



Sustainable Forest Management in the Morice Timber Supply Area

The Morice & Lakes Innovative Forest Practices Agreement is a partnership between six regional forest licensees and BC Timber Sales in both the Morice and Lakes Timber Supply Areas. It is developing sustainable forest management plans using innovative approaches in public involvement, forest productivity and ecosystem-based management.



Sustainable Forest Management

While traditional forest management primarily focused on a sustained forest resource for timber production, there is now a public desire to manage the forest ecosystem balancing social, ecological and economic values for present and future generations. This concept is known as sustainable forest management (SFM), and represents the foundation by which the Morice Timber Supply Area (TSA) land base is managed through the Morice & Lakes Innovative Forest Practices Agreement (M&L IFPA).

In the Morice, forestry is the primary economic generator, but other activities and values—for instance agriculture, fishing, hunting, trapping, recreation/tourism, and mining—also contribute to the area’s socio-economic structure. In SFM planning, these other activities and values which exist on the same land base must be considered and integrated into long-term planning.



Public Involvement in the Morice

The Morice SFM Plan was developed using input from a local scenario planning team and a public advisory group. Since the formation of these teams in 2001, literally hundreds of planning sessions have been held, with representatives from a variety of resource interests putting forward their views on resource management. It is this commitment by representatives from government, industry, special interest groups and the community that makes this planning process so valuable. In addition to these planning sessions, consultant specialists gathered additional timber supply and ecological information to be used in developing the plans.

Through scenario planning, participants formulate a variety of scenarios for managing the forest based on the resource values they have identified. Each scenario is then projected into the future to see how the forest will look with an emphasis on different resource values. Scenario themes in the Morice include forest productivity, ecosystem-based management, recreation and agriculture. Using the learning scenarios, a final decision scenario is formulated that forms the basis of the SFM Plan

Version Three of the Morice SFM Plan

Arriving at a decision scenario developed from the intensive scenario planning process, Version 3 of the Morice SFM Plan represents a culmination of effort and dedication to actively implement SFM on the Morice TSA land base. The enormous planning and data collection efforts required to produce the plan make it one of the largest natural resource analyses of its type ever undertaken in the province. Unlike conventional analyses, the SFM plan in the Morice optimizes multiple resource objectives simultaneously.

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Version 3 of the SFM Plan:

- Includes forecasted planning indicators over long time periods to better understand how values can be maintained on the landscape using different management approaches.
- Helps to assimilate different provincial strategic initiatives—such as IFPA Forestry Plans, Land & Resources Management Plans, Sustainable Resource Management Plans, Forest Investment Plans, certification initiatives, and Beetle Management Plans—into a single adaptive management framework for operational planning and implementation.
- Fulfills five specific needs: support for Forest Stewardship Plans required under the new Forest and Range Act, support for government agencies charged with setting legal objectives under FRPA, support for government decision makers in determining harvest rates in the face of accelerated forest stand mortality, an investment rationale for Forest Investment Account expenditures in the Morice TSA, and CSA sustainable forest management certification in the Morice TSA.

This version of the SFM Plan has benefited from the first cycle of performance monitoring, management review and continual improvement actions that led to numerous practical improvements from the first two versions of the plan. Future versions will continue to improve as new information becomes available.

SFM Plans: Continually Improving

- Version 1: developed a sustainable forest management framework complete with objectives and indicators to measure performance.
- Version 2: set targets and spelled out ways to achieve sustainable forest management based on current practices and assumptions and set the stage for certification for partner companies.
- Version 3: built on Version 2, explored alternative management strategies and arrived at a decision scenario from the scenario planning process, incorporating improvements from the review process.

SFM and the Mountain Pine Beetle

The major challenge during the term of SFM Version 3 is to manage for multiple values in the face of the rapidly escalating mountain pine beetle epidemic. The most recent information and knowledge related to the current status of the beetle have been incorporated into analysis work and management strategies. The hope is that this plan enhancement will better prepare managers in all sectors to respond to the epidemic in a manner consistent with SFM values and indicator targets.



Photo courtesy of Ministry of Forests

