



March 2009  
Summary No. 67

## Morice & Lakes Innovative Forest Practices Agreement

### PROJECT SUMMARY

Ecosystem  
Management

Forest Productivity

Public Involvement

Adaptive  
Management

*Morice & Lakes IFPA projects are exploring ways to enhance forest productivity through a better understanding of factors affecting productivity, through intensive silviculture treatments, by increasing the area of productive forest land, and by improving site productivity estimates.*

### Non Satisfactorily Restocked and Impeded Stands Review in the Morice TSA

#### Introduction

The Forests for Tomorrow (FFT) program was set up to respond to the catastrophic wildfires and the mountain pine beetle epidemic. The program is aimed at improving the future timber supply and addressing risks to other forest values through the re-establishment of young forests on land that would otherwise remain under-productive. The program focuses on land that is primarily within the timber harvesting land base yet outside of forest industry obligations.

The Morice Timber Supply Area (TSA) is heavily impacted by the mountain pine beetle (MPB) epidemic and has approximately 33,678 hectares in 422 silviculture openings without industry silviculture obligations. These openings don't represent the total of non obligation openings, but are openings (or portions of openings) that do not have a current forest cover label such as NSR (non-satisfactorily restocked), SR (satisfactorily restocked) or FG (free growing).

It is important to have a label because:

- Without a current label the opening may not be contributing to the timber supply.
- Without a label the full impact of the MPB infestation cannot be known.
- Provincial budgeting for additional silviculture funding for activities such as fertilization, site prep, planting, thinning for the opening is not likely without a current forest cover label.



#### Objectives

The objective of this project is to review non-obligation silviculture openings in the Morice TSA, including harvested blocks and openings created by wildfire. A key outcome of the project is a free growing (FG) declaration in RESULTS for openings confirmed free growing in overview flights. Openings not found to be free growing in overview flights will be confirmed non-FG in RESULTS and scheduled for ground surveys as funding becomes available. (The RESULTS silviculture application tracks silviculture information in the province by managing the submission of openings, disturbances, silviculture activities and obligation declarations as required by the Forest and Range Practices legislation.) Source: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/his/results/>



Fraser Lake Sawmills



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Specific objectives of the program for the 2008/2009 fiscal year were to:

- Complete documentation of the file review for the eligible silviculture openings in the Morice TSA.
- Complete a silvicultural success risk assessment of openings in geographic areas targeted for overview flights this fiscal year and rank them as high, moderate or low risk.
- Schedule low and moderate risk openings for aerial visitations with occasional ground calls to confirm which openings can be declared as FG in RESULTS, and which openings should be ground surveyed.
- Prepare an inspection report and update the RESULTS database for viewed openings. The inspection report and database entries will recommend subsequent silviculture activities and schedule the next activity, if any, for viewed openings.
- Conduct ground based silviculture surveys on 29 openings.
- Prepare a survey report and update the RESULTS database for ground surveyed openings. The survey report and database entries will recommend subsequent silviculture activities and schedule the next activity, if any, for viewed openings.
- Prepare a project activity report summarizing work completed and results of the silviculture opening assessments.

## Methods

The overall approach is a three-step process: 1) review files to stratify risk of each opening related to its free growing status, 2) conduct overview flights to confirm that the opening status is consistent with file information and, if not, to confirm subsequent actions, and 3) update the opening file status information in the ministry silviculture RESULTS database.

Overview flights targeted low and moderate risk openings where the probability of confirming free growing status is high. This eliminates these openings from the more expensive ground survey program. In addition, some previously assessed openings were ground surveyed during the 2008 field season.

- When conducting the file review several factors were considered, including: existing survey information, treatments that have been scheduled or carried out, opening size, location, ecology, age and species mix, pest information, and local knowledge.
- The overview flight specifically reviewed survey information such as stratification, species composition, densities, and pest information (levels of MPB). If the opening was found to have conditions that are impeding FG status, a recommendation for a ground survey was made. If the opening was found to be consistent with the file information and current stand conditions support FG status, the opening was recommended to be declared FG.
- Openings confirmed as FG through the overview flight were updated as FG in results and had a future survey scheduled. If the FG stand was pine leading and at risk of future MPB infestation, a forest health helicopter survey was scheduled to be

flown in 3 years. If the FG stand was not pine leading a reconnaissance survey was scheduled to be conducted in 10 years. For openings that were part of the overview flight, and the FG status could not be confirmed, a ground survey was scheduled in RESULTS.

## Results

Given the magnitude of this project it will take several years to complete. In 2008 117 openings were reviewed through overview flights and a further 21 openings were ground surveyed.

Of the 117 openings that were reviewed in the overview flight, 85 were declared FG. The remaining 32 openings from the overview flight were recommended for ground survey in 2009. Of the 21 openings ground surveyed in 2008 all have been declared FG.

## Recommendations

- The NSR and impeded stands review should continue in the Morice Timber Supply Area in 2009.
- In 2009, 85 openings are scheduled for overview flights and 114 openings are scheduled for ground surveys.

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