked for the Southern Interior Forest Region (Invasive Plants), following a stint with Energy and Mines (Reclamation & Permitting) after initially joining the Forest Service's Research Branch (Research Range Ecologist/Extension) in 1992.

In 'earlier history' he was in Saskatchewan (Forage Scientist - Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada), Alberta (UofA Ph.D in Range Science and Alberta Public Lands' Land Reclamation Section) and Africa (extension for integrated rural development programs).

Russ is excited about the Forest Service's Learning Organization culture and the opportunities the ministry provides for stewardship of Crown land resources.

He grew up in Victoria and values trips back to smell the ocean and to soak up that 'island sunshine.'

“It’s RMCP not RCMP!”

The Resource Management Coordination Project (RMCP) was initiated in the fall 2007 by the Integrated Land Management Bureau board of directors to increase collaboration and coordination of key activities, such as compliance and enforcement and First Nations consultation, across natural resource management organizations.

Project director Rick Manwaring (On TA assignment to ILMB from his home base duties as Kalum Forest Service District Manager) feels that, even in its early stages, the project is changing aspects of the culture in the respective organizations and achieving efficiencies desired by the province. “We launched the initiative in the northwest and, in a short period of time, we started seeing positive on-the-ground results with better coordination of C&E activities,” says Manwaring.

The combination of increasing land-use activity and recruitment/retention workforce challenges in resource management organizations provide a strong impetus for enhanced coordination. “The resource agencies collectively face substantial challenges and the need for greater collaboration has increased steadily in recent years,” stresses Manwaring. “We knew greater coordination would mean adjustments and people have responded by sharing



Bernie Mattie, John Stevenson, Flint Knibbs post a Crown Land Seizure Notice on an illegal structure

information and intelligence, and proactively identifying collaboration opportunities.”

“To date, C&E coordination efforts have focused on human/wildlife conflict prevention, mining and minerals activities, land inspections and open burning,” says Terrace C&E Field Operations Supervisor Art Moi. “The combination of appropriate authorizations, training and mentoring has enabled our staff to conduct several inspections typically carried out by Conservation Officers.” In Kitimat, for example, Forest Service staff and Conservation Officers collaborated on public education related to bears and managing attractants such as garbage, fruit trees, pet food and compost.

Smithers-based C&E Field Operations Supervisor Bernie Mattie indicates that “we are learning more about each other’s business and considering overall corporate risk, so we can focus resources on high priority sites. This strengthens existing relationships across agencies and provides wins for each program.”

According to Manwaring “we are building upon the northwest experience and we’re well on the way to having increased coordination of C&E activities in other regions by the end of 2008, and then across all of BC by spring 2009.”

When starting as Project Director, Rick didn’t know quite what to expect. “I suspected this would be a different experience from anything I had done previously and that certainly has proven to be the case. I’ve learned a great deal and have been consistently impressed with the commitment of people in all the resource agencies to ensure the RMCP is successful. Without this commitment, we would not have achieved so much in such a short time.”

Geomatics 101 Geomatics 101 Geomatics 101

Submitted by: Todd Davis, Geomatics Analyst, Forest Stewardship Program, Coast Forest Region

The Geomatics 101 document was created in response to a commitment by the Geomatic Services Leadership Team (GSLT) to improve communications and broaden awareness of this technology. One common issue raised by the geomatics community was that nobody really understood what they do, and often geomatics staff have supervisors or managers who are not versed in geomatics/GIS, and as a result do

not understand the geomatics role, or what services they can provide.

The Geomatics 101 document serves as a primer for supervisors and managers, or any MFR staff who require, or think they may benefit from geomatics technology. The document provides examples of common functions geomatics staff can perform, a brief description of spatial data and the formats used in the ministry, outlines the tiers of

service available and how to go about obtaining an ArcGIS licence. It also describes the distribution of the various geomatics staff (technicians, analysts, coordinators, etc.) and the services they can provide. Also included is a handy glossary of commonly used geomatics terminology.

This document can be found at the Ministry of Forests and Range internal [website](#).

FREP scores 'Silver'

Submitted by: FREP Quality Management Team

Early this summer, the Forest and Range Evaluation Program (FREP) was awarded Level 3 organizational certification through the National Quality Institute (NQI) Progressive Excellence Program. For meeting the rigorous criteria set out in the Canadian Framework for Organizational Excellence, NQI will also present FREP with a coveted Canada Awards for Excellence Silver Award for Quality. The highest level of award for level 3.

FREP embarked on its quality journey soon after its formation in 2003. A study of several alternatives led the Quality Management Team to select NQI's model as the best option for quality management certification in a public sector setting. In 2006, FREP was the first BC government program to receive NQI Level 1 certification. Level 2 in the four-level program was achieved in 2007. FREP aims to obtain Level 4 before 2010 and vie for the prestigious Canada Awards for Excellence Gold Award.

What does achieving quality through certification ultimately mean for BC government organizations? "In the context of the NQI process, it covers both internal business operations and external client relationships," says FREP Quality and Data Management Specialist, Thomas Chen.

NQI offers a comprehensive certification framework for projects, programs, business units, and organizations. Incorporating best practices, case studies and research from over 160 countries, NQI certification emphasizes that program management is comparable to the best Canadian and international organizations. Success is attained through its focus on leadership, people, suppliers, partners, clients, process management and planning. It offers national recognition through its Canada Awards for Excellence.

FREP receives its "Silver" at the 2008 Canada Awards for Excellence

Gala Dinner on October 20th at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. The Quality Management Team offers a big "Thank You" and congratulations to all who contribute to FREP and made our Silver award possible, including the regional coordinators, district staff, resource value team leaders, managers, the chief forester and our contractors. "Besides performance, NQI certification stresses staff well-being and recognition—something the Forest Service is really good at!" says Chen.

For more information on the National Quality Institute, ([website](#))

For more information on **FREP**

The Road We Are On!

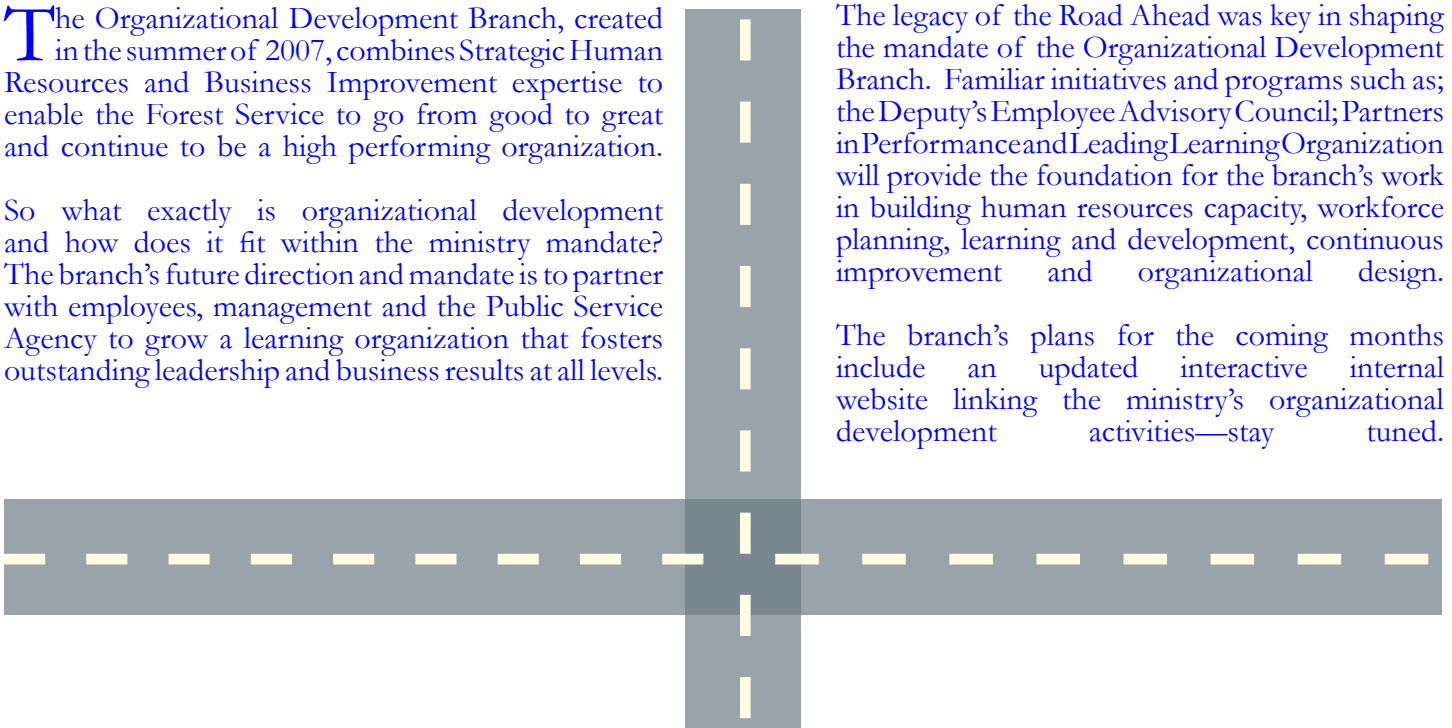
Submitted by Tara Wilson, Organizational Development Branch

The Organizational Development Branch, created in the summer of 2007, combines Strategic Human Resources and Business Improvement expertise to enable the Forest Service to go from good to great and continue to be a high performing organization.

So what exactly is organizational development and how does it fit within the ministry mandate? The branch's future direction and mandate is to partner with employees, management and the Public Service Agency to grow a learning organization that fosters outstanding leadership and business results at all levels.

The legacy of the Road Ahead was key in shaping the mandate of the Organizational Development Branch. Familiar initiatives and programs such as; the Deputy's Employee Advisory Council; Partners in Performance and Leading Learning Organization will provide the foundation for the branch's work in building human resources capacity, workforce planning, learning and development, continuous improvement and organizational design.

The branch's plans for the coming months include an updated interactive internal website linking the ministry's organizational development activities—stay tuned.



Ten Hours from Nairobi

This spring, Paul Kennedy, BCTS Woodlands Manager in Williams Lake, and his daughter Stephanie traveled to Kenya with the organization **Touch Africa International**



The idea originated with Stephanie, and Paul tagged along. Their efforts were supported by about \$2500 in contributions from work colleagues to support local projects in Kenya. Fund raising was made easier through a website that Sylvie Bailey, Budget Performance Coordinator in Quesnel, helped set up. “We really appreciated Sylvie’s help and the donations from so many people,” says Paul. “I want to thank everyone for their generosity. What seems like a small amount in Canadian terms translates to life-saving support in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa.” Touch Africa International is a Kenyan-managed organization, with a focus

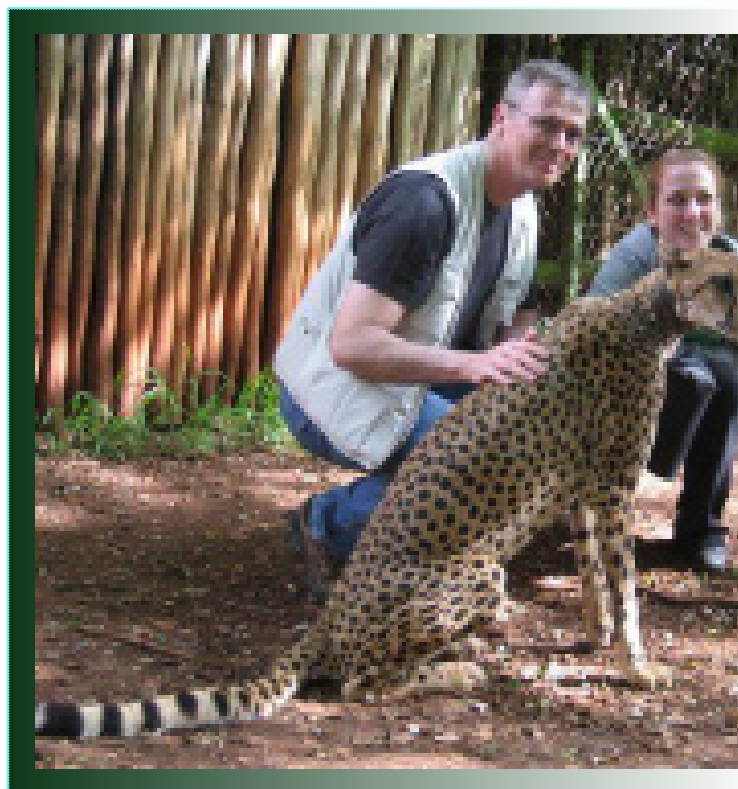
on meeting the needs of local people. Paul and Stephanie were placed in the town of Malindi—about ten hours from Nairobi—and served in ways they never dreamed of. According to Paul “we definitely were outside our comfort zone, but it was really worth it.”

While Paul was stationed at the Kenya Forestry Research Institute, Stephanie was at Malindi District Hospital. She was assigned some tasks that wouldn’t normally be done until the late stages of medical school here—labour and delivery, taking biopsies, performing AIDS tests, etc. “When we met with the hospital’s head physician, we asked her about the most important thing needed by the hospital with which we could help. Without hesitation, she said they needed new suction machines because their manual ones were very old and kept breaking down. It was extremely gratifying to be able to use the donations to contribute \$1000 for this much

needed equipment,” says Paul. The remaining \$1500 was used to cover the full cost of a medical camp in the small village of Kalonleni, located two hours north of Mombasa. The medical camp is a mobile outreach service provided by Touch Africa and St. Luke’s hospital in Kalonleni. People in the area are extremely poor, with the average wage being \$1.00/day or less. Most survive through subsistence agriculture, with finding food to live being a higher priority for most than getting health care.

Through its physicians, nurses and the pharmacy staff, St. Luke’s hospital provides a range of services at the medical camp, including testing and counselling for HIV, assessment of minor and major illnesses and treatment of minor illnesses. Check the short **video** taken by Stephanie.

“This was an excellent experience,” says Paul. “I would seriously recommend it to any one and will certainly go back myself. The people in Kenya are very appreciative of what they have and incredibly grateful for additional help that can be provided for those in need.”



The Secret Benefits of Being ‘Developmental’

Submitted by: Norah White, Forest Policy Advisor Strategic Policy and Planning Branch



A few years ago, Sue Stephen and Christine Gelowitz had a problem: they couldn't fill a policy position in the Strategic Policy and Planning Branch. Like many areas of the ministry, they found the pool of qualified applicants to be narrowing, with fewer policy people and more poaching from within government. So, they transformed their original position into a 'developmental' opportunity and took a chance: they hired me.

As a recent UBC forestry grad, Forester-in-Training and intern at the BC Legislature, I was looking for a way to blend my technical experience with the 'bigger picture' of resource use and was drawn to the unique characteristics of the Forest Policy Advisor posting. It promised a smooth transition into the workplace by offering that the successful candidate would be 'coached, mentored and encouraged over a two year period' and would receive investment in training with increasing responsibility over time. Despite being a newbie, I had the opportunity to contribute by working with senior groups as a full participant, assisting in projects normally beyond the scope of an 'entry level'

position, taking part in training and workshops, and joining plenty of interesting meetings. Along the way, I've connected with Forest Service staff of all levels across the province including others in developmental positions, gained experience in supervision and recruitment, become part of the Learning Organization community and fully registered as a forest professional.

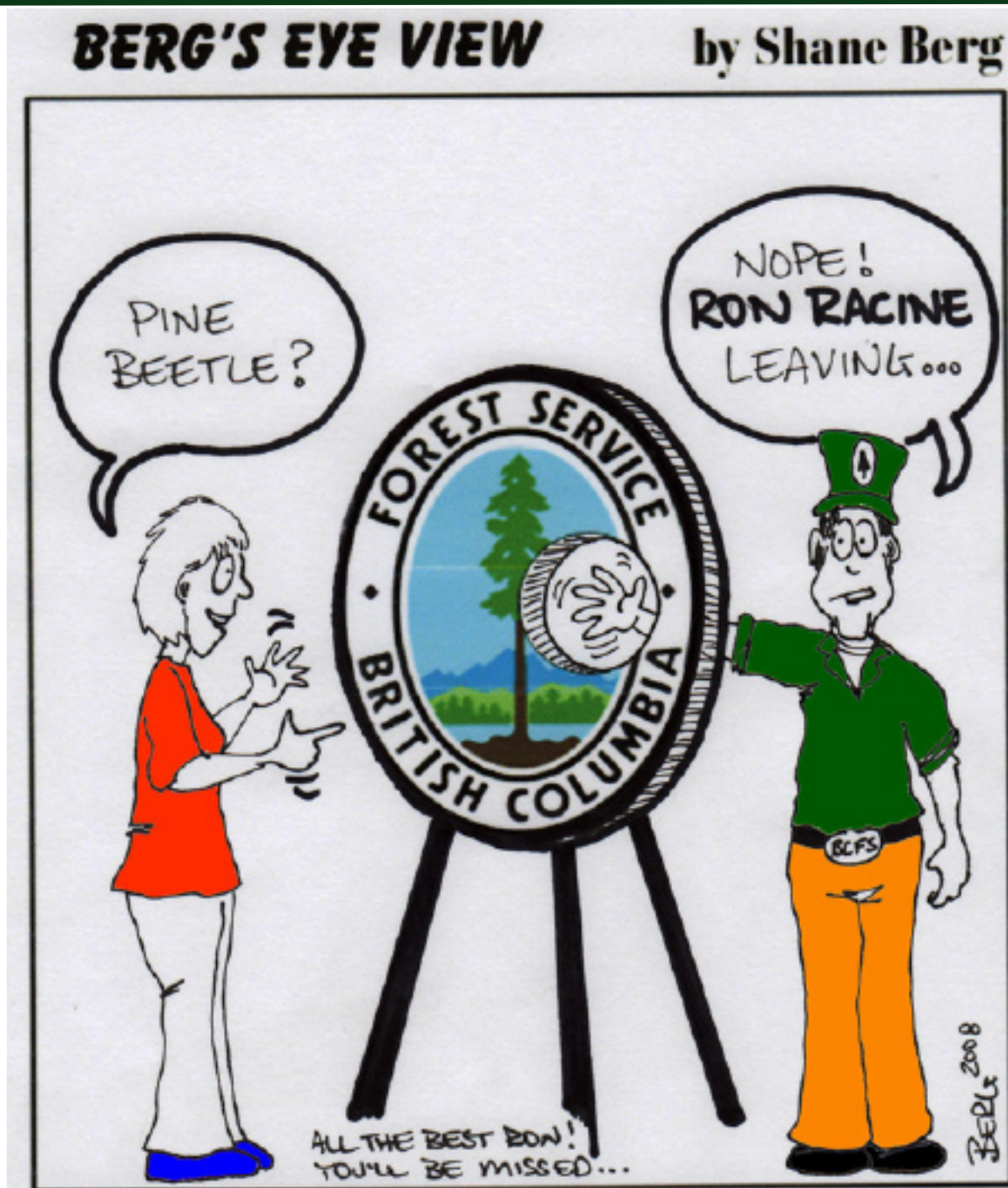
I completed my developmental term in July and have continued in many of the same roles, including leading and coordinating a cross-ministry policy team of business area specialists, delivering the Strategic Conversation across the province, traveling with groups like the minister's forest practices advisory council and the ministry's land-use planning specialists, working with new technologies, and leading

development of an indicator for the 2010 State of BC's Forests report.

The Strategic Policy and Planning Branch took a chance growing a policy person from scratch. A developmental position requires time and effort from a dedicated mentor and work unit to guide their growth, exposure and advocacy—just ask Sue, Christine and the entire Strategic Policy and Planning Branch! Being developmental is more a mindset than a position and I have found this mindset continues on as a habit and way of learning. The experience was a whirlwind, but I would recommend it to anyone as a great solution for bringing new people into the organization and keeping them there.

'Developmental duo' Norah White and Roddy Mackenzie in the South Island Forest District





Thank you!

The Forest Service News Advisory Group would like to thank Ron Racine, District Manager of the Okanagan-Shuswap Forest District for his invaluable contributions to the newsletter. Ron has decided to pursue a new business venture; therefore, leaving the Forest Service and the Advisory Group.

His input, dedication and team spirit will be missed.



Forest Service News is a quarterly newsletter for all Forest Service employees and former FS employees.

Sonia Donison is providing administrative and coordination support for the newsletter. Questions or comments about *Forest Service News* should be directed to Sonia at 250-953-3859 or **email**

Call for Stories/Ideas

The success of *Forest Service News* depends upon the active engagement of staff throughout the organization. One way for people to support the newsletter is to share your ideas, news, stories, successes, experiences with revitalization and learning, celebrations and photos for use in future editions of the newsletter. People are asked to check with Sonia at 250-953-3859 or **email** about their idea or ideas before writing a story. Stories are to be submitted no later than 2 weeks prior to each quarterly edition—deadline for December articles is December 5.



SUBMISSION GUIDELINES