



MILLAR WESTERN FOREST PRODUCTS LTD.

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DFMP *Newsletter*

NUMBER 3, May 2004

DFMP UPDATE

The Plan Development Team (PDT) for Millar Western's Detailed Forest Management Plan (DFMP) consists of a large group of researchers, forestry professionals, public representatives, and government employees.

Members of the PDT met several times in the last few months. The Steering Committee, who directs the DFMP development process, have begun monthly meetings to discuss the strategic direction of

the plan and resolve technical issues associated with the planning process. Representatives from the Steering Committee have also met with several researchers working on the biodiversity, climate change, and population change aspects of the DFMP. Many of the outcomes from these meetings are presented in this DFMP Newsletter, including:

- Amendments to the Plan Development Team;
- Proposed revisions to Millar Western's field sampling protocols, and;
- Field tours. *cont'd*



A helicopter delivers nursery-grown seedlings to tree planters in Millar Western's FMA (Forest Management Agreement) area.

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Cones are collected by Millar Western from mature trees in the Whitecourt forest (top left) and shipped to a tree nursery. At the nursery (top right), seeds from the cones are used to propagate new seedlings that will be planted in areas Millar Western has harvested. Seedlings must be planted within a given distance from the seed collection point to maintain the genetic identity of trees in that area, and the location of the seed source must therefore be carefully tracked. Here (bottom), a box of seedlings ready for planting is labelled with the seedlot (59-14-5-87 S17), which contains a geographical description of the collection location: 59 is the township, 14 is the range, and 5 is the meridian. It also contains the year of collection (1987), and the section number (S17).

This issue also features an article on the Climate Change Landscape Projection Group (LPG), who is modelling the potential effects of future climate and vegetation change on the Whitecourt forest area. See the article 'Background on Impact Assessment and Landscape Projection Groups: Climate Change', on page 3 of this newsletter.

SECTION I: PUBLIC

NEWSLETTERS ON WEBSITE

Current and back issues of the DFMP Newsletter are now available in PDF format on Millar Western's corporate website.

Look under the Publications link at www.millarwestern.com.

WHAT IS A "TERMS OF REFERENCE"?

In accordance with provincial legislation, forest products companies must develop and submit a Terms of Reference (ToR) prior to submitting a DFMP.

In the broadest sense, a ToR is a schedule for the development of the DFMP. It is a document that is often referred to as the "plan to do the plan".

The ToR defines the scope of the DFMP, and sets the timelines for the development of the *cont'd*

DFMP components and for the approval processes. The ToR includes a Communication Plan for internal, government and public communications. This will lay the groundwork for formalizing a Public Participation Process with public interest groups. Millar Western will submit their ToR to the government in June, 2004. The ToR is subject to approval by the Manager of the Forest Planning Section in the Alberta Government.

**BACKGROUND ON
IMPACT ASSESSMENT &
LANDSCAPE
PROJECTION GROUPS:
CLIMATE CHANGE**

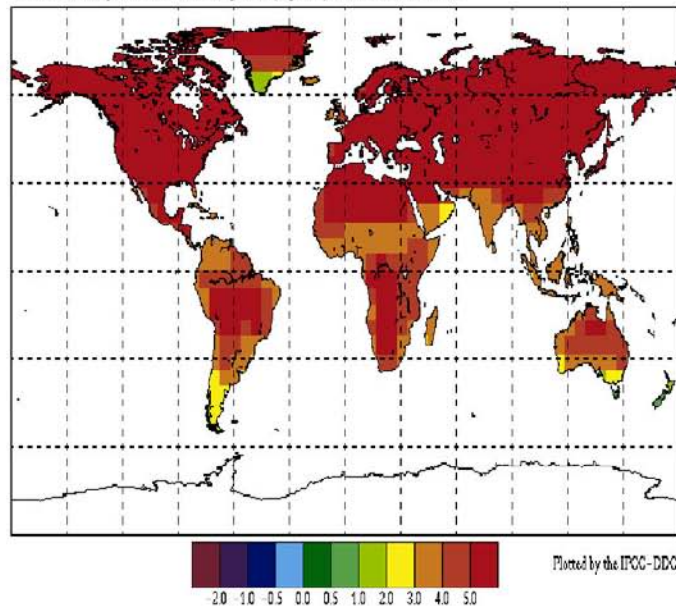
**Millar Western FMA will
serve as test area for global
climate change research**

By: Stephen Yamasaki

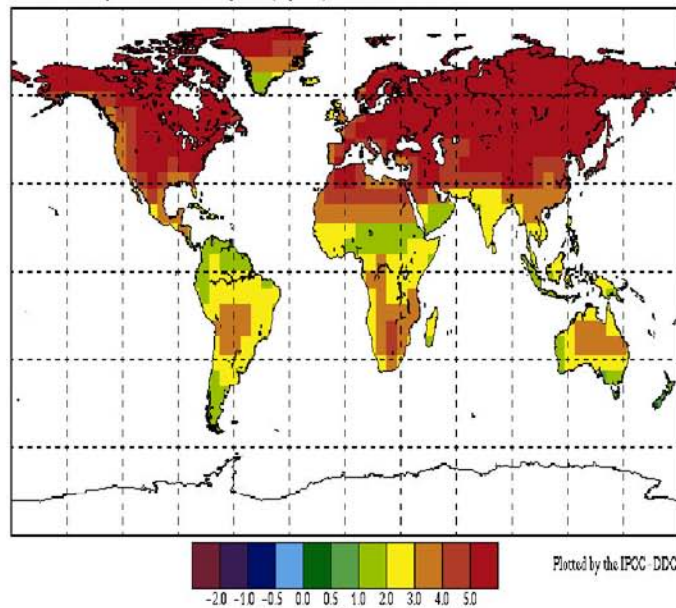
From 1750 to the current date, there has been a 30% increase in atmospheric CO₂. There have been more frequent and more intense hot periods and droughts. Around the world, sea levels have increased by 1 to 2 mm every year since 1900. In the northern hemisphere, the ice cover on lakes now lasts about 2 weeks less than in 1900. Changes to arctic ice are alarming: since 1950, its extent has decreased by 10-15% and thickness has decreased by 40%. El Niño events, which are responsible for extreme weather events in North America, are now more frequent, intense, and persistent.

cont'd

NISSW/A2a January to December Mean Temperature (degrees C) 2080s relative to 1961-90



NISS99/B1a January to December Mean Temperature (degrees C) 2080s relative to 1961-90



Two different climate change scenarios as predicted by the IPCC using the 'NIES99' climate change model.

These observed changes are on the minds of many scientists and, more and more, becoming a pre-occupation for policy makers, business people, and the public in general.

At the United Nations (UN), there is a group of scientists and policy makers known as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); this group is responsible for the development of climate change predictions that inform the Member States of the UN.

The work of the IPCC begins with the development of "storylines" describing the development of human societies globally and their impacts on trade, industrialization, transportation, education, attitudes towards the environment, and consumption of goods. From these storylines, the IPCC scientists develop "emissions scenarios", which are projections of the production of greenhouse gases (such as CO₂ and methane) over the next 100 years.

The emissions scenarios serve as the basis for most of the climate change modeling that takes place throughout the world. Thus, climate modeling groups, such as the Canadian Centre for Climate Modeling and Analysis (CCCma), feed these emissions scenario data into their climate models, and project how climate may change over time. These models of climate change are very complex, as they simultaneously re-compute and keep track of ocean, atmospheric, and



Future climate change may result in climatic and vegetation conditions that are more conducive to wildfire. Doug Scatcherd, Silviculture Forester for Millar Western, evaluates the regeneration potential for a burned stand in the Virginia Hills area near Whitecourt.

soil temperatures, as well as a host of other variables. All of these computations are carried out for the entire globe. When climatologists talk about data, they talk in terms of terabytes (that is, roughly the equivalent of 1 million 3 ½ inch diskettes).

Most scientists predict a drier and warmer climate for Alberta, which has important impacts on the forests in the province. These impacts may vary in scale from cells of individual organisms to large-scale impacts, such as changes in the composition of forests.

The growth of trees and their ability to produce flowers and seeds may be affected. At a larger scale, the changing climate may bring greater disturbance by

insects (the mountain pine beetle in particular) and fire.

It is, however, difficult to predict the exact outcome for three main reasons. First, the field work on climate change to date has been limited to one or a few years, and has been carried out over small study areas. Thus, it is difficult to generalize the conclusions. Second, the forecasts for climate change vary greatly, depending on the choice of emissions scenario and climate model. And third, forest ecosystems are very complex indeed.

To overcome this uncertainty, the Climate Change Landscape Projection Group (LPG) will look at a range of climate scenarios and will model change based on our understanding of ecological process, an understanding *cont'd*

that has developed over nearly one hundred years.

We will be studying, through the use of computer models, the influence of projected climate change on plant and soil processes. Then, based on these changing processes, we will model the impacts of climate change on forest growth, wild-fires, harvesting, and wildlife.

SECTION II: MILLAR WESTERN

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The DFMP Steering Committee has scheduled monthly meetings to discuss the development of the DFMP. The meetings will ensure that the direction Millar Western is taking with the DFMP is consistent with the government's protocols. The meetings also provide opportunities to discuss general and technical developments in the DFMP process.

The first three Steering Committee meetings were held on March 15, April 19 and May 10. Subsequent meetings are scheduled for:

- June 14
- July 12
- August 16
- September 13
- October 18
- November 15
- December 13



Millar Western pulp mill in the town of Whitecourt.

All meetings are to take place at The Forestry Corp. in Edmonton. Meeting minutes will be made available to all members of the Plan Development Team by posting them on the FTP site in the 'DFMP' folder. Please contact Gunnilla Nilsson at The Forestry Corp. if you require access information (contact details on last page of newsletter).

W11 FMU PFMP SUBMITTED

Forest Management Unit (FMU) W11 was incorporated into Millar Western's Forest Management Agreement (FMA) area in 2002. Accordingly, the Company is required to submit to the provincial government a Preliminary Forest Management Plan (PFMP) for this area.

The PFMP for W11 was submitted to the provincial government on April 2, 2004. The three doc-

uments that comprise the W11 PFMP are:

- W11 PFMP - Timber Supply Analysis Documentation, including the recommended forest management strategies and the timber supply analysis documentation;
- W11 PFMP - Landbase Net-down Documentation, and;
- W11 PFMP - Yield Curve Documentation.

SECTION III: ASSESSMENT & PROJECTION GROUPS

UPDATES TO THE PLAN DEVELOPMENT TEAM

There have been a few amendments and updates to the Plan Development Team. *cont'd*

There are now 14 committees and groups:

1. Steering Committee
2. Environmental Co-Stewardship Committee
3. Communications Committee
4. Peer Review Committee
5. Timber Supply Analysis Impact Assessment Group (IAG)
6. FireSmart IAG
7. Biodiversity Assessment Project (BAP) IAG
8. Forest Watershed and Riparian Disturbance (FORWARD) Project IAG
9. Carbon IAG
10. Climate Change (and Vegetation Change) Landscape Projection Group (LPG)
11. Population Change LPG
12. Wildfire LPG
13. Oil and Gas LPG
14. Landscape Dynamics Modelling LPG

A complete list of the committees and group members is available to the PDT on the FTP site. Changes to the groups are as follows:

The Landscape Projection Groups were formerly called Impact Assessment Groups. The term 'landscape projection' more accurately describes the role of these groups, to project possible landscape changes that may result from factors external to forest management.

The Environmental Co-Stewardship Committee is a new committee. It was established by Alexis First Nation and Millar Western for the purpose of reviewing and guiding Millar Western's opera-

tions in the Traditional Territory, as well as reviewing the cumulative impact of activities in the Traditional Territory. Alexis First Nation occupies a Reservation approximately 75 kilometers southeast of Whitecourt, and has a 3500-hectare Reservation located within Millar Western's FMA.

The Communications Committee is new and will oversee the development and implementation of a Communication Plan for the DFMP process.

The FireSmart IAG is a new group who will conduct a landscape fire assessment of the FMA area by developing "FireSmart" strategies to mitigate the likelihood of large, high-intensity, high-severity fires, especially around the town of Whitecourt. In addition, the Wildfire LPG will conduct analyses on future wildfire risks as a result of climate and population change.



High-intensity crown fire.

The Landscape Dynamics Modelling LPG is newly formalized and consists of the individuals involved in the landscape dynamics modelling process (see Issue Number 2: 'DFMP Landscape Dynamics Modelling').

IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND LANDSCAPE PROJECTION GROUP MEETINGS

In March, three members from the DFMP Steering Committee (the team of Millar Western staff, consultants, researchers and government who direct and coordinate the development of the DFMP) travelled to Ontario and Quebec to meet with two of the DFMP planning groups.

On March 17, they met with Richard Loreto from the Population LPG. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the group's approach for modelling future changes in human population in the Whitecourt area. Key outcomes from the meeting included:

- Identification of data requirements for the Population LPG;
- Integration mechanisms with other IAGs and LPGs; and
- Timelines for deliverables.

cont'd



Left to right: Ted Gooding and Gunnilla Nilsson (The Forestry Corp.; Steering Committee) and Richard Loreto (RAL Consulting; Population LPG) discuss potential methods for modelling demographic trends in the Whitecourt area.

The group plans to have a draft report on future population and land use trends by the end of 2004. A workshop is planned for January 2005 where all the IAGs and LPGs will discuss how the results in the Population LPG report will be integrated into their assessments.

On March 18, the Steering Committee members met with the Climate Change, BAP (Biodiversity Assessment Project), and Landscape Dynamics Modelling groups at Institut Québécois d'Aménagement de la Forêt Feuillue (IQAFF) in Ripon, Quebec.



Meeting at IQAFF: Frédéric Doyon and Ted Gooding (top); Gunnilla Nilsson and Robin Duchesneau (middle); Stephen Yamasaki (bottom).

The group discussed a framework for the landscape dynamics modelling process. This is the process that will explore the potential long-term, dynamic impacts of changes in climate, population, wildfire, and oil and gas (see Issue Number 2 for a description of the landscape dynamics modelling process). They also discussed issues around modelling impacts of timber harvesting on biodiversity.

Summaries from both meetings are available for downloading from the FTP site.

POPULATION GROUP TOURS ALBERTA

Richard Loreto (RAL Consulting) and Tom McCormack (The Center for Spatial Economics) from



Tom McCormack, ready for a helicopter tour of the Millar Western area.

the Population Landscape Projection Group (LPG) flew to Alberta to tour the Whitecourt forest area early in May.

Steering Committee members Jonathan Russell (Millar Western) and Ted Gooding (The Forestry Corp.) led a helicopter tour of the Whitecourt forest, and a truck tour of the foothills south of Rocky Mountain House. *cont'd*



Tom McCormack and Richard Loreto stand in a regenerating harvest block in the Virginia Hills Burn area of the Whitecourt forest.



Different land use values: agriculture meets forestry near Whitecourt.

Why the foothills? Because some of the future forest scenarios projected by the Climate Change LPG are pointing towards a drier, warmer climate in the Whitecourt area. This could potentially cause lower elevation forest types to migrate to higher elevations. Richard and Tom wanted to see what the Whitecourt area *might* look like 200 years in the future. This will help them to consider changes in land use value associated with potential, future changes in population.

SAMPLING PROGRAM PROTOCOLS

Millar Western and the DFMP Plan Development Team are finalizing the revisions to Millar Western’s Temporary and Permanent Sample Plot (TSP and PSP) programs. Most of the changes to the sampling programs relate to the data collection requirements

for the Biodiversity Assessment Project (BAP; see Issue Number 1 for background information on BAP).

Three types of changes were made:

- 1) Some of the stand and tree attributes collected under the old protocols for BAP were not being utilized and were therefore dropped.
- 2) Several attributes have been added to the data collection protocols to improve BAP analyses. As an example, ecosite will be recorded for all TSPs (under existing protocols, ecosite is only recorded for PSPs).
- 3) Improvements have been made to the protocols for collecting

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data on downed woody debris (deadfall), snags (standing dead trees), and several other ecological tree and stand attributes.

The revised protocols will be submitted to the government for approval this month. Field sampling using the revised protocols will begin in mid May for the TSP program, and in June for the PSP program.

WHAT’S NEW ON THE FTP SITE?

There are several new or updated postings on the FTP site:

- Updated Plan Development Team (PDT) information
- Updated DFMP process flow-chart
- Minutes and summaries from PDT Meetings

Members of the PDT who require access information for the FTP site are asked to contact Gunnilla Nilsson at The Forestry Corp.

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IN THIS ISSUE...

The Timber Supply Analysis Impact Assessment Group is featured in this issue of the DFMP Newsletter. This group will lead the process to calculate the annual volume of timber that Millar Western will propose to harvest in their DFMP (Detailed Forest Management Plan). Also in this issue, information on the newly-formed DFMP planning group, the Environmental Co-Stewardship Committee, as well as descriptions and photographs from two different field tours of the Whitecourt forest.

SECTION I: PUBLIC

MILLAR WESTERN AND ALEXIS NATION SIGN MAJOR AGREEMENT

By: Janet Millar

At a ceremony held in Edmonton on May 26th, Mac Millar and Chief Roderick Alexis signed an economic development and cul-



Left to right: Rob Merrifield, Yellowhead MP, Mac Millar, President and CEO of Millar Western Forest Products Ltd., and Chief Roderick Alexis of the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation.

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tural exchange agreement between Millar Western and the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, whose traditional territory overlaps the Whitecourt Forest Management Agreement area.

Under the agreement, the Millar Western Woodlands group will be working closely with the Alexis Nation to ensure the people of that community not only share in the benefits of responsible resource development, but also participate in planning processes to help sustain a diversity of forest values.

The Alexis/Millar Western Forestry and Economic Development Agreement (FEDA) features a commitment to establish an Environmental Co-Stewardship Committee (ECSC). The ECSC will participate in the development of Millar Western's DFMP (see page 7 of this issue). In addition,

the FEDA features a commitment to provide training and employment for Alexis community members in the Millar Western's forestry operations.

Initially, the agreement provides for Alexis contractors to harvest a minimum of 50,000 cubic metres of timber and plant a minimum of 500,000 tree seedlings each year, generating seasonal employment for 16- to 20 people; over time, these numbers should increase, generating additional employment and related economic benefits. Other FEDA undertakings involve traditional land use studies, archaeological assessments, trapline impact mitigation and wildlife habitat impact assessments.

The agreement-signing ceremony was attended by elders, councillors and residents of the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, Yel-

lowhead MP Rob Merrifield, Aboriginal Affairs Minister Pearl Calahasen, Whitecourt-St. Anne MLA George VanderBurg, and several Millar Western representatives. The ceremony was held during a gathering of First Nations hosted by the Alexis Nation, and featured traditional prayers, songs and dances, as well as remarks by attending dignitaries.



Drummers at the FEDA agreement-signing ceremony: (clockwise from top left) Dwayne Alexis, Don Kootenay, Heston Letendre, Jonah Letendre and Sydney Potts.



Roderick Alexis and Mac Millar sign the Forestry and Economic Development Agreement.

Describing the agreement's significance to the gathering, Chief Alexis emphasized his people would gain both economic opportunities and the ability to directly influence resource management, saying, "We look forward to working with Millar Western to share in the employment and other benefits generated through responsible resource development." Mac Millar commented on the importance of sustaining the forest, saying, "Jobs and income can be the lifeblood of a healthy community, but there are other important values in the forest, like water, wildlife, medicinal plants and sacred places, we must work together to protect. If we take good care of it, the forest

will provide these values forever."

Four years in the making, FEDA is a win-win proposition. For Millar Western, who conducts forestry in areas considered the traditional territory of the Alexis Nation and has a strong interest in ensuring its activities are supported by the community, the agreement will provide mechanisms for protecting forest values and avoiding land-use conflicts. For the Alexis people, the agreement will provide jobs, income and a strong voice in forest management. And, for both parties, FEDA will provide the opportunity to gain valuable new perspectives, knowledge and understanding.

BACKGROUND ON IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND LANDSCAPE PROJECTION GROUPS:

Timber Supply Analysis Impact Assessment Group

Timber supply analysis (TSA) is the process to calculate how much timber to harvest each year within a defined area of the forest. Alberta forest product companies who hold a Forest Management Agreement (FMA) on Crown land are required to submit a TSA to the provincial government as a component of their Detailed Forest Management Plan (DFMP). Millar Western's 1997-2006 DMFP describes timber supply as follows:

Forests do not have an inherent timber supply; rather it is derived based on objectives, assumptions, observations, and human values. Changes to any of these will affect the timber supply. Timber supply is calculated at a constant rate throughout the planning horizon (usually 200 years, or two rotations of harvest and regrowth).

The volume of wood the government allows a forest products company to harvest each year is referred to as the annual allowable cut (AAC). Timber supply is recalculated in each DFMP (DFMPs are submitted every 10 years). This leads to different AACs and, therefore, actual timber supply is not constant through time.

The main factor companies use to calculate AAC is the growth rate of the forest. However, as forest management practices continue to evolve, non-timber values are being incorporated into the TSA process.

For example, ecological, social and economic values influence the available supply of timber. Years of evolving forest management practices have changed forestry from a narrow focus on timber production, to a broader focus on the management of the whole forest. From V. Alaric Sample, ed., (1994):

After more than a century as the guiding principal of forestry, 'sustained yield management' of a few commercial tree species is evolving and gradually being



Timber supply analysis is the process to calculate how much timber to harvest each year. It is done according to the principles of sustainable forest management, which incorporates the protection and sustainable management of forest ecosystems, taking into consideration the full array of plant and animal species that occupy natural forest communities.

replaced by another principal: the protection and sustainable management of forest ecosystems, taking into consideration the full array of plant and animal species that occupy these complex natural communities.

Millar Western uses a multi-stakeholder approach as their key strategy for adaptive and sustainable forest management, and for incorporating a range of both timber and non-timber values into the TSA process.

The TSA group for Millar Western's DFMP includes company

employees, forestry consultants, local industrial forest stakeholders, local community representatives, and the provincial government. The TSA group operates within the network of the greater DFMP Plan Development Team, which includes representation from First Nations, the public, universities, the oil and gas industry, and municipal and federal governments.

One of the key technological tools used in the TSA process is the timber supply model. A timber supply model is a computer-based, analytical model that sim-

ulates the growth and harvest of collections of forest stands over time. The model requires for input:

- A description of the area that can be harvested;
- The growth rate of the forest, and;
- Forest management objectives and constraints.

Forest management objectives and constraints may reflect any number of timber and non-timber forest values. For example, there may be objectives to maximize or minimize the harvest volume from a given tree species, to retain a defined amount of specified wildlife habitat, or to avoid harvesting near water bodies, archaeological sites or areas of cultural significance.



Wildfire is an example of a constraint in timber supply modeling. Wildfire can have a huge impact on the available supply of timber and, conversely, the amount of timber harvested can influence the occurrence of wild fire.

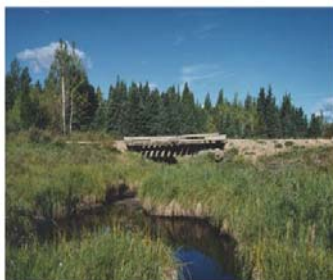


Wildlife habitat is an example of a timber supply modeling objective. The Least Flycatcher forages in hardwood-dominated stands with well-developed crowns and ample flying space. A rich range of other avian species occupy similar habitat types.

The model provides as output a long-term harvesting scenario

that best meets the objectives and constraints defined by the user. For instance, it suggests when and where to harvest, what species or combination of species to harvest, and how much volume and area to harvest.

The TSA group for Millar Western's DFMP will run multiple timber supply scenarios with these models. Each scenario will incorporate different management objectives and constraints. The iterative process will incorporate input and feedback from the other DFMP planning groups. In particular, the water, biodiversity, fire and carbon Impact Assessment Groups (IAGs) will look at the impacts of potential timber supply scenarios on non-timber values. These groups will also provide feedback and input for subsequent rounds of timber supply.



Millar Western's timber supply analysis will consider, among many other things, the impacts of harvesting on the quantity and quality of water within the FMA area.

From the multiple scenarios, a preferred forest management strategy will be selected and presented to the government for review and approval in the DFMP.

SECTION II: MILLAR WESTERN

GROWTH & YIELD SAMPLING PROGRAM SUBMITTED

Millar Western is submitting the protocols for the 2004 growth and yield sampling program to the provincial government this month. The government will review these protocols for approval. Once approved, the data gathered through the summer field sampling program will be used to create updated empirical yield curves for Forest Management Units (FMUs) W11 and W13, for use in the 2006-2016 DFMP.

PLANNING UPDATE

Swan Hills Forestry Communications Group Takes a Field Trip

By: Ray Hilts

The Swan Hills Forestry Communications Group (SHFCG) is an organization of Community Members, Swan Hills Town Council, Forest Industry, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) and Community Interest Groups prepared to identify issues and concerns regarding the management of forests in the Swan Hills region.

Members of the SHFCG actively participate in a process where ideas and information are discussed in an open and constructive manner in an effort to build solutions acceptable to the membership.

On June 8th, the SHFCG took a field trip in the forest near Swan Hills. The trip took place as an educational opportunity for members to see some of the challenges and successes of the local forest industry. The trip included several stops that looked at oil and gas impacts on the forest, several reforested cutovers, and a 30-year-old forest fire.

The first few stops on the trip allowed group members to see first hand the impacts of improper road and creek crossing construction and the potential impacts on fish habitat.

Group members saw that hanging culverts will make entire reaches of a stream watershed void of fish where fish once lived. They also saw that a poor maintenance program on a road can create siltation and erosion problems that impact fish habitat.



Hanging culvert on oil and gas road.



22-year-old lodgepole pine stand that has been thinned.



30-year-old forest fire origin stand; too many stems.

The main part of the tour was focused on the forest industry's efforts to reforest areas that are harvested and the management opportunities and challenges that the industry faces.

The group looked at a 22-year-old lodgepole plantation that was recently (5 years ago) thinned. This stop on the tour was an excellent example of strong and vigorously growing plantation. They also stopped at an area that had been thinned as part of a Fire Smart strategy. SRD has been working with municipal governments and local community members to develop and implement local FireSmart strategies.

The group looked at a 160-year-old lodgepole pine stand along



160-year-old lodgepole pine stand.

the way. This stand had grown to twice the age of maturity and is showing signs of deterioration. It was explained that much of the timber resource in the area is in this age category.

The last stop of the day was at a stand of trees originating from a 30-year-old forest fire. The group saw that without some human intervention some stands (e.g. lodgepole pine) will grow back at a density that is too high for the stand to grow to a healthy state. Some of these lodgepole pine stands will have tens of thousands of stems per hectare. Most pine stands only have 600 - 1200 stems per hectare at maturity. This stand should have been



Tree cookies from a 22-year-old thinned stand (left) and 30-year-old forest fire origin stand (right).

tended years ago to remove the excess trees so that only the healthy trees would be left to grow.

MILLAR WESTERN TRACKS EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Millar Western will be tracking all of their communications in the Communications Tracking Application (CTA) database.

The CTA was originally developed by the Company for DFMP and Stewardship Reporting purposes (see 'Communication Tracking Application' in Issue number 2). Given its extensive reporting and tracking capabilities, it was decided to apply this process to the corporate level as well.

As such, all incoming and outgoing external communications with both the Whitecourt and Boyle divisions, as well as with the Edmonton head office, will be recorded in the CTA.

SECTION III: PLAN DEVELOPMENT TEAM

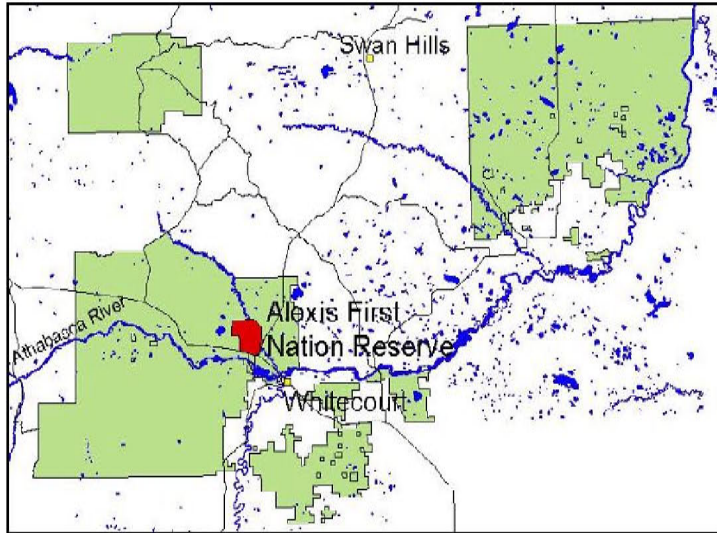
NEW DFMP PLANNING GROUP:

Environmental Co-Stewardship Committee

The Environmental Co-Stewardship Committee (ECSC) is a new committee on the Plan Development Team. All of Millar Western's DFMP processes will be formally vetted through this committee.

The ECSC will:

- Assist in gathering and storing Traditional Environmental and Cultural Knowledge for use by Millar Western and Alexis;
- Assist in training Alexis community members in land use planning and management, and in the production and provision of information for Alexis relevant to Millar Western Operations;
- Review all operational plans prior to Millar Western's applications for approval of any operations by the Governments of Alberta or Canada, and;
- Provide advice to Millar Western as deemed appropriate by all members, regarding suggested modifications to proposed operations.



The Alexis Nation Reserve (shown in red) is 3,500 hectares, and is located north-west of the Town of Whitecourt in Millar Western's Forest Management Agreement area (shown in green).

PRELIMINARY MEETING OF DFMP FIRE GROUPS A SUCCESS

On June 14, the FireSmart Impact Assessment Group (IAG) and the Wildfire Landscape Projection Group (LPG) met for the first time to discuss each group's strategy for contributing to the DFMP. The two fire groups have different roles in the development of the DFMP.

The FireSmart IAG will develop strategic land management strategies to reduce the risk of wildfire in the forest around Whitecourt,

particularly around communities. Millar Western will implement these strategies on the forest land-base. "FireSmart" is a philosophy promoted by the provincial government that focuses on mitigating the likelihood of large, high-intensity, high-severity fires.



The Wildfire LPG will examine the risk of wildfires under the influence of possible future changes in climate and/or human population. The output from this group will not influence Millar Western's actual management practices. Rather, it will be presented in the DFMP as a point of discussion on the drivers of forest change that are not currently con-

sidered in the formal DFMP process.

The two fire groups will work in close association with each other in order to share the skills and resources that are required for modeling wildfire behaviour.

DFMP PLANNERS VISIT THE WHITECOURT FOREST

On June 18, members of the DFMP Plan Development Team (PDT) received a one-day tour of the Millar Western Forest Management Agreement (FMA) area.

In the midst of a rolling landscape dominated by pine, spruce and aspen trees, the group learned about and discussed the various harvesting, thinning, and research operations within the Whitecourt forest. The tour was intended to familiarize the participants with Millar Western's forest management planning process and operational activities, and provide the participants with insight for developing the 2006-2016 DFMP.

Many of the operations the group toured are being monitored over time to evaluate the level of their success and to see if they should become standard operating practices. Some of the operations the group toured include:

- Leaving variable-sized green-tree retention patches in har-



A thinned pine stand; the abundant understory vegetation results from the increased light levels at the forest floor. From left to right: Jonathan Russell, Tim McCready, John Lawrence, Stephen Yamasaki, Bruce Nielsen, Gunnilla Nilsson, Brooke Martens and Hugh Wollis.

vest blocks as potential habitat for neo-tropical migratory birds;

- Pre-commercial and commercial thinning of tree stands to improve growth rates in remaining trees, and;
- Brushing (brush clearing) to remove herbaceous and woody vegetation that would otherwise compete with crop trees for resources.

The group also viewed the harvesting being conducted under the Forest Watershed and Riparian Disturbance (FORWARD) project; see issue number 2 of the DFMP Newsletter for more infor-

mation on the FORWARD project.

For more information on these operations, please contact Tim McCready at (780) 778-2221.

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