Kalum Timber Supply Area

(Formerly the Kalum-South Area of the Kalum Timber Supply Area)

Summary of Public Input

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This is a summary of the public input received on the Timber Supply Review in the Kalum Timber Supply Area. This summary does not assess the feasibility or validity of the input or whether it relates to the clearly defined mandate of the chief forester in the allowable annual cut determination.

Kalum Timber Supply Area

Background

As part of the review of timber supply in the Kalum Timber Supply Area (Kalum-South Area of the Kalum Timber Supply Area prior to January 1, 1995), the British Columbia Forest Service distributed a *Public Discussion Paper* and two technical reports, the *Timber Supply Analysis Report* and the *Socio-Economic Assessment*. The public was encouraged to review and comment on the accuracy of the information in these documents and to provide additional information. This report summarizes the input received during the 90-day review period. This information was provided to the chief forester for his consideration when he reviewed the allowable annual cut for the Kalum Timber Supply Area.

The first section of this summary outlines the public review process implemented by the Forest Service and describes the types of public input received. The second section summarizes the public input in sufficient detail to indicate the range of input received. The original submissions (with personal identifiers removed in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*) can be reviewed at the Kalum Forest District office in Terrace.

Public Review Process and Response

Kalum Forest District staff actively solicited public input on the Timber Supply Review in the Kalum Timber Supply Area through the following actions:

- direct mail-out of the three documents to about 70 individuals and organizations. The *Public Discussion Paper* included a response form which readers were encouraged to complete and return to the district manager
- local radio, television and newspapers ran interviews and editorials and were briefed on all reports
- thirteen information sessions were held with representatives from the timber industry, labour, governments and other interest groups (see Table 1)
- two open houses were advertised through local news papers

As Table 1 shows, about 90 individuals attended the information activities. The Kalum Forest District received one completed response form and nine written submissions (see Appendix 1). In addition, Skeena Cellulose Inc. commissioned Sterling Wood Group Inc. to technically critique the *Timber Supply Analysis Report.* This review is referred to as the 'technical critique' in this summary.

Activities (Participants)	Date
Information Sessions (1994)	
Media briefing (2)	July 8
Helmut Giesbrecht, MLA (1)	July 12
Forest industry representatives (7)	July 12
Land and Resource Management Plan, Community Resources Board & Interagency Planning Comm. (20)	July 12

Kitimat-Stikine Regional District & City of Terrace (5)	July 13
Kitimat Chamber of Commerce (7)	July 14
First Nations	
Kitsumkalum Band (2)	July 28
Haisla Tribal Council (5)	July 29
Nisga'a IPM Committee (10)	August 3
Helmut Giesbrecht, MLA (1)	November 18
Media briefing (4)	November 18
Land and Resource Management Plan, Community Resources Board (10)	November 30
Skeena Cellulose, City of Terrace & Kitimat-Stikine Regional District (4)	December 1
Open Houses (1995)	
Kitimat (5)	February 7
Terrace (10)	February 9

Table 1: Participation in public information activities

Kalum Timber Supply Area

Public Input

In this section, public input on the information presented in the three Timber Supply Review documents for the Kalum Timber Supply Area is summarized under the following headings:

- timber supply analysis
- socio-economic assessment
- public discussion paper

Public input on other ongoing government processes that may influence the timber supply in the Kalum Timber Supply Area in the future is summarized at the end of this section.

Timber Supply Analysis

Technical critique

The technical critique describes the *Timber Supply Analysis Report* as being similar to "walking through a corridor with closed doors." The critique suggests the arbitrary rules and assumptions used in the analysis lead to only one answer: the base case timber supply forecast.

The critique states that the timber productivity projections used in the Forest Service analysis for managed forests are unreliable because:

- the existing timber harvesting land base is dominated by old growth or very young forests and therefore the long-term productivity of these sites is not accurately known
- the minimum harvestable ages (which define when second growth timber is available for harvest) were arbitrarily set at 95 per cent of the age when trees reach their maximum annual growth. The critique maintains that more flexibility in harvestable age is possible because annual growth is fairly constant for a number of years before that maximum is reached

The critique indicates that the Forest Service analysis did not use the minimum harvestable age determined by the Forest Service and asks that this inconsistency be explained.

The critique also suggests the timber harvesting land base has been defined very conservatively, with 81 per cent of the land protected for other values. The critique notes the timber supply analysis confirmed that timber supply over the next 50 years depends to a great extent on the size of the timber harvesting land base.

In addition, the critique asserts that timber supply is very sensitive to forest cover requirements and this was not reflected in the Forest Service analysis.

The critique recommends that over the next few years, the Forest Service should:

- remove as many uncertainties in the data as possible
- accurately assess the productivity of managed forests
- determine the opportunity for uneconomical timber to become economical

- accurately assess available volumes of old growth timber

Other Public Input

- **Size of the timber harvesting land base**
  A submission from the City of Terrace suggests the land base will be smaller once Native land claims are settled. They also observe that the restrictions of the Forest Practices Code and the increased stumpage associated with the Forest Renewal Plan could reduce the area economical to harvest.

- **Productivity of second growth forests**
  The City of Terrace suggests that based on preliminary data (not provided), the productivity of second growth forests might be higher than reported. More intensive silvicultural practices will also increase productivity.

  Another respondent indicates field work is required to reduce uncertainty about site productivity and future forest growth, and more research is needed to better determine ecological rotations.

- **Existing volume**
  One respondent states the estimated volume of current forests is inaccurate, but does not indicate whether the estimate is too high or too low.

Socio-Economic Assessment

- **Employment and community impacts**
  The District of Stewart expresses concern about the stability of their community. The district claims that the *Socio-Economic Assessment* failed to address the social and economic development costs and lost opportunities Stewart has experienced as a result of raw log exports. They highlight the community stability that would come from having a manufacturing plant in Stewart.

  Another respondent acknowledges the potential of the Forest Renewal Plan and value-added forestry manufacturing to offset projected job losses arising from a reduced timber supply level.

  One respondent commented on several aspects of the *Socio-Economic Assessment*:

  - a direct relationship between harvest levels and employment does not account for the threshold effect where a reduction in timber supply may result in mill closure
  - employment multipliers should be higher for single industry towns like Terrace
  - person-years underestimate employment due to the seasonal nature of much forestry work
  - employment income estimates are too low because they don't include benefits
  - it is false to assume Forest Service staffing levels are not affected by changes in timber supply levels

- the value of timber is underestimated because the stumpage rates used are lower than current rates

One respondent insists forestry activities in the timber supply area should benefit local communities. Another suggests the forest industry could increase its timber utilization at the current allowable annual cut, thereby increasing employment and income. It is also suggested that consideration be given to smaller logging operations.

Three respondents, including the City of Terrace, express concern about the lack of recognition given to the larger economic region of the northwest in the *Socio-Economic Assessment*. They claim the interdependence of northwest communities and the cumulative effects of timber supply adjustments in surrounding timber supply areas were not considered. One respondent observes that the tree farm licence which generates about 70 per cent of the timber harvesting activities within the Kalum was not considered in the analysis.

- **Non-timber values**
  The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks is concerned that the *Socio-Economic Assessment* gives the impression that fish, wildlife and biodiversity goals are being achieved under current practices. The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks maintains current practices provide only minimum protection for fish and wildlife values, in particular:
  - streamside protection is practiced throughout the area at minimal levels. They suggest that because of the variability inherent in establishing streamside management zones, the analysis underestimates the area actually set aside by as much as 100 per cent
  - only two spots throughout the timber supply area have been retained as wildlife tree patches

- biodiversity corridors are found in only one planning area

Two submissions suggest benefits from non-timber values such as mining, mushroom picking, tourism and inland fisheries should be considered and balanced with the needs of the timber industry. Additionally, the economic benefits of tourism need to be recognized and its assets (unspoiled scenery, fish and wildlife habitat) protected.

- **First Nations**
  Six respondents note that First Nations concerns were not adequately addressed in the Timber Supply Review. Two specifically state that the impacts of land claims on the timber supply were not acknowledged.

One First Nation suggests that until First Nations interests have been fully addressed through treaty negotiation or other processes, inclusion of timber from traditional territories in the timber supply is not appropriate. They further contend that licences are being continuously renewed without consultation. They state that they haven't received any employment benefits from forestry activities and suggest an apportionment of the allowable annual cut so they can participate in resource management.

Another First Nation points out that aboriginal rights are not mentioned in the reports and affirms the existence of these rights. They also indicate that timber in the Fiddler Creek Planning Area is not available for harvest.

A third First Nation comments that they could not provide comments on the reports, as they had no funding to hire experts to do so. They further affirm their aboriginal rights with regard to forestry activities.

A submission from the Kitamaat Village Council questions the methodology of the consultant who prepared the *Socio-Economic Assessment*.

A respondent claims that although they were never interviewed regarding the Kalum Timber Supply Area, they are quoted in the report *Socio-Economic Assessment*.

Public Discussion Paper

Several issues raised in the *Public Discussion Paper* prompted public input.

- **Forest management practices**
  The following concerns are raised by respondents:
  - harvest rates in sensitive headwater areas should be reduced to avoid detrimental effects on fisheries habitats. Smaller clearcuts and selective harvesting are suggested
  - forest ecosystem networks, recreation and visual corridors, old growth areas, environmentally sensitive areas, and riparian and streamside buffers should be combined, while ensuring the ecological and hydrological integrity of watersheds. Forest land reserves should be established for enhanced development of productive areas
  - incremental silviculture, watershed assessments and more First Nation participation in forest tending is necessary
  - visual quality objectives need to be strengthened so that no more logging is visible from Lakelse Lake. As well, a rate of cut analysis on Williams Creek is needed to see if harvesting is impacting run-off rates, adding to the flooding problem of the lake

- **Deferring harvest**
  The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks suggests an analysis is needed to ensure that the areas given to forest licensees are sustainable. This concern arises from the practice of deferring harvesting to protect resources in an area without adjusting the volume allocated, thereby concentrating harvesting in non-deferred areas; this concentrated harvest poses a threat to non-timber resources.

- **Allowable annual cut adjustment**
  Seven out of the 11 submissions make recommendations regarding an allowable annual cut adjustment. About half of the submissions support maintaining the timber supply level and half support a reduction. The input ranges from a suggestion that the timber supply level be maintained as high as possible for as long as possible, to a recommendation that the cut be immediately reduced to a level close to the long-term level.

  Those expressing a preference for maintaining the current allowable annual cut offer the following reasons:

  - to reflect the current unprecedented environment of uncertainty
  - to await the increased availability of accurate and reliable data
  - to minimize the disruption of communities and workers

  The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks urges a conservative approach to setting the allowable annual cut in order to achieve fish, wildlife and biodiversity objectives.

Related processes

Comments about ongoing government processes in the Kalum Timber Supply Area are summarized here to indicate perspectives on issues that may influence timber supply in the future.

- **Timber Supply Review Process**
  One respondent expresses concern that the Timber Supply Review process has caused Forest Service planning and inventory functions to be diverted from more urgent tasks.

- **Land and Resource Management Planning**
  One respondent recommends the Kalum South Land and Resource Management Plan be utilized in future allowable annual cut determinations.

- **Forest Practices Code**
  One submission notes that requirements of the Forest Practices Code were not incorporated into the timber supply analysis. Another recommends a new analysis be conducted after the Code is implemented.

Appendix 1

Submissions Received by the Kalum Forest District

Local government
District of Stewart
City of Terrace
Allied Tsimshian Tribes Association
Kitamaat Village Council (2)
Gitxsan Lax'skiik

Government Agencies
The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks

Industry
Skeena Cellulose Inc., Terrace
Sterling Wood Group Inc.

Individuals
Two submissions