Representing Canada's World Youth/Junior Biathlon

Cole Bender (CAN)

Cole Bender (CAN)

The face of determination and competitiveness!

Cole Bender (CAN)

Cole Bender (CAN)

Cole Bender represented Canada at the World Youth/Junior Biathlon Championships in Switzerland earlier this winter.

The events Cole participated in and the results can be found at: https://www.the-sports.org/biathlon-world-youth-championships-results-2019-2020-men-epm100427.html. His best showing was 11th in Men's Relay. He also finished 45th in Men's Individual, 41st in Men's Sprint, and 35th in Men's Pursuit.

Cole's parents, Wes Bender and Agathe Bernard, volunteer their time coaching biathlon and organizing fun cross-country skiing and biathlon events. Agathe works for Forest Analysis and Inventory Branch and Wes works for Wildfire Management Branch.

Congratulations Cole!

Advisory Group Vision:

"True to our proud histories, informing ministry staff through balanced and timely communication"

©British Columbia

The Dirt Facebook

To join "*The Dirt*" facebook page, simply go to the link provided and ask to join the group. You must let us know where you worked/work within the ministry. https://www.facebook.com/groups/flnrnews/

Issues of "*The Dirt*" will be posted online quarterly. The newsletter and facebook group are for all employees and former employees and is intended to provide up-to-date information on the organization. Add your story to *The Dirt* facebook account. "Participating in social media means contributing content or comment. When doing so, we trust you to be professional, personable, and relevant." Social media guidelines.

Submit an Article to *The Dirt* and receive a Notebook or Fruit Infused Water Bottle

The Dirt Contents, March 2020

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February 2, 2020

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I began my forestry career with the BC Forest Service on February 2, 1974 so it is fitting to announce my retirement 46 years later on the same date. The end date for my work is April 30, 2020 a date that should allow sufficient time for a smooth transition to ensure that the needs and the interests of Western Aerial, its employees and customers are attended to.

I had the privilege to work 28 years with the BC Forest Service and the past 18 years with Western Aerial, practicing silviculture the entire time.

I am proud of the progress that has been made in silviculture over the past four decades and of my part in it, from devising treatments with the Forest Service, to conducting treatments with Western Aerial. My views on forestry are strongly held and informed by over four decades of immersion in the issues. We must do everything we can to support forestry to ensure sustainability and its emerging importance to combat climate change.

Fortunately for me, I was able to pair my commitment to forestry with my passion for aviation. The prominent role of the helicopter industry in forestry cannot be understated. It has been a tremendous experience and honour to be part of a process to improve our business practices and deliver greater performance with a commitment to safety. The challenge of public perception is ongoing while at the same time, more and more people are asking helicopters to do more. Using all the tools available, together with effective leadership and the versatility of the aircraft, I believe the business opportunity for the next generation is excellent.

Thank you, it's been a pleasure working with you.

RP(Ron)Gladiuk

Bill Ashman Retires After 33 Years of Service

Submitted by: Wendy Cumming, Pricing & Tenures Administrator

January 31, 2020 – After 33.5 years of service Bill Ashman is putting his thermos away and calling it a day with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

A little bit about Bill…he graduated from the Forestry Technology programme at Lakehead University in 1978 and hit the ground running into the forest…so to speak, ha ha.

His career began by working in Forestry in Ontario for a couple years. Then in 1980 he headed to beautiful British Columbia, starting with BC Forest Products where he worked in numerous logging camps up the coast for 6 years. He tells the tale of travelling a million miles by floatplane, pickup truck and on foot (in caulk boots). Bill then began working with the ministry in June of 1986 in the town of Bella Coola as a silviculture technician. He worked a bit in some logging camps, even one of the BCFP camps, and spent some time on the Yellow Cedar, a 51-foot FS vessel. It was in Bella Coola that he completed the ABCPF's Pupil programme. He then transferred to Clearwater in 1989 where he was a generalist technician looking after the Tum Tum zone in the upper Adams River area, and then as the woodlot and small business operations technician. Bill says these were the 'glory days' of firefighting and slash burning. He admits it was lots of fun and hard work, in that order. Bill became a Registered Professional Forester in 1994 and won the Tenures Officer job in Horsefly. While there, he met his wife Kate, and their two daughters were born. The office was closed in 2003 so the family packed up and transferred to Fort St. James in the new Stewardship Officer position that included the Recreation programme. In 2004, he returned to the Tenures Officer position with the Kamloops District and in 2016 he moved to the downtown Regional Office (now he was office-bound, but he did get a window) as a Tenures Specialist for the South Area.

Bill notes that over his career this has been the Ministry of Forests; Forests & Lands; Forests again; Forests and Range; Natural Resource Operations; Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations; and finally, Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development. I quit printing business cards.

We'll miss Bill's cheerful attitude, smiling face and definitely his wealth of knowledge. Enjoy Retirement Bill, you deserve it… from your work family!

If you are a former employee and want to keep up with the latest Dirt, please contact Michelle Larstone, provide her with your email and she will add you to the retiree's email distribution list.

You can contact Michelle directly at Michelle.Larstone@gov.bc.ca. Don't forget our Facebook page!

InvasivesBC

Submitted by: Tammy Dekens, CSM, Project Manager, Strategic Initiatives & Business Innovation, Information, Innovation, and Technology Division

It has been a year since we announced in *The Dirt* the start of a new project to support field collection and management of invasive species data and we are eager to report that"InvasivesBC" is now well on its way!

InvasivesBC is a new corporate system that will be the central repository for invasive species occurrence information and data associated with control actions and monitoring. This is the first technical project of the SEISM initiative which is investing in more accessible, reliable and integrated data and information to support decisions for sustainable management of species and ecosystems in BC.

Development

InvasivesBC is being developed by an eight-member team, comprised of internal government staff and contracted resources, located at the Exchange Lab in Victoria. The system is being developed using an agile software development methodology.

Currently, development has been focusing on capturing observations of invasive species, as well as data on mechanical and chemical treatments for invasive plants. Planned features for the system include mapping, analytics, mobile data collection, quality control capabilities, and improved field collection methodology. These user-centric features will provide federal, provincial and local government staff, First Nations, utilities, natural resource sector industries and agreement holders, contractors, non-profit organizations, and citizens increased efficiencies and stronger data collection in the field. When completed, the new system will also replace the existing corporate Invasive Alien Plant Program (IAPP) application and offer a central place for invasive animal species data.

Recent developments

The InvasivesBC team recently spent time focusing on development of a new mobile app for use by the BC Mussel Defense Program to improve the support for the inspection of watercraft. This "inspect" app is scheduled to be available to Conservation Officer's in April 2020 and will reduce staff time required to record inspection results and ensure off-line security and automatic data uploads when the mobile device is back in cell or WIFI range. Learnings from this mobile work will enable the InvasivesBC team to use components for other invasive species mobile requirements and will be leveraged by other SEISM technical projects requiring mobile functionality.

Want to learn more or provide input?

The team is working closely with the Inter-Ministry Invasive Species Working Group, Invasive Plant Program in FLNRORD, and the Invasive Animal Species Unit in ENV, and is actively seeking input from other staff who have experience with monitoring or managing invasive animals. If you would like to provide input, please contact Product Owner, Mike Shasko.

The InvasivesBC team has sprint reviews every other Wednesday that is hosted in-person at the Exchange Lab at 1012 Douglas Street, and on-line. If you are interested in attending a sprint review, please reach out to Mike Shasko in advance for arrangements. You may also review the team's confluence page for further details.

FLNRORD Research Program – Brief Summary of Achievements – Victoria

Submitted by: Francesco Cortini, PhD RPF, Research Management Lead

The research scientists in Victoria are embedded in six branches: Forest Improvement and Research Management, Resource Practices, Climate Change and Integrated Planning, Forest Analysis and Inventory, Fish and Aquatic Habitat, and Wildlife and Habitat. During the 2018/19 fiscal year, the Research Program funded 8 research scientists conducting 26 collaborative research projects. These projects fall under the Research Program's portfolios as follows: **Timber** – 14 projects; **Ecosystem Stewardship** – 5 projects; **Species and Habitat** – 4 projects; **Water** – 2 projects; and **Bioeconomy** – 1 project.

These projects provided a strong contribution in advancing our knowledge on topics such as:

- Projecting climate change risks and opportunities for adaptive management.
- Development of projected climate data.
- Risk of climate related landcover change on water supply.
- Silviculture Treatments for Ecosystem Management.
- Tree Species Selection Tools.
- Forest Fertilization.
- Steelhead trout hatchery stocking.
- Factors affecting Moose population change.

A good example of this work on climate change is from a project led by Dave Spittlehouse within the Ecosystem Stewardship portfolio. The project worked toward the development of high spatial resolution historic and projected climate data for BC. Researchers at the University of BC, the University of Alberta and within the BC government are important partners in this work.

ClimateBC is extensively used in BC by researchers, resource managers, industry, consultants and academics. There is also a version covering North America. These computer applications generate monthly climate data at the spatial scales necessary in resource management (http://climatebc.ca/). Web-based and PC-based versions enable users to obtain monthly historic climate variables and those projected under climate change scenarios based on the latitude, longitude, and elevation of a location. ClimateBC provides the climate data that powers the Climate Based Seed Transfer tool, the Climate Change Informed Species Selection tool and various Water tools. Try out the interactive web version to view historic and projected climate data for your location (http://www.climatewna.com/ClimateBC_Map.aspx) .

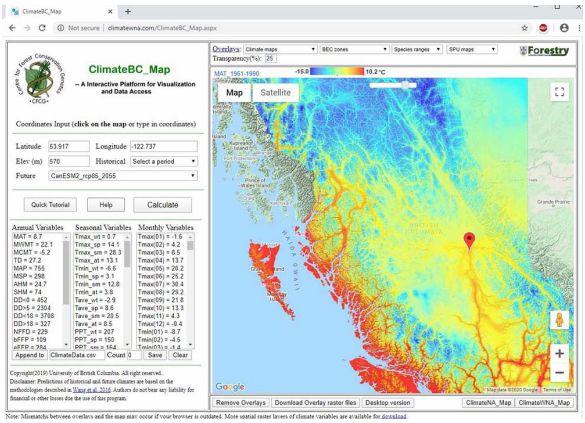

Figure 1. Screenshot of the web-based version of ClimateBC. At the web site, scroll to the resolution desired, right click on your point of interest, chose a historical or future period and click on calculate. The climate data can then be saved to your computer.

Another interesting project has been investigating for several years the factors affecting moose population change in BC and it was led by Gerald Kuzyk under the Species and Habitat portfolio. This project is investigating if moose decline coincided with a mountain pine beetle (MPB) outbreak where habitat changes and increased salvage logging and road building resulted in greater vulnerability to moose from hunters, predators, nutritional constraints, health and environmental conditions.

The results indicated that cow survival rates were largely within the range reported from other stable Moose populations (i.e., >85%), but the lower survival rates observed in the Entiako study area are likely contributing to population change.

This study highlighted the importance of evaluating drivers of moose calf survival and recruitment in relation to population declines. The improved understanding of factors affecting population trend and habitat use of moose will inform decisions on harvest and land management as well as activities toward moose recovery and moose enhancement.

continued...

Research - Victoria continued...

Figure 2. Wildlife Biologists Krystal Dixon and Heidi Schindler fitting a GPS-radio-collar to a captured cow moose in Entiako study area, March 2017 (Photo Ryan Madley).

Figure 3. Collared cow moose with twin calves observed in the Entiako study area (Photo: Joey Chisholm)

Become a Part of *The Dirt* Advisory Group!

Wouldn't you like to be part of this exciting team? If so, we would love to hear from you.

The Dirt newsletter advisory group members represents a number of locations around the ministry, but always looking for new recruits to add to our team.

The Advisory Group represents the overall balance of interests from across the ministry. Members of *The Dirt* Advisory Group have:

- High level of interest in the newsletter;
- Passion for enhanced communication across the ministry and to retirees;
- Ability to provide a corporate perspective;
- Ability to objectively look at story content ideas and story plans, and provide guidance as appropriate;
- Ability to recognize good story ideas;
- Able to commit approximately four (4) - six (6) hours per "quarterly" edition; and
- Editorial or communications experience would be helpful, but not considered as mandatory.

If you are interested or know someone who may be interested you can contact FLNRNews@gov.bc.ca directly.

Automated External Defibrillator

Submitted by: David Paul, Licensed Authorizations Officer, South Island Natural Resource District

Automated external defibrillators

With access to the right equipment, training and support, you can help save a life. Philips HeartStart AEDs guide you through the process of treating a victim of suspected sudden cardiac arrest.

I have been an Authorizations Forester in Port Alberni, South Island Resource District for the past 4 ½ years and when I arrived, I could not believe we did not have an automated external defibrillator (AED) in our office, which is why I joined the Occupational Health and Safety (OHSC) committee and worked with the government system to try to get a unit.

After 3 years, we had spoken with the Provincial Safety Officer and had submitted several Capital requests, but we were not getting an AED. We even submitted a 14-day letter of concern through the OHS committee during the process. All to no avail.

So, this fall our District Manager; Rhonda Morris, stepped up and committed to providing batteries for the ongoing maintenance of our AED machine. Staff then gathered together, and we had a garage sale, people donated their time and we raised the needed funds to purchase an AED. One that we now gifted to the employer.

Before coming to the South Island, I worked for the Canadian Red Cross and the research is there, AED's save lives! The first five minutes are critical to the patience survival.

South Island raised the money because our district works like a family. We value each employee and today we had our introduction on how to use the new machine…. It is very simple.

I strongly encourage other districts to follow our lead and purchase and AED that could someday save a life.

Have a Story idea?
Send *The Dirt* Advisory Group your ideas!

Don't forget about the Facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/groups/flnrnews/

Drawing connections at the GIS Community of Practice

Submitted by: Chris Ens, Geospatial Services Team Lead, Thompson Okanagan Natural Resource Region

Last November the GIS Community of Practice, a FLNRORD sponsored and led group, met face to face for the first time in 2 years in Victoria. One hundred and sixty staff from across the province covering all NR sector ministries came together to share ideas.

Guided by our theme, "Drawing Connections", the goal of the meeting was to build connections—both in our grey matter and between colleagues. As GIS technology has advanced, spatial products and services have become standard inputs to government decision making. It has become essential for GIS staff to lean on their professional network for advice, collaboration, and best practices. This event connects staff in ways that are not possible on our regular Community of Practice conference calls.

The morning of day one included icebreakers, introductions, get to know your games and plenary presentations on topics of interest to the community as a whole. The remaining day and a half were made up of Community of Practice members sharing their work and expertise in short 5-minute lightning talks, 15-minute presentations, and hour-long technical sessions.

Highlights of the meeting:

- **Participation:** A third of the attendees contributed to the meeting either through making a presentation, displaying their work in our map and web-app gallery or helping organize.
- **Networking:** The opportunity to put faces to names and follow-up presentations with conversations.
- **Learning:** 27 presentations, 13 lightning talks, 19 map and web-app gallery submissions, 2 technical talks that highlighted the impressive work going on around the province.
- **Fun:** Our first ever "GeoGolf" tournament which had teams exploring the city after hours to get as close to each location (hole).
- **Recognition:** Peer recognition awards that recognized 13 individuals for their outstanding work in their field and contributions to the GIS community.
- **Engagement:** Leaving the event with your head full of ideas and energized to get back to the office to apply them.

Science-Policy Talks Series

Submitted by: Luisa Ramirez (Mitacs Canadian Science Policy Fellow)

A series of Science-Policy Talks was launched last December by the Research Program. The purpose of these talks is to provide a venue for researchers, operational and policy staff, and managers to share ideas, initiatives, and experiences for science and policy integration. The series include nine monthly talks until August 2020. If you are interested, you can attend in person at Capital Park 2 (Victoria) or join via webinar.

The first talk: "Science Policy Integration: Putting Research into Action" presented by me, Luisa Ramirez on December 22nd, provided insights to improving the impact of research findings. The second talk: "Incorporating Climate Change Research into Timber Supply Decisions" given by Christine Fletcher on January 22nd, discussed some of the challenges for incorporating climate change research in timber supply decision making. On February 26th, Ben Morton talked about the 20 years of negotiation in the Great Bear Rainforest to achieve an ecosystem-based management approach that allows balancing environmental sustainability and economic needs. The most recent talk given by Dennis Paradine on March 10th, presented an overview of the Forest Carbon Initiative and the Science and Research Agenda.

The webinar recordings from these talks are available in the Research Program intranet at: https://gww.nrs.gov.bc.ca/flnrord/forest-improvement-and-research-management/research-program

The upcoming Science Policy talks are:

- **April 28th, 2020. Pamela Dykstra.** Research Leader Forest Ecology Interpretations, FLNRORD.
- **May 13th, 2020. Manjit Kerr-Upal.** Director Conservation Science, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy.
- **June 10th, 2020. Melissa Todd.** Wildlife Ecology Researcher, West Coast Area, FLNRORD.
- **July 15th, 2020. TBC. Rebecca Mersereau.** Director of Consulting for Econics. Elected Saanich Council in 2018.
- **August 12th, 2020. TBC**.

Please contact me directly at: Luisa.Ramirez@gov.bc.ca, MITACS Canadian Science Policy fellow if you want to receive more information.

Okanagan Shuswap FREP Team Earns "2019 ADM Award for Excellence in Resource Stewardship Monitoring"

Submitted by: Jill Werk, Stewardship Officer, Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource District

Members of the DOS FREP Team with ADM Award. Left to Right: Eric Goodman, Jill Werk, Keith Boyes, Megan Sheshurak, Kevin Derow, Jeff Samuel. (Not pictured are Stan Jones, Jeff Nitychoruk, Jody Bradwell, Brent Lipinski, Jeff Schochter, and Daryl Flindt). Trophy was hand carved by George Williams of the Ahousaht Nation of the Nuuchahnulth Territory. Photo Credit: Pat Shatzko, Authorizations Administrator.

The Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource District (DOS) Team was recognized as the District that made the most significant contribution towards Forest and Range Evaluation Program (FREP) resource stewardship monitoring in 2019. They were presented with the ADM Award at the FREP Continuous Improvement (CI) Session in Victoria on February 11, 2020. The FREP Mission is to collect and communicate the best available natural resource monitoring information to inform decision making, improve resource management outcomes, and provide evidence of government's commitment to environmental sustainability.

In 2019, the key focus for the DOS FREP Team was the concept of "team" which included relationship building with First Nations and licensees, innovation, and succession planning. The team demonstrated leadership and innovation by identifying resourcing barriers to Indigenous community participation in FREP and pursuing alternative approaches to compensation. This significantly increased First Nations engagement in the district's FREP program and aligned with recent legislation such as the recently passed *BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.*

The DOS FREP Team implemented a communication strategy internally that focussed on succession planning, capacity building, and cross-program collaboration, achieving support from management for involvement by various program areas.

Communicating externally, the DOS FREP team provided a FREP info session at the Timber Supply Area Steering Committee level, soliciting interest from licensees and First Nations representatives for FREP training and field sampling. The info session allowed for Q & A and input for how the team can improve their interactions with licensees and First Nations in the FREP program. Following this, the team coordinated a well-attended FREP Riparian training session for First Nations representatives that included a BBQ event and facilitated involvement by licensee representatives, consultants, First Nations, and DOS FREP Team members in FREP training and sampling.

The DOS FREP Team exceeded their FREP sampling target in 2019, safely and successfully completing 38 samples. The values that were monitored were Cultural Heritage Resources, Riparian, Visual Quality, and Water Quality. The team wrapped up 2019 by hosting a mini CI session where team members celebrated successes and shared photos, learnings, and ways to improve the program for 2020. They also compiled a list of topics to take to the FREP Provincial CI Session in Victoria.

The DOS FREP Team is honoured to receive this award and thanks the DOS District Management Team and District Leadership Team for their support for resource stewardship monitoring. The team also acknowledges the Resource Planning and Assessment Branch for their leadership, expertise, and continuous support.

Learn more about FREP!

continued...

Okanagan Shuswap FREP Team continued...

Barbeque Lunch at the 2019 FREP Riparian Training with First Nations Representatives in the Okanagan Shuswap TSA.

DOS FREP Team in Action, Visual Quality Sampling. Photo Credit: Jill Werk, Stewardship Officer

Traditional Knowledge. Photo Credit: Jeff Samuel, First Nations Advisor, Okanagan Shuswap Natural Resource District

Have a Story idea?
Send *The Dirt* Advisory Group your ideas!

Don't forget about the Facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/groups/flnrnews/

NOTICE

49th ANNUAL

ALEXIS CREEK BC TRAPSHOOT

COME AND JOIN US FOR THE LONGEST RUNNING FOREST SERVICE EVENT!

It'll be a BLAST!

When: May 30th, 2020

Where: Alexis Creek Rifle Range

Why: To carry on a great Forest Service tradition!

How: in Teams of 5 or individually (We will find a team for you to shoot with)

Events:

- *T-Shirt design contest – You could be famous – entries by April 10th-contact Brian Rosengren for more details (250) 394-4710*
- *Dinner Saturday evening*
  - *Beans, Salads and fixins' provided - Bring your own meat*
  - *Cost included for shooters*
  - *$5.00ea for additional adults $3.00 for kids*
- *Breakfast - Saturday (by donation, proceeds to A.C. Rod & Gun Club Range), Concession available - Saturday*
- *Practice rounds until 10:30am Saturday (or completion)*
- *Main Event > 25 shots, 15 trap – 10 skeet, best team score*
- *2 Annie Oakleys - $5.00 each per /round*
- *.22 Shoots – Ladies: $5.00 Kids: Free*

◆ T-Shirts: Included with entry (extras $20.00 ea) ◆

◆ Cost: $34.00/Shooter $170.00/Team BEFORE May 24th (Team registration form must be completed no money in advance required)

****Cost Increases to $39.00/Shooter $195.00/Team after May 28th, 2020****

◆ Entry includes one box of shells/entry. Additional shells $10.00/box, $5.00 for practice round if you have your own shells(for clay targets).◆

◆ Free Camping available on site Friday and Saturday ◆

>>>> Visiting team door prize donations welcome <<<<

Please be aware that due to the COVID-19 pandemic this event may be cancelled for the safety and well-being of attendees. If so, you will be notified.

For information contact: Brian Rosengren (250) 394-4710,
Harold Stolar (250) 398-4400 or Jason Kerley (250) 398-4689

Link to Registration

Polar Bear Plunge

Submitted by: Kassia James, Range Agrologist, Cariboo Natural Resource Region

Cariboo Range and Agriculture Staff are Freezing For a Reason!

Seven fearless ministry staff (and one brave family member) from Williams Lake and Quesnel said "Hay Australia" on February 2, 2020, as they were Freezin' for a Reason and jumped into Williams Lake as part of the 20th annual Polar Bear Plunge.

The effort was led by the courageous Trish Nairn who was joined by Morgan Mueller, Kassia James, Connie Haley, (her daughter) Rian Haley, Cynthia Fell, Katie Galliazzo, and Nicole Pressey. Together they raised $2,815 Canadian to bring "hay" to farmers in Australia affected by the wildfires. Trish said she was inspired by the outpouring of support that farmers in British Columbia received during the 2017 wildfires. The donations went to Farmers Across Boarders – Hay from WA campaign, and totaled $3,075 Australian dollars. That was enough to bring an entire truck load of hay to affected farmers. In total the group received 56 donations. Donations of more than $25 or $30 were offered a Hay Australia toque or tee shirt (take a close look at the pictures to see the group sporting the gear). It was a fun day and Trish even livestreamed the jump on her Facebook page.

Submitted by: Trevor Lees, Wildfire Technician, Penticton Fire Zone, Kamloops Fire Centre

The Penticton Fire Zone was honored to host the 17th Annual Dan LeClerc Memorial Hockey Tournament from Feb 7th to 9th at the Memorial Arena in Penticton. We had 12 teams take part in this year's tournament again and it was awesome to see representation from all over the province. We had four District offices represented (Williams Lake, Clearwater, Cascades and Kamloops), all six Fire Centres (Kamloops, Southeast, Coastal, Northwest, Prince George and two from Cariboo) and one Fire Zone (Penticton).

After a multi-decade drought (1987), the Cascades District was able to hoist the trophy once again after beating Cariboo Team #1 in the final. Congratulations Cascades District!

It was great to see the continued success of the tournament and many teams returning this year. We are hoping to add more teams in future years and continue building the tournament. Once the organizing committee settles on next year's tournament location, there will be a call out for teams to enter.

A big thank you to all the teams who made the trip to Penticton and to Joel Rudyk, Greg Gaudry, Mikhail Elsay and Tyler Luscombe for helping me with this year's tourney.

Interested in reading past newsletters?

You can find archived ministry newsletters dating all the way back to 1922 at:

https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/HEX/external/!publish/Web/News_Letters/

Published by the Forest History Association of British Columbia - April 1999!

Published by the Forest History Association of British Columbia

No. Fifty-four Victoria, British Columbia April 1999

FAIRCHILD HUSKY – THE "MADE IN B.C." WATERBOMBER

by Dirk Septer

Over the years, many types of aircraft have been used as waterbombers in British Columbia. Most of these aircraft have been converted especially for this purpose from surplus civilian or former military aircraft. The backbone of the Conair fleet used in B.C. is the Douglas DC-6, used in the 1950s and 1960s for passenger and cargo service.

The CS3F Tracker and Douglas A-26 were formerly military aircraft; the latter being a converted World War II bomber. Another waterbomber is the Canso, an amphibian, also of Second World War vintage.

Some of the more recent waterbombers were especially developed for forest fire fighting purposes. Examples are the Canadair CL-215 and CL-415 and the "new kid on the block," the versatile Air Tractor 802. Especially designed for areas with many lakes suitable for scooping water, the two Canadair machines have not been extensively used in B.C.

Recycled paper

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Husky Bushplane continued...

In the past, smaller bushplanes such as the de Havilland Beaver and Otter were used as waterbombers in Ontario and the United States. But very few people know that the Fairchild Husky, another small bushplane in this category, was likewise used in B.C.

Canada has produced a number of successful bushplanes like the Noorduyn Norseman, de Havilland Canada DHC-2 Beaver and DHC-3 Otter. With the exception of a number of operators and pilots who flew that other Canadian designed and built bush aircraft, few people have heard of the Fairchild F 11 Husky.

The Husky was designed and built in Longueuil, Quebec. A little less than 10 months elapsed between the start of the Husky project and the aircraft's first flight. On June 14, 1946 the prototype made its first flight, with chief pilot Arch M. "Mac" McKenzie at the controls.

The Husky was a relatively large aircraft with a distinctive upswept rear fuselage. It has been compared to a pregnant fish or called a "guppy." It was a strut-braced, high-wing monoplane, following the conventional pattern for successful bush aircraft. It was all metal with a conventional stressed skin fuselage, but incorporated fabric-covered wings, elevators and rudder. It was powered by a 450 HP Pratt & Whitney Wasp Jr. engine.

Removable sling seats fore and aft held three passengers each, with detachable chairs seating two more, for a total of eight passengers in the cabin with room for a crew of two, or pilot and one passenger, up front.

The monocoque fuselage with a rear door permitted loading from the rear of such awkward items as canoes, lumber and drill rods. At the back of the cabin the bottom of the fuselage sloped up sharply to the high tail. Here the tail loading hatch (opened by a crank) was one of the aircraft's best features. Routinely, 16-foot canoes were pulled through this hatch into the cabin. Loading two such canoes was easy.

When BC Tel had a large piece of equipment to go to Trutch Island, they unsuccessfully checked all around Vancouver to find a floatplane that could handle it. They finally phoned Island Airlines at Campbell River. Their answer was: "no problem." They just backed their Husky up to the ramp and slid the cargo through the big tail door.

The rear door hatch could be opened in flight with a hand crank. This feature was quite useful for dropping cargo where no suitable landing spots were available. The Manitoba government operated two Husky aircraft and used them to drop bales of hay to cattle marooned by spring floods in the southern part of that province, thus saving them from starvation. Lee Frankham of Campbell River remembers dropping frozen quarters of beef from tree top level close to the construction camps of the crews building the railroad into Lynn Lake in northern Manitoba.

The Husky was received very well and was highly regarded by many operators. The aircraft appeared to be a success when several were purchased by Nickel Belt Airways. This Sudbury, Ontario operation was owned by Ben Mervin, who also controlled Boreal Airways in Quebec. However, at the same time, de Havilland Canada was also

continued...

Husky Bushplane continued...

developing a new plane in the same general category as the Husky. Their DHC-2 Beaver made its first flight on August 16, 1947. The Beaver soon showed an edge over the Husky. The big difference was the power-to-weight ratio. Whereas both aircraft had the same Pratt & Whitney R-985 engine, the Husky had a much larger gross weight. This 450 HP powerplant provided enough for the Beaver but not quite enough for the Husky.

At the time, the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests was looking for a new bushplane. Frank MacDougall, the department's Deputy Minister and a bushplane pilot himself, promised an "order of 25 machines" to whichever company produced the best aircraft. Both the Husky and Beaver were serious candidates. At the end of a series of tests, MacDougall decided in favour of the Beaver. He considered the Husky's performance to be no match for the Beaver, particularly on takeoff. Early on, George Neal, de Havilland's test pilot, had given him a full demonstration of the Beaver's capabilities. The department immediately ordered four. This order was soon increased and over time some 50 Beavers were delivered to the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests.

Due to too small an engine and the initial success of the DHC-2 Beaver, the Husky never became successful. Fairchild lost an opportunity for a quantity purchase and the company never recovered. By the time Fairchild went bankrupt only 12 Huskys had been built.

It was generally agreed that the Husky was underpowered. Though it had comparable cargo space and the advantage of rear ramp loading, the Husky's engine was too small compared to the Norseman's 600 HP Wasp Senior engine. The Husky was slow to accelerate and more than once pilots had to throw something like a 50-pound bag of onions off the plane to permit takeoff.

The Husky's lack of takeoff performance was the most persistent criticism. With equal loads the Husky required more room than the Norseman and the Beaver. However, the necessary room was almost always there and the aircraft could perform beautifully a number of bush freighting functions which the Norseman and the Beaver handled either very inefficiently, or not at all. Although accused of being underpowered, the Husky proved to be a solid and dependable bushplane.

After a start in eastern Canada, most of the remaining Huskys ended up on the west coast. While Red Lake in northern Ontario likes to call itself the Norseman capital of the world, Campbell River could easily have been the Husky capital. Island Air, which was later taken over by the Jim Pattison Group to form Air BC, operated three Husky aircraft out of Campbell River.

Starting in the mid-1950s, the first of half a dozen Huskys was re-engined with the 550 HP Alvis-Leonides engine from Britain, enabling the aircraft to fly relatively fast, at 120 mph (193 km/h). In later years attempts were made to revive the Husky project. Preliminary work was done on conversion to a turboprop engine, a stretched fuselage and tricycle landing gear. Saunders Aircraft of Gimli, Manitoba had plans to build five complete sets of Husky components but this venture failed when one of the partners pulled out of the project.

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Husky Bushplane continued...

Just one aircraft was built at Gimli and only from parts of a salvaged Husky pulled from the bush where it had crashed in 1955. Later this rebuilt Husky would sit idle at the Vancouver airport for several years. Now it is the only flyable Husky and is on display at the Western Canada Aviation Museum in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The last Husky flying commercially crashed and sank near Prince Rupert in 1985. This aircraft had become something of a trademark for North Coast Air Services of Prince Rupert. For about 22 years it serviced the north coast and Queen Charlotte Islands. Soon after this Husky crashed the wreckage was lifted from the bottom of Seal Cove and is now part of the collection of the Canadian Museum of Flight and Transportation in Langley. This very same aircraft was the only Husky to be converted to a waterbomber.

The summer of 1958 will be remembered as a hot and dry one and many forest fires raged in B.C. and elsewhere. Though the aircraft was never really designed to be used as a waterbomber, the prototype Leonides-powered Husky was converted for such use in a very short time. In eight days, Husky Aircraft, based at Vancouver's Sea Island airport, designed and built a special 150-gallon watertank. It was installed inside the aircraft with inlet pipes between the floats and a dump chute leading to the open rear belly door. Because of the extreme fire emergency in B.C. during July and August, the Department of Transport gave special clearance for this Husky and as soon as it was ready it was put to use in the Nelson Forest District.

The aircraft and its rapid snorkel fill-up system performed well. The interior tank permitted normal flying efficiency, including dive bombing, and a reasonable payload. Equipped with floats, the Husky could be used on a large number of water landing areas. The inlet pipe system enabled the tank to be refilled in six seconds of fast taxiing. The load was released in four seconds, to form a pattern 300 to 500 feet long and 40 to 50 feet wide.

In 15 days of water dropping for the B.C. Forest Service the Husky logged 85 flying hours. The aircraft operated alongside a de Havilland Beaver. Each aircraft picked up water from the same source and they worked together on the same fires. The Husky carried just twice the quantity of water per trip and could make three round trips for every two made by the Beaver. Whereas the Husky's water pickup pipes were the only exterior obstruction to airflow, the Beaver's performance was seriously reduced by the watertanks mounted on the top decks of its floats.

Pilot K.W. Quest, who flew 50 hours doing the Husky water dropping, confirmed the excellent performance and flying characteristics of the aircraft. It was very light on the controls and easy to handle. When the water was dropped there were no sudden changes in trim and gentle stick pressure brought immediate response, even during mid-afternoon turbulence and at low airspeeds.

Despite all these advantages, the Husky waterbomber was rather short-lived. Apparently the aircraft was used again as a waterbomber in the 1959 season. This time it was flown by Jack Anderson in the Fort St. James and Quesnel areas. In February, 1959 Skyways Air Services of Langley, the predecessor of Conair, gave serious consideration to the purchase of the Husky waterbomber but this never happened.

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Husky Bushplane continued...

It is not known what became of the Husky's tank and water pick-up equipment. There are also rumours that a Norseman was converted to a waterbomber. Perhaps someone can answer these questions.

Apart from the lack of takeoff performance, the Husky bushplane proved to be a solid and dependable aircraft. If Fairchild would have continued, it is certain that eventually a respectable number of Huskys would have been sold. The original Husky with the 450 HP engine never "got off the ground" due to a combination of circumstances: a reputation for being underpowered, competition from cheap war surplus airplanes, Fairchild's switch to prefab houses and ultimately, the de Havilland Beaver. The Husky was a superior Canadian-made product far ahead of its time that should have been produced in a big way. In 1946 an executive of engine builders Pratt & Whitney called the Husky "far in advance of anything being built in Canada today."

Anyone with knowledge of the Husky, especially the water bomber version, is asked to contact the author:

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Interested in reading past newsletters?

You can find archived ministry newsletters dating all the way back to 1922 at:

https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/HEX/external/!publish/Web/News_Letters/

We hope you enjoy reading about the past!

Learning from Experience: Big Bar Landslide After Action Review

Submitted by: Ian Kopp, Internal Communication Coordinator, BCWS

Following a long summer of collaboration on the Big Bar Landslide near Lillooet, B.C., a group of approximately 20 representatives from the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) and the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) met for an after-action review.

The review had two objectives:

- Create a strong working relationship between the two agencies to understand how we can work together effectively in the future.
- Review the response at Big Bar with a focus on what went well and what can be improved during future joint responses.

During the day, the group identified several things they felt went well and should be replicated during future responses. One of the key strengths of the entire response and everyone who participated was adaptability. For the majority of both CCG and BCWS responders, this was new—all of it. Assisting with a landslide to enable fish migration is not something either of our organizations has done before. It was also the first time we responded to an event together, but we made it work!

BCWS staff highlighted the coast guard incident planning process as a benefit to the response, while CCG made note of BCWS' ability to quickly create and constantly update a robust website dedicated to the response as well as the information technology support provided. CCG members also commented on the professionalism, initiative and comradery of the fire crews who participated in the response, highlighting how well crew members took care of each other and worked in unusual circumstances without complaint.

In order to improve future responses, BCWS and CCG discussed the need for standardization. Examples included using the templated incident command system forms rather than customized versions, like those BCWS uses in some cases.

The group also discussed the unique requirements of responding on behalf of another agency. In the case of Big Bar, that was the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Regional Operations division of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources Operations and Rural Development. Specifically, the need to have clear objectives and authorities in place when responding on behalf of other agencies was a theme heard throughout the day.

Although reviewing the Big Bar Landslide response was the catalyst for this meeting, the conversation was largely focussed on the future, building relationships between the two agencies, and developing people and capacity together.

This partnership is an excellent example of collaboration between different organizations, and we look forward to furthering this relationship moving forward.

The Dirt Photographers!

Due to the lack of photos received for this edition we will try to resume the contest in the next edition. Any photo submitted for this edition and the June edition will be judged for the next photo contest. Get your photos in no later than June 19, 2020.

You don't want to miss out on a prize!

Time to get out and snap some photos! *The Dirt* Advisory Group increasingly requires good quality digital photos for the quarterly newsletter. We acknowledge that there are skilled photographers among ministry staff and would like to showcase your photos in each quarterly edition.

Categories

Photos can consist of:

- Workplace images – individuals or groups/teams in office and field settings; health, wellness and social activities;
- Community involvement;
- Wildlife; or
- Scenic.

Submission Details

- Deadline for submissions is changed with each edition and will be noted on the previous edition.
- Images can be submitted to: FLNRNews@gov.bc.ca
- The contest is open to all ministry employees and retirees.
- Interested staff can make submissions to as many editions (season/category) as they want, but there is a limit of 5 images per category.
- We are looking for recent photos; please limit your entries to shots taken within the past 2 years.

Prizes and Judging

- There will be an overall "Best" image in each category;
- Judging will be done by the Advisory Group;
- Images will be judged on composition, clarity, exposure, creativity, relevance to the ministry and category fit;
- The winner of the "Best" image in each category will be sent a prize for their photo (see Prizes available);
- Individuals can win only one prize; and
- All winners will be announced with their photo in the edition of the newsletter.

Technical Specifications/Requirements

The following specifications and requirements have been established to ensure that images can be used in a variety of applications.

1. All images must have relevance to the ministry and be submitted in digital format.
2. All images must be in full colour or black and white.
3. Photo dimensions (image size) should be at 300 dpi and preferably in a JPG format and sent to FLNRNews@gov.bc.ca.
4. Images can be digitally enhanced (i.e., colour/exposure adjusted composite photos are okay), but not digitally altered (i.e. NO "Photo-Shop" images must portray subjects and/ or material in photo as they were captured).
5. When submitting images, some descriptive information is to be included – category or image and location.
6. All images submitted, whether or not selected as a winning image, may be published in future issues of the newsletter or potential other sources (The Dirt Facebook account)

For further information, contact:
FLNRNews@gov.bc.ca

DEADLINE IS JUNE 19, 2020

BERG'S EYE VIEW

by Shane Berg

The Dirt is a quarterly newsletter for all employees and former employees.

Sonia Donison is providing management, coordination and production for the newsletter. Questions or comments about the newsletter should be directed to Sonia at 778 974-5834 or via email.

Call for Stories/Ideas

The success of the newsletter 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 778 974-5834 or via email about their idea or ideas for an article prior to writing the story. Stories are to be submitted no later than 2 weeks prior to each quarterly edition (March, June, September, December). Article deadlines for the next edition is June 19, 2020.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES