

## Working with our Neighbours

Summer 2000

Volume 2

### Private Lands

#### Streamside management receives favourable agency review



A major government agency review of riparian area management on private forestlands this spring concluded that TimberWest meets the required standards in protecting fish habitat and water quality.

After 10 days of intensive field reviews by habitat specialists from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), they confirmed that, overall, TimberWest met or exceeded the legal standards of the *Private Land Forest Practice Regulation* and the *Fisheries Act* at all its private land operations.

Steve Lackey says the agency's main concern was that the impact of blowdown, which is where trees left in a cutblock after harvesting are felled by wind, sometimes has the potential to damaging sensitive fish habitat.

"As part of our commitment to variable retention harvesting, we have been working very hard to solve this problem," he says. "DFO staff were impressed with our latest efforts to minimize the impact of blowdown by reducing the crown area on leave trees with helicopter born equipment and topping or spiral pruning trees left in riparian areas."

#### First ISO audit review complete



TimberWest's commitment to environmentally sound business practices went under the microscope in May when independent auditors reviewed the Environmental Management System of all company operations.

On November 26, 1999, after an independent audit by KPMG Registrar Inc., TimberWest was awarded ISO 14001 certification. This internationally recognized standard requires companies to identify and manage environmental risks, set goals and objectives and continually improve environmental management performance.

After a forest company earns ISO certification, it is subject to periodic reviews. These comprehensive, structured reviews are termed Surveillance Audits. The report of the first of these audits is now complete. All TimberWest operations successfully demonstrated their continued conformance with the ISO 14001 standard.

"Successful registration is a clear and independent endorsement of our complete chain of environmental management systems, from forest operations, sorting logs and manufacturing lumber to shipping the final product to our customers," says management forester, John Phillips.

"Our people are proud of their accomplishments and are gratified that such a respected organization believes they are doing the right thing. But we can never become complacent as the evaluation process is always ongoing."

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## Watershed action groups seek TimberWest’s expertise

TimberWest has joined forces with two new community groups grappling with critical watershed management issues on Vancouver Island.

In Port Alberni, the company is now a member of the Somas River Watershed Advisory Committee and in Sooke, participates in the Sooke Watershed Technical Committee, part of the Sooke Watershed Society. Both committees are dealing with the technical aspects of managing important regional watersheds.

TimberWest’s Community and Sensitive Watershed Harvest Management Strategy complements the ongoing work of the two groups, says forest hydrologist Dr. Bob Willington. “Because of our efforts on private lands, we are in the position to supply both groups with considerable background information.” TimberWest is also a member of the Oyster River Watershed Management Committee and, along with Weyerhaeuser, recently completed the long-awaited Oyster River Watershed Assessment.

“There’s no question that the time spent participating in so many watershed committees, as well as working directly with the water purveyors and licensed domestic users, stretches our staff resources pretty thin at times,” adds Bob. “However, the working relationships we develop with key members of our community are necessary to ensure our operations do not negatively affect the quality of water.”

## Wood waste yields dollars, jobs for communities

Inevitably, some wood is left on the ground after harvesting. While much of this “waste” is acceptable debris, which enriches soils and meets habitat needs, in 1999 TimberWest earned almost \$2 million by encouraging small contractors to recover commercially viable timber waste.

“On our private lands alone, more than 150 people are employed part-time or full-time by 80 salvage companies.

“Besides recovering the additional value from the forest and providing us with additional revenue, it’s turned out to be a very positive job creation project.”

Among the products recovered as part of the wood salvage program are cedar shake and shingle materials, yellow cedar and Douglas-fir slabs (portions of broken logs), fence posts, firewood, waste wood used to fuel pulp mills and power generators and maple pieces for hardwood products. Salvage crews also recover trees blown down by wind and another group of contractors pays the company for the right to harvest salal and Christmas trees.



## Watershed strategy wins support



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*At the end of the first year of TimberWest’s Community and Sensitive Watershed Harvest Planning Strategy, staff members working on company private lands have evaluated more than Vancouver Island watersheds.*

This watershed strategy, which requires TimberWest people to work co-operatively with water purveyors in the planning of any harvesting activities, has yielded excellent working relationships with all major community water supply areas, from Campbell River to Victoria.

After a full slate of meetings with water purveyors and in some cases, city councils and regional districts, operations got underway in the following community watersheds; Deception Gulch and Leech River (Capital Regional District); Holland Lake (City of Ladysmith); Bainbridge Creek (City of Port Alberni); Allen Lake (Village of Cumberland); and Comox Lake and Oyster River (Comox-Strathcona Regional District). Work also proceeded in a number of licensed domestic water supply watersheds following plan reviews and communication with license holders.

### *Variable retention under in-house review*

A year after announcing it would replace clearcutting with variable retention harvesting systems by May 2003, TimberWest's foresters and engineers are performing field reviews to assess the company's progress.

After a major effort last summer to develop a set of "made for TimberWest" goals, objectives and guidelines for implementation, variable retention harvesting began in earnest last fall. To determine how well divisions are meeting their goals, the company established an internal review committee consisting of inventory specialists, engineers, foresters, and operational staff.

Later this year, management forester John Phillips will formally monitor variable retention harvest sites as part of his regular internal audit process. TimberWest's annual environmental audits examine all aspects of forest management including harvesting, forestry, and environmental protection. Audit results will be reported in future issues of *Community Update*.



## Danger tree removal protects motorists

Oyster River harvesting crews removed 70 Douglas firs lining a scenic lakeside drive on Highway 28 between Campbell River and Upper Campbell Lake after identifying the trees as a threat to public safety.

Most of the trees removed were dead or significantly rotten, or had large, dangerous dead tops leaning over the busy highway. Past incidents where fallen trees blocked the highway, along with safety concerns raised by Oyster River's safety committee, prompted TimberWest to take action.

Engineer Gary Veitch organized the tree clearance project, which took a day and a half. Highway 28 was closed off for no more than 20 minutes at a time while trees were felled and logs and limbs cleaned off the road. "The public response was great," says Gary. "There were no complaints about the delays, people really appreciated our efforts to safeguard the travelling public. Our fallers did a first-rate job of removing the trees—everyone agrees there was absolutely no impact on the viewscape."

### Meeting calendar—

#### *Sooke*

In March, private land use forester Steve Lackey, met with Ed MacGregor, mayor of the new **District of Sooke**, and his chief administrative officer, Tom Day. Discussions focused on TimberWest activities such as variable retention harvesting, its Community and Sensitive Watershed Harvest Planning Strategy, community relations and company operations in the Sooke area.



In April, Dr. Bob Willington, TimberWest hydrologist and geo-scientist, and John Mitchell, operations planner for the Cowichan Woodlands division attended the Sooke Watershed Planning Open House in Sooke. In addition to manning the company's information display and answering questions from the public, the two participated in a panel discussion on planning and watershed management.

## Redesignation for Arrowsmith Trail benefits local hikers

TimberWest is co-operating with the Nanaimo Regional District to have the historic Arrowsmith Trail designated as a formal recreation corridor.



The regional district plans to lease the trail area from TimberWest, once a number of legal issues are settled. Under the proposed lease arrangement, liability issues regarding trail use will be covered by regional district insurance and TimberWest will fund a new bridge across Pipeline Creek.

“This kind of arrangement gives everyone what they are looking for,” says Steve Lackey. “TimberWest will have liability coverage, and the public will once again have access to a well-maintained, historical Vancouver Island trail.”

## Public Lands

### Community group plays key planning role

TimberWest is maintaining its harvesting activities on Quadra Island by forging a positive working partnership with local residents.

Quadra Island, designated a Special Management Zone, where non-timber resources take priority, has provided TimberWest with the opportunity to work closely with the Quadra Forest Watch community group. Their role is to closely monitor the harvest planning process and focus on company activities at the stand level.

“Quadra Forest Watch has done an excellent job,” says TimberWest operations forester, Rick Monchak. “As a result of this ongoing co-operation we are able to operate at a reasonable level, provide local people with jobs in harvesting and silviculture and protect the community’s important forest environment.”

The Quadra group recently alerted TimberWest to a karst feature not



identified on its detailed resource map. Of special interest to spelunkers, a karst is the very early beginnings of a cave formation in limestone. As a result, the company revised its silvicultural prescription and harvest plan in order to preserve the rock opening and surrounding area.

## Pesticide application approved for coast

TimberWest’s Johnstone Straits operation has obtained government approval for its first five-year Pesticide Management Plan for the TFL, excluding Quadra Island, following completion of an extensive public review process.

In order for young forests to reach the free growing state, as required by legislation, forest managers occasionally use herbicides as a last resort to control competing alder and other brush.

As part of the approval process, TimberWest assistant forester, Colin Buss, charged with stakeholder communications, met with private landowners close to Hemming Lake on East Thurlow. Many of the landowners are non-resident for most of the year. Initially the landowners were very concerned about the potential for herbicides to enter into their drinking water. Colin provided people with information by telephone, e-mail and snail mail, and made presentations in Vancouver. After several months of consultation, all property owners endorsed the company’s plan. It received final agency approval in April and the herbicide application will get underway on East Thurlow in late summer.

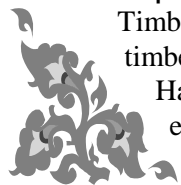
## Forest development planning sessions/field trips complete

- Honeymoon Bay staff took their five-year forest development plan for Tree Farm License 46 on the road to public viewings in Port Renfrew, Lake Cowichan, Duncan and Victoria. They also held special meetings to with the Ditidaht, Pacheedaht, Cowichan Tribes, Hul’qumi’num Treaty Group and Temex’w Treaty Association.
- Stuart Island residents recently reviewed our Johnstone Straits operation’s forest development plan for the Egerton operating area. Stakeholder meetings were held into May. As a direct result of public input, a number of cutblocks with

visual sensitivities were re-designated as “information blocks” and will be deferred from harvesting in this plan in order to address concerns.

- Beaver Cove operation met with the public, First Nations and other key stakeholders to review its forest development plans for Beaver Cove and East and West Cracroft.
- Honeymoon Bay operations staff took key agency personnel on a field trip through TFL 46 in April to review riparian and elk management issues. Participating were Mary Jo Hamey, habitat officer, Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks and Cindy Harlow, habitat protection officer, Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

### Namgis participation helps resource planning process

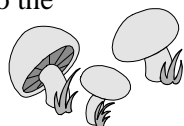


TimberWest plans to participate in a non-timber resource inventory project on Hanson Island designed to create new employment opportunities for local residents.

Endorsed by the Namgis First Nation, the inventory project is sponsored by the Inner Coast Natural Resource Centre (ICNRC) in Alert Bay. ICNRC sponsored projects are aimed at helping coastal communities develop new job strategies and economic development plans. Non-timber resources include such things as salal, mushrooms and tourism. BC’s Ministry of Community Development, Cooperation and Volunteers is expected to fund the project.

“In its initial stages, the project will primarily benefit the community of Alert Bay, but the ICNRC hope that benefits will extend to the whole region over time,” says Beaver Cove operations forester Gordon Glover. Hanson Island is part of TimberWest’s Tree Farm License 47.

“We support this initiative and have met with the Namgis, the Ministry of Forests, Forestry Canada and the ICNRC to plan the inventory data collection. We want to ensure it is conducted to the highest standard as the information will be used in future resource management planning



for the Hanson Island area.”

### Watershed restoration provides local jobs

Forestry and fisheries projects in the Nimpkish and Bonanza watersheds on northern Vancouver Island continue to improve salmon habitat and provide important work for local people including First Nations.

The Nimpkish Resource Management Board is comprised of the Namgis First Nation, Canadian Forests Products, TimberWest, Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks, Department of Fisheries and Oceans and three local hatcheries. Funding comes from Board members, with additional support from Forest Renewal B.C. and Fisheries Renewal B.C. The Board’s goal is to develop and implement regional fisheries related projects.

To date much of the work has focused on stream and creek management, fish habitat enhancement and management of three salmon hatcheries. The Board has hired a full time fisheries biologist to oversee projects planned in the Nimpkish and Bonanza drainages. It will spend more than one million dollars this year on projects such as lake fertilization, spawning channel construction and stream inventories.



### Local kids help TimberWest with tree planting



TimberWest completed its spring planting in April with more than 4.3 million trees planted on its private and public lands.

In Campbell River, the company got a little help from the Boy Scouts, who planted 600 trees; and in Courtenay from Valley View Elementary students, who planted 300. We donated 1200 trees, plus grass seed and fertilizer, to Courtenay Fish and Game Club for use in streamside rehabilitation projects.

“Our planting program is an integral part of our business,” says public land use forester, Steve Lorimer.

*“We concentrate on planting hardy, high-quality, superior seedlings of native species. And we ensure that the right species are placed on the right sites.”*

Quality planting gives young seedlings a strong start, and the company’s subsequent brushing and weeding efforts reduce surrounding competition to maintain early growth rates. Much later in the growth cycle, our work with late-stand fertilization of selected maturing Douglas fir stands gives trees a final boost.

**Public land planting**

- Between **Honeymoon Bay** and **Johnstone Straits** operations there were *970,000 seedlings* planted on approximately *960 hectares*. The majority of species planted were Douglas fir but also included cedar, amabilis and grand fir as well as some white pine in the Johnstone Straits area. **Beaver Cove** operation will be doing their planting in late summer and fall.

**Private land planting**

- **Cowichan Woodlands, Honeymoon Bay** and **Nanaimo Lakes** planted a total of *2.8 million seedlings* over an estimated area of *2700 hectares* this spring. When you add to that the *550,000 trees* planted at the **Oyster River** operations, it amounts to close to *3.35 million trees* planted on our private land operations. Once again, the majority were Douglas fir with other species of fir, pine, cedar, spruce and hemlock being planted depending on the site.



**Lake Cowichan Forest Co-op generates first revenues**

Lake Cowichan Forest Co-operative has received a cheque for approximately \$245,000 from

TimberWest representing its first share of profits from their unique joint logging venture.

The company and the co-operative have partnered to manage a forest licence in the Mount Bolduc area next to TFL 46. After several years of development planning, logging was deferred due to depressed wood products markets. It finally got underway in late 1999.

“This experience has been good for everyone involved,” says public land use forester Steve Lorimer. “We all achieved our goals and the co-operative now understands what it takes to operate successfully in this industry.” As a follow-up, Honeymoon Bay engineer Mark Carter took co-operative chair, Pat Foster, and business agent, Gary Gunderson, on a field trip to review logging progress, future plans and salvage opportunities.

**Eco-tourism effort boosts community**

As the largest landowner in the Lake Cowichan area, TimberWest is a key participant in a Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture initiative to help diversify the local economy.



Public land use forester, Steve Lorimer, along with other community representatives, is working with Gateway Communities project committee to identify ventures that will promote ecotourism and create new jobs in the forest dependent Cowichan Valley.

*“This is a very positive community effort and we are glad to play a role,” says Steve Lorimer.*

Steve, who sits on the steering committee and is a member of the business plan sub-committee says the group has received tremendous support from the public. “So far, we have come up with quite a list of projects. When the one-year initiative is over, these projects will be managed by the Town of Lake Cowichan, the Chamber of Commerce and other local groups.”

On the drawing board are plans to build a large-scale “lumber arch” entryway to the region; achieve Tourism BC designation as BC’s first Superhost



Community; develop a new regional marketing strategy, along with appropriate marketing tools and training for small businesses; and erect new signage on Highway 1. The committee is also reviewing the potential for transferring the management of Forest Service campsites to a local government body. The goal is one-stop shopping for all regional campgrounds.

For more information, contact Renee at [gateway@cowichan.com](mailto:gateway@cowichan.com).

### ***Employee-driven program turning the tide on safety***

A unique, year-old employee involvement program has already achieved safety improvement at TimberWest.

After experiencing an unacceptable number of lost time accidents in 1998, the company formed a four-person Safety System Evaluation Team, with the mandate to audit and evaluate safety systems throughout its logging operations and dry land sorts. All team members had hands-on operating experience.

“We took this approach because our management-driven programs weren’t working,” says president and CEO, Scott Folk. “Our goal with the new program was to empower employees and have them drive a safety program that would truly make sense to our workforce.”

Working with the Workers’ Compensation Board (WCB), the team received two weeks’ intensive training before travelling with WCB auditors to each operation. There they met with employees and supervisors to compare local safety systems to new WCB regulations. After receiving team findings, each operation produced an action plan.

This bottom-up approach to safety is working. In 1999, TimberWest achieved a 27% reduction in lost time accidents from 1998. “It’s early days but we’re very encouraged,” says Scott. “We want people to take individual responsibility, have employees look out for each other and encourage operations to share their successes.”

*Sadly, this spring, TimberWest was grieving the loss of a 31-year-old contract truck driver who died after*

*losing control of his logging truck at the company’s Nanaimo Lakes operation.*

*“We send our deepest sympathy to the family and co-workers,” says Scott. “I think we can best honour his memory by making a renewed commitment to working safely every minute of the day.”*

### **Community leaders tour TimberWest operations**

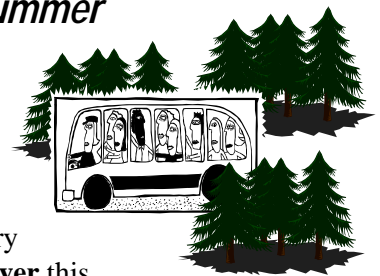
Elected representatives from several Vancouver Island communities and regional districts were invited on a field trip with TimberWest in June. The purpose was to get a close-up look at our forest management practices, such as variable retention harvesting and watershed management.

Invited were officials from Courtenay, Comox, Campbell River, Cumberland, Nanaimo, Parksville, Ladysmith, Duncan, North Cowichan, Lake Cowichan, the Cowichan Valley Regional District, the Nanaimo Regional District, and the Comox-Strathcona Regional District. Half the group visited the Courtenay/Comox Lake area and the other toured land near Ladysmith and Lake Cowichan. While on tour, participants posed questions to TimberWest people at all levels from foresters and operations supervisors to vice-presidents.

“We received some valuable feedback from our guests and we hope they found the forest management information useful,” says Erik Bentsen, senior vice president, Coast Timberlands. “Given the level of interest by community leaders, we will definitely arrange similar tours in the future, particularly for communities that not included in this first tour schedule”

### ***Tours set for summer start-up***

TimberWest and three other companies are joining forces to re-institute public forestry tours in **Campbell River** this summer.



Until 1998, TimberWest and its predecessor companies offered free public woods tours in several Vancouver Island communities including Campbell River and Lake Cowichan. The program was halted two years ago following a major downturn in the global marketplace.

This year, in response to ongoing public interest in the **Campbell River** area, TimberWest, Western Forest Products, Weyerhaeuser, and InterFor are jointly sponsoring tours, two days a week, during the months of July and August. These tours, operated by **Paradise Found Adventure Tours** of Campbell River, will be available on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Adults will pay \$10 for the six-hour tours; there is no charge for children aged 12 and under. *For more information call 250-923-0848.*

“In today’s economy, the expense of running public tours is quite prohibitive for a single company,” says TimberWest private land use forester, Steve Lackey. “But when we all pool our resources and have a modest income to help off-set our costs, we have a very viable program. If this year’s tours are successful, in future we hope to expand the program to include local schools.”

TimberWest is also sponsoring tours in the **Lake Cowichan** area. Beginning in September, the Cowichan Lake Education Centre will be offering school tours during the week and adult tours on weekends. For more information you can call 250-749-6213.

### North Island tours underway



TimberWest, Weyerhaeuser, Canfor, Western Forest Products Ltd., and InterFor are pooling their resources to once again manage and operate the **North Island Discovery Centre**.

Located along the North Island Highway at the Beaver Cove turnoff, south of Port McNeill, the centre gives visitors local information, with a focus on forestry, and offers wood tours at no cost from July 1 to August 31. Tours must be booked in advance and can be arranged by calling the centre at 250-956-3844.

## Update on Sale of TFL 46 and Cowichan Lumbermill

On July 13<sup>th</sup>, J.S. Jones advised TimberWest that it was withdrawing its offer to purchase TFL 46 and the Cowichan Lumbermill located at Youbou. The reason for this decision was that Jones was unable to secure the support of the IWA Local 1-80 Executive and the local MLA for the deal. This event creates additional on-going uncertainty for employees and communities as TimberWest renews its efforts to find a buyer for these assets.

TimberWest believed that the Jones proposal offered the greatest benefit to our workers and to local communities. The proposal involved relocating part of the mill to Nanaimo, employment for 80 Cowichan Lumbermill employees, early retirement for about 80 people and severance packages for about 40 people. Both the early retirement and severance packages were enhanced beyond the requirements of the IWA labour contract.

The independent review of the economic viability of the Cowichan Lumbermill, conducted as part of the Ministry of Forest’s Mill Closure Review Process, concluded that an investment of \$10 to \$12 million would be required to make the mill competitive. It noted that “A number of knowledgeable mill people and financial analysts have reviewed the situation at Youbou and have concluded that such a capital investment would not be viable”. The report confirmed that closure of the mill is justified.

During the time it takes for the renewed sale effort to find a buyer for these assets, TimberWest will operate the sawmill as market conditions permit. However, the hard reality is that with the poor market conditions and the decreasing competitive position of the coastal forest industry, the operating level at the mill will likely decline.

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