



# Okanagan IFPA

Okanagan Innovative Forestry Society

February  
2003

## Innovative Forestry Bulletin

### Public Input Welcome on Application for Timber Harvest Increase

The Okanagan Innovative Forestry Society will be making an application for an uplift to the Allowable Annual Cut in the working forests of the Okanagan timber supply area. The application is available to the public for review and comment between February 12 to April 14. Open houses are scheduled:

- 🌲 March 3rd 3 - 9 pm Penticton Ramada Inn
- 🌲 March 5th 3 - 9 pm Kelowna Laurel Center
- 🌲 March 4th 3 - 9 pm Vernon Prestige Inn
- 🌲 March 6th 3 - 9 pm Salmon Arm Prestige Inn

#### The Okanagan IFPA

IFPAs, or Innovative Forest Practices Agreements, are a provincial initiative designed to test new and innovative forestry practices. The major forest companies in the Okanagan TSA have entered into **Innovative Forest Practices Agreements** with the Minister of Forests, including:

- Bell Pole Company Salmon Arm
- Federated Co-Operatives Canoe
- Gorman Bros. Lumber Westbank
- LP Engineered Wood Malakwa
- Riverside Forest Products Kelowna
- Selkirk Timber Company Sicamous
- Tolko Industries Vernon
- Weyerhaeuser OK Falls

All eight licensees and the B.C. Timber Sales Branch operate in the Okanagan TSA which covers 1.6 million hectares in total land base and has a current Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) of 2,655,000 cubic meters per year

#### Public Participation

Government, First Nations, stakeholders and Okanagan communities have been invited to provide input about proposed activities of the IFPA during the preparation of the IFPA Forestry Plan and major amendments to the plan.

#### Management of the IFPA

IFPA management, objectives and activities are governed by the IFPA Forestry Plan, that has been prepared by the eight licensees, along with Ministry of Forests B.C. Timber Sales in the Okanagan TSA and with input from the government and stakeholders. The Forestry Plan developed by the IFPA was approved by the Regional Manager for the Kamloops Forest Region for the period of March 2002 to March 2004. The IFPA is submitting a major amendment to the Forestry Plan in April, 2003.

#### Okanagan IFPA Objectives

In favour of investments into Okanagan forested land base by Licensees in the Okanagan TSA, the Society will:

- Assess the current health, growth and yield of the forest and determine Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) reflective of an accurate representation of the biophysical capability and ecological composition of the forest
- Realize an increase in the AAC in the Okanagan TSA and distribute the increase to the IFPA holders
- Update inventories and implement innovative forest practices which will enhance and protect the many resource values derived from the forests as identified in the Okanagan-Shuswap Land & Resource Management Plan (LRMP)
- Enhance forestry related jobs through the implementation of the approved forestry plan

#### IFPA Funding

IFPA funding will be the responsibility of the Board of Directors of the IFPA Society, and comes from a variety of sources, which may include Forest Licensee investments and research agency partnerships. Where needs identified in the Forestry Plan meet Forest Investment Account (FIA) criteria, funding may be shifted from existing activities in member company programs to a FIA funded program administered by the Society.



#### Okanagan-Shuswap LRMP

Timber Harvesting Practices resulting from a potential approved uplift in AAC will be consistent with the Okanagan Shuswap Land and Resource Management Plan approved by Government in January 2001.

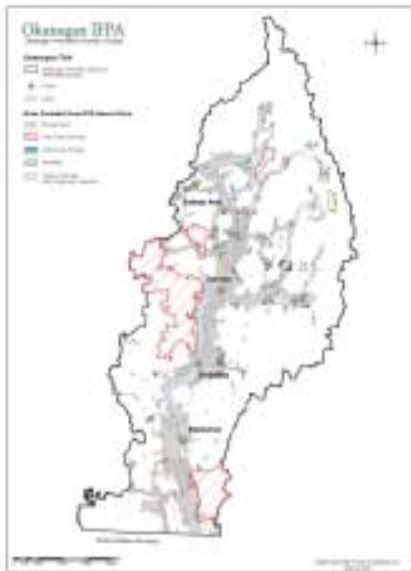


## How fast does the forest grow?

The OIFS is continuing to study the forests within the Okanagan in order to better understand what is present. Timber Inventory Projects in 2002/03 have verified that the existing forest inventory is 7% greater than current estimates used in TSR (What forests exist around us?). Growth and Yield projects in 2002/03 provide updates to *site-index* (How fast are they growing?) and have verified that the forest is growing more than 20% faster than estimates used by the Chief Forester in TSR. This information will help determine sustainable use of timber and non-timber resources within the forest.

## IFPA Area of Interest

All work completed by the OIFS applies to the Okanagan IFPA area of interest. This area is within the boundaries of the Okanagan Timber Supply Area (TSA). Tree Farm Licenses, private land and woodlots are excluded.



## Ecosystem Study Continues

The Okanagan IFPA is continuing a study of ecosystems within the Okanagan TSA (Timber Supply Area). Upon completion, by 2005, the multi-year *Predictive Ecosystem Mapping* project will classify the Okanagan TSA by Ecosystem focusing on moisture gradients of the land (site series). The project will then support a wide range of additional planning and inventory projects. That may include site index adjustments, wildlife habitat studies and forest health plans.

## Okanagan-IFPA website:Public Access to Innovation

The Okanagan IFPA's website continues to be a place where members of the public can gain a wide understanding of the IFPA and its' activities. In the past year, the website has been used to communicate and make available a range of information including:

- Forestry Plan
- IFPA Projects comprehensive description of program activities and link to reports/results
- Request for Proposals for key IFPA projects
- Okanagan IFPA satellite map

The IFPA website, [www.okanagan-ifpa.org](http://www.okanagan-ifpa.org) will continue to be used as the prime mechanism for public access to the IFPA Forestry Plan and innovative projects.

## Improved Information to Assist Resource Planning

Since its inception in 2001, the Okanagan Innovative Forestry Society has strived to improve the quality of information associated with land and resources within the working forests of Shuswap/Okanagan. In 2002, the society implemented a wide range of projects including the following:

- Sustainable forest management planning
- Ecosystem mapping
- Wildlife habitat studies for mule deer, mountain caribou and pine marten
- Forest health planning
- Updated information on growth rates and productivity of working forests
- Verification of existing forest inventory
- Examination of timber supply analysis assumptions

The PEM Project has been completed for the Dry belt to a standard acceptable to the Chief Forester for use in Timber Supply Analysis. Replanted managed forests are generally growing over 20% faster than in the natural forests. The evaluation of the existing forest inventory has identified 7% more volume on the ground. The current condition of the existing forests can support an increased cut level of 345,000m<sup>3</sup> for 40 years after which it will return to the current harvest level for 30 years and then increase again as the new managed stands mature.

## Timber Supply Analysis

In the implementation of the approved Forestry Plan, the Okanagan IFPA has completed a timber supply analysis project to better understand the existing availability of timber while maintaining existing resource values. The analysis incorporates the results of numerous projects that the IFPA has completed since its inception in 2001. The results of this analysis provide documentation that supports a request for an increase in the Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) of 345,000m<sup>3</sup> per year to 3,000,000 m<sup>3</sup> per year in the Okanagan TSA. The proposed harvest level is sustainable for 40 years at which time it returns to the current AAC of 2,655,000 m<sup>3</sup> per year.

The analysis is included in a major amendment to the Forestry Plan and AAC Uplift Request for the Okanagan IFPAs available for public comment from February 12<sup>th</sup> to April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

## Economic Activity and Community Stability

The Chief Forester of the Province of B.C. calculates the amount of timber, or AAC, that can be harvested from timber supply areas such as the Okanagan TSA. With the initiation of the Okanagan IFPA, the opportunity has been given to the members of the OIFS to improve the inventory, planning and management within the TSA and provide a scientific basis for an increase in the AAC. The OIFS has stated that any future request for an increase in the AAC will be made while maintaining the environmental and social objectives of the Okanagan-Shuswap LRMP. The increase being requested will generate an additional \$25 million per year in economic benefits to the Okanagan Shuswap area.

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