

M&L IFPA update ...

News from the Morice & Lakes Innovative Forest Practices Agreement

In November 1999 BC's Minister of Forests signed an Innovative Forest Practices Agreement (IFPA) for the Morice and Lakes Timber Supply Areas in Northwestern BC. The Morice & Lakes IFPA is developing Sustainable Forest Management Plans using innovative approaches in public involvement, forest productivity and ecosystem-based management.

M&L IFPA Forestry Plan Completed

Uplift in Allowable Annual Cut Requested

A Forestry Plan has been completed by the Morice & Lakes IFPA and is currently available for review and comment by the public. The plan calls for an increase in the Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) in the Morice Timber Supply Area. This uplift request is based on a projected increase in timber yields through innovative forest management techniques, and on a harvesting strategy to salvage timber affected by the mountain pine beetle (MPB) epidemic.

"The IFPA has worked on numerous innovative projects to get the most out of available timber supply within a sustainable framework," said M&L IFPA manager Jim Burbee. "But to a significant extent the mountain pine beetle will drive forest management decisions in the area for several years."

The beetle harvesting strategy is best described as a "best of the worst first" tactic. That is, stands with the largest projected beetle-related volume losses are high priority for harvesting, and, within these stands, the more productive forests are a higher priority still. The intention is to salvage as much of the beetle killed wood as possible before the assumed five-year shelf life of the affected timber has expired, and to get the best growing sites back into production first.

A detailed timber supply analysis was completed which compared three harvest scenarios: 1) a status quo harvest level using the provincial government timber supply review information, 2) a harvest level that incorporates recommendations from the Morice Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) and updated beetle-related timber mortality predictions, and 3) a composite mitigation harvest level that incorporates LRMP and beetle data but also includes updated assumptions based on innovative practices to mitigate timber supply impacts. (See page 2 for the harvest flow graph and innovative practices table.)

"We feel the mitigation scenario strikes a balance of minimizing timber losses to MPB and maintaining environmental values," said Canfor planning superintendent Jim McCormack. According to McCormack, the recommendation to use the composite scenario is based on comprehensive analyses of timber and other resource values in the TSA, involvement of the IFPA's community-based public advisory group in testing the sustainability of this harvest level, and discussions with management staff of the Nadina Forest District (which comprises both the Morice and Lakes TSAs) and BC Timber Sales, Babine Business Unit.



To review and provide feedback on the Morice & Lakes IFPA Forestry Plan, go to

www.moricelakes-ifpa.com

The M&L IFPA is currently welcoming public comments on the Forestry Plan through a variety of opportunities (see page 4). Two open houses were held recently in both Houston and Granisle to gather input from the public. "We welcome input into this plan," said Burbee. "Public feedback provides additional information on which to base the final version of the plan, which will be re-submitted to the Ministry of Forests and Range after the public review process is completed."

See page 2 for details on the M&L IFPA Forestry Plan harvest flow scenarios and innovative practices to improve timber supply.



Innovative Practices to Improve Timber Supply in the Morice Timber Supply Area

INNOVATION	DESCRIPTION	TIMBER SUPPLY GAIN
Reduced Operational Adjustment (OAF) Factor	Increases the accuracy of predicted sustainable harvest levels.	5,200 to 7,600 cubic metres increase in annual timber supply in the short, mid and long terms.
More accurate Predictive Ecosystem Mapping and Site Index / Biogeoclimatic Ecosystem Classification data	Results in an increase of growing stock within the forest and consequently additional sustainable harvest volume.	77,162 cubic metres increase in annual timber supply in the mid term and a 148,458 cubic metres increase in the annual timber supply in the long-term harvest.
Increased utilization	Harvesting to a 15cm stump height.	Results in a 2% increase in available timber supply (32, 000 cubic metres per year and 8.37 million cubic metres across all planning periods).
Increase the percentage of spruce planted in future plantations	Changing future plantation species mix from 60:40 pine/spruce mix to 60:40 spruce/pine mix.	Increases the long-term timber supply by 5.25% or 88,418 cubic metres per year.
Use of genetically improved stock	Uses the genetic worth and availability forecasting in the Forest Genetics Council 2004-2005 business plan.	Increases the long-term timber supply by 9.5% (100,000 cubic metres per year in the mid term and 160,000 cubic metres per year in the long term).
Implementing the Harvest Rules as outlined in the Mitigation Composite Scenario	Stands with the largest projected beetle-related volume losses are high priority.	Reduces non-recoverable losses as a result of the MPB epidemic. Increased harvest in the short-term is 1,098,883 cubic metres per year.

Note:

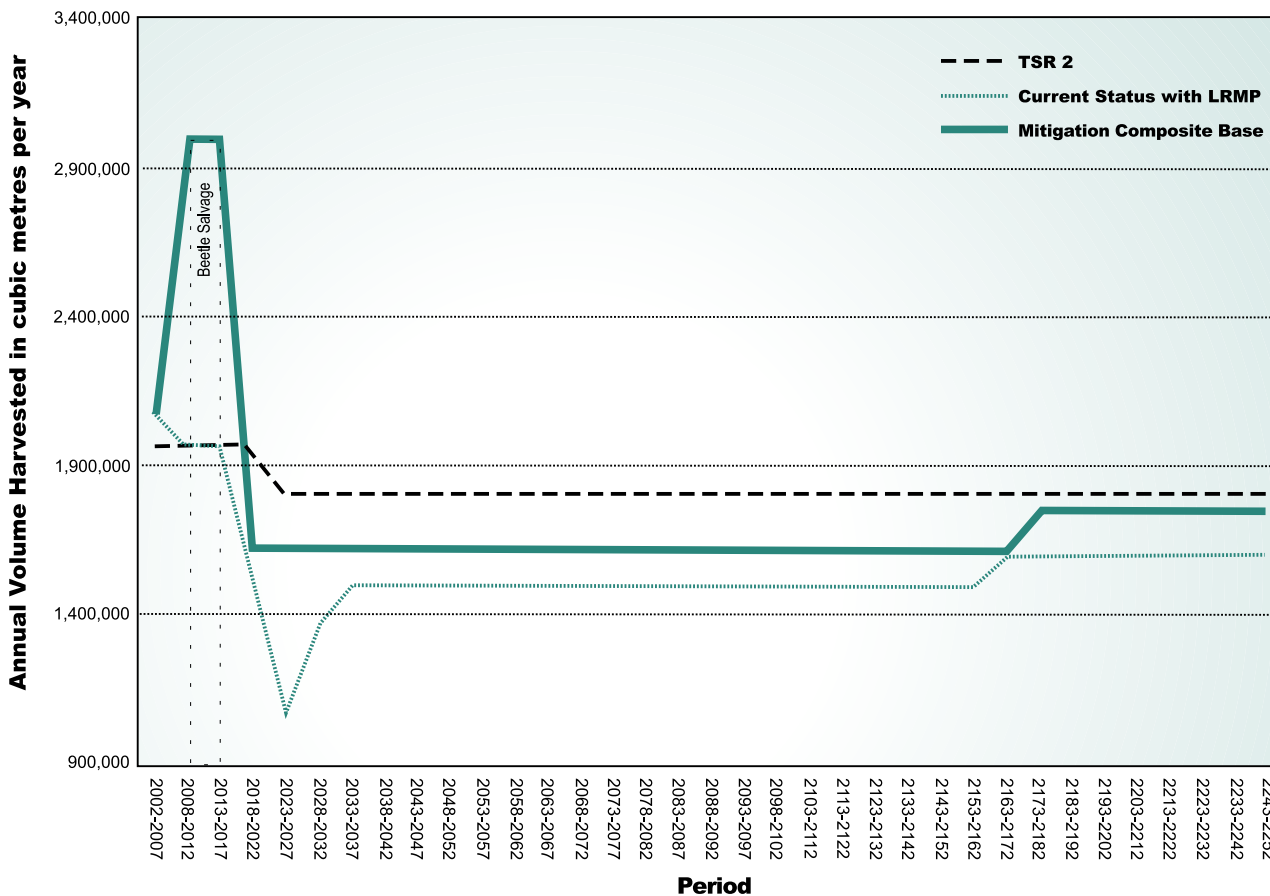
For more information on these innovations, refer to the M&L IFPA website www.moricelakes-ifpa.com. The October 2006 Forestry Plan, as well as relevant project activity summaries are posted on the site.

Short- term harvest = 2007 to 2017

Mid -term harvest = 2018 to 2102

Long-term harvest = 2103 to 2252

Harvest Flow Scenarios in the Morice Timber Supply Area



Studies Track Northern Goshawks in Local Forests

Hunting below the level of the treetops, the Northern Goshawk is seldom seen by the casual observer in the forests of the Morice and Lakes, but two long-term goshawk studies—partially funded by the Morice & Lakes IFPA—are keeping tabs on the northern forest dweller.

Information from the studies will help forest managers in the Morice & Lakes IFPA to tailor their harvesting efforts so that the bird can continue to thrive in local forests. “These studies help us identify nesting areas so that we can manage for them as well as provide a localized base of knowledge regarding their habitat use and requirements in the IFPA area,” said Jaret van der Giessen, planning forester for Houston Forest Products.

The studies are attempting to answer some critical questions concerning potential impacts of timber harvesting on wildlife habitat. “Essentially we are using goshawks as a mature forest indicator and asking the fundamental question: How much mature forest can be removed before the birds are negatively affected?” said Todd Mahon, a Telkwa-based wildlife biologist leading the long-term studies.

The extremely agile bird maneuvers through dense forests (often crashing willingly through branches and shrubs) taking prey such as squirrels, grouse, and snowshoe hare. They are also well-known for their defense of nest sites, often attacking animals and people that get too close.

Goshawks are considered to be an indicator of mature forest composition and fragmentation because of their apparent need for mature forest cover: too much habitat loss or fragmentation and the bird may not be able to breed or, ultimately, be displaced from some portions of the landscape. Other wildlife species also have a need for mature forest, so if management plans can be developed that maintain nesting and foraging habitat for the goshawk, other species may also benefit. In this way, the goshawk is an “indicator species” in developing sustainable forest manage-

ment plans in the Morice and Lakes Timber Supply Areas.

To obtain data for the indicator study, Mahon and his crew monitored radio-tagged birds in 14 separate territories within different categories of forest cover. Over the course of three winters, the birds were located twice a week and these locations mapped to determine the home range size of individuals and patterns of habitat selection. Observations to this point indicate that goshawks prefer mature forest, even though there may be more prey in other habitats. “The key habitats are not necessarily where prey is most abundant, but where there is the best balance between prey abundance and vulnerability to the goshawk’s hunting abilities,” said Mahon.

In a concurrent study, Mahon is looking specifically at clearcutting near nest sites and its effect on the reproductive success of the goshawk. “This is the most comprehensive study of this type and results to date indicate that goshawks can tolerate more forest development at the nest stand scale than previous guidelines recommended. These results emphasize the importance of studies at larger scales, which is the focus of our current work,” said Mahon.

After several years of intensive fieldwork the focus of the project is shifting to detailed data analysis and developing ways to incorporate the results into ongoing management initiatives, such as M&L IFPA sustainable forest management plans. The goshawk projects will continue to collect baseline data over the next few years and fine tune existing knowledge of the relationship between mature forest and the goshawk’s habitat and success in breeding.



Quick facts on the Northern Goshawk:

- The Northern Goshawk can be very persistent in pursuing prey. One goshawk was seen pursuing a snowshoe hare for 45 to 60 minutes along a hedgerow until finally the hare ran into a clearing and was seized. A goshawk may also chase poultry into buildings.
- Attila the Hun wore an image of a Northern Goshawk on his helmet.
- The Northern Goshawk is found across northern America and Eurasia. Most of the Eurasian races have much more dark barring on the chest than the American form, but about half of all Siberian goshawks are nearly white.
- The name “goshawk” comes from the Old English words *gos*, meaning goose, and *hafoc* meaning hawk. It is pronounced as if the words are still separate, without any “sh” sound.

Source: www.birds.cornell.edu/allaboutbirds

M&L IFPA Publishing 2006

Visit the M&L IFPA website to view recent project work as well as sustainable forest management planning reports. The table below lists recently published summaries of project work and are available for viewing/printing in PDF format in the "publications" section of the website.



No. IN SERIES	TITLE	No. OF PAGES	AUTHOR
49	Stream Crossing Quality Index	8	Pierre G. Beaudry, P. Beaudry and Associates Ltd.
50	Accuracy Assessment of Predictive Eco-system Mapping in the Morice & Lakes TSAs	8	Larry McCulloch, LM Forest Resource Solutions Ltd. Todd Mahon, Wildfor Consultants Ltd.
51	Using Northern Goshawks as Effectiveness Indicators to Evaluate SFM Strategies and Targets	8	Todd Mahon, Wildfor Consultants Ltd.
52	Effects of Forest Development Near Nest Sites on the Reproductive Success of Northern Goshawks : an Adaptive Management Approach	8	Todd Mahon, Wildfor Consultants Ltd.

To Comment on the M&L IFPA Forestry Plan:

The M&L IFPA Forestry Plan public review period runs until December 2nd, 2006. If you wish to provide comments on the plan, it can be viewed online at www.moricelakes-ifpa.com. A comments page is also available on the site to provide feedback.



In addition, hardcopies of the Forestry Plan are available for viewing at the following locations:



West Fraser Timber Ltd
Houston Forest Products
1300 Morice River Road
Houston, BC



Canfor Ltd
Houston Operations
1397 Morice River Road
Houston, BC

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Frank McDonald	Non-motorized Recreation
Andy Meints	Contract Logging
John Mould	Trapping
Jim McCormack	Canadian Forest Products
Caroll Hoffmeister	Tourism and Recreation
Rob Payne	Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers of Canada
Christopher Hunter	BC Timber Sales
Rob Saunders	Wildlife
Sharon Smith	District of Houston
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Ben Wilson	Small Business/First Nations
Dwight Scott Wolfe	Tesera Systems Inc.

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