

Forest Caucus Report

A Newsletter of the Canadian Environmental Network Forest Caucus

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CREDITS FOR CLEARCUTS: ABUSING THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

by Martin von Mirbach - Centre for
Forest and Environmental Studies

At the climate change negotiations in Kyoto, Japan, in December 1997, Canada made a commitment to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to 6% below 1990 levels by the years 2008-2012. As with any agreement, however, "the devil is in the details," and it's becoming evident that Canada is going to extraordinary lengths to protect the industrial status quo. This article will focus on just one area; namely how forestry interests in Canada are hoping to generate "carbon credits" by manipulating definitions under the Kyoto Protocol. (A whole other subject - not dealt with in this paper - has to do with concerns about the so-called "flexibility mechanisms" such as emissions trading and joint implementation that will enable industrialized countries to "buy" their way out of their Kyoto commitments without making the changes that are necessary over the long term.)

Forests as carbon sinks

Forests are important carbon "sinks," storing vast amounts of carbon in trees and forest soils. Under the 1992 Framework Convention on Climate Change all countries are required to report on large-scale changes (both positive and negative) in carbon stocks. However, when it comes to calculating credits or debits against legally binding commitments made in the Kyoto Protocol, the only activities included are those related to *deforestation*, *afforestation* and *reforestation*. The definitions of these terms have not yet been decided upon, but it's worth reviewing what the Canadian forest industry *thinks* they should be.

Deforestation. Activities resulting in deforestation are obviously considered a carbon "emission," or debit. Deforestation refers to the permanent removal of forest cover when the forest is converted to some other use. *It does not include the massive carbon emissions caused by logging.* What's worse,

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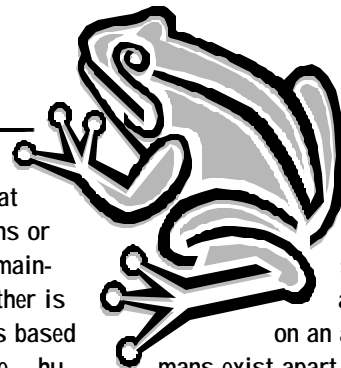
THE NEED FOR NETWORKING

The Canadian Environmental Network's Forest Caucus can boast a membership of Canada's most effective organizations currently working on forestry issues. As staff, as volunteers, and as members of board of directors, these organizations have at their disposal some of Canada's hardest-working and most experienced environmental activists. However, owing to the large distances and jurisdictional complexities between us, we have as yet done a relatively poor job of sharing information and expertise. The Forest Caucus Report is a response to that gap.

Judging from the number of articles received, I would venture to say that there is a niche for this type of publication. Our goal is to share information and ideas, as well as to provide the opportunity for lending support to like-minded campaigns. Folks in Manitoba can read about land-use planning in Ontario, and those in Ontario can compare what is going on in their backyards to B.C.'s process. Furthermore, reading about the campaigns of other member organizations can help foster creative ideas for pursuing one's own goals and objectives.

This is just the first issue, and hopefully, there will be many more to come, each more informative and interesting than the one before. Thanks go out to all the contributors and steering committee members for helping make this first issue a reality.

Rita Morbia



"In the current conflict over
tion and logging we can see that
nitely two different orientations or
issue. One is the dominant, main-
ist model of modernism, the other is
logical paradigm. The first is based
model of our relation to nature - hu-
of nature; it accepts a utilitarian value system. In the expansionist paradigm,
nature is regarded essentially as a storehouse of resources to be utilized for the
meeting of ever-increasing material needs by and ever-increasing human popula-
tion. Consequently, this position equates growth with the progress of develop-
ment which, in turn, is regarded as a prerequisite for human happiness and pros-
perity, claiming that any drop in this growth rate must inevitably result in stag-
nation, mass unemployment and distress. . . . On the other hand, the ecological
paradigm is based on humans as participants in nature; it accepts an ethic based
upon respect for diversity and ecocentric values."

forest preserva-
there are defi-
approaches at
stream, expansion-
an emerging eco-
on an anthropocentric
mans exist apart from and outside

A Ian D rengson and D uncan T aylor
F rom Ecoforestry: The A rt and Science of
Sustainable F orest U se

The deadline for submissions to the next issue is April 10, 1999. Please send articles, either directly to the editor or to the Caucus Coordinator. Email submissions are appreciated. Articles should relate to forestry issues and be under 500 words if possible. Please contact the editor for more lengthy

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some interests in Canada are determined to ensure that the construction of forest access roads not be considered deforestation, since forest roads are part of “the forest.” Keeping forest access roads out of the Kyoto Protocol would allow logging interests in Canada to move into vast areas of pristine forest in places such as Labrador and the northern Prairie provinces, without taking any penalty for the fact that as much as 10% of the land base will be converted to roads, landings and skid trails.

Afforestation. Afforestation refers to the establishment of forests on lands that have not been forested. The Canadian Pulp and Paper Association (CPPA) estimates that 8 million hectares of land in Canada could potentially be afforested for carbon credit, most of it marginal agricultural land on the Prairies. While many environmentalists might welcome the establishment of new forests, it’s worth noting a few points before popping the champagne corks. First of all, there has been no careful accounting of what is already on these lands, and the benefits they’re currently providing in the way of carbon storage and wildlife habitat. Secondly, for an intensive afforestation program to reap the maximum carbon credit it will require planting vast monocultures of fast-growing hybrid poplars; in other words, the worst form of intensive plantation management. Thirdly, the CPPA’s interest in afforestation is obviously due to their expectation that these plantations would be chopped down as soon as possible (with no carbon debit for logging!) to feed new mills. And finally, industry interests are fishing for some form of subsidies for any such programs; through domestic or international trading of carbon credits or direct subsidies from governments or carbon-consumptive industries.

Reforestation. The definition of reforestation that will be used in the Kyoto Protocol is still far from clear. A reasonable definition might be the reestablishment of forests on lands that were once forested, but have been converted to other uses. Canada, however, is proposing a much broader definition, which would include the restocking of forests on all lands that have been logged, whether by planting, seeding or natural regeneration.

Below are four reasons why it’s unreasonable to use this definition in the Kyoto Protocol.

1. It’s illogical.

It makes no sense to claim a credit for reforestation on lands that have never been deforested (remember that logging is definitely *not* included under deforestation).

2. It’s “double counting.”

The Canadian forest industry is seeking carbon credits on the energy side of the equation for using biomass (such as bark, slabs and wood waste) to replace fossil fuels. Biomass is considered “carbon neutral” under the Kyoto Protocol because it’s assumed to be a renewal resource, so that the carbon emitted during logging and burning is balanced by the carbon stored in the trees that grow back on the site. By claiming an *additional* credit for replanting and regeneration the forest industry is seeking to count the carbon in these trees twice.

3. It’s ineffective.

The purpose of the Kyoto Protocol is to reduce the amount of carbon and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. This proposed definition of reforestation does nothing whatsoever to help in this regard; it’s just a cynical “grab” of easy carbon credits without having to do anything different.

4. It’s perverse.

Even worse, it provides a perverse incentive that undermines both the Climate Change convention as well as any principles of good forest management. The industry hopes to get credit for the carbon stored on all lands after they’ve been logged. In other words, the greater the land area logged, the greater the carbon credit. Presto! It’s called “Credits for Clearcuts.” Never mind that the overall amount of carbon stored in the forest will be greatly reduced once an old forest has been converted to young plantations. What’s even worse is that these phoney carbon credits will likely be worth money under proposed domestic trading schemes, so that private woodlot owners will have yet another incentive to liquidate their holdings.

What you can do

The only way it would make sense to give credit for planting and natural regeneration is if there is a corresponding debit for logging, which Canada staunchly opposes. What this means is that the Canadian forest industry is proposing interpretations of the Kyoto Protocol that would have significant negative impacts on forest conservation, biodiversity protection and the long-term storage of carbon in Canada’s forests. For certain industry interests the Kyoto Protocol is not about responding to the challenge of climate change so much as it is a vast accounting exercise, inviting exploitation through dubious accounting practises. People need to speak up against this cynical approach that embodies the worst elements of self-interest, short term greed and head-in-the-sand avoidance.

Get the word out. Let everyone know what’s going on. The polling evidence shows that the Canadian public takes the issue of climate change seriously, so people will not be impressed by news of the kinds of manipulations being proposed by the forest industry.

Write to Christine Stewart, Minister of Environment, and Ralph Goodale, Minister on Natural Resources (House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6). Let them know that you expect Canada to take its Kyoto commitment seriously and not simply manipulate the Kyoto definitions to claim credit for forestry activities without actually making a real difference.

Stay informed. There are some good NGO websites on climate change, including ones maintained by the Sierra Club of Canada (www.sierraclub.ca/national), the Pembina Institute (www.piad.ab.ca) and the David Suzuki Foundation (www.davidsuzuki.org). You can also follow the process by which the Canadian government is developing options to be considered in its climate change strategy (www.nccp.ca/html/index.htm).

CERTIFICATION HEATS UP

by John McInnis

Consumer campaigns by international ENGOs such as Greenpeace and World Wildlife Fund have drawn unprecedented attention to the issue of deforestation and wildlife habitat loss. Many smaller groups are also involved in these campaigns through strategic alliances, such as Taiga Rescue Network, Rainforest Action Network, Native Forest Network and Forest Movement Europe.

The result of these campaigns is often that suppliers of wood products to the marketplace are looking for a secure supply of environmentally-friendly product. Many of the larger home renovation chains in Europe have signaled clearly that they would like to move to buying a certified product - the sooner the better. Moreover, there is evidence that the same is happening in the United States.

These developments have given a very high profile to the issue of forest certification. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international, non-profit, non-governmental organization founded in 1993 to support environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests. The FSC is very active in Canada and was discussed extensively at the recent CEN AGA in Quebec during the Forest Caucus sessions.

There are active FSC certification applications in several parts of Canada. In BC, Western Forest Products has applied for certification. They have hired SGS Qualifor out of Oxford, UK to conduct an audit. Several other major forest companies are investigating possibilities. In the Atlantic region, J. D. Irving, Ltd.'s Black Brook forest district in New Brunswick (188,678 ha) has recently been certified by the FSC. Sierra Club of Canada (a member of the CEN Forest Caucus) is appealing this certification by Scientific Certification Systems, based in California. There are two other forests currently certified: Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve located in Ontario and audited by Smartwood and Tembec Inc.-Huntsville Di-



vision also in Ontario and certified by Scientific Certification Systems..

Information on FSC International can be obtained from their website: <http://www.fscoax.org/> and that of FSC Canada at <http://www.web.net/fscca>.

The Canadian Standards Association operates another major certification scheme active in Canada. The CSA scheme is an offshoot of the ISO's quality management systems, best known as ISO 9000. The Quality standards have evolved over time to an environmental management system, known as the 14000 series.

The CSA standard was developed on the initiative of the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association and several other forest industry interests recruited for the purpose. The CSA is progressing slowly. Several firms are said to be pursuing CSA certification. There is only one current application for certification under the CSA scheme. Several other companies are at an early stage of preparing to make an application.

The CSA certifications operate in a very low-key environment. The process created by the CSA is more important in some ways than the actual performance of the forest operator. It is very difficult to determine precise performance standards under the CSA formula. Environmental groups have had limited influence in setting the certification procedures under CSA. They do have an opportunity to influence the application of these procedures in their local forest. The CEN Forest caucus has published a guide to the CSA process, available from the CEN office.

With a downturn in Asian markets and access to US markets currently limited by the Softwood Lumber Agreement, the Canadian forestry industry is desperate for new markets. A credible environmental certification program would not only help access new markets but allow industries to hang onto existing ones.

Many ENGOs are working actively with the FSC to improve forest management

and progress toward sustainability in forest management practices. There is certainly a need for strong efforts to develop standards, monitor certification activities and speak on behalf of forest conservation values.

Maritime Regional Steering Committee Update

by Jamie Simpson - Falls Brook Centre

The Maritime Region Steering Committee for the Forest Stewardship Council has reached a milestone in the development of regional forest stewardship standards by receiving endorsement of its standard from the FSC-Canada Board of Directors.

The regional forest stewardship standard for the Maritime Region was finalized on November 11, after two and a half years of work by the committee. Full consensus was reached on all issues by all representatives, although J. D. Irving Ltd., the industrial representative, withdrew support for the standard the following day.

Now that the standard has been endorsed by the FSC-Canada Board, the FSC Secretariat in Oaxaca, Mexico will review the standard and make a recommendation to the FSC Board. Provided all goes well, the standard will be presented to the FSC Board for the January, 1999 FSC Board meeting for the final endorsement decision.

Once endorsed by FSC, the Maritime region forest stewardship standard will become the minimum requirement for all those in the Maritimes who wish to obtain FSC-endorsed certification.

For more information, please contact the MRSC Secretariat, Falls Brook Centre, at fbcja@web.net. The standard document may be viewed at <http://www.canadian-forests.com/fsc.html>.

GLOBAL FOREST WATCH CANADA

by Gaile Whelan-Enns



Global Forest Watch (GFW) is an independent, decentralized, early-warning monitoring network to track the condition and development of the world's large, remaining tracts of natural forests. In its start-up phase, GFW is developing a monitoring network in Canada, Cameroon, Gabon and Indonesia. In 1999, activities will be expanded to Chile, Guyana, Russia, Suriname and Venezuela. While the World Resources Institute (WRI) is catalyzing the development of GFW, it will eventually be spun off as a separate, independent organization.

The objectives of GFW are to:

1. Empower civil society with the information they need to participate in decision-making regarding forest conservation and resource use;
2. Assist governments and private sector companies by monitoring forest-related activities;
3. Establish early warning systems;
4. Help promote forest stewardship by disseminating information on standards and laws regulating forest use; and
5. Identify and promote successful forest management practices.

Logging, mining, road and dam construction, and other large-scale devel-

opment projects pose an immediate threat to many large natural tracts of temperate and boreal forests across Canada. Government resource agencies often lack comprehensive data on this development and its impacts which impedes their ability to adequately manage public forests in the public interest. Canadian ENGOS, First Nations, and universities, who might play an oversight role - assuring that these areas are being managed in the public interest - are similarly hampered.

Government resource agencies often lack comprehensive data on . . . development and its impacts which impedes their ability to adequately manage public forests in the public interest.

In response to this situation, WRI is currently collaborating with organizations in BC, the Yukon, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec in building GFW Canada. This Canadian initiative is also independent, neutral, non-profit and non-partisan. GFW Canada will not undertake advo-

cacy activities.

GFW Canada aims to provide to public audiences information about our public forests in ways that will allow for improved decision-making, development practices, and conservation of Canada's forests. It is a partnership of independent forest monitoring nodes that support the aims of GFW Canada and are governed by its charter. Nodes will be comprised of environmental organizations, First Nations and Aboriginal organizations, scientists, communities affected by forest decision-making, and users of forest monitoring information. There will be a national steering committee made up of one representative from each monitoring node. Experts in forest ecology, legal matters, technical mapping and data work will also be enlisted. GFW Canada and its node organizations will establish technical review mechanisms to assess the quality of data being used, the validity of monitoring results, and accuracy of information products.

For more information, contact:

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PRIVATE FORESTS AND WILDLANDS

by Harvey Scott - Friends of the Athabasca

The Need to Share Private Conservancy Experiences - How about a 'Private Wildlands/Forests Discussion Corner'?

While there is an enormous amount of public lands Forest Caucus Work to be done, there are also significant ecological challenges and preservation or restoration opportunities with privately-owned forest and wildlands.

Each of us is probably involved in a variety of public lands issues. Many of

us are perhaps also active in conservation and stewardship with our own private lands or in community education and advocacy work encouraging other citizens to recognize and protect wildlife habitat, native flora and fauna on their lands.

At previous Forest Caucus meetings I have raised the question of Caucus member interest in private land woodland stewardship and conservancy and found considerable interest. I promised to initiate some networking around

this and am finally beginning that process here in what could develop into a regular 'PRIVATE WILDLANDS/FORESTS DISCUSSION CORNER' (or discussion list serve were this to be an email publication?).

I would propose that each of us in our various affiliates, provinces or territories share 'hotspots', issues, happenings, opportunities, initiatives, success stories. I'll kick the process off in this newsletter and hope that others will

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take a turn for subsequent editions.

Here in Alberta we are going through a provincial government farmland property assessment and taxation review which has significant implications for private wildlands conservancy. I shall outline some of these implications here. Property taxation has a huge impact on how most private land owners manage their wildlands. I believe we could learn a lot from each other's experience and in turn inform our efforts to influence private wildlands taxation policy in various jurisdictions. While I shall speak primarily about forested wildlands, I imagine some of the same points will apply to wild wetlands, prairie and other wild places on private land.

PRIVATE FOREST LANDS/ WOODLOTS & THE ALBERTA PROPERTY TAX SYSTEM

With widespread cutbacks in government budgets and the downloading of services and infrastructure costs to municipal governments, local governments are getting more aggressive in locating additional tax revenue. Until recently, 'recreational' bush land (forested land left to nature) was taxed minimally as it was seen to have little 'productive' value. With the development of new Kraft pulping technology the poplars, previously considered a 'weed species' are now valued as 'resources' and owners and tax assessors have seen an opportunity to make money. Thus in the Aspen Parkland of Alberta and elsewhere large tracts of rural land have been clear cut for a quick dollar. Some rural municipalities have implemented assessment and taxation policies which have forced this forest liquidation.

Now throughout Alberta, as elsewhere, our property taxes are to be based on 'market value based assessment'. At present, private forests and wildlands in high market value areas will be taxed high accordingly. In municipalities where this was implemented earlier, we already have seen large-scale clearcutting or sale of nature land to real estate speculative purposes. For landowners wishing to set aside nature, land tax bills have become prohibitive in many cases.

Traditionally, land used for agriculture was assessed and or taxed at a much lower rate based on its productive value (soil quality, etc.). This has been part of a traditional package of farm cost supports. Farm woodlots were usually taxed as agricultural use. With the agricultural property tax review there was pressure from revenue strapped municipalities to ensure that land speculators and urban folk not be allowed to use the rural land as a tax shelter. The Alberta Woodlot Association was successful in getting a proposal put forward that 'sustainably/ selectively-cut and managed woodlots' certified by a professional forester] would be taxed at agricultural rates. While the final decision is not in on this, it seems likely that this small step may be accepted by the powers that be. This means that wildlife and biodiversity associated with such managed woodlots will be taxed at the lower farm rate. This can mean significant savings. For example, in a county near Edmonton, a 160 acre quarter section of forest taxed as 'agriculture' would cost the landowner \$50. As non farm market value assessment it would be taxed \$2000. It will be very difficult for the land steward to keep the forest as forest in the latter tax regime.

NEEDED-A PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION SYSTEM

I have urged Alberta ENGOs and wildlands advocates to get out to these hearings to both support this halfway measure of farm woodlot assessment and to push for a fullblown 'conservation assessment and taxation policy'. As many of them have pointed out at these hearings, if we wish to recognize the great importance of private forests to our environmental health[as CO2 scrubbers, clean water storage etc] as environmental service providers, to biodiversity etc we need to be able to encourage and reward landowners for preserving and stewarding these wildlands. Assessing these natural forests as managed woodlots can only lead to greatly reduced biodiversity even with enlightened forestry planners.

We need to develop and implement property tax systems which reward the citizen landowner for leaving the wild

forest to be in its natural state or to gently help it restore itself to that aboriginal condition. We need a tax system which rewards landowners who will commit their wild forests to nature in perpetuity. The Conservation Easement or Restrictive Covenant are legal tools which can establish that contractually. These legal devices effectively take the wildland out of the market system and removes any possible gain from the owner. As such, surely it should be given a very minimal tax assessment and mill rate.

In Alberta, the conservancy/ stewardship community is beginning to gather ideas for such a 'private land conservation property assessment and taxation system'. We would welcome ideas, experiences or examples of such a nature property tax subsidy system from across the country or elsewhere. If you have any such suggestions please put them in an article for the next edition of this newsletter's 'PRIVATE WILDLANDS AND FORESTS DISCUSSION CORNER' ??

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Often as 'environmentalists' we have to be reactive and seemingly 'negative' in our activism in opposing developments etc. One of the nice things about private land conservancy and stewardship work is that it can be proactive and very 'positive'. It usually results in a 'win' for all concerned or at least a broadened horizon and positive stroke for a landowner who just needed a bit of encouragement to do the right thing - protect that endangered species habitat or other ecologically-important sites.

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SKILLS-BUILDING: HOW TO RUN A ROUND TABLE

by Juergen Hansen - Okanagan / Similkameen Parks Society

Round tables are a sort of town hall meeting in an updated and streamlined form, well-adapted to modern needs and conditions. The Canadian and provincial Round Tables have played a major part in developing the ground rules that define a modern round table. The new model is being used increasingly to facilitate environmental planning.

This article summarizes how committees and boards that normally work by majority-based (and therefore adversarial) rules of order can be transformed into co-operative, flexible and consensus-based round tables.

The two major requirements are that members should be volunteers and the meeting agenda should be structured to lead from major issues to minor ones,

- A neutral facilitator should lead the group through an analysis of the problem, a brainstorming for options followed by an evaluation of the options to a consensus decision,
- Whenever agreement is reached, the consensus decisions are written down, and the sum of these decisions forms the final package.
- This package takes the form of a recommendation to the convenor.

The round table system provides, above all, an opportunity for all com-

mittee members to co-operate, to look at all possible options simultaneously and to reach a decision by consensus. It differs from the usual adversarial voting system in four specific ways:



- 1) a neutral facilitator, and not a chairperson, sets the agenda in such a way that the group can deal with major issues before getting into details.
- 2) Each issue is discussed and resolved through a systematic analysis-options-decision sequence.
- 3) All possible options are defined during a swinging and open brainstorming session, and
- 4) Only those decisions are written down that serve the needs of all participants and are supported by all members. In other words, there is no

voting!

The secret of the success of round tables lies in providing unique opportunities for in-depth discussions and for a simultaneous evaluation of all options. The special format creates a new dynamic that allows all participants to become fully informed, to propose creative options, to evaluate the implications of each and to help shape the final decisions. Even the most adversarial participant soon learns that everybody's basic interests have to be taken into account before consensus can be reached.

This is commonly called "the road from preconceived position to common interest". It's a hard one especially for those people who are experienced and successful in the normal political process. But it lets everybody become involved in the decision-making. It also leads to a final consensus decision that is truly supported by all participants, is the best from a public point of view, yet guards everybody's own basic rights and needs.

What is good for the hive cannot be bad for the bee!

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THE CHRISTMAS MOUNTAINS - NEW BRUNSWICK'S LAST OLD-GROWTH HOPE

By Tara Swift, Colin Lundy and Mary Robinson - Friends of Christmas Mountains

In 1993 a group of concerned New Brunswickers joined together under the heading "Friends of the Christmas Mountains" (FCM) in the fight to save the province's last remaining old growth boreal forest. At 20,700 hectares, the Christmas Mountain region was an untouched ecosystem; the possibilities of permanent protection seemed optimistic.

At present, a 1000 hectare core is all

that remains of this natural habitat. Surrounded by roads and clearcuts, the future of the Christmas Mountains is seriously threatened.

The Christmas Mountains region is located on crown land in north-central New Brunswick, west of Miramichi. Leased to Repap Pulp and Paper, the forest represents a small percentage of the company's crown land holdings. Despite numerous public requests,

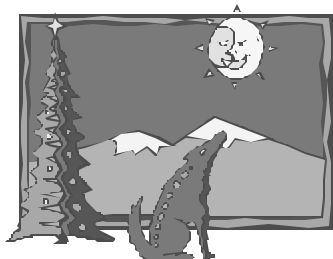
both the New Brunswick government and Repap have refused to stop harvesting. Repap is currently applying for registration under the Canadian Standards Association (CSA). FCM feel that the protection of such a small, yet significant area, would improve the company's commitment towards sustainable forest management; thus, contributing to their application for forest certification. All of this could combine

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to increase the

public image of Repap, while protecting a region so vital to the natural and cultural heritage of New Brunswick.

In September '98, members from FCM visited the area; to their amazement, a number of new cutblocks were discovered on Mount Dasher. Due to the age of the forest (overmature by industry stan-



dards), and laxity in forestry regulations (i.e., buffer zones, adjacency rules, maximum cut sizes), management plans are being disregarded. Areas that were not scheduled to be harvested for another 20 years have suffered sizeable cuts. This could be further evidence of the unsustainability of New Brunswick's forestry industry, as well as their desperation for every cord of wood available. The predicted fibre crunch to be suffered in New Brunswick is becoming a reality.

FCM is calling on the government and industry to permanently protect the Christmas Mountains region, including Mt. Dasher, Mt. Serpentine and Mt. Nalask. We are also asking for the permanent protection of the Logan Lake Study Area, which lies to the south of the mountains. Initially, a 1000 ha core

region was to be included in the Protected Areas Strategy of New Brunswick as one of the most undisturbed areas in the best 10% of the northern highlands eco-region. Unfortunately, due to the already existing Mount Carleton Provincial Park, it was excluded. FCM is requesting that it be added.

For more information regarding the campaign to save Christmas Mountains, please write:

Friends of Christmas
Mountains
152 Main St., Unit 956
Sackville, NB
E4L 1B3

email: fcm@mta.ca

SASKATCHEWAN – AN UPDATE ON FORESTRY PLANS

by Allyson Brady – Saskatchewan Environmental Society

In 1996 changes were made to the Saskatchewan Forest Resources Management Act and to the Environmental Assessment Act. Forest companies in Saskatchewan have to submit an Environmental Impact Statement (EIA) based on a 20 year plan for their forestry operations. These EIA's and Plans are subject to a 60-day public review period.

EIA's are keeping environmentalists occupied. For major forest companies operating in Saskatchewan, half of their public review periods are over, including L&M Forest Products and Mistik Management, (both located on the west side of the province.

SaskFor MacMillan (a partnership between the Saskatchewan government and MacMillan Bloedel) along with Weyerhaeuser are currently in the process of their reviews. SaskFor MacMillan's public review period will begin at the end of November 1998, and the Weyerhaeuser public review will probably start in February of 1999. As the two largest players in Saskatchewan's forests, they are undergoing an interesting review process. The provincial environment department, Saskatchewan Environment & Resource Management (SERM), felt that they needed more expertise to review the

extensive documentation involved in the public review. SERM has hired an external "Consultants Panel" with representatives from all across Canada to review the EIA's & Plans. And, in addition, an "Expert Panel" made up of "some of the biggest names in forest research" will review the Consultants Panel's evaluation. Complicated?

SaskFor MacMillan has based their 20 year plan on Oriented Strand Board technology. In order for their plan to be "sustainable", SERM has informed SaskFor that they will have to build a new OSB Mill within a two year period, or else their Forest Management Lease Agreement will be revoked. Weyerhaeuser, the largest industry player in Saskatchewan, has been in the international spotlight due to the "Dore-Smoothstone" campaign. An area of the boreal forest around the Dore and Smoothstone Lakes in northern Saskatchewan has been targeted by ENGO's as a representative area for protection. This area falls within the Weyerhaeuser forest management lease agreement and has received attentions from local, national and international environmental groups such as: Dore-Smoothstone Wilderness Protection Association, Ca-

nadian Parks & Wilderness Society, and the World Wildlife Fund.

A major criticism of all of the EIA's & Plans at this point, is that the plans have focused only on the industry's impacts on the forest ecosystem, and have failed to plan around some of the larger issues facing our forests today, such as climate change.

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FORESTRY IN NITASSINAN - THE INNU NATION'S ALTERNATIVE

by Larry Innes - Innu Nation

Labrador forests are an area of major concern for the Innu Nation. Innu people rely on the forest, the plants and the animals that live there. Innu have also been able to use the forest sustainably for thousands of years, without harming it or significantly changing the forest landscape. A healthy forest is perhaps the most valuable legacy that our ancestors have left us, and we have a responsibility to pass it on to our children.

But many other parts of the world have not used their forests so wisely. The island of Newfoundland, for example, has signed over huge areas of forest land to large paper companies. These companies have clear-cut vast areas of forest, leaving nothing for animals like the endangered Newfoundland Pine marten, which needs undisturbed old-growth forests to survive. Forestry activities have also damaged rivers and streams, affecting the populations of trout and salmon in these areas. To make matters worse, the high demand for trees from these areas has stripped the ability of the forest to regenerate. As a result, Newfoundland has stripped its forests, and it is running out of wood to feed the paper mills.

Many forestry and paper companies are now looking to Labrador, which the Innu call Nitassinan, as a source of pulpwood. But the Innu Nation strongly opposes large scale forestry operations, because we do not believe that our forest can sustain harvesting at such a fast rate over a large area without having serious negative effects on the land, the water and the wildlife.

The Innu Nation has told the Newfoundland government that Nitassinan forests are not for sale, and has threatened to use protests, court actions and other means to prevent the big forestry companies from operating here without Innu consent. These tactics have been successful, and the Innu Nation has obtained signed commitments from Atibibi-Consolidated, one of the largest forestry companies in the world, that they will not conduct forestry operations in Nitassinan until there is a land rights agreement.

This situation has also led to the establishment of a new relationship with the Newfoundland government. The Innu Nation now has a great deal of say over where forestry is conducted and how much wood is cut. We are not able to stop all logging, but we are able to limit the number of companies and restrict the amount of wood that they cut to 1995 levels (approximately 25,000 cords of wood). Under this arrangement, only those local companies with existing permits are allowed to log.

Innu Nation is now working with local forestry companies, with the Newfoundland government and with other groups (like outfitters and tourism promoters) on a management plan which will set the rules for any future forest industries in the Goose Bay and Cartwright areas. The management plans will require any new forestry industries

We do not believe that our forest can sustain harvesting at such

to operate within the natural limits of the Nitassinan ecosystem, protect forest functioning, and provide meaningful local benefits, including employment and locally-produced wood products. The goal of the Innu Nation is to ensure that any use of the forest allows Innu and other local people to meet their needs for wood, for wildlife, berry picking, etc. without having a negative impact on the health of the forest. We do not want to see the type of damage and waste that occurs in large industrial forestry operations repeated in our territory. We want to ensure that the forest that has sustained countless generations of Innu people remains whole and healthy. At the same time, we recognize that people use wood for many things, including housing and firewood, and that in the future, there may be some sustainable economic opportunities for Innu-owned ecologically responsible forestry operations.

Innu Nation staff are working with Elders, with scientists and with local loggers to demonstrate that it is possible to both protect forest health and forest function while developing a sustainable, small-scale forest-based economy. To do this, large areas of forest will be protected from any type of development while other areas, such as the Grand Lake Road, will become a focus for improving forestry practices within existing harvesting levels. We are trying to encourage logging companies to change the way that they operate so that they do less damage to the areas that they are cutting. We want them to move away from clear-cutting, which removes all of the trees, to a form of selective cutting which leaves many trees standing while protecting sensitive areas, like creeks and lichen patches. We are also encouraging forestry companies to concentrate on local needs for lumber and other products instead of sending logs out on the barge.

The Innu Nation's forest monitors and Herb Hammond, a respected Canadian eco-forester, have designed a cutting plan for a local timber company. We hope this initiative will demonstrate that our alternative works. This winter, the company will be cutting on the block. Over the coming months and years, we will be doing studies to see whether or not the cutting plan was successful in protecting the sensitive areas for fish and wildlife, and ensuring that forest functions are maintained.

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LANDS FOR LIFE OR LANDS FOR STRIFE??

by Lara Ellis - Wildlands League



Conflict in Ontario's forests is the result of poor land designation decisions in the past. The result of these decisions is that almost all public productive forest land in the province is currently allocated to logging companies.

With so little forest protected for wild-life and natural values, conservationists have repeatedly called for land use planning to complete the protected areas network. Land use planning is also needed to protect forest communities. Hard hit by job loss, mostly due to mechanization in the forestry industry, these communities could greatly benefit by having a land base for locally-controlled and sustainable uses.



"Lands for Life" was supposed to be the solution for some of the problems caused by an imbalanced allocation of public land. When "Lands for Life" was set up by the Provincial Government, there were three goals to be met: Complete the parks and protected areas system, recognize the land base needs of the resource-based tourism industry, and provide certainty for the forestry industry.

Three Government appointed "Round Tables" were charged with meeting those goals for half the province (over 40 million hectares). They embarked on a rapid round of public consultations that saw increasing polarization of the issues. In a vacuum of real information (i.e. wood supply and industry viability), the logging and mining industries' rhetoric was taken at face value. Fear over job loss and industry closure not only succeeded in stifling meaningful discussion over where protected areas should be established, but actually sparked debate on opening up existing parks to industry and gave a forum for ecologically indefensible concepts such as "floating reserves".

The Round Tables' recommendations were released on October 30th. The public was given one month to review and respond. The recommendations clearly fail at achieving any of the three goals set by the province. The goal of completing the parks and protected areas system is extremely far off target.

Earlier, Grand Chief Charles Fox, a First Nations representative was quoted as saying that "The issue of aboriginal and treaty rights was totally excluded . . . There was no mention whatsoever of our particular issues and we are profoundly and deeply disappointed by that because we agreed to participate in this process in good faith . . . The Ontario government let us down."

Following the recommendations would protect an additional 1.6% of the planning area. This would only raise the

percentage of protected areas to 8.2% overall and be ecologically disastrous as all remaining public land (92.4%) is open for industrial activity. The majority of it is controlled by large remotely-based, and increasingly multi-national, forestry companies.

The devastating recommendations do not even succeed in providing security for the forest and mining industries. If the Provincial Government implements the Round Tables' recommendations "as is", there will be no peace in our forests. There are outstanding provincial and federal commitments to complete the parks and protected areas network, and conservationists will continue to fight to see this commitment honoured. Other forest users, like tourism operators, will also have to continue to fight the forestry and mining industries for a piece of the landscape.

The frustrating reality is that creative solutions do exist so that Ontario can protect biodiversity and have healthy sustainable forest communities -- without losing employment in the forestry industry or shutting down the mining industry. We need public pressure to show the Government that the path the Round Tables recommended leads to a dim biological and economic future for Ontario and must not be the path that is taken.

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THE POWER OF TWO STALWART CYCLISTS AND ONE SMALLISH ENGO

by Judy Huntly - Bert Riggall Environmental Foundation

People seem already to have become used to the idea that, in this era of government actions being more often environmentally counterproductive than productive, much of what needs to be done for society is the job of the non-profit sector. ENGOs, for instance, seem to be expected to take on multiple jobs:

- of ensuring that the best possible policy and legislation is drafted and adopted
- to take on much of the task of monitoring for compliance, and
- in cases of noncompliance to finding the resources to require both compliance and penalties,
- on top of those tasks to doing public education via the media, the classroom, public events, popular theatre, and other creative venues, so that the rest of society has some idea about what goes on in the world.

ENGOs and activists have learned, very quickly, to do these things well. We have also learned that even all these things are not enough to ensure the changes that will lead us to a healthy world.

Now we are taking on another task, and getting rapidly more skilled at it: that is, looking ahead, anticipating what is needed, and learning how to satisfy the need.

One aspect of the work is providing the baseline data and ongoing monitoring on which future decisions will be based. In some cases, volunteer stewardship programs can manage to keep track of changes over time -- and though, in my opinion, vastly too much is currently downloaded onto volunteers, the result is that the voluntary groups are becoming the ones with the knowledge. Knowledge about law and policy, information technology and communications, ecological processes, toxicology, sustainable alternatives....and the tools for making maps. As well, we

have the willingness and skill to link up with other peoples' knowledge (traditional knowledge, academic knowledge), and put it to use in the world. We have the creativity, determination, and pure human energy that leads to remarkable levels of productive output for relatively few dollars input. Are you as tired as I am of the pundits who claim that Canada is a nation of low productivity? Has anybody done a productivity analysis of the voluntary sector lately?

Having had my rant, let me describe a particular project.

The Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition, in the southwest corner of Alberta,



seeks protection for the severely impacted wildlands that lie north of Waterton Lakes National Park. The area is part of the "Crown of the Continent" ecosystem; the main river is the Castle. At one time part of the park, these lands have since been logged, explored for gas and mineral opportunities, and drilled and pipelined: that is, they are heavily roaded. Last year, CCWC commissioned a GIS map that plotted all available digitized data on roads and exploration trails. It's a

good map and, given the emerging understanding of the impact of roads on wild lands, a good teaching tool.

However, some of the data were decades out of date. The area is much used by the off-road vehicle folks. What we didn't know was the total picture of to what extent the seismic cuts had grown over, and to what extent the ATVs -- not to mention some energetic floods -- had cut them into eroded trenches?

CCWC decided to find out, and with a grant from the Alberta Ecotrust was able to field two hardy souls with superb educational backgrounds and equally impressive leg muscles to cover, by mountain bike, all 800 km of roads and trails in the CCWC's target area. They were equipped with good bikes, GPS equipment, a camera, bear spray (there were two serious maulings in the area this year, one of them fatal: this was not a risk-free project) and, back in the office, a computer with GIS software. The field season was three months; one of the researchers was given another three months to do reporting, data entry and public education.

And six months later, as a result of a good idea, a forward-looking funder, and two admirable researchers, who has the actual, hard, ground-truthed, up-to-the minute scoop on roading in the SW corner of Alberta? And where will anyone else have to come to get it? To two stalwart cyclists and one smallish ENGO.

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FORESTS NOT TREE FARMS CAMPAIGN

by David Coon - Conservation Council of New Brunswick

The Conservation Council of New Brunswick has launched a public campaign to stop the conversion of Crown land forests to tree farms. Rather than managing harvesting and silviculture to ensure a healthy forest ecosystem, the provincial government is paying millions of dollars every year to pulp and paper companies to farm Crown land for fibre. This is degrading our forest ecosystems by compromising their productivity and eroding their biodiversity.

Half a million acres of Crown forests have already been replaced by monoculture tree plantations of black spruce or jack pine. Millions more have been and continue to be simplified by clearcutting and inappropriate thinning. Most of New Brunswick's longer-lived trees species such as red spruce, hemlock, cedar, sugar maple, beech, ironwood and ash are in decline while balsam fir, white birch and poplar have been increasing in both abundance and distribution.¹

What are the implications of such widespread degradation?

Ecologically, it manifests itself in declining soil productivity, an increase in the variety and size of insect infestations, changes to the water flow in our river systems, and a decline in a number of forest species -- the same kinds of problems associated with industrial agriculture.

Economically, farming Crown lands for fibre drastically limits the job opportunities available in the woods as clear-cut logging lends itself to an extremely high level of mechanization and low level of expertise. It also limits the value and variety of wood produced by our forests, and by extension, the opportunities for high value and value-added processing and manufacturing.

The centrepiece of CCNB's *Forests Not Tree Farms Campaign* is our Five-Point Action Plan for Crown Land Conservation. We hope to build enough public support for the Action Plan to influence the goals and objectives for Crown land now under development by Department of Natural Resources and En-



Forests Not Tree Farms Five-Point Action Plan for Crown Land Conservation

1 Stop establishing tree plantations on Crown lands.² Rather harvesting plans must be designed to protect existing regrowth and promote optimal regeneration. If poorly stocked stands require underplanting this must be done with an ecologically appropriate mix of species.

2 Restrict clearcutting to those areas where other harvesting practices cannot be ecologically justified and then the cutting must be patchy, leaving large clumps of live mature trees, dead standing trees, coarse woody debris, and an irregular ragged edge. These would be more accurately called partial or retention cuts. Herbiciding should not be permitted.

3 Require selection harvesting wherever it is ecologically justified. The forest canopy should not be opened beyond the point that it would contribute to a significant change in species composition of the existing understorey composition.³

4 Keep a significant percentage of each forest community type (e.g. Sugar Maple-Beech-Yellow Birch-Red Spruce-Hemlock, Red Maple-Fir-Cedar, etc.) as old forest (mature-overmature age class).

5 Design harvesting and silviculture to shift the forest composition and forest structure of Crown lands towards a more natural condition for each of the seven ecological regions of the province.⁴

² This will have the added effect of eliminating 75 percent of the herbicides currently sprayed on Crown land. The remaining 25 percent should be eliminated as a result of the recommended harvesting practices.

³ To regenerate existing shade tolerant tree species, no more than a third of the basal area should be removed, reducing the forest canopy closure from 80-90% to around 60% .

⁴ The pre-settlement composition and structure of our forests provide a benchmark against which naturalness can be compared.

ergy. A draft of these is to be completed by the end of this year, and transformed into provincial policy in 1999.

We also hope to have our Action Plan considered in the negotiations between the First Nations and the provincial government over revisions to the Crown Lands and Forests Act.

We are asking New Brunwickers who support the *Forests Not Tree Farms Campaign*, to simply clip out the Five-Point Action Plan and mail it along with a letter indicating their support to the Minister of Natural Resources and their local MLA. Both can be reached at P. O. Box 6000, Fredericton, N.B. E3B

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¹ Zelazny, V. and Veen H. *The Acadian Forest, Past and Present. Proceedings of the Ecological Landscape Management Workshop. Canadian Woodlands Forum, Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, Fredericton, New Brunswick. 1997.*

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S FOREST CRISIS

by Jim Cooperman - BC Environmental Network Forest Caucus

An Excerpt from B.C. Environmental Network Forest Caucus Discussion Paper

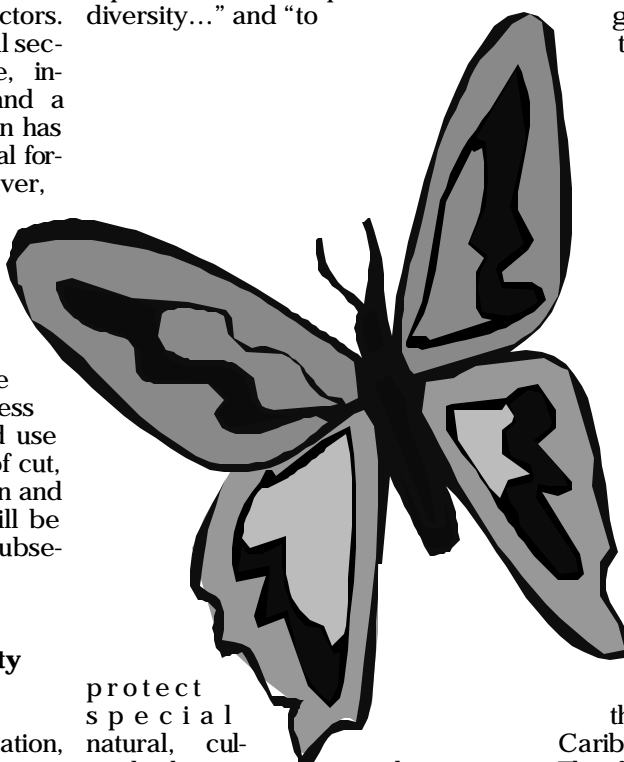
British Columbia is defined by its forests. As a source of economic and biological wealth and spiritual inspiration, B.C.'s forests are integral to the hearts and souls of the vast majority of its citizens. The issues surrounding the use of our forests are complex, as they combine biological principles with economic, political, and social factors. Protests and demonstrations by all sectors, intensive media coverage, increased scientific knowledge and a high level of international concern has led to major changes in provincial forest and land use policies. However, are these new policies adequate and is forest management improving?

In order to answer these questions and examine the issues in more detail, this article divides the issues into seven topics: wilderness and biodiversity protection, land use planning, forest practices, rate of cut, jobs and the economy, restoration and tenure. The first two sections will be presented here and the rest in subsequent issues.

Wilderness and Biodiversity Protection

Despite over 100 years of exploitation, this province still contains more temperate forest wilderness than anywhere else in North America. Wilderness protection is the major issue in B.C. and is key to the protection of biodiversity. Since the provincial government began the Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) to protect 12 percent of the province's land base, over 2.8 million hectares have been protected in 190 new parks and protected areas. However, as a report by the Land Use Coordination Office shows, 68 percent of the province's new and existing protected areas are in alpine or sub-alpine areas where there is little conflict with resource use, especially logging.

Only 5 percent of the low to mid-elevation areas where biodiversity is highest and most threatened by resource use is protected. The report predicts that once targets are met in the Omineca-Peace region and the lower mainland, the provincial total will reach 11.5%, which will leave few options for the remainder of the province. Clearly, the provincial government will have to move beyond its 12% target if it is serious about meeting the two goals of the PAS; "to protect viable, representative examples of natural diversity..." and "to



protect special natural, cultural heritage and recreational features..."

While protecting wilderness is essential, ecologically responsible stewardship is necessary on the remainder of the land base, or the new parks could become islands of extinction. The two key tool kits for protecting biodiversity under the **Forest Practices Code** are the Biodiversity and Identified Wildlife Guidebooks. Since the Wildlife Guidebook has yet to be released, there are no current requirements to protect wildlife. Implementation of the biodiversity guidebook remains stalled, as government staff have not yet determined how to design landscape units

plans.

Even if and when landscape planning is finally in place, the near total liquidation of the province's old growth forests will continue as the guidebook is limited to having a maximum 4 percent impact on the allowable annual cut (AAC) and up to only 10 percent of the land base will be allowed to have high biodiversity emphasis. A recent new policy directive further weakens the guidelines by relaxing the requirements to maintain mature and old growth forests in order to avoid timber supply impacts. Despite a provincial old growth strategy released in 1992, the government has failed to identify and protect those forests that are truly ancient and unique and face the greatest threat of extinction.

Land Use Planning

In an effort to end "valley by valley confrontations," the province began land use planning in 1992 by establishing the Commission of Resources and the Environment (CORE). Although the interest-based, roundtable negotiations were unable to reach consensus, CORE produced land use plan recommendations for three regions: Vancouver Island, Cariboo/Chilcotin and the Kootenays. The final government plans incorporated most of these recommendations to create land use zones for protection, special management and intensive management. However, final completion and implementation of these plans has for the most part shut out public consultation and has resulted in timber targets taking predominance over sensitive management. A report prepared by the Sierra Legal Defence Fund, **Business As Usual: The Failure to Implement the Cariboo-Chilcotin Land Use Plan**, shows how special management objectives are being ignored to continue the current high levels of logging. Over 56,000 thousand hectares are planned to be mostly

clearcut in the special management zones over the next five years, which threatens the survival of species such as grizzly bear and mountain caribou. In the Kootenays, protests have escalated as domestic use watersheds in special management zones are about to be logged despite the objections of local residents and town councils. On Vancouver Island, the industry dominated follow-up committee has recommended that over 50 percent of the island become an intensive forestry zone.

Once government realised the difficulties in creating regional land-use plans, it moved to sub-regional planning in the form of Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs). Three LRMPs are now in place for Kamloops, the Kispiox, and Vanderhoof. The Bulkley Valley LRMP has been approved in principle by the government and its final plan is now being drafted. Three LRMP processes have recently begun and eight others are nearing completion. In some areas such as the Robson Valley, the processes are failing because the forest sector is refusing to accept any impacts on their industry and the forest service maintains a stranglehold over the process.

When CORE completed its regional planning, it worked on the development of provincial sustainability legislation. However, due to budget constraints and political obligations to forest workers, the government axed CORE. B.C.'s citizens are now left without an independent provincial organization to provide sustainability advice, to oversee and monitor land use planning or to provide dispute resolution services.

THE B.C. FOREST SCENE, NOV. 1998 - by Jim Cooperman

Forest issues are dominated today by the downturn in the forest industry. Many mills have shut down and others are slowing down. The industry has been lobbying very heavily for more bailouts. The government, still reeling from their 'emperor has no clothes' - Jobs and Timber Accord which instead of creating jobs has seen 10,000 jobs disappear; is desperately working on a 30-day plan and a 90-day plan to supposedly rescue the industry. So as to not further alienate the environmental community, the government has also been meeting with representatives of the BCEN forest and parks and wilderness caucuses to come up with some positive environmental announcements. It remains to be seen, whether some important initiatives such as landscape unit planning and identified wildlife measures (a necessary, but woefully inadequate policy) will be announced.

The forestry woes are finally prodding the government to look at tenure reform, but for industry that means privatization or the creation of more secure tenures. A minor effort is underway to create some pilot community tenures. Industry continues to blame the forest practices code and stumpage for their problems, when really the global economic situation combined with overcapacity, oversupply of wood and overcutting are the real problems. Clearly the unions have a major influ-

ence within the provincial government, which results in a system that continues to subsidize B.C.'s extraordinary high labour costs.

The real problems continue on the ground, as overcutting creates pressures to clearcut sensitive areas, including community watersheds, wildlife habitat areas and steep slopes. Salvage logging is also causing problems, since planning requirements are minimal and a few beetle killed trees provokes massive cutting. While a few companies have improved their practices somewhat and MacMillan Bloedel has promised to end clearcutting within five years (by that time most of the remaining valleys will be gutted), clearcutting continues on a massive scale. Certification may perhaps lead to some improvements in the future, but for now the companies are trying to use the loopholes in the process.

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ACTION ALERTS AND NEWS ITEMS

PRESS RELEASE

November 26, 1998

GOVERNMENT'S CLEAN FOREST PRACTICES AUDIT HAS NO CREDIBILITY WHEN SFP HAS MANY VIOLATIONS

"The Forest Practices Board's recently released audit, which monitored logging by Slocan Forest Products for the past year, is a sham," stated Craig Pettitt, a director of the Valhalla Wilderness Society. The audit found that Slocan Forest Products' forest practices were substantially in compliance with the Forest Practices Code. This audit and its findings demonstrate how little protection there is in the Forest Practices Code for rural residents of BC. On the Cutting Permit for Bonanza Creek in the Slocan Valley during the period of October 1997 through to May 1998 there were four separate areas of water related violations of the Forest Practices Code, all of which were photo-documented by the VWS and reported to the Ministry of Forests. What has the Ministry of Forests done with these complaints? Absolutely nothing.

"All these instances demonstrate that either through lack of manpower or lack of initiative the Ministry of Forests is not doing a sufficient job to enforce the Forest Practices Code. These documented violations of substandard logging practices clearly demonstrate that

the Forest Practices Code and the Ministry of Forests' enforcement policies are inadequate to safeguard the water quality in our domestic and community watersheds from poor logging practices," said Craig Pettitt.

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MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT ASKED TO INITIATE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF UNIQUE NEWFOUNDLAND ECOSYSTEM

In a letter to Minister Stewart, Greg Mitchell of the Humber Environment Action Group has requested an EA for plans to build a forestry access road into the Soufflets Valley. Located on the eastern side of the Great Northern Peninsula on the island of Newfoundland, this road would traverse forests which may be unique in the Boreal ecosystem and require long term protection. These forests do not follow the typical pattern of stand replacement and are of uneven age classes,

some reaching up to 230 years. The characteristic logging practice on the island, that of clearcutting, would destroy the ecosystem before its special properties were even adequately studied.

Mitchell writes, "We ask you to ensure that an Environmental Impact Statement is initiated and adequate public review is undertaken . . . The other two major watersheds in the Eastern Long Range, the Cloud and the Main, are scheduled for harvest and the Soufflets may be our only opportunity to conserve biological diversity in an ecosystem which is unique in the Canadian Boreal and perhaps unique in the boreal forests of the world."

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ONTARIO'S FOREST BIRD DECLINE

Environment Canada's "Tipsheet" reports that "Eleven-year trends have been put together on the birds which live

in Ontario's forests. The trends were calculated for 69 species of forest birds at 298 mature forest sites in the province, from 1987 to 1997. Four forest interior species showed significant declines: Pileated Woodpecker, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Swainson's Thrush. Further research will help confirm the trends and perhaps determine some cause for the declines." A full report is available.

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BIOTECHNOLOGY AT THE CANADIAN FORESTRY SERVICE

Cathy Holtslander, co-ordinator at the Saskatchewan Eco-Network put together the following very useful summary of CFS' latest newsletter:

Spruce trees with the *Bacillus thuringiensis* toxin engineered

in their genome are being developed so that trees won't have to be sprayed for spruce budworm. The article doesn't mention how they plan to deal with insect resistance which would certainly occur with trees given their long lifespan. For more information, contact Arman Sequin at 418-648-5832.

However, there is research being conducted to deal with the consequences of increased resistance to Bt: 'the next generation in pest control' will be genetically engineered viruses that attack the spruce budworm. Dr. Basil Arif at 705-759-5740, is working with the multinational Rohm and Haas to alter a naturally occurring virus through biotechnology so it kills the insect sooner in its life-cycle and so that it will die when the caterpillar dies.

Another article discusses a genetically engineered fungus that will be used to clear powerline right-of-ways and ski runs. It is called ECO-clear (TM), and was patented by Dr. Raj Prasad. The fungus, if approved, will be used to reduce costs of keeping these areas free of regrowth, and also to kill competing hardwoods in

commercial stands of softwoods. More information is available from Dr. Simon Shamoun at 250-363-0766 or Dr. Dean Thompson at 705-759-5740.

Silvagen, Inc. is developing commercial applications for



"somatic embryogenesis" which is "a technique that can produce unlimited numbers of genetically identical embryos, and then plants, from a single seed." The company's CEO says that their products will offer the advantages of significant genetic improvement while avoiding reductions in genetic diversity by deploying diverse seeding lines.

You can get a copy by contacting them at:

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