

Introduction

With the goal of developing a detailed forest management plan (DFMP) that would be positively received by internal and external audiences, Millar Western developed several strategies to communicate with and receive feedback from interested internal and external stakeholders, all of which are contained within the *Communication Plan for the Development of the 2007-2016 Detailed Forest Management Plan*. Included in its entirety as an appendix to the DFMP, the communications plan guided communications during the DFMP development period, which ran from late 2004 to the fall of 2007. The communications plan was peer-reviewed by Dr. Debra J. Davidson, Associate Professor, with the Department of Rural Economy at the University of Alberta. Her comments, as well as Millar Western's response, are included in Appendix A.

This report summarizes the communications activities that took place during the DFMP's development phase, providing some analysis on the effectiveness of various tactics, with a view to improving communications and public consultation activities going forward.

Internal Communications

Introduction

The internal audience was composed of members of the DFMP plan development team (PDT), which included Millar Western employees, industrial stakeholders, the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, the Town of Whitecourt, the research community, and the provincial and federal governments. The primary objective of internal communications during the DFMP development phase was to ensure members of the PDT had access to appropriate levels of information required to understand and support the development of the company's 2007-2016 DFMP.

Meetings

The DFMP communication plan identified regular meetings as a way “to facilitate a continuous flow of information pertaining to the development of the DFMP.” The process was initiated with a PDT Workshop, held in Quebec in November 2003. At that meeting, numerous impact assessment and external driver groups were established, which met throughout the DFMP development phase, to share data and drive the project toward its completion. Below is a list of those committees, and the dates on which they met.

Group or Committee	Meeting Dates (mm/dd/yy)
Steering Committee	03/15/04, 04/19/04, 05/10/04, 06/14/04, 07/12/04, 08/16/04, 09/13/04, 10/18/04, 11/19/04, 12/13/04, 01/18/05, 02/23/05, 03/16/05, 05/11/05, 06/30/05, 08/24/05, 09/19/05, 11/28/05, 02/6/06, 09/10/07
Communications Committee	07/21/04, 08/26/04, 08/24/05, 11/28/05, 01/19/05, 02/13/06
Environmental Co-Stewardship Committee	05/25/05, 06/08/05, 07/12/05, 11/17/05, 01/11/06, 03/15/06, 05/16/06, 01/08/07, 03/26/07, 05/02/07, 06/27/07
Timber Supply Analysis Impact Assessment Group	08/17/04, 08/18/04, 08/24/04, 10/25/04, 11/22/04, 12/15/04, 01/25/05, 02/17/05, 03/17/05, 05/25/05, 06/27/05, 09/9/05, 10/12/05, 11/16/05, 12/19/05, 01/18/06, 02/22/06, 03/22/06, 05/17/06, 06/13/06, 07/11/06, 01/15/07
FireSmart Impact Assessment Group	07/21/04, 08/26/04, 09/09/04, 09/15/04, 11/17/04, 1/10/05, 9/14/05, 11/14/05, 01/17/07
FORWARD Impact Assessment Group	01/09/04, 02/13/04, 03/12/04, 04/21/04, 06/10/04, 07/28/04, 09/21/04, 10/15/04, 11/25/04, 02/14/05, 04/06/05, 05/16/05, 10/21/05, 11/18/05, 01/20/06, 02/10/06, 03/24/06, 04/28/06, 06/14/06, 09/25/06, 10/27/06, 11/27/06, 01/11/07, 02/16/07, 03/16/07, 05/25/07, 09/19/07
BAP Impact Assessment Group	09/28/04, 06/15/05, 10/12/05, 11/07/06
Carbon Impact Assessment Group	06/15/05, 07/11/05, 10/12/05
Climate Change Landscape Projection Group	03/18/04, 09/28/04, 06/15/05, 07/11/05, 10/12/05, 11/07/06
Population Landscape Assessment Group	03/17/04, 09/08/04, 04/25/05, 06/15/05
Wildfire Landscape Projection Group	03/18/04, 06/14/04, 06/15/05, 07/11/05, 10/12/05
Oil and Gas Landscape Projection Group	03/18/04, 06/15/05, 07/11/05, 10/12/05
Landscape dynamics Modelling Landscape Projection Group	03/18/04, 09/28/04, 06/15/05, 07/11/05, 10/12/05, 11/07/06
Peer Review Committee	10/06/04, 10/12/05, 08/29/06

DFMP Newsletter

Over the course of the DFMP development period, Millar Western published 10 issues of the DFMP Newsletter (Appendix B). The newsletters were distributed to all PDT members by mail or e-mail, and posted on Millar Western's external website, making them accessible to all employees and the general

public. As well as updating PDT members about the DFMP's progress, the newsletters profiled the work of various impact assessment groups and consultation committees and advised of upcoming events and deadlines. Not only did they serve as an important instrument for conveying information but they also contributed to team building by keeping members apprised of the work of all DFMP participants.

FTP Site

The Forestry Corp. on behalf of Millar Western, created an FTP site (<ftp://216.123.241.134>) as a mechanism for sharing data and information, such as models, process flow charts and meeting minutes, among PDT members, who were dispersed across Canada. Content updates were promoted through the DFMP Newsletter.

Workshops and Field Tours

Millar Western hosted several workshops and field tours during the course of the DFMP's development, to help PDT members better appreciate issues and challenges of managing its defined forest area.

Date	Participants	Event Description
November 2003	Members of PDT	To form impact assessment and external driver groups, and plan the DFMP development process
May 2004	Members of Population Landscape Projection Group	To study higher elevation climates in the Alberta foothills, and potential impact of climate change on Whitecourt area
June 18, 2004	Members of PDT	One-day tour of Millar Western FMA area, to familiarize participants with the company's planning process and operational activities
June 9, 2004	FORWARD team members, Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, Alberta Newsprint Company, Alberta Pacific Forest	Two-day workshop focusing on modeling the land-water interface, including tour of field sites and infrastructure

Date	Participants	Event Description
	Industries, Robert Mills Forestry, Streamline Consulting, The Forest Corp, SRD, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, and Alberta Environment	
December 7 & 8, 2004	Representatives of PDT, Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, Weyerhaeuser Company Ltd., Blue Ridge Lumber, Slave Lake Pulp, SRD, Canadian Forest Service	Review the structure of the DFMP and progress status for each planning group
September 8, 2005	Members of the PPG	Field Tour of Millar Western operations

External Communications

Introduction

External audiences included employees and stakeholders outside of the PDT – industrial and non-industrial stakeholders, other aboriginal communities, non-governmental organizations and members of the public. The objectives of external communications was to ensure relevant stakeholder perspectives were reflected in the DFMP; to raise public awareness, understanding and acceptance of the DFMP; and to ensure employees, particularly those employed in the Woodlands area, were aware of and able to meet the company's forest management obligations.

Internal and External Websites

From November 2004 to June 2006, Millar Western employees were kept apprised of DFMP-related news such as open houses primarily through e-mail. After its launch in June 2006, the corporate intranet became the main delivery system for notices and updates relating to the progress of the DFMP.

For those outside of the company, Millar Western's external website (www.millarwestern.com) served as a main access point for DFMP-related information. The *Publications* section of the website included all issues of the DFMP Newsletter, the 1997-2001 Forest Stewardship report, as well as the 1997-2006 DFMP. The website was also used to promote open houses and report on other DFMP-related events, such as FORWARD workshops. In association with the Spring 2006 series of open houses, the company also mounted a Virtual Open House, making available on-line all materials produced for the physical open houses, which were held in March 2006.

Consultation Groups

As well as consulting with several existing groups, such as the Whitecourt Regional Forest Advisory Committees (RFAC), Millar Western also created the Public Participation Group (PPG), specifically to help set the strategic direction of the DFMP. The PPG reviewed various aspects of the plan, such as harvest sequences and values, objectives, indicators and targets (VOITs), even contributing VOITs of its own. During the plan development phase, another new consultative mechanism, the Environmental Co-Stewardship Committee (ECSC), was established, to gather input from the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, on matters relating to forest management and economic development. As described below, the ECSC and other consultation groups had a significant impact on the DFMP's development.

Aboriginal Consultations

ECSC

The Environmental Co-Stewardship Committee (ECSC), formed on May 26, 2004, was the main vehicle for DFMP consultations with the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, whose traditional territory overlaps with Millar Western's FMA area. The ECSC met eleven times during the development phase, with trapping emerging as one of the key issues. Further to concerns expressed by the band, Millar Western arranged meetings with SRD officials, to clarify rules regarding trap-line ownership and transfer issues. A reflection of the input of the ECSC, the DFMP includes several VOITs that speak to the company's commitment to continue to partner with the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation on matters relating to economic development and forest management.

Other Aboriginal Communities

As the DFMP development phase approached its conclusion, the Alberta government identified an additional three aboriginal communities whose traditional land-use areas may overlap with Millar Western's operating areas, and urged Millar Western to enter into a dialogue with these communities as well. The company approached the Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council (LSLIRC), the Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, and the Alexander First Nation in writing (Appendix C), to gauge their interest in becoming involved in this and future forest management planning. To date, the company has been successful in meeting with the Alexander First Nation, and has provided a series of FMA maps, for their review, with further discussion to ensue. Due to scheduling difficulties on both sides, Millar Western has not yet been able to meet with the LSLIRC, but is planning to make a presentation at a future council meeting. Millar Western has invited all aboriginal communities operating in and around its FMA to participate in a new public consultation body, the Millar Western Public Advisory Group (PAC), which began convening in the early summer of 2007.

Swan Hills Forestry Communications Group

The Swan Hills Forestry Communication Group (SHFCG), composed of representatives of Swan Hills town council, the forest industry operating in the Swan Hills area, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, community interest groups, and the general public, was formed to address concerns about forestry operations in and around the community, with a view to creating a forum for dialogue and issue resolution. In addition to presenting information about its approach and management plans, Millar Western endeavoured to raise greater awareness and understanding of forest management issues among participants. For instance, it organized a field tour on June 8, 2004, to provide members with a first-hand view of the forest industry's efforts to manage the forest in a sustainable manner, including visits to creek crossings, stands thinned as part of the FireSmart strategy, and old-growth forests. As a result of the SHFCG's involvement, harvesting plans were modified in the Edith Lake area, to reflect area concerns.

Whitecourt Regional Forest Advisory Group

The Whitecourt Regional Forest Advisory Group brings together forest companies working in the Whitecourt area (Blue Ridge Lumber, ANC Timber, Mostowich Lumber, and Millar Western) and the public, to address land-use issues in a more coordinated fashion. The group not only acted as a sounding board for Millar Western during the DFMP development, but also assisted in the identification of local forest values.

Public Participation Group

To fully meet the public consultation requirements of the Alberta Planning Standard, Millar Western found it necessary to create another stakeholder group, one that was more representative of its operating area and therefore able to review, refine and identify forest values, for the company's consideration. Formed in the fall of 2004 and composed of representatives from local interest groups and the public, the Millar Western Public Participation Group (PPG) served as the centrepiece of the DFMP public consultation process and was instrumental in helping Millar Western meet its objective of crafting a publicly defensible plan that reflects the concerns and priorities of local stakeholders. As documented in the PPG Report, attached as an appendix to the DFMP, the PPG went far beyond its minimum obligations as described in its Basic Operating Rules, reviewing in detail various aspects of the DFMP and making significant contributions to the final document. For example, the group modified the wording of two existing VOITs and identified six new VOITs for the company to address over the next 10 years. The group also raised many issues for ongoing consideration by both the company and the Alberta government, as they work together to ensure the sustainability of Alberta's forest resources. As a result of the group's success, Millar Western is establishing a permanent public advisory committee, to review plans, monitor performance and raise issues of concern to the community, on an ongoing basis.

Open Houses

At various stages of the DFMP's development, and in multiple locations in and around the company's

operating area, Millar Western held a series of open houses, to raise awareness of the company's planning activities and gather public input into the DFMP.

November 2004

An open house to introduce the DFMP process to the public was held at the Whitecourt Travelodge, from 3 to 9 pm, on November 24, 2004. Promoted under the banner "*Sustainable Forest Management: Your Role, Your Opportunity, Your Voice*", the event was widely advertised to the public through radio and newspaper advertisements. As well, a brochure, which included open house details and key facts about Millar Western's operations, was mailed to 7,000 area residents (Appendix D). The open house drew a small but interested audience who were offered a wide range of information about Millar Western's FMA area and the plan development process. Staff from Millar Western and The Forestry Corp. were on hand to answer questions and distribute detailed FMA area maps that identified roads, seismic activity and trap-lines to interested participants.

January 2006

On January 11, 2006, Millar Western held a special open house for the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, at the Alexis Hall in Glenevis, which was promoted through posters placed in prominent locations around the community (Appendix E). Representatives from Millar Western and The Forestry Corp. greeted approximately one dozen visitors and presented information on the DFMP and annual operating plan for the upcoming year.

March 2006

From March 14 to 16, a series of open houses was held in Swan Hills, Fort Assiniboine and Whitecourt, respectively, to provide information on the planning process, present proposed harvesting sequences and hear community priorities in forest management, so they could be reflected in the DFMP. The events were promoted through radio and newspaper advertisements (Appendix F). As well, over 150 invitations were sent to stakeholders, including members of Millar Western's public consultation groups, recreational groups, educational institutions, local chambers of commerce, other industrial forest users, and municipal and provincial government officials (Appendix G). The invitee list has not been included within this document, in accordance with personal information protection laws, however the company can provide access to this list within the bounds of such laws, if requested. Attendance over the three evenings totaled 65. Trappers were particularly well represented, raising concerns about the combined impact of forestry, oil and gas, and agriculture, on fur-bearer populations. At the Ft. Assiniboine open house, one trapper presented a prototype of pine-marten breeding shelter, which has led to a research project involving Lakehead University of Thunder Bay. Several people also made written submissions at the open houses, all of which were logged in our Communications Tracking database. Interim written responses were provided in July 2006, with final responses to be compiled and distributed when the DFMP is completed. All materials made available at the open house were posted on the corporate

website as part of a virtual open house (Appendix H). As a result of the open houses, Millar Western was able to establish a dialogue with several members of the public who had specific concerns relating to the company's operations, and work with them toward resolving them to the mutual satisfaction of all parties.

Media

In addition to placing open-house advertisements in radio and print media, Millar Western submitted an article on the DFMP process to area newspapers in May 2004, to mark Forestry Week. The company also issued news releases to local radio and newspaper outlets both prior to and after the 2006 open houses, with the intention of promoting the events and reporting results to communities. (Appendix I)

Conclusion

Guided by the 2007-2016 *DFMP Development Communication Plan*, Millar Western has been able to draw on the expertise and perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders, from highly-regarded scientists, to local snowmobile associations and trappers, to construct a DFMP that is both scientifically sound and reflective of community priorities.

Wanting to maintain a high level of public discourse on forest management issues, Millar Western intends to continue many of the communications and consultation vehicles it introduced during the development of the 2007-2016 DFMP, for instance establishing a permanent public advisory group to guide its forest management activities. The company will also establish a more formal stakeholder registry, to be able to identify those interested in our activities so that we can communicate with them on a regular basis. With a view to introducing new ways of inviting review and feedback, a virtual open house will be erected on the corporate website, providing access to documents such as annual operating plans, certification audits and annual reports. And in an effort to improve openness and accessibility, the company will also implement a 24/7 toll-free telephone hotline and establish a process for handling public concerns thoroughly and expeditiously. These and other initiatives are described in greater detail in the 2007-2016 *DFMP Implementation Communication Plan*.

Viewing communication and public participation as a vital component of sustainable forest management, Millar Western looks forward to continuing to work with its stakeholders in a spirit of openness and cooperation, to identify new forest values as well as monitor and refine those already in existence, and to address issues concerning the health and integrity of our forest resources, in an effort to continuously improve its efforts to manage the forest in a sustainable manner and to maintain ongoing, widespread support for its operations.

Appendices

- A. Peer review by Dr. Debra Davidson and MWFP Response***
- B. DFMP Newsletters***
- C. Introduction Letters to Aboriginal Communities***
- D. 2004 Open House Brochure***
- E. Alexis Open House Promotional Poster***
- F. Open House 2006 Advertising***
- G. Open House 2006 Invitation Letter***
- H. Open House 2006 Information Posters***
- I. Non-Advertising Media Submissions***
- J. Final Responses to Open House Inquiries***

**APPENDIX A: Review of Millar Western Forest Products, Ltd.
Communication Plan for the Development of the 2007-2016 Detailed
Forest Management Plan and Millar Western Response**

Review of Millar Western Forest Products, Ltd. Communication Plan for the Development of the 2007-2016 Detailed Forest Management Plan

Reviewer:

Dr. Debra J. Davidson, Associate Professor
Department of Rural Economy
University of Alberta

Date: November 1, 2005

The Communications Plan developed by the company consists of internal communication among the DFMP development team, and external communication among stakeholders and the public. Within the latter component of the plan, group-specific communication strategies have been developed. In regard to internal communications, the development team consists of multiple independent, theme-specific committees, so responsive communications among these committees is clearly crucial to the final integration of committee work into the DFMP, and a central objective of the Steering Committee. The cross-committee representation, regular face-to-face meetings, and online file transfer protocol are certainly conducive to open communication, but as internal organizational communication is not my area of expertise, I will focus on the external communication strategies.

The external audiences identified by the company as targets for their communications include Millar Western staff, government representatives, industrial stakeholders, Aboriginal forest users, and “unaffiliated members of the general public.” The goals of external communications are: assurance of a “no surprises” governmental review and approval of the DFMP; the inclusion of the perspectives of others in the final DFMP; and also extension of public awareness regarding the activities of the company.

Communications with Millar Western Staff

The company already has an established communications network between company management and employees, and this network has been used effectively in keeping employees informed of progress on DFMP development. Monthly meetings with staff are particularly important, as this appears to be the primary means for staff to offer feedback on the process. One additional strategy that would have had some value in ensuring the ability of company staff to express any concerns they might have would be a mechanism for anonymous feedback. Without assurances of confidentiality, employees who felt their concerns may not bode well for their future in the company are obviously unlikely to express them.

Communications with the Provincial Government

An ongoing communications strategy with the Provincial government is an important component of the Communications Plan. The success of this component will ensure the DFMP abides by all Provincial legislation, and will contribute to a timely approval of the DFMP. While newsletters can be a valuable source of information, it is quite likely that

overworked SRM staff members are not diligent at reviewing these newsletters. As a result, the most important feature of this component is the formal submission of DFMP component documents for agreement-in-principle. As SRM staff are not obliged to review these documents, however, the effectiveness of this strategy relies on continuing inter-personal communications between company personnel and SRM staff. The Communications Plan does not indicate whether these communications are taking place, or if in fact the company has been receiving agreement-in-principle from SRM for DFMP component documents.

Communications with Other Industrial Users

Another important stakeholder includes those companies with industrial operations on the same land base, including forest quota holders, and—particularly in this instance—oil and gas extraction. The Communications Plan indicates intent to hold meetings with other industrial stakeholders on an as-needed basis, and invite those other industrial operators to Open Houses. Having had some research experience with relations among forest and petrochemical companies in Alberta, I am aware that these relations can be quite tense due to the incompatible development timelines associated with these respective activities. The failure to resolve these issues can lead to conflicts on the ground, and in some unfortunate cases, modifications to forest plans, as proposals for pipelines, etc. emerge. It may well be that Millar Western already has very positive working relationships with other industrial stakeholders, but I am not convinced that the existing communications strategy goes far enough in building or maintaining those relationships: the busy personnel of other companies are under no obligation to attend Open Houses, and it is not clear what constitutes an “as-needed basis,” and thus there is no guarantee that regular meetings are taking place.

Communications with Aboriginal Peoples

The inclusion of the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation on the Planning team was an excellent idea, and reflects the value Millar Western places on maintaining positive working relations with this community. Their involvement with other First Nation communities in the collecting and storing of traditional knowledge is also commendable, and conducive to stronger communications than many other forest companies enjoy. The fact that such information “will be incorporated in the DFMP as appropriate,” however, should elaborate on *who* is determining the appropriateness of the information. Furthermore, Aboriginal representatives have often complained that limited internal resources constraint their ability to contribute meaningfully to land-use management, including the review of DFMPs. As such, the company may want to consider a mechanism of compensation that will enable greater levels of contribution from those Aboriginal communities in the region.

Communications with the General Public

The company has taken several steps in an attempt to engage the general public in regard to the development of its DFMP, including the use of mass media, Open Houses, direct mailing, and a Public Participation Group. The combined approach increases the likelihood of effective communication with members of the public to a far greater extent than would reliance on a smaller number of initiatives. Among these initiatives, two

allow for actual two-way communication: the Open Houses and the Public Participation Group. The inclusion of a personal survey in the Open House setting is especially valuable as a medium for receiving feedback. What is also important, but not specified in this document, is that meetings be held at times and locations that maximize accessibility for a broad spectrum of the interested public. As I have indicated in my previous review, while previous research shows that the sponsorship of public advisory groups has the potential for improving stakeholder communications, and forest management, the effectiveness of this strategy hinges on the ability of the advisory group to represent those views of the interested public. It is not clear to me that the current membership of the Public Participation Group would be successful in going so. A large proportion of members represent natural resource industries, there is no representation from environmental organizations, and only one representing recreational interests.

Comments on Overall Structure

I will close with some general comments on the Communications Plan. The first comment bears on the identified targets for the Public Participation Strategy. I believe there are two important targets that are not identified. The first is the labour union that represents company employees, which would likely take an active interest in long-term company planning that may bear on labour needs. The second includes established environmental organizations that have expressed an interest in this region, including the Pembina Institute, the David Suzuki Foundation, and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. It may well be the case that these organizations choose not to participate, but an effort to supply information in the form of newsletters, and the extension of invitations to attend Open Houses would reflect a good faith effort to establish communication with organizations that represent the interests of a broad sector of the Albertan public, a sector which, furthermore, is not likely to be able to engage in the development of the DFMP by any means other than through such organizations.

Secondly, I believe the efforts on the part of the company to collect and organize all external feedback into a common database is exemplary. What is not clear, however, is whether the Planning Team is obliged in any way to reflect this commentary in any other than a selective fashion in the final DFMP. Honoring those individuals who took the time to offer feedback on the company's DFMP demands that the company ensures a systematic and representative transfer of feedback into the final Plan.

Finally, I believe the Communication Plan developed by Millar Western for the development of its DFMP is as a whole very commendable, and suggests sincerity on the part of the company to maintain positive and constructive communications with interested parties. The comments offered above should be considered as constructive feedback for current and future planning processes.

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MILLAR WESTERN FOREST PRODUCTS LTD.

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6 December, 2005

Debra J. Davidson, Associate Professor
Department of Rural Economy
University of Alberta

Dear Dr. Davidson:

On behalf of the entire Millar Western DFMP development team, I would like to thank you for your thorough review and insightful comments regarding our communication plan. The plan's author, Deb Choma, is currently on maternity leave, and I have been asked to respond in her absence.

1. *Communications with Millar Western Staff* – while Millar Western promotes a collaborative culture that invites frank discussion, your suggestion that opportunities be provided to allow employees to comment anonymously recognizes that not all employees may feel comfortable expressing certain opinions, particularly those that are contrary to the direction being taken by the development team. I will therefore explore various mechanisms to enable anonymous input and ensure that this opportunity is made available to employees by January 2006.
2. *Communications with Provincial Government* – as you rightly observe, the effectiveness of our communications strategy with the provincial government relies on strong interpersonal relationships. To foster these relationships, we have been involving Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) officials directly in the DFMP process. They not only sit on the steering committee but, also, on most impact assessment groups, providing them with opportunities to develop high degrees of awareness of our planning activities and to comment on and contribute directly to plan development. As well, a formal process has been developed to submit component documents to SRD for review and approval, the details of which are available upon request.
3. *Communications with other Industrial Users* – we have been working on several fronts to involve other industrial users in our planning for many years, including negotiating a landmark grazing lease agreement with members of the Alberta Cattle Producers Association in 2000, which has since been incorporated in the government's forest management manual. As well, representatives of the oil and gas sector sit on our Regional Public Advisory Board and our Oil and Gas Landscape Projection Group, and we are involved in negotiating a long-term agreement with the coal-bed methane industry, a relatively new player in our area. As we are now in the process of planning the open houses, we will, as you suggest, invite other industrial users to review our preliminary plans. Understanding the many pressures put on all stakeholders, as you

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point out, we will also post open-house materials on our website and direct interested parties to this source of information through general open-house advertising, so they can review the information at their convenience.

4. *Communications with Aboriginal Peoples* – your comment about financial constraints being an obstacle to meaningful participation in land use management is a valid one and one we have confronted in the past. Recognizing that fiscal limitations could pose a barrier, we are providing, through the Environmental Co-Stewardship Committee, the amount of \$10,000 per year to the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, to enable them to review our plan components. You will also be interested to know that we are planning to hold a DFMP open house in Glenevis in January, to provide all band members with the opportunity to review and comment on the preliminary plan. As for who decides appropriateness of the information, those choices are made by the relevant arm of the development team and documented within the DFMP itself. Your question, however, has prompted us to explore the possibility of having the Alexis sign off on the whole plan, to ensure they are supportive of its contents.
5. *Communications with the General Public* – as indicated, we are now in the planning stages of our DFMP open houses, so your comments in this regard are timely. To maximize public participation, we will be holding three open houses in communities within our FMA –Swan Hills, Fort Assiniboine and Whitecourt on March 14, 15, and 16 respectively – the details of which will be advertised across a fairly large geographical area. To maximize accessibility, we are moving the meetings from January to March, when the weather is likely to be more agreeable, and holding the sessions in the evening, to allow more public members to attend. As previously mentioned, we also will send invitations to specific stakeholder groups, such as other industrial users, elected officials and various interest groups, as well as the media, and direct those who cannot attend to visit our website for more information. As for your comments regarding the makeup of the Public Participation Group (PPG), the absence of representation from environmental organizations reflects the fact that such groups simply do not exist in the areas where we operate. Groups situated in larger centers have told us either that they do not wish to participate or that they cannot participate due to limited resources. To address their absence, we plan to make presentations to several environmental groups, as explained in the next point. I will add that the current PPG members have done an outstanding job of representing local community concerns and have been an extremely valuable part of the process.
6. *Comments on Overall Structure* - regarding your suggestion that we involve our labour union, I can advise that the Millar Western workforce is not unionized. As for your comments about efforts to involve environmental groups, our Chief Forester is intending to make presentations to several non-governmental organizations, such as the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and the World Wildlife Fund, which was also done during the development stages of our last DFMP and yielded helpful comments. Again, all input from these and other external sources will be documented within the plan, together with an explanation of how the information was handled.

In closing, I would like to add that, in addition to a communications plan for the development of the DFMP, we will also be developing a communications plan for the DFMP implementation, which will form part of the DFMP itself. Many of the suggestions you've made will be applicable to and carried forward in that plan as well.

If you should wish further information about the impact of your review on our planned communication activities or would like to discuss any aspects of my response at greater length, please feel free to call me at (780) 486-8270. Again, your thoughtful consideration of the communications plan is greatly appreciated and will serve to strengthen our DFMP planning process and associated communications efforts.

Yours truly,

[Original signed]

Louise Riopel
Communications Manager

cc. DFMP Communications Committee

APPENDIX B: DFMP Newsletters



MILLAR WESTERN FOREST PRODUCTS LTD.
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DFMP *Newsletter*

NUMBER 1, DECEMBER 2003

WELCOME TO THE FIRST ISSUE

Millar Western Forest Products Ltd. is entering into the 7th year of its Forest Management Agreement and this year the Whitecourt Division is initiating a planning endeavor that is required by all FMA holders every ten years: the Detailed Forest Management Plan (DFMP). As recipients of this newsletter, many of you are familiar with the last DFMP. That plan addressed issues that extended "outside the box" of harvesting and growing trees.

The 2006-2016 DFMP will follow that lead. In addition to a formal Timber Supply Analysis, water quality and flow assessment, carbon bud-

get, biodiversity assessment and the submission of an Annual Allowable Cut, this DFMP will consider the possible impacts of long-term dynamic changes in climate, human population, wildfire and multiple resource extraction on the forest resource. This DFMP will investigate drivers of forest change that have traditionally been ignored within the context of a DFMP, specifically areas of influence that fall outside the control of the industry but have long term implications on forest sustainability. This approach to forest management planning in Canada is in its infancy. Bringing these issues forward in a public document such as a DFMP will hopefully present a source of information for public debate and a platform for change in forest management. *cont'd...*



The Athabasca River runs west to east through FMU W13 and forms the east border of FMU W11.

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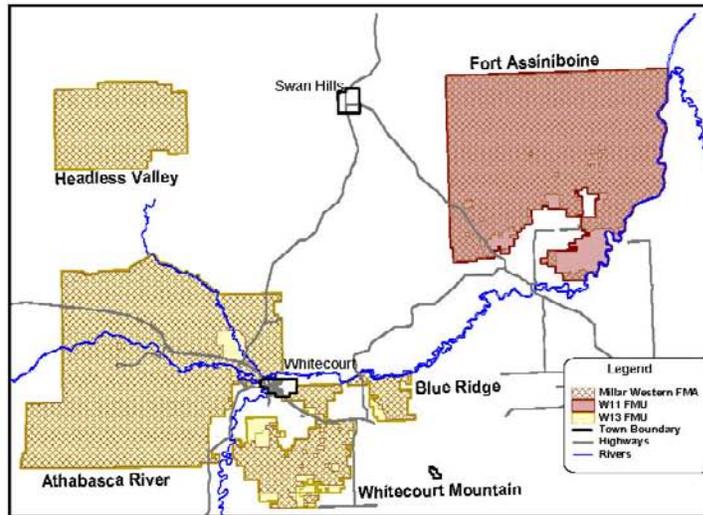
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The newsletter is organized into three categories, or Sections, with each section targeting a different audience.

1. Section I presents broad coverage of DFMP developments, planning issues, background information, and openhouse announcements to stakeholders and the general public.
2. Section II contains information specifically related to Company processes and staff interests.
3. Section III presents information specifically related to the Impact Assessment Groups (IAG's) and external driver groups.

The DFMP Newsletter will be published bi-monthly and all subsequent issues will follow this format. Feedback and input are welcome; please feel free to contact us.



Natural Region and the remainder lies in the Central Mixedwoods. The total FMU area includes 162,542 hectares of FMA land, 2,927 hectares of grazing lease, 1,194 hectares of private land, and 8,360 hectares of reserved land, for a total (gross) land area of 175,025 hectares. More than half of the operable area is deciduous landbase, and both the coniferous and deciduous landbases include large areas of fire-origin stands.

WHAT IS A DFMP?

A Detailed Forest Management Plan, or DFMP, is a public document. Forest companies operating under Forest Management Agreements (FMA's) are required to submit a DFMP to the provincial government every 10 years and must receive plan approval in order to proceed with harvest activities.

The purpose of a DFMP is to provide a general direction for forest management over 200 years.

The purpose of a DFMP is to provide a general direction for forest man-

agement over a 200-year time horizon, and lay the groundwork for more specific operational activities over a shorter, 10-year time horizon.

Current provincial policies require that a DFMP provide the following elements:

- A comprehensive description of the forest management area;
- A summary of previous forest management plans and learning associated with management review;
- A statement of values and objectives;
- A description of and rationale for the chosen forest management strategy;
- A description of the monitoring program; and
- A demonstration of how the DFMP links to short-term operational plans.

Within this framework, Millar Western's 2006-2016 DFMP will include seven major components:

SECTION I: PUBLIC

2002 ADDITION TO MILLAR WESTERN'S FMA

A new Forest Management Unit (FMU) was incorporated into Millar Western's Forest Management Agreement (FMA) area in 2002. The W11 FMU, or "Fort Assiniboine", was previously managed by the Government with the Company holding a Deciduous Timber Allocation in the area.

W11 lies north of the town of Fort Assiniboine and is bordered on the east side by the Athabasca River. The northwest corner of the FMU is located within the Lower Foothills



Pine seedlings for regenerating harvested area.

1. **Physical, social, and economic descriptions** of the forest management area.
2. The 1997-2001 and 2001-2003 **Stewardship** Reports, including plans for addressing deviations from targets.
3. The Company's management **philosophy**. This includes the Values and Objectives that drive the selection of the Preferred Forest Management Strategy and the Indicators and Targets that will be used to measure the Company's success in meeting Objectives.
4. A **Timber Supply Analysis** on the netdown landbase, including a 200-year spatial harvest projection that demonstrates sustained yield.
5. The **research** component of the Company's forest management program.
6. Dynamic assessments to evaluate the impact of forest management on **water, biodiversity and carbon**.
7. Dynamic assessments of long-term **human population change, climate change, wildfire, and oil**

and gas on land use, future forest conditions, and timber supply.

Dynamic impact assessments are a set of Millar Western initiatives that will evaluate the effects of forest change on a diversity of forest values. The Forest Watershed and Riparian Disturbance (FORWARD) project will assess water quality and stream flow; the Biodiversity Assessment Project (BAP) will examine landscape configuration, ecosystem diversity and species specific habitat supply analysis; and, the carbon-modelling group will develop carbon budgets.

Dynamic impact assessments are initiatives to evaluate the effects of harvesting on a diversity of forest values.

Long term dynamic impact assessments are another set of Millar Western initiatives that will drive change within the forest in regards to forest type, structure, extent and use. These are typically non-traditional areas for analysis and will include; human

population change, climate change, wildfire and oil and gas. Each newsletter will present background information on one Impact Assessment Group, beginning in this issue with BAP.

Long-term dynamic impact assessments will include human population change, climate change, wildfire and oil and gas.

The DMFP document will be submitted to the provincial government in May 2006.

WHO CREATES THE DFMP?

The DFMP Planning Team is responsible for coordinating the DFMP with ultimate responsibility for plan development residing with the Chief Forester of the Company. The Planning Team is a multidisciplinary group of technical and professional individuals that includes the Steering



Millar Western staff assess juvenile pine growth.

Committee, Technical Committee, Impact Assessment Groups (IAG), and Advisory Committees.

The Steering Committee is a small team comprised of Millar Western staff, consultants, researchers, and one government representative. This committee defines the direction of the new DFMP using input from multiple sources including the Advisory Committees, public and private stakeholders, government, and science. The Steering Committee also directs and coordinates the Technical Committees and IAGs, acts as an arbitrator, consolidates output and synthesizes information from impact assessments, and uses impact assessment output to advise Millar Western on the suitability of different forest management practices in meeting Company objectives, public expectations, and government policies and legislation.

The Technical Committees include Millar Western staff, researchers, stakeholder representatives, and consultants. These committees are key in providing technical support and expertise to the planning process.

The IAG leaders are responsible for devising scientifically sound means to evaluate the impact of Millar Western's forest management activities on other non-timber values including water, habitat and carbon. They are also responsible for assessing the potential impacts of factors such as population, climate change, wildfire, and oil and gas on future states of the forest land base.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE JUNE 2004

Millar Western is hosting an open house in June 2004 in Whitecourt, Alberta. The primary purpose is to



DFMP Planning Meeting, November 2003. Clockwise from front: Peter Duinker, Stephen Yamasaki, Jonathan Russell, Ellie Prepas, Gordon Putz, Dan Smith, Tom Moore, Richard Loreto, Ray hilt, Tim McCready, Frédérik Doyon.

solicit private and public stakeholder input on key forest values in the Whitecourt area. The Company will present up-to-date information on the progress of the 2006-2016 DFMP and will welcome input and feedback. Questions or concerns regarding the management of the Whitecourt forest area can be raised at this meeting or at any time by contacting the developers of this newsletter. The exact data and location of the open house will be announced in a subsequent newsletter.



BACKGROUND ON IMPACT ASSESSMENT GROUPS:

Biodiversity Assessment Project

The Biodiversity Assessment Project, or BAP, was initiated at Lakehead University in 1995 for the 1997-2006 DFMP. It was designed to predict the potential impacts of various forest management strategies on the biological values of the forest. More specifically, BAP is a suite of computer models that calculate biodiversity levels in terms of landscape fragmentation, ecosystem diversity, and species-specific habitat supply. This is done according to computer-simulated, spatially-explicit forest management scenarios. Habitat supply models were developed for seventeen wildlife vertebrate species. *cont'd..*



Snowshoe Hare

Three principles concerning the conservation of biodiversity helped to develop the analytical approach for BAP. From the 1997-2006 DFMP:

1. Since natural processes operate at different temporal and spatial scales, forest biodiversity must also be maintained at these scales. Selected bioindicators should reflect this condition.
2. Forests are dynamic and their biodiversity status will change both as a consequence of natural forest development and as a result of management intervention. Therefore, the impacts of forest management and human activity should be assessed, keeping in mind the natural range of variation of the bioindicators.
3. Accounting for patterns of biodiversity at these different scales should also account indirectly for a multitude of forest values.

BAP was designed to predict the potential impacts of various forest management strategies on the biological values of the forest.

Dr. Frédéric Doyon is the principal BAP researcher at the Institut Québécois d'Aménagement de la Forêt Feuillue. According to Doyon, BAP is used in the development of the

DFMP to identify a preferred forest management scenario, detect critical forest conditions, help design biodiversity-sensitive practices, help select appropriate monitoring indicators, and provide tools for integrating the public into the decisional procedure.

The framework for assessing how biodiversity values are affected by potential forest management strategies consists of an adaptive management loop. This loop begins when the Company starts the development of a DFMP. It continues through the implementation of the plan over a 10-year period and, through monitoring, feeds into the development of the next DFMP:

- The Company and stakeholders define the strategic direction for forest management. This leads to the forecasting of alternative forest management strategies that follow the general strategic direction.
- Within the forecasting loop, alternative forest management options guide forest projections, which are then assessed for their impacts on biodiversity with the BAP indicator models. The results then feed

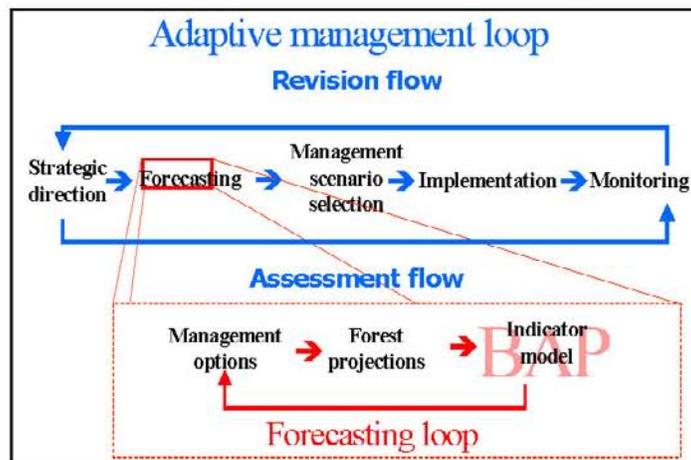
back into revised management options that incorporate improved strategies for biodiversity conservation.

- The forest management scenario that best follows the strategic direction is selected from the range of scenarios that were examined in the forecasting loop.
- The forest company then implements this strategy. It is continually monitored for its effectiveness in meeting the strategic direction. Results from the monitoring process feed back into the definition of new strategic directions when the planning process begins again.



Bull Moose

Dr. Peter Duinker at Dalhousie University heads the habitat supply modelling validation component within BAP. Since the development of the





Spruce Grouse

previous DFMP, graduate students have validated the Goshawk, Brown Creeper, Lynx and Varied Thrush habitat supply models with field data collection on specific habitat characteristics and degree of animal use of habitats. Further testing of other models will begin as soon as the summer of 2005.

The selection of a preferred forest management scenario will rely on output from BAP assessments.

Similar to the 1997-2006 DFMP, the selection of a preferred forest management scenario in the new DFMP will rely on output from BAP assessments in order to best reduce the impacts of timber harvesting on biodiversity values. Updated BAP reports and developments are available upon request.



Barred Owl

ISO 14001

Millar Western is developing an Environmental Management System (EMS) according to the international certification requirements of ISO 14001 (International Organization for Standardization).

An EMS is an organized and formal approach to managing environmental issues within an organization. The ISO standard provides a structured framework for the Company to manage the impact of forestry activities on the environment. This initiative supports the Company's commitment stated in the 1997-2006 DFMP to minimize or eliminate pollutant deposition. The EMS will facilitate sustainable forest management. Progress towards developing the EMS will be reported in subsequent newsletters.

SECTION II: MILLAR WESTERN

VALUES DATABASE

The Forestry Corp. in conjunction with Millar Western is developing a database to house real (versus derived) data pertaining to base data, values data, forest operations, research, Impact Assessment Groups, public values, and non-forestry land uses. Database updates will be presented in this newsletter as they become available.

Please contact The Forestry Corp. to obtain a list of available data or to obtain copies of data.

2004 CRUISING PROGRAM

The 2004 cruising program will incorporate multiple forms of data collection including Temporary and Permanent Sample Plots (TSP's and PSP's), soils data, and an ecological classification. A meeting between Millar Western staff and The Forestry Corp. will be held in January 2004 to establish a protocol for data collection within the cruising program. This process will include a refinement of TSP and PSP protocols and incorporation of BAP and FORWARD data requirements.

Additionally, a regeneration cruise will be undertaken of the Virginia Hills Burn to assess how much of the area should be included within the productive land base for the next Timber Supply Analysis (TSA). The sampling protocols were submitted to Alberta Sustainable Resource

Common Name	Scientific Name
Barred Owl	<i>Strix varia</i>
Brown Creeper	<i>Certhia americana</i>
Canada Lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>
Elk	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>
Least Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax minimus</i>
Marten	<i>Martes americana</i>
Moose	<i>Alces alces</i>
Northern Flying Squirrel	<i>Glaucomys sabrinus</i>
Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis atricapillus</i>
Pileated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>
Ruffed Grouse	<i>Bonasa umbellus</i>
Snowshoe Hare	<i>Lepus americanus</i>
Southern Red-backed Vole	<i>Clethrionomys gapperi</i>
Spruce Grouse	<i>Dendragapus canadensis franklinii</i>
Three-toed Woodpecker	<i>Picoides tridactylus</i>
Varied Thrush	<i>Ixoreus naevius</i>
Woodland Caribou	<i>Rangifer tarandus caribou</i>

Seventeen BAP species.

Development in September 2003 and once they have been approved the Company will undertake the cruise.

TOWARDS THE ROUND 1 TSA

Primary input requirements for the Round 1 Timber Supply Analysis (TSA) include defining management philosophies, developing yield curves, and a landbase netdown.

The definition of management philosophies begins with the management values. To date, the values identified in the CSA (Canadian Standards Association) Sustainable Forest Management: Requirements and Guidance document, 2002, have provided a basis for this process. Millar Western is refining these values so that they are specifically relevant to the Company's forest management area. Once this is done, objectives, indicators and targets will be created. This process will rely on input from other forest operators, private and public stakeholders, First

Nations, and the government. A public open house will be held in early summer of 2004 to present the proposed philosophies and solicit input and feedback.

The landbase netdown process will be conducted at The Forestry Corp. and will include an update of the W13 and W11 FMU landbases.

AQUATIC AND WETLANDS INVENTORY

In the 1997-2001 Stewardship Report, Millar Western committed to developing an aquatic and wetlands inventory. Although the specific process has yet to be finalized, a major component of this process is likely to involve air photo interpretation. This inventory will be recorded in the Values Database. It will provide input into the landbase netdown for the final TSA round as well as into the FORWARD and BAP modelling tool updates.



Salvage harvesting burned timber.

1997-2001 STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENTS

The 1997-2001 Stewardship Report was submitted to the government on November 4, 2003. Several management commitments came out of this document. One of these is the aquatic and wetlands inventory. Additional commitments are listed as follows.

Monitoring Commitments:

- Monitor trapping yield and success, grazing use and carrying capacity, number of complaints from other users;
- Report on coarse woody debris;
- Compare pre-harvest assessment date to year of harvest;
- Track areas harvested under FORWARD;
- Calculate percent area harvested containing rare habitat types and LERP (Likelihood of Encountering Rare Plants) values;
- Report structure retention volumes and areas;
- Report projected vs. actual CRICS (Cultural Resources Impact Classification System) values;
- Re-inspect Barred Owl nesting boxes.

Inventory Commitments:

- Assess presence and distribution of aquatic biota;
- Complete crossings inventory;

New Systems/SOP s/Plans:

- Develop recreational monitoring system;
- Develop EMS (Environmental Management System);

- Stand-specific black spruce plan;
- Develop ground rules for rare plants;
- Incorporate rare plants into Roads SOP (Standard Operating Procedure).

Many of these commitments are already well underway. Others are a requirement for increased diligence in monitoring existing management practices for reporting in the next Stewardship Report.

SECTION IV: IMPACT ASSESSMENT GROUPS

NOVEMBER 2003 WORKSHOP

The November DFMP workshop held in Quebec initiated the organization of multiple impact assessment and external driver groups who will be working on the 2006-2016 DFMP. These groups will be conducting assessments to evaluate the impact of forest management on water, biodiversity and carbon, as well as assessments of long-term human population change, climate change, wildfire and oil and gas on land use, future forest conditions, and timber supply.

The first day of the workshop involved a series of presentations from each group that provided background information and research results to date. The second day involved interactive discussions regarding how these groups will coordinate their activities for the



November DFMP Workshop Attendees. Back Row: Gordon Putz, Richard Loreto, Janice Traynor, Gunnilla Nilsson, Arnold Rudy, Tim McCready, Ted Gooding, Margaret Donnelly, Janice Burke, Tom Moore, Dan Smith. Front Row: Jonathan Russell, Ray Hiltz, Ellie Prepas, Peter Duinker, Stephen Yamasaki, Frédéric Doyon, Ivan Whitson. **Photographer:** Mark Serediak.

timely completion of the DFMP in May 2006. In particular, discussion revolved around data requirements, data collection, data flow, and timelines.

The timelines and data flow processes discussed during the workshop are currently being formalized at The Forestry Corp. Copies of the presentations and a meeting summary are still available on the ftp site.



CONCEPTUAL DATA FLOW MODEL

A conceptual data flow model is being developed at The Forestry Corp. and includes data inputs, processes and outputs along a two-year timeline for each of the groups involved in the development of the DFMP. This will be posted on the FTP site for review and feedback shortly.

2004 FIELD DATA REQUIREMENTS

Millar Western's 2004 cruising program will coordinate data collection for the TSP and PSP programs, soils, and ecological classification. Data requirements must be presented to Millar Western and The Forestry Corp. by the BAP and FORWARD groups no later than January 30, 2004, to be incorporated into the new protocols for data collection.

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MILLAR WESTERN FOREST PRODUCTS LTD.

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DFMP *Newsletter*

NUMBER 2, March 2004

STATUS OF THE 2006-2016 DFMP

Welcome to the second issue of Millar Western's DFMP Newsletter. There has been a considerable amount of progress made on the DFMP planning initiatives in the last two months.

The Company is currently finalizing a Public Participation Plan to guide public involvement during the development of the DFMP. In addition, a "Communication Tracking Application" database has been developed to record and track all communications between Millar Western and the public, which will in turn help the Company to incorporate pub-

lic input directly into the DFMP process.

As the 2004 summer field season approaches, plans are being made for data collection. Growth and yield data, as well as physical, biological and ecological data for the Impact Assessment Groups (IAGs), will be collected. Members from several of the IAGs have met with Millar Western to discuss data collection needs. They are also discussing and evaluating possible approaches to model landscape dynamics under different future climate, population, wildfire and oil and gas scenarios.

Finally, this issue of the newsletter features a comprehensive background description of the



Aspen stand with spruce understory.

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Forest Watershed and Riparian Disturbance (FORWARD) Project. The goal of the FORWARD Project is to model processes that link disturbance to the quantity and quality of water in the Millar Western FMA area.

SECTION I: PUBLIC

CHANGES TO FMA BOUNDARY

Millar Western's Forest Management Agreement (FMA) area boundary is being updated. During the development of the 1997-2006 DFMP,

several inconsistencies were identified regarding the Whitecourt FMA boundary. These pertain to changes in land uses such as grazing leases, oil and gas licenses, and private land.

Millar Western contracted EZRA Consulting Ltd. to review recent landuse changes that have affected the FMA boundary, (deletions or additions) and to clarify the current boundary.

These changes have been reviewed by the provincial government and are currently being finalized. The net change in the FMA area is negligible but nonetheless, it is extremely important that Millar Western has an accurate, approved boundary for the

DFMP and lower level planning initiatives.

MILLAR WESTERN'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS: AN INTRODUCTION

As managers of a public forest resource, Millar Western would like interested parties to have input into the development of the 2006-2106 DMFP. The earlier this input is received the more efficiently it can be incorporated into the DFMP process. The Public Participation Process describes Millar Western's proposed strategy for involving the



Aerial view of regenerating harvest blocks in Millar Western's Whitecourt FMA area.

public in the development of the 2006-2016 DFMP.

A diverse range of interest groups became known to Millar Western during the current (1997-2006) planning period. Involving these groups early in the planning process will help the Company to better address concerns regarding the management of the defined forest area, and incorporate public values and non-timber resource requirements into the Preferred Forest Management (PFM) strategy. As the process for involving the public is expected to be dynamic, the plan is intended only as a guide. The Company will adapt the plan to accommodate new interest groups and reflect the evolving process of interactions. These changes will be presented in the final DFMP submission in the form of a revised Public Participation Process for the implementation of the new DFMP.

There are four main elements to the Public Participation Process:

1. A description of known interest groups;
2. A set of operating rules to guide public involvement;
3. A description of communication and information exchange processes; and
4. Proposed public involvement activities specific to the development of this DFMP.

The Process is in the final stages of development. It will soon be submitted to the provincial government and then presented to the public for review and feedback.

BACKGROUND ON IMPACT ASSESSMENT GROUPS:

FORWARD Project

By: Janice Burke



The genesis of the Forest Watershed and Riparian Disturbance (FORWARD) Project

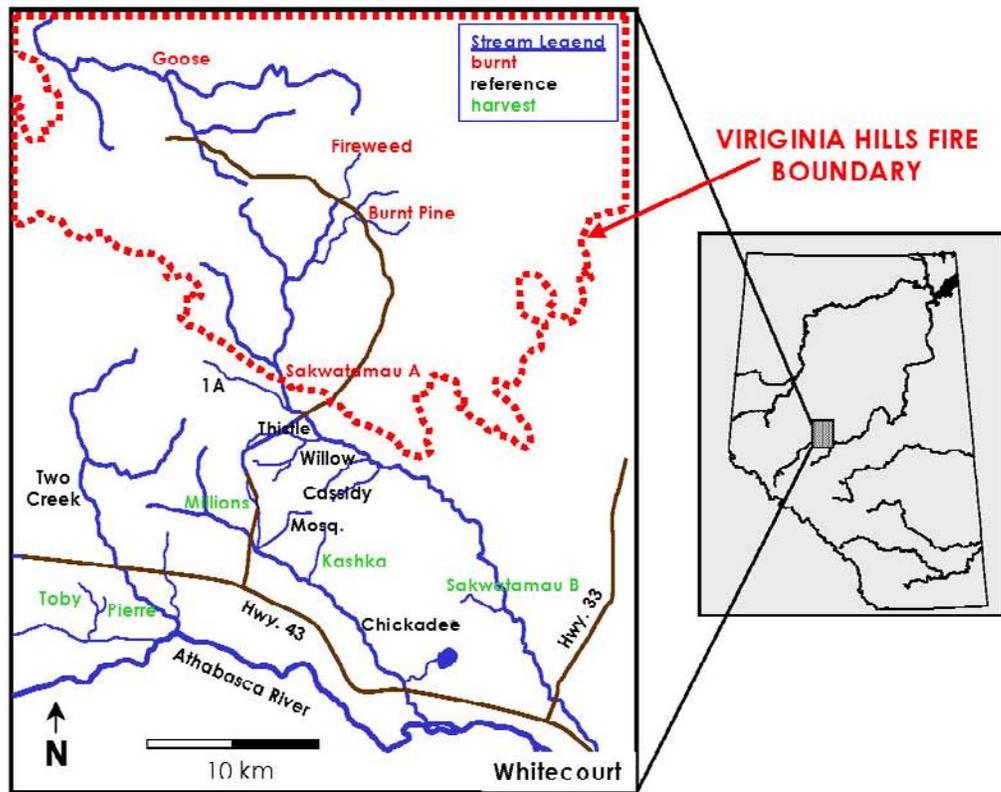
was an interest on the part of forest companies working in the Virginia Hills area, who wanted to link forest management with water management. The 1998

Virginia Hills fire occurred while a cooperative program was being developed between the forest industry and university scientists in possession of a unique data set from a watershed study in 1983. The fire burned 89% of the watershed of one of two large streams that were part of this study on streamflow and water quality.

Data from the 1983 study came to represent pre-fire conditions in both a burned and a "reference" (non-burned) stream. Immediately after the fire, a collaborative program involving researchers from the University of Alberta and Millar Western Forest Products was initiated to determine the impacts of fire on streams in the western Canadian boreal forest.



The Virginia Hills fire.



Map of the FORWARD research area.

By 2001, with funding from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, the FORWARD project was formalized and evolved into a partnership between Millar Western, Blue Ridge Lumber, LP Canada Ltd., West Fraser Mills Ltd., Vanderwell Contractors (1971) Ltd., and scientists from three Canadian universities.

The goal of the FORWARD project is to model processes that link disturbance (fire and harvesting) to the quantity and quality of water within watersheds in the Millar Western FMA area. In general, watershed disturbance is

expected to increase losses of water and nutrients from the forest, which has implications for forest recovery. The fire in 1998 caused an increase in nutrient and water movement out of burnt watersheds. Researchers expect to see a similar, though less dramatic, response after harvesting.

The focal point for disturbance is forest soils. Disturbance of forest soils affects:

1. Movement of water (rain, snowmelt) over land and through soils and subsurface flow paths;

2. Soil erodability and particle movement; and
3. Nutrient cycling and transformations in soils.

These changes, which are mediated by the type and intensity of the disturbance and by soil characteristics, affect the quantity and quality of stream water draining the watersheds.

The FORWARD Impact Assessment Group is working to understand the mechanisms for water and nutrient retention and loss in study watersheds in the Millar Western FMA area. The role of the FORWARD project in the

DFMP is to predict disturbance-induced changes to ecological processes on various spatial scales and time scales, so that forest planners can use this information to manage these changes.

There are 16 study watersheds in FORWARD. In addition to the two previously mentioned there are two additional large watersheds (as part of the fire disturbance component) and 12 small watersheds. Four of the watersheds are slated for harvest in winter 2003 and 2004 will have at least 60% of their forest cover removed. Of these, two will receive 30 m buffer strips and two will have no buffers. A fifth watershed was harvested in 2000.

The FORWARD project is field-intensive because data are needed on fine time and spatial scales to drive the modelling process. Field infrastructure in the Millar Western FMA area includes the following:

- To monitor precipitation, temperature, wind, solar radiation, and other parameters: four weather stations at locations spanning the elevation gradient of the study area;
- To collect water samples for nutrient and suspended sediment analysis during high



Typical small FORWARD stream showing Isco sampler.

streamflow periods: Isco automated samplers;

- To collect in-stream information: water level and temperature recorders; and
- To obtain reliable assessments of water flow year-round: control structures at four streams (with more planned for the future).

The core program in FORWARD includes stream, soil, and vegetation field teams, water and soils laboratory components and a modelling team. The core program is complemented by graduate student thesis projects. The collaborative academic-industry environment provides a productive learning experience for students.



Andrea Hargrove and Isco sampler.

University researchers in the FORWARD program are Dr. Daniel Smith (modelling, University of Alberta), Dr. Ellie Prepas (streams, Lakehead University), Dr. Gordon Putz (modelling, University of Saskatchewan), and Dr. Lense Meyer (soils, Lakehead University). The core program teams are led by Mark Serediak (stream), Dr. Ivan Whitson (soils), and Nancy Luckai (vegetation).

For more information, you can find FORWARD on the web at www.forward.lakeheadu.ca



SECTION II: MILLAR WESTERN

COMMUNICATION TRACKING APPLICATION

By: Grant Burkell

Forest management in Alberta is progressing to incorporate more public input into strategic and operational planning decisions. There are considerable benefits to this approach both for the public and for forest companies. Namely, when a company is faced with the task of making forest management decisions, it is more practical to include those who will be affected by the decisions from the outset.

To facilitate the monitoring and tracking of public involvement, Millar Western created the Communication Tracking Application. This computer database will be

used by Millar Western staff to document communications and associated response actions between the Company and private and public stakeholders. Tracking communications in this manner will help Millar Western to incorporate public input into strategic planning initiatives such as the development of the new DFMP, as well as operational planning initiatives, such as Annual Operating Plans.

The database will also help Millar Western to report on communications for the purposes of fulfilling commitments as defined within the DFMP. For example, the Company can use the database to summarize all public communications and resulting actions. This information can then be reported in annual reports and five-year Stewardship Reports, which are then submitted to the provincial government for review. These reports are also available to the public.

The multiple database functions include:

1. Document communications (phone calls, letters, open houses, tours, in-person conversations, public information sessions, meetings, etc.) initiated either:

- 1) Internally - Millar Western initiates communication with stakeholders; or
- 2) Externally - External party initiates communication with Millar Western.



Jonathan Russell, Chief Forester for Millar Western, discusses a poster display at a public information session with Andrea Doucette, a researcher in the Biodiversity Assessment Project (BAP) who validated the Habitat Supply Model (HSM) for Lynx.

2. Link related documents within the database to communication events.

3. Link follow-up actions to communication events such that the fulfillment of the contact actions can be tracked and reported.

4. Produce detailed and summarized reports for individual contact events and for sets of related contact events.

5. Store detailed individual contact information for external contacts associated with communications events.

6. Assemble groups of individuals for the purpose of mass contacting (*ie.* Trapper Group for

notifying trappers of operational harvest plans).

2004 FIELD SEASON

Summer may be four months away but plans for the summer field season are already upon us. The new DFMP is due in May 2006 and considerable field data is required for many aspects of the DFMP development process. Growth and yield data is required to support the development of yield curves for the Timber Supply Analysis. Additional field data is required to support the analyses of the Impact Assessment Groups (IAGs).

Millar Western and the IAGs are currently discussing specific data requirements that will guide the field sampling protocols this

summer. These protocols will be finalized by early spring.



Mark Chileen measures the diameter of a pine tree.

SECTION III: IMPACT ASSESSMENT GROUPS

DFMP LANDSCAPE DYNAMICS MODELLING

By: *Stephen Yamasaki*

The Impact Assessment Groups (IAGs) are currently developing the tools needed to evaluate how future climate change, population growth, wildfire, oil and gas developments, as well as forest harvesting might impact Millar Western's FMA area.

Landscape dynamics modelling is a computer-based modelling pro-

cess that can be used to explore long-term, dynamic impacts over large areas. Millar Western will use this process to investigate how different management scenarios might influence the forest's age structure and composition as well as biodiversity and other values.

Millar Western and staff at the IQAFF Institute (Institut Québécois d'Aménagement de la Forêt Feuillue) are currently evaluating options for modelling landscape dynamics. One option that is being considered is SELES (Spatially Explicit Landscape Event Simulator). SELES is a tool that was specifically developed for landscape modelling by Andrew Fall.

An attractive feature of SELES lies in its use of multiple sub-models that each represents a different ecosystem process; for example: wildfire, oil and gas development, *etc.* These sub-models are independent in terms

of their programming, a feature that makes it easy to manipulate and adjust the sub-models. At every time step during a SELES run, the sub-models modify geographic data, such as forest composition and age, that were fed into the model initially and create a new state for the forest landscape. These resulting conditions in turn become the initial condition in the next time step, and the process begins again.

Once IQAFF staff have simulated different possible future forest states, other IAGs will evaluate how these possible scenarios might impact water quality and quantity (the FOWARD project), biodiversity (the Biodiversity Assessment Project, or BAP), and carbon outputs.

The goal of this work is to generate a better understanding of the drivers of forest change, and how harvesting practices interact with and are affected by these drivers.



The next stage in evaluating the options for modelling landscape dynamics will involve a detailed examination of the sub-models that would go into SELES.

For more information on Landscape Dynamics Modelling for the DFMP and on SELES, please contact Stephen Yamasaki at (819) 983-6589, or by e-mail at syamasaki@iqaff.qc.ca

WHAT'S NEW ON THE FTP SITE?

1. The Conceptual Dataflow Model

One of the outcomes of the Montebello workshop in November was the suggestion to map the data inputs, processes, and outputs for the development of the DFMP. This has since been created at The Forestry Corp. and is available for downloading from the FTP site. The file name is: [Visio-Feb24_conceptual_data_flow_model.pdf](#). It charts all general DFMP development processes from now until 2006. This is a work in progress. More detail on data transfer still has to



Understory spruce in a burned stand.

be incorporated and comments are invited.

2. DFMP Planning Group Contact Information

An updated list of planning group contact information is also available on the FTP site. The file name is [Planning_Group_contact_info.xls](#).

Please contact Millar Western if you wish to be removed from the DFMP Newsletter mailing list.

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