



PROJECT SUMMARY

Ecosystem
Management

Forest Productivity

Public Involvement

Adaptive
Management

Developing and implementing a Sustainable Forest Management Plan for both the Lakes and Morice Timber Supply Areas is the central objective of the Morice and Lakes Innovative Forest Practices Agreement. The adaptive management cycle and public involvement are both important components of this planning process.

Communications and Extension M&L IFPA Audiences, Media & Methods

Introduction

The Morice & Lakes Innovative Forest Practices Agreement was established in November 1999 to develop and implement a sustainable forest management (SFM) plan using innovative approaches to forest management. The agreement encompasses the Morice & Lakes Timber Supply Areas, which includes five communities, First Nations groups, and 2.4 million hectares. It also comprises a partnership between six forest licensees - Canfor, Houston Forest Products, L&M Lumber, Decker Lake Forest Products, Fraser Lake Sawmills and Babine Forest Products - and the Ministry of Forests' Timber Sale Program.

SFM planning is at the heart of the M&L IFPA, which uses the SFM approach developed by the McGregor Model Forest for sustainable forest management. The Morice and Lakes IFPA program includes three key elements of sustainability: social acceptability, environmental soundness and economic viability.

The M&L IFPA is a significant undertaking. In addition to developing the SFM plan using innovations in public involvement (scenario planning), numerous projects have been completed in the additional core program areas of forest productivity and ecosystem-based management. A critical component of the IFPA is to extend information from the program to resource managers and others who can use it, and to keep the public informed and aware of milestone accomplishments and ongoing project work. Effective communications and

extension are central to the credibility and success of the IFPA initiative.

This summary outlines communications and extension work completed to June 2003 for the Morice & Lakes IFPA by Tetrad Communications, the company hired in August 2001 to provide communications support.

Goals and Objectives

In general, the goals of the M&L IFPA communications program are to:

- Help people understand the purpose of the agreement.
- Communicate what the agreement is producing and how it will improve forest resource management in the Morice & Lakes Timber Supply Areas.
- Increase awareness and support for this IFPA in local communities and throughout British Columbia.

A formal communications strategy was developed to provide a framework for the program.

The strategy involves two general approaches:

- *Communications*—to convey general information on the M&L IFPA, including such aspects as its purpose and how it will benefit forest resource management and local communities.



Fraser Lake Sawmills



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- *Extension*—to disseminate technical results and other information from the activities carried out under the IFPA.

The five specific communications and extension goals for the Morice and Lakes IFPA have been condensed from the provincial-level IFPA communications and extension strategy and are summarized in Table 1.

The strategy also identified two broad audiences to which the M&L IFPA would communicate:

Public:The *public* audience includes community members at the local and regional level, along with elected officials, First Nations representatives, forest industry employees and customers, the media and the public at large. Satisfying the broader public’s need for information on innovative forestry practices means providing a variety of attractive and interesting information sources using a minimum of technical language and terminology.

Technical:The *technical* audience includes practitioners, professionals, technicians, other resource management staff, and academic faculty and students. Sharing technical results with individuals most able to use this new knowledge helps to ensure that the findings are available for application beyond the IFPA land base.

Methods and Results

Following the workplan set out in the communications strategy, Tetrad Communications produced a variety of materials for the IFPA’s target audiences. Each component is summarized below.

Newsletters

The agreement’s newsletter program provides timely information to local residents and resource managers in the Lakes and Morice area. A total of six newsletters have been published to date. Two newsletters are planned for the current fiscal year, bringing the total to eight. In order to optimize readership, the newsletters are distributed to local communities (some 5000 of each edition are printed and distributed to Houston, Burns Lake and surrounding



communities) and posted to the M&L IFPA’s Web site. It is important to note that the newsletters are one of the most frequently requested items from the site. Each issue features a variety of topics that support the agreement’s communications strategy, including:

- sustainable forest management plan updates;
- profiles of people involved in the process;
- scenario planning team and public advisory group information;
- feature stories on forest productivity/ecosystem technical projects; and,
- news on past and future open house events.

	Topic	Goal	Objective
1.	IFPA Vision	Clearly define the purpose, role and vision of the M&L IFPA and the provincial IFPA initiative.	Increase recognition of the M&L IFPA and its contribution to provincial IFPA goals.
2.	Public Recognition	Increase community recognition of M&L IFPA achievements.	Provide a localized focus for the M&L IFPA.
3.	Local Outreach	Effectively involve local communities and First Nations.	Increase local/regional awareness, understanding, support for, and participation in the M&L IFPA. Support dissemination of information by the Public Advisory Groups to the community members they represent.
4.	Technical Outreach	Share results with other IFPAs and resource practitioners throughout BC to expand the M&L IFPA investment benefits.	Provide technical outreach to selected audiences for improving resource management in Morice and Lakes TSAs and beyond.
5.	Build External Support	Build external support for the IFPA initiative, both locally and provincially.	Increase support for the M&L IFPA at the local and provincial levels, involving the tandem effect of grass roots local support and advocacy work outside the region.

Non-Technical Open House Events and Special Events

The Morice public advisory group has led several open houses to date to share information about the M&L IFPA with its constituent groups and other members of the public.

Another important form of public involvement is through participation in special community and/or natural resource management events. In the past two years, the M&L IFPA has participated in several local community events and trade shows and at provincial symposia on natural resource management. A professionally designed collapsible display system was produced to ensure that the M&L IFPA has a strong visual presence at such events. The M&L IFPA continues to assess event opportunities.

Logo

The existing logo for the program was redesigned in order to be effective and flexible for print- and Web-based materials as well as appropriate for both technical and public audiences.

Brochure

An overview brochure was produced that summarizes all of the key M&L IFPA program areas using minimal jargon. The publication is a valuable communications tool for use in mailouts, open houses and special events. The brochure and display are used in tandem at special events to describe the M&L IFPA to a broad audience.

Web site

The Morice & Lakes IFPA currently maintains a professionally designed Web site at www.moricelakes-fpa.com. The site—designed to be both user-friendly for the general public and highly informative for natural resource managers—is a crucial part of the communications program and includes news items, technical publications, newsletters, links, and a variety of pages providing background information on the IFPA. All technical documents generated by the M&L IFPA are converted to PDF and posted to the site. To expand awareness of the site, printed materials adver-



tise the site address. To maintain site usefulness and credibility it is regularly updated with news and publications. The site was recently revised to enable quicker access to project publications. During fiscal 2002/2003 the site received some 47,000 hits and site visitation steadily increased from 2311 hits in April 2002 to 7910 hits in March 2003.

News Media

Local newspapers and other regional media are an excellent method of informing the general public about the Morice and Lakes IFPA and its activities. Through participation in Forestry Week inserts, and by providing interesting forest management articles to community newspapers, the public has had the opportunity to learn more about the M&L IFPA and sustainable forest management planning.

Technical Publications and Extension

Extension activities address the fourth communications goal: technical outreach. As of June 2003, some 32 project summaries and numerous reports and presentations were published and added to the Web site in PDF format. These publications are published using consistent templates, incorporating the agreement's new logo, for both summaries and reports to ensure a consistent and identifiable presentation. Printed copies of project summaries are made available at public events and distributed throughout the region. The summaries are distributed through mailouts, community events, open houses and technical transfer sessions. Summaries highlight the key project points to give readers a quick overview of the activity's objectives, methods, results and recommendations. Contact information is also provided for the reader.



Comprehensive Distribution and Web Extension

As materials are published and printed it is important to ensure that they are directed to audiences identified by this strategy. The IFPA will continue to distribute printed materials at public events and through mailouts.

In addition to posting materials to the M&L IFPA's own Web site, project meta data is posted to the Natural Resources Information Network (NRIN). The NRIN is a collaborative initiative of the Forest Research Extension Partnership (FORREX) and other natu-

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ral resource agencies in British Columbia. NRIN allows resource managers to improve their access to natural resources information. All project summaries completed by the M&L IFPA are posted to the NRIN site.

Technical Transfer Sessions

In each of the past two years, knowledge transfer sessions for the M&L IFPA were held in the Village of Granisle in which project leaders and managers presented results from their project work. These sessions have been well-attended by a variety of natural resource managers from throughout the region. Another knowledge transfer session will be held in 2003/2004 to present project information to regional resource managers. It is also anticipated that project leaders will continue to present updates and findings at suitable IFPA workshops locally and provincially. Workshops and the knowledge transfer session are timed so that project publications are available for distribution to participants.

Ongoing Communications Support

In addition to the materials identified in the communications strategy, ongoing support is provided to the agreement through:

- Identifying communications opportunities
- Writing editorial and advertising copy for various media
- Editing reports
- Providing input on annual communications strategy

Summary

The Morice & Lakes IFPA communications program was designed to help the initiative and its results become better known in BC to the many people it is intended to benefit. Using a variety of approaches at the local and provincial level, the program has succeeded in communicating key messages and results to diverse audiences.

Visitation to the program's Web site has increased each month since it was established in early 2002. The initiative has printed thousands of extension notes, newsletters and brochures and distributed them to local communities and around the province. The program's knowledge transfer session, held annually for the past two years, has been well-attended by representatives from industry, government agencies and the consulting community. Through participation in local events and provincial symposia, the M&L IFPA has gained more recognition.

By developing a communications strategy at the outset, reasonable goals were set for M&L IFPA communications. These goals have been reasonably met. As the SFM planning process moves forward, it is expected that communications needs will change over time. Communications planning will continue to be the key to responding to new situations.

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Morice & Lakes
IFPA

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