

The Private Managed Forest Land Council (Council) completed an inspection of selected managed forests during the summer and fall of 2009. These inspections are an important component of the Managed Forest program and the Council's function in monitoring the implementation of forest practices on managed forest land.

This report provides an executive summary of the inspections. The inspection team was made up of professional foresters familiar with operations on private forest land and the object of the Private Managed Forest Land legislation. The purpose was to assess owners' performance in managing their forest properties with respect to the management commitments and legislation, and to assess owners' knowledge of private managed forest regulations, specifically, the Private Managed Forest Land Council Regulation.

Of the 52 managed forests inspected, 22 were in the interior of the province and 30 on the coast. This sample represents 23% of managed forests in the program and was comprised of a range of large to small properties. The 22 managed forests in the interior were located in the central interior, Kamloops area, and West Kootenays. The 30 managed forests in the coastal region were located on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands.

For each property discussions were held with the owners regarding their forest management activities. The discussions provided owners with an opportunity to discuss the Council regulation, and bring forward any questions or concerns they had. A sample of activities was inspected; these included recent harvesting including the protection of fish streams, the condition of newly constructed or maintained roads, and the reforestation status of both older and recent cutblocks.

### **Properties**

Of the 52 managed forests inspected, 11 had logging activities within the past 5 years ranging from cutting of individual trees for firewood, to small selection areas to recover mountain pine beetle or root rot infected stems, to moderate sized clearcuts. The inspectors found that in general, harvested lands have been reforested with vigorous, healthy trees.

For most of the other properties inspected, there have not been any forest management activities within the past five years other than monitoring and maintenance of young stands and road maintenance as required.

### **Observations**

#### **1. Knowledge of legislative requirements**

The inspectors found that owners' knowledge of regulatory requirements varied widely from very good, for half of the owners, to weak. In general, the owners with weaker knowledge did not have active operations as their forests tended to be younger and well established, and therefore the level of regulatory knowledge is not an immediate concern. However the owners were encouraged to increase their knowledge of the managed forest legislative requirements both through the council website and by referring to the Forest Practices Guide *infoflip*<sup>™</sup>, of which each owner has a copy. It is also available on the council website.

Where applicable the classification of streams and the protection of fish habitat and drinking water quality were as required by the regulation; no issues were noted.

### 2. Management Commitments

A management commitment is a legal requirement that must be accepted by Council before a property is classed as managed forest land under the *Assessment Act*. It describes and documents an owner's forest management objectives for a property. Overall, objectives and strategies outlined in the management commitments were found to be a reasonable representation of the status and operation of the managed forests.

For several properties, the management commitment maps were found to be outdated or insufficient in detail to facilitate planning of future operations and stand tending activities. Updating of maps was recommended to these owners.

Inspectors also recommended to several owners that they may want to review and add tree species to the list of commercial species identified in their management commitments that will be used for reforestation. It is important to note that if a survey is done to confirm that restocking standards have been met, that only these commercial species listed in the management commitment are counted towards the restocking requirement.

### 3. Reforestation

Most of the young stands inspected were found to be well stocked and healthy. However three properties had areas that appeared to be marginal with respect to meeting the minimum restocked trees per hectare. It was suggested to these owners that they may want to carry out silviculture surveys for those areas to ensure that they are able to meet their reforestation obligations which are approaching. On one property the inspector observed that a portion of an area logged 7 years ago appeared to be below the minimum restocking requirements and was potentially in contravention of the regulation. Other owners were advised that even though their restocking obligation due dates are a number of years in the future, they may want to carry out a survey to determine the current stocking levels well ahead of the deadlines. This would allow time to carry out fill-planting or stand maintenance if required to ensure that that restocking requirements are met

### 4. Workshops Proposed

Partly in response to the interest of owners seeking technical advice regarding stand management, two workshops have been proposed for summer 2010; one on Vancouver Island and one in the interior. These workshops would be intended for smaller property owners and would include discussions of reforestation technique, stand tending regimes and practices, and regulatory requirements.

### Conclusion

The inspectors commented on the interest and cooperation shown by the owners in their participation in the inspections. A range of attributes were noted: healthy forest stands, riparian habitat, water quality and wildlife presence. It was the opinion of the inspectors that the owners are endeavouring to practice responsible forest stewardship and in so doing, enhance the productivity and value of their forest assets.

Overall, operational practices were noted to be consistent with the legislation and the owners' management commitments, with a few exceptions as noted in Reforestation above.

The 2009 managed forest site inspections indicated that overall the owners are managing their properties in accordance with their management commitments and regulatory requirements of the *Private Managed Forest Land Act*.



Recent interior cutblock: broadcast burned & planted



Older western red cedar stand on Gulf Island



Healthy mixed age coastal stand



Interior selective harvest area with regeneration filling in



Vigorous 15 year old coastal Douglas-fir stand



Scattered mountain pine beetle in interior