

Chief Forester Order Respecting the AAC Determination for the Sunshine Coast TSA

Section 8 (3.1) of the Forest Act stipulates in part that:

If... the chief forester considers that the allowable annual cut...is not likely to be changed significantly with a new determination, then...the chief forester by written order may postpone the next determination...to a date that is up to 10 years after the date of the relevant last determination, and must give written reasons for the postponement.

In December 2001, I determined a new Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) for the Sunshine Coast Timber Supply Area (TSA). The current AAC of 1 143 000 cubic metres came into effect on January 1, 2002 and excludes all volume issued to woodlot licences. In my determination, I also partitioned the volume as follows:

- 95 000 cubic metres per year to red alder-leading stands with at least 50 percent deciduous species by volume;
- 3000 cubic metres per year partition to other deciduous-leading stands.

In considering whether to postpone the next AAC determination for the Sunshine Coast TSA, I have reviewed:

- each of the factors potentially affecting timber supply on the TSA;
- my previous *Rationale for AAC Determination* dated December 2001;
- the *Sunshine Coast Timber Supply Area Analysis Report* dated June 2001.

I note the timber supply forecast reported in the 2001 analysis report indicated that an annual harvest level of 1 233 000 cubic metres could be maintained indefinitely. An alternative harvest flow whereby a harvest level of 1 350 000 cubic metres per year could be maintained for five decades before declining to 1 213 000 cubic metres per year, further confirmed the stability of timber supply in this management unit. In my 2001 rationale, I also discussed the impact and interaction of key factors affecting timber supply in the short, medium and long terms. I have reviewed each factor specified under Section 8 of the *Forest Act* and investigated whether any new information exists concerning each factor. I am aware that:

- since the last (2001) determination, 20 Wildlife Habitat Areas (WHAs) totalling approximately 342 hectares of timber harvesting land base (THLB) have been established within the TSA. I note that this additional area represents less than 0.2 percent of the THLB—well within the maximum one percent impact that I accounted for in my last determination;
- ongoing monitoring of forest health issues on the TSA—including damage attributable to black bear, hemlock looper and *Phellinus weirii* (laminated root rot)—indicates that the likely timber supply impacts are consistent with the assumptions made in my 2001 determination;
- establishment of Old-Growth Management Areas (OGMAs) since the last determination within 4 landscape units restricts timber harvesting opportunities on approximately 2 percent of the THLB. I note that the likely establishment of additional OGMAs may reduce short-term timber supply in proportion to the land base affected;
- additional FIA-funded inventory work was initiated in 2002 by licensees on a portion of the TSA. However, the information does not affect the assumptions in the 2001 determination.

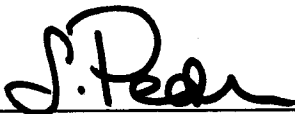
After reviewing the factors considered in the last determination and the currently available information, I find it unlikely that the allowable annual cut would change significantly with a new determination made according to the existing schedule.

I acknowledge the continued and ongoing demand for red alder within the TSA and in the Coastal Forest Region more generally. I am confident that the current deciduous harvest levels are attainable for at least the next 6-year period, given the extent of the existing deciduous timber resource and current management regime. I request that district staff continue to monitor the harvest from deciduous stands. Additional analysis specific to the deciduous resource may be warranted should the demand for alder and associated management strategies change significantly.

I have also considered the requirements for identified wildlife, landscape-level biodiversity and ungulate winter range. I acknowledge that additional area within the THLB may be required in the future to accommodate WHAs and OGMAs for example. If these requirements deviate significantly from the assumptions in my 2001 determination, I am prepared to make an earlier re-determination of the AAC.

I am aware of ongoing treaty negotiations with First Nations including both the Sechelt Indian Band and the Sliammon First Nation. If any treaties involving areas currently within the Sunshine Coast TSA are concluded with First Nations, I will consider the implications to timber supply at that time.

In summary, based on my review of the factors discussed in the 2001 rationale, the limited new data available and my knowledge of the timber supply dynamics of this unit, I have determined that the AAC for the Sunshine Coast TSA would not likely change with a new determination. Under my authority as outlined in Section 8(3.1) of the *Forest Act* I hereby postpone the next AAC determination to a date prior to December 31, 2011 which is 10 years since the last determination. If additional significant new information is made available to me or if major changes in management assumptions occur, then I am prepared to revisit the next determination sooner than the maximum 10-year period indicated in the legislation.



Larry Pedersen
Chief Forester

Date

