

# Morice & Lakes



# IFPA



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## Morice & Lakes Innovative Forest Practices Agreement

### PROJECT SUMMARY

*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.*

## The Sustainable Forest Management Plan: Public Involvement and Adaptive Management

Ecosystem  
Management

Forest Productivity

Public Involvement

Adaptive  
Management

### Introduction

The Morice & Lakes Innovative Forest Practices Agreement (ML-IFPA) encompasses two Timber Supply Areas (TSAs), 2.6-million hectares and a population of over 12,000 people. Six forest licensees operating in the Morice and Lakes TSAs joined to form this IFPA in late 1999 with the Ministry of Forests' small business programs in both the Morice and Lakes forest districts. Like other pilot IFPA projects in the province, the ML-IFPA is assisting industry and government in finding answers to difficult challenges facing British Columbia's forest industry.

### Objective

Developing and implementing a Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) plan for each TSA is the central objective of the ML-IFPA. This document will detail explicit management objectives, innovative management practices and key performance indicators for resource management. It will provide long-term stability for communities in the region while enhancing both timber supply and environmental values.

The SFM plan will be based on three key elements of sustainability: social acceptability, environmental

soundness and economic viability. Involving local community stakeholders in the plan's development is a key component—and innovation—of this IFPA.

### Methods

The planning process is based on the McGregor Model Forest's approach to sustainable forest management. Developed by the McGregor Model Forest Association, and implemented by the McGregor Group, this process is based on a generic adaptive management cycle (*Figure 1*). Additional features have been added to this process to facilitate the development and implementation of SFM plans and systems.

A multi-disciplinary planning team is a vital part of the process: it uses scenario planning to develop a series of future forest scenarios that attempt to achieve a variety of resource management objectives. Aiding team members in their activities are technical experts in strategic and operational planning, spatially explicit forest estate modelling, indicators, and adaptive management.

By going through a series of scenario iterations, the team develops a decision scenario that includes a comprehensive list of management strategies forming the basis of a SFM plan. The licensee or



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Figure 1. The McGregor Approach to Sustainable Forest Management.

government agency implements these strategies. Once the SFM plan is implemented, the adaptive management system ensures continued monitoring and evaluation of the selected suite of key performance indicators. Periodic adjustment of management strategies may be required based on indicator performance.

**Public Involvement**

In order to establish an effective public involvement process, the organizers developed a hierarchy of committees and fully integrated these entities into the design and implementation structure of the IFPA. Two key committees are the TSA-level Public Advisory Groups (PAG) and Scenario Planning Teams (SPT).

The PAG—comprised of members who represent sectors of the community with specific interests—provides a local forum for input and feedback into the development of the SFM plan.

The SPT is a smaller working group that develops the resource management objectives, strategies, indicators and future forest scenarios necessary for the delivery of the SFM plan. Each SPT is comprised of individuals who represent the Public Advisory Group, the IFPA proponents, and resource agencies. Functionally, the bulk of the “hands on” public involvement in the development of the plan rests with the SPT members. The public members of the SPT report out to the PAG on a regular basis, and through the PAG members, the community at large.

Since the start of this project in early 2000, well over 200 people have contributed local knowledge and expertise to the identification of resource values, management strategies and indicators (Figure 3). Over 100 meetings have been held within the planning area to solicit community involvement and develop the plan. Many more meetings are planned over the next three years. The idea will be to develop a series of learning scenarios and a final decision scenario for each TSA. The final decision scenarios will form the basis of the SFM plan.

**Public Involvement Timeline**



Figure 3. The IFPA SFM plan public involvement timeline to date.

## Data Acquisition and Preparation.

Since August of 1999, the IFPA has been compiling and preparing data for use in the learning scenario analysis. To date, dozens of digital maps have been prepared in each TSA. Data files associated with timber growth and yield, ecosystems, habitat and activities have also been collected. All this information will be used to forecast the effects of various management strategies on a wide range of resource values. The map-based data has been divided into two categories: Static and Derived. Static data relates to the existing inventories for different resource values (forest cover, roads, streams, lakes, wetlands, ecosystems, etc.). Derived data layers are the value-added data layers generated from these existing layers (buffers, habitat, rare ecosystems, etc.). The two SPTs and the Technical Committee have been involved in the review and approval of each data layer. Reviewing the data with the SPTs provided the members with opportunities to understand the complexity and completeness of the project's information base.

A number of data layers have been prepared for various resource values based on input from the general public. This input includes local knowledge on recreation, wildlife habitat, commercial lodges, and areas of cultural significance, to name a few.

The McGregor Group has been preparing these data layers for use in the learning scenario analysis. The first use of this information will be in the preparation of the *Base Case Information Package* for each TSA. This package will detail the extent of the timber harvesting landbase, describe the management strategies that will be forecast and provide the current status of each indicator. It will be reviewed and approved by the Technical Committee prior to being employed to forecast the base case.

## Results to date

Scenario Planning Teams in each TSA have developed a number of learning scenarios that they would like to see modelled on each TSA. Brief outlines for each learning scenario are listed below.

- Base Case: Follows the Ministry of Forest's Timber Supply Review harvest flow policies and management assumptions.
- Forest Productivity: Emphasizes timber values over other resource values. Intensive silviculture treatments and more accurate site productivity estimates will be modeled.
- Ecosystem-Based Management: Timber harvesting practices are guided by localized ecosystem-based targets for patch size and seral stage.
- Biodiversity: Emphasis on landscape and stand level biodiversity values.
- Watershed: Emphasis on watershed and riparian values.
- Wildlife: Emphasis on species-specific management objectives rather than landscape-level objectives.
- Recreation: Emphasis on recreation, tourism and scenic values.
- Agriculture and Range: Emphasis on agriculture and range values (Morice TSA only).

The Lakes SPT is currently working with a list of about 67 different resource values with associated objectives and management strategies. Approximately 60 unique indicators have been identified as necessary to properly model these resource values.

The Morice SPT is currently working with a list of about 94 different resource values with associated objectives and management strategies. Approximately 70 unique indicators have been identified as necessary to properly model these resource values.



Figure 2. Morice TSA Scenario Planning Team meeting.

## Looking Ahead

For the general public, long-term forest planning has seemed beyond the reach in terms of their ability to participate in a meaningful way. This is not the case in the Morice & Lakes IFPA, which has demonstrated that capacity building can occur quickly and assure meaningful local participation. A key lesson is to start small and build a knowledge base over time. Long-term commitment and support of local communities can also be achieved through ongoing involvement in the adaptive management process.

The public involvement component also meets consultation requirements of the major certification programs. This approach follows the emerging trend of government becoming less involved in planning and is well suited to developing local-level partnerships for sustainable resource management. A commitment to report back to the local communities and regulatory agencies is another essential component of performance-based resource management.

The Morice & Lakes IFPA offers an effective model for communities to build capacity and participate meaningfully in the identification of local-level resource values, objectives, strategies and indicators related to sustainable forest management.

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**For More  
Information...**



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