



## Change can be an opportunity

By ROD KRIMMER

Change. The prosperous dread it; the disenfranchised demand it; the new president promises it; uncertainty results from it and opportunity arises out of it. One thing that is clear from recent events is that a period of rapid change is upon us.



The forest is changing too, and with a natural lifecycle of one to three hundred years in the interior (much longer on the coast), all predictions are off. In this light, how is it possible to make appropriate forest management decisions now? Are forests most valuable to us as sources of solid wood, biofuel or habitat? Water is certainly a value held in our forests, and even the most basic of life's necessities, oxygen itself, is a key benefit of our forests? We could blithely state "all of the above," but it is not that easy.

The natural antidote to uncertainty is resilience, and resilience is a product of diversity. This applies to the forest and to the marketplace. Woodlot licenses are part of the diversity that will help preserve forest attributes for the future while deriving tangible benefits now.

## The shifting landscape

### Selkirk College leads the way in adapting to the future forest

It's a given that BC's forests are changing, with dramatic effects on the forest industry and economy of the province.

But what now for our trademark forests and this once mighty industry? What's in the future for people who wish for a forestry career?

Kootenay-based Selkirk College's forestry program has changed to reflect the current reality. It is now named the School of Renewable Resources.

The Dean of Selkirk College, Angus Graeme, is a Registered Professional Forester. He believes BC must come to grips quickly with the need to adopt a radically different approach to the management of BC's forests. But he also believes that skilled forestry workers are needed more than ever.

"There will always be a need for technical forestry," Graeme said. "There's a huge task in front of us now, with restructuring and strategic planning for the future of the forest sector. It won't be easy without a strong body of professionals."

The School of Renewable Resources is committed to providing the most flexible, nationally accredited environmental



**Selkirk College's Angus Graeme sees a big future for forestry — and that includes a commitment to a college-run woodlot that gives students the hands-on tools to take them into the next era of forest management.**

DEBORAH GREAVES PHOTO AND STORY

science programming in Canada.

"Selkirk College can contribute a well prepared, technically proficient workforce who'll have an eye to the future," Graeme said.

In addition to its academic and technical programs, Selkirk College also has an active and licensed woodlot.

The Selkirk College woodlot is a working forest and an outdoor classroom that takes students outside for 50 to 60 per cent of their educational time. They take ownership of the work they carry out there, Graeme said.

The School of Renewable Resources has been established

in response to the fact that in the very near future, forest management will be about much more than trees.

"Within our professional lifespans trees will have other values. Carbon capture and water will be as important as forestry. The political will of the people of BC will decide whether we want to go back."

According to Graeme, changes in the forest must lead to changes in the way human beings manage it. We have to adapt the way we think of and manage BC's natural resources. The new reality is here, and for the future's sake we can't afford to ignore it.



Small-scale family operated forestry operations like Woodlot #1715 in the Kitsequecla Valley will have a significant part to play in the forest economy of the future, says Larry Mason.

## Family forests to play key role in future, predicts forestry researcher

BC's family forests — and especially woodlots — are well positioned for the future forest industry, according to Larry Mason, Project Coordinator with the University of Washington's Rural Technology Initiative. "That future will see forests treated as tree farms with shorter rotations producing smaller logs, bioenergy products, specialty wood for niche markets and environmental goods and services," said Mason in a presentation to the FBCWA's Annual General Meeting last fall.

Markets have changed for a variety of reasons, said Mason, especially in the U.S. housing market with the development of a broader range of engineered wood products (EWPs). As EWPs and new methods for evaluating properties of wood within trees and logs continue to emerge and increase market shares, the need for older trees to achieve the size and quality needed for traditional products will diminish. A trend toward short rotations (harvesting trees in a shorter time period) and smaller trees can already be seen.

"Traditional methods of growing and marketing timber that worked well in the past to generate logs... may be inappropriate for log markets in the future," said Mason.

There is also a developing specialty niche market for softwood and hardwood lumber (appearance beams, millwork, furniture and cabinets) and veneer that some small tree farmers may be well suited to serve. Tree farmers may consider diversifying to include specialty products and other revenue streams

"Ecosystem services dealing with things such as water and air... will have value in the 21st Century," said Mason. Others suggest that tree farmers will someday receive compensation for the non-market public benefits that they provide such as habitat, clean water, carbon sequestration, and that the forest economy in the future will be less reliant upon log sales.

The world needs healthy forests, wood products and clean energy, and family forests will play a role in this, concluded Mason.

## One load of logs goes long way for healthy kids

Log A Load For Kids Canada is a national giving campaign through which loggers and other forest industry people donate the value of a load of logs, or any amount raised through fundraising events, to local hospital foundations affiliated with the Children's Miracle Network (CMN). One hundred percent of all contributions go to local CMN Canada hospital foundations; overhead expenses are contributed separately by sponsoring associations, the Children's Miracle Network, and corporate and private underwriting.

Since its inception in September 2000, Log-A-Load for Kids Canada has raised over \$400,000 for various children's hospitals across Canada. None of that would have been possible without the dedicated work of many, many volunteers who have donated time and effort to organize large and small fundraising events. All of these efforts put together make for a very successful program.

Log A Load For Kids Canada is a commitment between the Canadian logging and forest industries to an annual nationwide campaign to help ensure that quality healthcare is available to our country's children.

Similar to a very successful program in the U.S., it gives logging and forestry people a chance to show they care and to make a difference in their local communities.

For more information, go to: [www.logaloadforkidscanada.org](http://www.logaloadforkidscanada.org)



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