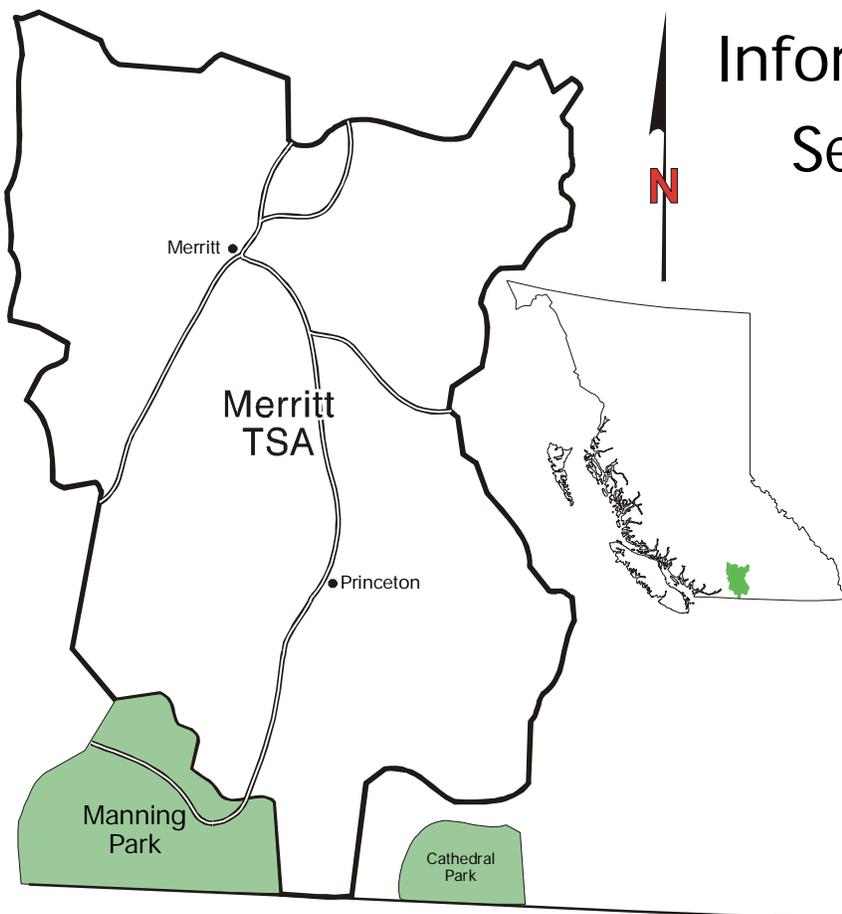


Merritt Timber Supply Area

Information Report
September 1999



Introduction

The British Columbia Forest Service is required by law to formally review the timber supply* in all timber supply areas* and tree farm licence* areas in the province. A review of each of the areas is completed at least once every five years. The main objectives of the reviews are:

- to identify the economic, environmental and social information that reflects the current forest management practices—including their effects on the short- and long-term timber supply
- to identify where improved information is required for future timber supply forecasts
- to provide the chief forester with information to make any necessary adjustments to the allowable annual cuts* for the next five years

* Throughout this document, an asterisk at the end of a phrase or word indicates that a definition can be found in the margin.

Objective of this document

The objective of this document is to provide an opportunity for public review of the draft data and management assumptions that will be applied in reviewing the timber supply for the Merritt timber supply area. This document represents the early stages of the timber supply review process and is intended to provide a non-technical overview of the data and management assumptions that will be used in the upcoming *Merritt Timber Supply Area Analysis Report*.

The *Merritt Timber Supply Area Analysis Report* will be one of the documents that the chief forester will consider in making the allowable annual cut determination under Section 8 of the Forest Act. Public input is encouraged to ensure the best information is used in determining allowable annual cuts.

This report contains a general description of the data assumptions and current forest management practices related to timber supply for the Merritt timber supply area. For the purpose of this timber supply review, current practices can be defined as the set of land-use decisions and forest management practices that are currently implemented and enforced. Future forest management objectives that may be established but are not currently implemented and enforced are not included.

Many of the draft data and management assumptions are summarized on pages six through ten. For a more detailed description of the information, please contact the Merritt Forest District office in Merritt, the field office in Princeton, or the Kamloops Forest Region office in Kamloops and request a copy of the data package. The public will have 30 days to review and comment on the information report and data package. A response form at the end of this document will assist you in providing your comments. Written comments will be accepted until October 12, 1999.

Timber Supply Review process

In British Columbia, a process for determining allowable annual cuts* has been in place since the late 1940s. However, the process has changed significantly over time. Most recently, the process has had some minor revisions designed to improve efficiency and encourage earlier public review through the release of this report.

Figure 1 (next page) illustrates the five-step process that has been developed for the timber supply review of timber supply areas. The diagram indicates the current status of the timber supply review for the Merritt timber supply area, and the estimated time required for each step.

Timber Supply Review

in the Merritt TSA

Timber supply

A harvest level that is forecasted to be available over time, under a particular management regime.

Timber supply area

An integrated resource management unit established in accordance with Section 7 of the *Forest Act*.

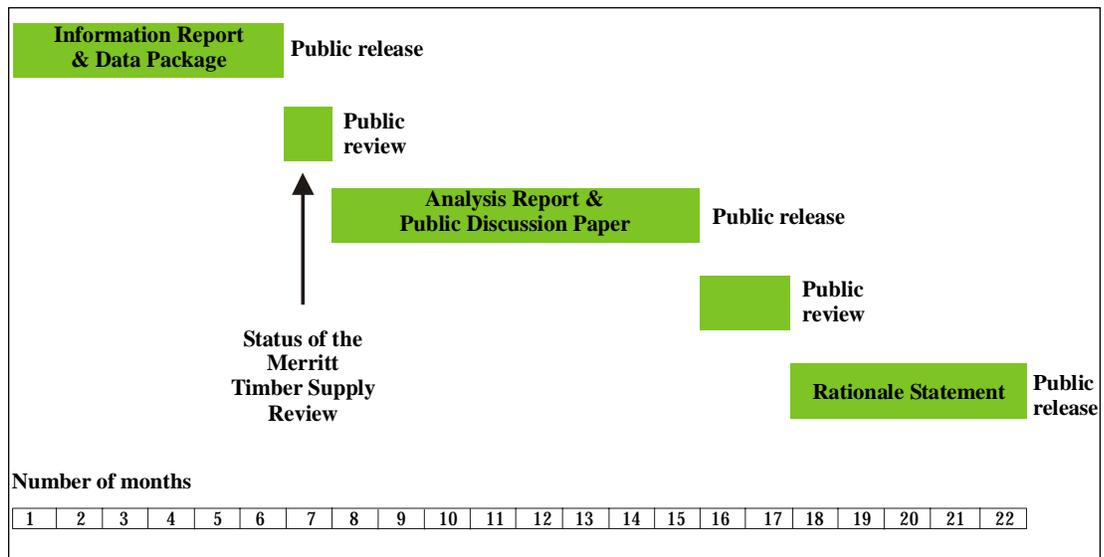
Tree farm licence (TFL)

Provides rights to harvest timber, and outlines responsibilities for forest management, in a particular area.

Allowable annual cut (AAC)

The rate of timber harvest permitted each year from a specified area of land, usually expressed as cubic metres of wood per year.

Figure 1.
Review process for
the Merritt timber
supply area.



The process for reviewing the timber supply and establishing the allowable annual cut for tree farm licence areas is based on similar principles; however, the process takes 30 months from start to completion.

The chief forester's responsibility

Determining the allowable annual cuts for Crown forest lands in British Columbia is the responsibility of the province's chief forester. It is one of the chief forester's most important responsibilities since it affects the local and provincial economies and environment—now and in the future. Section 8 of the *Forest Act* requires the chief forester to consider the following factors to determine allowable annual cuts for timber supply areas and tree farm licence areas:

- a) the rate of timber production that may be sustained from the area, taking into account:
 - the composition of the forest and its expected rate of growth
 - the time in which the forest will become re-established
 - silvicultural treatments, including reforestation
 - standards of timber utilization

- constraints on the amount of timber produced from the area due to use of the forest for purposes other than timber production
 - any other information which relates to the capability of the area to produce timber
- b) the short- and long-term implications to the province of alternative rates of timber harvesting from the area
 - c) the nature, production capabilities and timber requirements of established and proposed processing facilities
 - d) the economic and social objectives of the Crown for the area, the region and the province, as expressed by the minister of forests
 - e) abnormal insect or disease infestations and major salvage programs planned for the timber on the area

Some of these factors can be measured and analyzed—others cannot. Ultimately, the chief forester's determination is an independent, professional judgement based on the best available information. Information that is relevant to the factors listed above is provided to the chief forester by government agencies, the minister of forests and the public.

One of the objectives of the Timber Supply Review is to incorporate changes arising from new information, new practices and new government initiatives that may have an impact on timber supply.

In the event of significant change, the allowable annual cut may be reviewed in less than the required five years.

Following the release of the allowable annual cut determination by the chief forester, the minister of forests apportions the cut to various licences and programs.

Principles of the Timber Supply Review

In determining allowable annual cuts—in addition to the requirements outlined in Section 8 of the *Forest Act*—the following principles have been developed.

The Timber Supply Review:

- is a decision-making process for establishing allowable annual cuts for timber supply areas and tree farm licence areas by the chief forester on a maximum five-year cycle, as required under Section 8 of the *Forest Act*; **it is not a process for making land-use or management decisions**
- incorporates the best information available, including all relevant current practices, and identifies where new information is needed
- reflects the results of implemented plans and land-use decisions, and provides a benchmark for future planning processes
- involves other agencies, affected groups and the public.

Merritt land-use planning processes

Currently no land and resource management plan has been initiated in the Merritt timber supply area. Proposed protected areas have been identified and will be established at the completion of a higher level plan, such as a land and resource management plan. No date has been set to establish a higher level plan. Therefore, only land-use planning decisions regarding forest practices that have final approval from government will be reflected in the timber supply review.

Description of the timber supply area

The Merritt timber supply area is situated in the southern interior of the province and comprises a total area of 1.12 million hectares. The area to the west falls under the rain shadow of the Cascade Mountains and is characterized by mountainous terrain and steep valleys. To the east lies the relatively dry, and flat plateau areas of the Thompson Plateau. The major river systems are the Tulameen-Similkameen watershed in the south and the Coldwater-Nicola watershed in the north.

This timber supply area is administered by the Merritt Forest District, with offices located in Merritt and Princeton. The Merritt Forest District is a part of the Kamloops Forest Region, and the regional forest office is located in Kamloops.

The communities

The major population centres in the timber supply area include the communities of Merritt and Princeton. Other smaller communities are Tulameen, Brookmere, Missezula Lake, Douglas Lake, Lower Nicola, Osprey Lake and Allison Lake.

According to the 1996 Census, the population of the timber supply area was 16,648, an increase of about 10 per cent from 1991. The communities of Merritt and Princeton form the largest populated centres with 7,631 people in Merritt and 2,826 in Princeton. By the year 2001, the population of the Merritt timber supply area is expected to grow by another seven to nine per cent.

The economy

The economy of the Merritt timber supply area is primarily resource based with forestry, tourism, mining, and farming supporting the local economy. Figure 2 summarizes total employment by industry sector for the area. Although the forestry and ranching sectors predominate

Indirect and induced jobs

Indirect jobs are supported by direct business purchases of goods and services. Induced jobs are supported by employee purchases of goods and services; for example, at retail outlets.

in the Merritt area, tourism is a contributing source of income associated with fishing, hunting, mountain climbing, hiking, camping, skiing, and snowmobiling. In 1998, revenues from cattle sales and hay production exceeded 22 million dollars. The development of the Coquihalla Highway system as a link between the interior and the coast has presented the Merritt area with many new visitors and development opportunities.

Forestry employment in the timber supply area is supported by harvesting and silviculture activity and the processing of wood products at four major lumber mills. Facilities range from single owner-operators to large mills with integrated operations, such as the Weyerhaeuser Canada Limited facility located in Princeton. In 1998 about 750 people were employed at these forestry operations and mills.

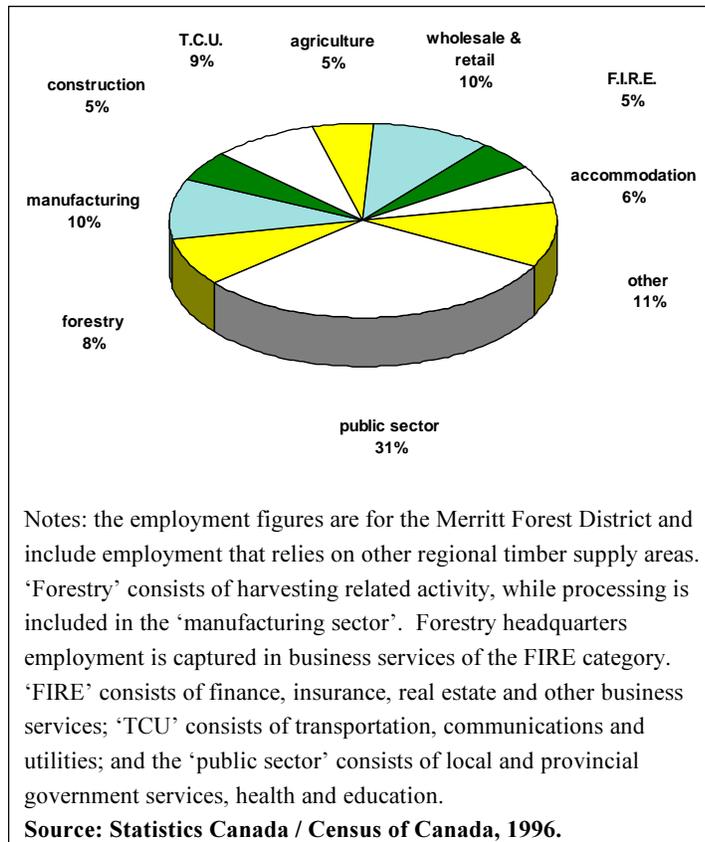
The forestry sector supports numerous other jobs in the region through companies and employees purchasing goods and services from local businesses. The

financial transactions from consumer spending is another indicator of the role forestry has in the economy. For every 100 direct forestry jobs within the Merritt timber supply area, another 25 to 35 indirect and induced jobs* are supported, depending on the type of forestry activity (logging or manufacturing) and the associated level of income. In comparison, every 100 jobs in the public sector or tourism support another seven to nine positions.

First Nations

The Nlaka’pamux Nation and the Okanagan Nation have traditional territories within the Merritt timber supply area. Currently there are six First Nations communities within the timber supply area with a combined population of approximately 2,360. These are the Coldwater Band, Lower Nicola Band, Nooaitch Band, Shackan Band, Upper Nicola Band and the Upper Similkameen Band. There are four other First Nations communities with a population of 1,121 located outside the timber supply area that have reserves and shared traditional interest within the timber supply area.

Figure 2. Major employment by sector for the Merritt timber supply area, 1996.



The forest land resources

Numerous natural resources are associated with the forest land base. Forest products, recreation, ranching, mining and tourism amenities, and a variety of wildlife habitat highlight the wide range of activities in the Merritt timber supply area. The diverse terrain of mountains and river valleys in the west, and plateaus in the east results in different climates and vegetation in the timber supply areas. The valley bottoms are predominantly

dry grasslands with forests of ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir. Forests at mid- and high-elevations are dominated by lodgepole pine and spruce.

Rangeland areas provide forage for both livestock and wildlife. There are two types of rangelands; permanent rangeland where substantial amounts of forage can be found in the same area over time, and transitory rangeland, where forage is temporarily available a few years following harvesting or fire.

Parks, recreation sites and trails, and roaded and non-roaded areas provide opportunities for numerous outdoor activities. Within the timber supply area are Monck, Otter Lake, Kentucky-Alleyne, Allison Lake, Bromley and Stemwinder Parks. Popular recreation areas in the vicinity of the timber supply area include the Coquihalla Summit and Cascade Recreation Area located in the south-west, and Manning Park and Cathedral Park in the south. The mountainous terrain and lakes in the timber supply area provide a wide range of opportunities for recreation activities including mountain-biking, hiking, camping, boating, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling.

The environment

There are seven biogeoclimatic zones* in the Merritt timber supply area. The distinct ecological features and the unique nature of the area contribute to high biodiversity values. The low elevation and dry areas within the timber supply area are characterized by grassland with forests of Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine. Areas with higher precipitation and elevation support lodgepole pine, spruce, and balsam stands. The high elevation mountain tops are blanketed with alpine shrubs, herbs and lichens.

The diverse forests host a range of wildlife species, which are considered rare and potentially threatened by human activities and natural events. Examples in the Merritt timber supply area are

ferruginous hawk, mountain beaver, northern goshawk, bull trout, tailed frog, rubber boa, gopher snake, American bittern, fisher, and grizzly bear.

History of the allowable annual cut

Effective January 1996, the chief forester determined the allowable annual cut for the Merritt timber supply area at 1,454,250 cubic meters, an increase which includes 250,000 cubic metres for harvesting stands of small-diameter lodgepole pine.

Effective January 1999, a temporary uplift of 550,000 cubic metres per year, effective for a term of two years was established. The objective was to salvage timber from the 1998 Lawless Creek fire and control the mountain pine beetle infestation in the southern portion of the timber supply area.

As part of the 1995 determination, the chief forester gave direction to resolve uncertainties with respect to the timber supply in the Merritt timber supply area. In preparation for the next allowable annual cut determination, the following issues were to be examined:

- **soil/terrain studies** - geological and surficial mapping in the timber supply area was to continue so that problem-soil areas that should be exempt from harvesting could be located accurately.

To date, terrain stability mapping has been completed for approximately one third of the timber supply area. The new information provides improved accuracy of the extent of sensitive soils and associated terrain stability. This information will be included in the upcoming timber supply analysis.

- **visual green-up studies** - the district was to continue its study of visual green-up heights and stocking densities of young plantations on previously harvested areas along the Coquihalla Highway system.

Biogeoclimatic zones

A large geographic area with broadly homogeneous climate and similar dominant tree species.

Timber Supply Review

in the Merritt TSA

Integrated resource management

The identification and consideration of all resource values, including social, economic and environmental needs, in resource planning and decision-making.

Forest Practices Code

Legislation, standards and guidebooks that govern forest practices and standards, with heavy penalties for violators.

Operability

Classification of an area considered available for timber harvesting. Operability is determined using the terrain characteristics of the area as well as the quality and quantity of timber on the area.

In 1998, district staff re-measured the green-up heights and stocking densities of the stands for those young stands along the Coquihalla Highway system. The new measurements are added to the previous measurements and will provide six years of growth measurements to quantify green-up estimates for the timber supply review.

Note: For more information on these points, please refer to the Merritt timber supply area Rationale for Allowable Annual Cut Determination, January 1996.

Current timber supply review

Public forest lands in British Columbia provide recreational enjoyment, fish and wildlife habitat, water supplies, timber resources and many other benefits. The Ministry of Forests manages the timber, range and recreation resources on public lands, while the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks is responsible for the management of fish, wildlife, water resources and parks. Both agencies subscribe to the principle of integrated resource management*, where all resources are considered when making forest management decisions.

The Forest Practices Code* is now law and has been fully implemented in the timber supply area since June 15, 1997. The new practices may influence both the short- and long-term timber supply.

The data and management assumptions that will be used in the timber supply analysis will be based on the existing land-use designations and resource management practices that are currently approved and implemented in the Merritt timber supply area. Uncertainties about some of the data regarding current practices, and their potential effects on timber supply will be examined through sensitivity analyses. The chief forester will also consider any new information, based on implemented

changes, at the time of the allowable annual cut determination.

Draft data and management assumptions for public review

The public is encouraged to review the data and management assumptions for completeness and accuracy. In determining an allowable annual cut, the chief forester will consider these assumptions as required by Section 8 of the *Forest Act*. The following general outline contains a brief description of the more pertinent information that will be used in the timber supply analysis and, subsequently, in the chief forester's allowable annual cut determination for the Merritt timber supply area. More detailed information can be found in *Appendix A: Data Package*. This appendix is available upon request from the Ministry of Forests offices listed at the end of this report.

Land base factors

- **operable area** - the forested area in the Merritt timber supply area has been assessed for operability* based on economic attributes and physical accessibility. Areas of operability have been defined by Forest Service staff in consultation with representatives from the forest industry. In addition to the operability classification, terrain mapping will be used to outline inoperable areas. Only those areas that are considered operable will contribute to the timber harvesting land base.
- **forest types not currently being harvested** - these are forest stands not currently utilized in the Merritt timber supply area due to physical or economic limitations. Generally, these are deciduous stands, and low volume coniferous stands (sometimes called problem forest types). District staff have reviewed the previous inventory of these stands and determined that several of these forest types be included in the timber harvesting land base because of

reclassification of the forest types. The remaining stands not utilized due to low merchantability are not included in the timber harvesting land base.

- **environmentally sensitive areas*** - the forest inventory includes a classification of areas that are considered to be environmentally sensitive and/or significantly valuable for other resources. For the Merritt timber supply area these are areas noted for sensitive soils, forest regeneration problems, water, wildlife, snow avalanche potential and recreation.

All areas identified with high environmental sensitivity will be removed from the timber harvesting land base. Areas identified with moderate environmental sensitivity will be included in the timber harvesting land base. Specific terrain and wildlife habitat mapping will supplement the environmentally sensitive area inventory.

- **forest roads** - for the purposes of the timber supply analysis an estimate was made of the productive forest land occupied by an inventory of roads, trails, and landings. Currently it is estimated that nine per cent of the timber harvesting land base younger than 40 years is occupied by existing roads, trails, and landings. Roads occupy 0.4 per cent of the forest older than 40 years of age on the timber harvesting land base. As future access and harvesting occurs, an estimated additional seven per cent of the remaining unharvested areas will be occupied by future roads, trails, and landings.
- **cultural heritage resources** - an archaeological site inventory update was completed in 1998 based on information available through the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism, and Culture. The site inventory information is recorded and a 50-metre buffer will be applied to each known site and the area removed from the timber harvesting land base.

Inventory factors

- **forest inventory** - the current inventory has been updated to December 1997 to take into account recent harvesting and silviculture activities.

The dominant tree species was lodgepole pine which accounted for 50 per cent of the total volume. In addition, Douglas-fir accounts for 23 per cent, spruce for 17 per cent, balsam for seven per cent, and ponderosa pine for three per cent of the total volume.

- **minimum harvestable ages** - the minimum harvestable age is the earliest age at which a forest stand is estimated to reach a merchantable size and considered available for harvest. For the timber supply analysis, the ages are based on the time to achieve a minimum volume of 150 cubic metres per hectare, and meet regional priority harvest ages that range from 81 to 121 years with the exception of selection cut stands. Selection cut stands are managed using a minimum re-entry period of 30 years, and a 25 per cent maximum volume removal during a harvest, allowing the entire stand to be harvested every 120 years.

Forest re-establishment factors

- **Basic silviculture** - British Columbia laws require that harvested areas that are expected to produce timber in the future must be reforested with ecologically acceptable species within a specified time frame. The most common silvicultural practice is to harvest; then if necessary prepare the site for reforestation; reforest by planting a mix of species or by relying on natural regeneration; and finally if necessary, control competing vegetation.

In the Merritt timber supply area, the most common silvicultural system involves harvesting, with reforestation achieved predominantly by planting well-spaced trees of acceptable species. On less productive sites of lodgepole

Environmentally sensitive areas
Areas identified as requiring special management to protect important recreation and scenic values, fisheries resources, sensitive soils and unstable slopes.

Timber Supply Review

in the Merritt TSA

Cutblock

A specific area, with defined boundaries, authorized for harvest.

Green-up

The time needed after harvesting for a stand of trees to reach a desired condition (usually a specific height) — to ensure maintenance of water quality, wildlife habitat, soil stability or aesthetics — before harvesting is permitted in adjacent areas.

Wildlife tree

A standing live or dead tree with special characteristics that provide valuable habitat for conservation or enhancement of wildlife.

Coarse woody debris

Logs and stumps that provide habitat for plants, animals and insects, and a source of nutrients for soil development.

Seral stages

Sequential stages in the development of plant communities that successively occupy a site and replace each other over time.

pine, a combination of planting and natural regeneration is used. In the timber supply analysis, it is assumed that all areas under even-age management are planted, and will achieve adequate stocking between two and four years after harvest. Reforestation in selection cut stands is by natural regeneration and stands are assumed to be stocked at all times.

Timber utilization factors

- **timber utilization** - estimates of merchantable volume will be based on the utilization of all trees (with some exceptions as noted below) which meet or exceed the following standards: a minimum top diameter (inside the bark) of 10 centimetres; a minimum diameter of 17.5 centimetres at 1.3 metres above the ground. For lodgepole pine stands, a minimum diameter of 12.5 centimetres at 1.3 metres above the ground. All species must be utilized to a maximum 30-centimetre high stump.

For small-wood pine stands the utilization standard is a minimum top diameter (inside the bark) of seven centimetres, and a minimum diameter of 7.5 centimetres at 1.3 metres above the ground. The maximum stump height for small-wood pine stands is 20 centimetres.

Infestations, devastations and salvage of timber

Each year, portions of the forests in the Merritt timber supply area are damaged by natural agents such as fire, wind, insects and disease. It is anticipated that some of the damaged timber will not be salvaged due to access and economic limitations or other environmental considerations. The annual unsalvaged volume for the Merritt timber supply area for this timber supply analysis is estimated to be 143,626 cubic metres. These numbers include the losses due to the large Lawless Creek fire of 8,000 ha in 1998 and the continued impacts of mountain pine beetle epidemic infestations.

Factors to be considered for purposes other than timber production

Forest management guidelines used to manage forest resources such as biodiversity, scenic values, wildlife habitat and water quality will be included in the timber supply analysis through the use of forest cover requirements, and volume and land-base reductions.

- **general forest cover requirements** - under current forest management practices, cutblocks* must achieve green-up* before adjacent areas are permitted to be harvested. The objective of these standard management practices is to avoid over-concentration of harvesting. They will be reflected by applying forest cover requirements that allow a maximum of 33 per cent of the timber harvesting land base to be less than three metres tall. As well, considerations for maintaining areas of old-growth forests will be accounted for in the timber supply analysis by reflecting management for biological diversity.
- **visually sensitive areas** - these are areas where the maintenance of scenic landscapes is a priority for recreation and tourism management. They are often located along major highways, primary access corridors and recreational waterways. Road construction and logging within these areas are planned and implemented to minimize visual impacts. Visually sensitive areas are identified in the Merritt timber supply area. The current management practice in visually sensitive areas is to permit a maximum of between two and 30 per cent of harvested areas to have forests less than three to five metres tall at any time.
- **community watersheds** - to account for forest cover requirements in community watersheds, a maximum of 20 per cent of the total forest area within each watershed will be allowed to have forests less than 6.6 metres tall at any time.

- **Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail** - for the purposes of the timber supply analysis, those portions of the trail designated by government, plus 100 metres surrounding the trail will be removed from the timber harvesting land base.
- **lakeshore management** – a lakes classification process has been completed for the Merritt TSA resulting in 282 lakes being classified under the Forest Practices Code. A portion of the land base around each classified lake will be considered unavailable for timber harvesting to account for the special management that occurs around these lakes.
- **wildlife habitat** - ungulate winter range and elk movement corridors are managed to ensure sufficient thermal cover is maintained. In these areas, a minimum of 40 per cent of the forested area must be taller than 20 metres, and a maximum of 20 per cent can be less than three metres tall.
- **biological diversity** - or biodiversity, is the full range of living organisms, in all their forms and levels of organization, and includes the diversity of genes, species, and ecosystems, and the evolutionary and functional processes that link them. The Forest Practices Code requires that biodiversity be managed at both the stand and landscape levels.

Leaving wildlife tree* patches, and single trees, addresses stand-level biodiversity current practices in the Merritt timber supply area. Generally, coarse woody debris* objectives are met by the contributions of non-merchantable timber left on the ground. The timber supply analysis will account for the current practice by reducing the timber volumes estimates associated with all stands in the timber harvesting land base by almost two per cent.

Landscape-level biodiversity will be accounted for in the timber supply analysis by applying averaged seral stage* constraints to each draft

landscape unit* and natural disturbance type*. This approach has been taken because at this time landscape units and biodiversity objectives are still in draft form and have not been formally established.

As part of the timber supply analysis, sensitivity analyses* are planned to examine the potential impacts on timber supply of applying the draft biodiversity emphasis objectives developed for the Merritt Forest District.

Implications of alternative rates of harvesting

- **alternative rates of harvesting** - there are many alternative harvest forecasts that can be produced for a given set of forest conditions and management assumptions. Each alternative usually represents a trade-off between the harvest level in the short term and the subsequent rate of decline to the long-term harvest level. For the projected base case forecast*, the initial harvest forecast will be based on trying to achieve the current allowable rate of harvest in the short term without compromising the long-term harvest level. The implications of alternative short-term rates of harvest will be tested in sensitivity analyses.
- **implications related to community dependence** - The impact of timber supply adjustments on local communities and the provincial economy is an important consideration in the timber supply review. The January 1995 *Merritt Timber Supply Area Socio-Economic Analysis* reported that, harvesting, silviculture and processing activities associated with the harvesting of the Merritt timber supply supported 1,132 direct person-years* and 1,698 indirect and induced person-years of employment provincially. About 44 per cent of these jobs are located in the Merritt timber supply area.

The socio-economic section of the upcoming timber supply analysis report will review the role of the forest sector in the timber supply area. To provide this

Timber Supply Review

in the Merritt TSA

Landscape unit

A planning area based on topographic or geographic features, that is appropriately sized (up to 100 000 hectares), and designed for application of landscape-level biodiversity objectives.

Natural disturbance type (NDT)

An area that is characterized by a natural disturbance regime, such as wildfires, which affects the natural distribution of seral stages. For example areas with less stand-initiating disturbance have more older forests, and generally a greater abundance of species.

Sensitivity analysis

Examines how uncertainty in data and management assumptions affect timber supply.

Base case forecast

The timber supply forecast which illustrates the effect of current forest management practices on the timber supply using the best available information, and which forms the reference point for sensitivity analysis.

Person-year(s)

One person working the equivalent of one full year, defined as at least 180 days of work. If someone works full-time for 90 days, he or she accounts for 0.5 person years.

update, current information on employment and fibre flows will be gathered from licensees, processing facilities, the B.C. Forest Service and other stakeholders. Indirect and other related employment at both local and provincial levels will also be estimated using employment multipliers provided by the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations.

To examine the implications of alternative rates of harvest, employment co-efficients, reported in person-years per 1,000 cubic metres, will be developed and used to estimate changes to employment levels now and in the future from any potential harvest level changes.

Timber processing facilities

The socio-economic analysis will examine the implications of potential changes in timber supply for the area's major processing facilities: Ardev Wood Products, Aspen Planers, NMV Lumber, Princeton Wood Preservers, Tolko Industries, and Weyerhaeuser Canada Limited. Implications for other manufacturing plants outside the timber supply area but reliant on Merritt timber supply area will also be examined. During 1998, the major timber supply area facilities processed an estimated 1.4 million cubic metres of timber. The small-wood licences produced value-added wood such as posts, rails and other products.

Economic and social objectives of the Crown

In a letter and a memo to the chief forester, the minister of forests has expressed the Crown's economic and social objectives for the province. The harvest flow objectives to be used in the timber supply analysis (see previous section, "Alternative rates of harvesting") are consistent with the minister's stated objectives.

In addition, economic and social objectives for the area and the general region will be derived from public input.

**Your input
is needed**

Establishing the allowable annual cut is an important decision that requires well-informed and thoughtful public input. Feedback is welcomed on any aspect of this *Information Report*, the *Data Package Appendix* and other topics related to the timber supply in the Merritt timber supply area. The response form at the end of this document will assist you in preparing your comments. As well, Forest Service staff would be pleased to discuss questions or concerns that may help you prepare your response.

Please mail the completed response form and your comments to the Forest Service district manager located at the address below. Your comments will be accepted until October 12, 1999.

After receiving public input, the B.C. Forest Service will finalize the data and management assumptions that will be applied in this timber supply analysis. The timber supply analysis will be completed and available for review by spring of 2000. You may also wish to participate in the second public review period, which will follow the release of the *Merritt Timber Supply Area Analysis Report*.

Following the second public review period, the chief forester will examine all the information available in order to review the timber supply for the Merritt timber supply area. The chief forester will then establish the allowable annual cut based on his consideration of the factors as required under Section 8 of the *Forest Act*.

You may identify yourself on your response if you wish. If you do, you are reminded that responses will be subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and may be made public. If copies of the responses are requested, personal identifiers will be removed before the responses are released.

**For more information contact and/or
mail your comments to:**

District Manager
Merritt Forest District
PO Box 4400, Stn. Main
Highway 5A & Airport Rd.,
Merritt, B.C.
V1K 1B8

Phone: (250) 378-8400
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Regional Manager
Kamloops Forest Region
515 Columbia Street
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Phone: (250) 828-4120
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or electronically mail to:
Dave.McBeth@gems2.gov.bc.ca

**Timber
Supply
Review**
in the Merritt TSA

APPENDIX A

Data Package

Description of Data Inputs and Management Assumptions

This appendix is available upon request from the
Ministry of Forests.

Offices are located at:

Merritt Forest District
Highway 5A & Airport Rd
Merritt, B.C.
V1K 1B8
Phone: (250) 378-8400

Kamloops Forest Region
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Kamloops, B.C.
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