

CRIT/FMLT ALDER REVIEW



Field Review: June 12, 2012

Author : Paul Barolet, R.P.F.
North Island Central Coast Resource District



TFL 6, Colonial River Drainage

The field review indicated the site was previously harvested and burned in the 1950's and it is assumed there was ample ground disturbance leaving exposed soils. The site regenerated naturally primarily to red alder and some conifers ingress over time.

The block was harvested by WFP in the winter of 2011 and planted in 2012. The strategic context is working towards fulfilling the Coast Forest Action Plan (CFAP) goal to produce 350,000 m³/yr of deciduous harvest by applying the CRIT Hardwood Management Discussion Paper principles.

<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/mof/CoastalPlan/cap07.pdf>

[http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/rco/stewardship/CRIT/docs/Hardwood%20Management%20in%20the%20Coast%20Forest%20Region%20\(final%20July11V2\).pdf](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/rco/stewardship/CRIT/docs/Hardwood%20Management%20in%20the%20Coast%20Forest%20Region%20(final%20July11V2).pdf)

Why Manage for Red Alder?

- 1) Contributes towards the Coast Forest Action Plan (CFAP) goal to produce 350,000 m³/yr of deciduous harvest.
- 2) Avoids or minimizes the need for multiple brushing treatments compared to conifer management on rich sites.
- 3) Free Growing as early as 5 years.
- 4) Benefit to midterm timber supply.
- 5) Develop local knowledge, capacity and expertise to manage for hardwoods.
- 6) Climate change and ecosystem Resilience.
- 7) Red alder is a high end commodity product.



Site Characteristics and Observations: Soils: Fragmental with a very high coarse fraction (70%) but still good soil available for alder. CWHvm1 05/07 rich sites, Site Index 27, with high brush hazard potential. Slope position: Lower and toe (ideal) SMR 4-5. Stand Structural goals: Even aged (self pruning) crop of deciduous leading high quality alder saw-logs @ 350m³/ha.

Rotation Length: Intensive 25-35 years, extensive 45-60 years.





This site produced high quality saw-logs of red alder. Notice the lack of branching through self pruning and dense pre-harvest stocking distribution.

Field Discussion: Want 05/07 site series, MITD 1-1.5 m for 1200-1400sph = 1000-1200 sph at FG, if above 1500 sph consider intensive management and spacing, plant 512s. Beware frost is your enemy.

Micro-site selection focus on disturbed sites that have mineral soil exposed, must plant plug in mineral soil or get the bottom of the plug into soil (not red-rot, duff, or moss), avoid high spots unless wet site, plant on side or bottom of mounds, avoid gravel with no soils or organics. Individual micro-site selection is more important than adhering to an even spacing regime!

Alder pak fertilizer tea-bags (RTI) recommended especially if you want to get ahead of the brush. Ironically alder does not initially compete well with brush until it becomes established so plant ASAP. Alternatively the option to delay planting a year and apply herbicide on salmonberry sites to help alder get established properly with full crowns in the critical early 2-5 year period. As a further note to this, if the brush is not treated then it is very important for stocking levels to be at the higher end of the spectrum, 1500sph so that the alder potential really dominates the site.

Seed-lots: A northern provenance moved south do well for alder.

Stock Handling: Thawing trees will flush in 3-4 days, buds are very soft so planters need to pack less in their bags. Alder thaws in half the time that conifers do.



Current Impasses to Success:

- 1) CFAP targets on the coast are not been achieved despite appropriate forest policy is considered to be in place by CRIT, local FMLT group, and approved FSP's. Why?
- 2) Starting to recognize the same people at CRIT/FMLT red alder functions so is there a need to reach out to a broader audience such as silviculture surveyors, consultants, and woodlots owners. These people need to be able to identify and recognize deciduous opportunities in the field.
- 3) Recognizing the right site conditions and risks is critical to red alder success. FMLT DNI needs to decide if a CRIT alder workshop is required on the North Island to educate those who are best situated to identify red alder sites.
- 4) Alder expertise is lacking and needs to continue to be developed on the coast sharing knowledge including both successes and failures.
- 5) At this time need to focus on getting it right with monocultures or patch-mixed wood for now on the North Island.





??????????????

In the office
and still
uncertain?

Solution: Go
to the field!

In the field
and still
uncertain?

Solution: Talk to
your colleagues
or hire an
expert for
advice!

??????????????



CRIT and FMLT Participants: West Coast Region,
Western Forest Products, BCTS, Interfor, Ecotrust,
North Island Central Coast Resource District.

Special Thanks to Neil Hughes, RPF.

