

NSR Challenge for British Columbia

As BC's Chief Forester, the issues of reforestation and NSR in BC are of great importance to me. From my perspective, the article, "NSR and British Columbia's Reforestation Crisis," (May/June 2011) regarding not satisfactorily restocked (NSR) forests over-estimates the NSR situation in British Columbia.

There is currently about 715,000 ha of NSR in the RESULTS database of which about 240,000 ha is not associated with a forest licensee or BCTS legal obligation to reforest. We estimate that there is the potential for an additional 650,000 ha of NSR arising from mountain pine beetle and 200,000 from other sources such as wildfire for a potential total NSR area (that is not associated with a legal obligation), that is closer to about 1.1 million ha.

I do not believe that the assumptions underpinning the May-June article adequately incorporate factors such as:

- The net down for areas outside the Timber Harvesting Land Base.
- The amount of area that will regenerate naturally and/or have sufficient residual stocking levels.
- The amount of area that will be harvested and carry legal obligations.

Regarding the last point it, is too early to say definitively how much mountain pine beetle-impacted area will ultimately require government reforestation funding because harvesting and regeneration of dead pine stands will continue for the next few years.

Industry and government are focusing harvesting on beetle-attacked and burned stands where we can capture current timber value and reforest in a timely manner. It is also clear that additional harvesting and regeneration will result from bio-energy and other new uses for beetle-killed wood. Past experience has taught us that what may seem uneconomical today can become a much more valuable resource tomorrow.

Reducing the impacts of wildfires and pest infestations is also a key priority of the 'Forests For Tomorrow' (FFT) program under the Land Based Investment Strategy. In areas where it is clear that harvesting will not be an option, FFT is using innovative and cost-effective techniques to survey and reforest productive sites (e.g. 45,000 ha of reforestation through 2010.)

In addition, given the significant area burned by wildfires in 2009 and 2010, the FFT program will be assessing the damage, and identifying the best opportunities, to re-establish sufficient stocking.

It will take a collective effort on the part of forest professionals to address stewardship issues such as reforestation and addressing NSR. In an upcoming issue of the **BC Forest Professional** I will be providing more detailed information related to the determination of Ministry NSR estimates and how we are responding to the NSR challenge.

**JIM SNETSINGER, CHIEF FORESTER
MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND
NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS**

Put in Your Two Cents

The **BC Forest Professional** letters' section is intended primarily for feedback on recent articles and for brief statements about current association, professional or forestry issues. The editor reserves the right to edit and condense letters and encourages readers to keep letters to 300 words. Anonymous letters are not accepted. Please refer to our website for guidelines to help make sure your submission gets published in **BC Forest Professional**.



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Vancouver Sun OpEd Offensive and Outrageous

Sharon Glover's opinion editorial that recently ran in The Vancouver Sun is both offensive and outrageous ("Forests require flexible management", April 26, 2011).

I cannot find words strong enough to convey to our president and council the damage this editorial has done to the credibility of the association and to the independence granted its members under the *Foresters Act* to serve the public interest.

The editorial appears to have been badly ghost written using "spin" from government and industry sources. It parrots the empty rhetoric, clichés and mantras of the forest industry and government used over the last decade to promote government forest policy and to justify deregulation.

In an overt, politically partisan defence of government forest policy, the association's council through Sharon Glover has badly overstepped its authority defined by the duty and objects of the association under the *Foresters Act*. Ms. Glover herself may well be in contravention of section 19(3) of the *Foresters Act* by writing the editorial and by purporting to speak for the profession. This amounts to passing herself off as a member, which she is not.

What is more reprehensible is the singling out of competent forest professionals as "critics" who have had the courage to exercise their powers granted under Bylaw 11 and to fulfill their responsibility to the public under the association's code of ethics.

To exercise one's responsibility to the public is difficult enough for most professionals. The professional in government is greatly constrained by the standards of conduct for public servants forbidding public criticism of ministry policy. Likewise, the professional in industry is also constrained by expectations of conduct being in the corporations' best interests.

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Administrative Fairness in Investigation/Decision for Case 2009-1

I believe that Case 2009-1 was not handled in an administratively fair manner by the ABCFP. The investigation took twice as long as posted on the ABCFP website. I believe several pieces of critical evidence were not considered by all parties—the registrar, the discipline panel and the investigation committee. Also, I was given significantly less time with the investigation committee than the hostile local participant. High financial risk forced me to choose not to go to a full hearing and accept a negotiated settlement instead. (If I had been found guilty, I could have been responsible for the full cost of the hearing and the investigation committee report.)

I appreciate the importance of association's legislated mandate to regulate forest professionals in British Columbia. However, I feel justice was not served in this case.

RODNEY J. ARNOLD, RPF, KASLO

EDITOR'S NOTE: A summary of Case 2009-1 is available on page 29 in this issue of *BC Forest Professional*. The full case digest is available on our website.

Expanded Uses for LiDAR in Northeast BC

A new approach to using Light Detection and Ranging Systems (LiDAR) is leading to more powerful information on the land base. The Science and Community Environmental Knowledge (SCEK) Fund, a BC focused research and development fund, recently sponsored a LiDAR based project with the University of Victoria and the BC Oil and Gas Commission. The project built on the forest inventory concepts discussed in the article "Making Better Business Decisions Using Enhanced Forest Inventories" (May/June 2011) by integrating LiDAR data with hyperspectral imaging. The result was an enhanced understanding of the land base including data on hydrology, geomorphology, elevation and ground cover from the canopy to the forest floor and in between.

The project involved flying and mapping a 700 square kilometre area in the Horn River Basin in the northeast area of BC. The resulting

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NSR and British Columbia's Reforestation Crisis

With 40 years' experience as an inventory specialist in British Columbia, I read with interest Anthony Britneff's thorough portrayal of the public record on NSR (May/June 2011).

Britneff's careful and conservative estimate of the extent of inventory NSR area challenges the whole notion of certification of sustainable forest management in British Columbia.

Also, the extent of NSR in British Columbia has huge implications for estimates of carbon dynamics and of mitigation potential for the forest sector. These implications need to be determined as we rapidly enter a carbon-conscious economy.

One would think that the worst ecological disaster in Canada's history—the mountain pine beetle infestation—would warrant federal assistance in financing both forest inventory and reforestation.

As Britneff suggests, the only immediate solution is for the provincial government to act in the interests of the public and the forest industry by investing immediately in good, expanded inventory and reforestation programs.

JERRY STENBERG, RPF, VICTORIA



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If council had acted in the best interests of both its membership and the public, Sharon Glover's editorial would have encouraged professionals to exercise their independence and to serve the public interest by speaking out about forest stewardship issues of concern and forest policies that are not working well; instead, she publicly castigated those that have recently criticized government policy and she whitewashed real problems with forest management in British Columbia that they have identified.

As a result, council, through Sharon Glover, has compromised the most precious power granted forest professionals, which is freedom to voice independent opinion in the public interest. President Ian Emery owes every forest professional a public apology for what can only be considered immature judgment on the part of council.

ANTHONY BRITNEFF, RPF (RET)
VICTORIA

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data collected through LiDAR can be used to determine forest inventory information such as species, canopy height and stocking as well as vegetation classification. The hyperspectral imaging component gives us an idea of the functioning of the forest such as the health of the trees and the effects of pathogens, forest pests and water related stresses.

Operational uses for the data include planning operations around riparian areas through better information on wetlands and soil wetness. Road design and layout can be enhanced through the interpretation of the wetlands, fens and bogs to efficiently route roads and design drainage patterns. The identification of potential gravel pits can be achieved through interpretation of the bare earth models mapping moraines, dune fields and shorelines. Detailed habitat mapping for wildlife species at risk can also be done through the LiDAR data.

These operational uses of the enhanced LiDAR data are just the start. Now that we have the data, we can focus on further analysis and applications of the data. We believe we have only scratched the surface of the potential uses for information from LiDAR and hyperspectral imaging in managing the natural resource base.

More information on the project can be found on the SCEK Fund website at <http://www.scek.ca/projects-completed.aspx>.

HOWARD MADILL
SCEK FUND MANAGER
DIRECTOR, STEWARDSHIP, BC OIL AND GAS COMMISSION

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