A Brief but Tortuous History of Forestry in British Columbia

Jim Pojar
March 2019

British Columbia’s Forests

- 64% of province forested, < ½ (25 million ha) productive & accessible forest land
- 3% permanently converted to urban areas, agriculture, hydro reservoirs

http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hts/pubs/tsr/tsrbkg.htm

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Public Land, Private Land

- Concept of “Crown land” goes back to early BC land allocation.
- Principle of public ownership of forests (and not selling off forest land base) established—prior to BC becoming a province—by House of Assembly 1866: “selling and granting of large tracts of timberland to companies or individuals should not be entertained as it is socially injurious & detrimental to settlement.”
- When grants of land proposed to attract investment in sawmilling, Assembly’s response was: “we will offer licenses to cut timber only on unsold and unpreempted land.”
- Leases & licenses became the predominant tenures.

Crown Land in British Columbia

- 94% of B.C. remains public ‘Crown’ land.
- Of the 94%, 2% is fresh water; of the 6%, ~1% is federal crown land & ~5% is privately owned.
- By retaining the land base in public ownership, the Province 150 years ago kept open its options to enable other public purposes concomitant with timber production.
- But forest industry never gives up; desires privatisation of Crown land or at least more TFLs.
**Forest Tenures?**

- Most forestland ‘owned’ by public.
- Almost all logging & processing equipment & mills are privately owned.

Tenures are certain property rights to public timber, transferred by Provincial government to private sector through legislation, regulation, contracts or policy.

**BC has very complex tenure system**

**Area based Tenures**

- 20 million m³ (30%) exclusive rights to area’s timber
  - Tree Farm Licences
  - Timber Licences
  - Community Forest Agreements
  - First Nation Woodland Licences
  - Woodlot Licences

**Volume based Tenures**

- 65 million m³ (70%) share area with others
  - Forest Licences
  - Timber Sale Licences
  - Pulpwood Agreements
  - various Licences-to-Cut
  - Free Use Permits

**Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) by Tenure - 2012**

- Evolution of Forest Tenure Policy
  - Early to mid-20th Century – focus on stimulating economic development. Timber rights offered in exchange for building wood processing facilities and creating employment.
  - 1980s – multiple use emphasis, sustained timber harvest (≠ sustainable), more responsibility on licensees (deregulation).
  - 1990s-2000s – short-lived regulation (Forest Practices Code) then more deregulation

**Evolution of Forest Tenure Policy**

- More Recently
  - Development of tenures to support the bio-energy industry
  - Area-based tenures to provide First Nations with forest-based economic opportunities and employment
  - More local control of some forest resources (community forest agreements)

**AACs & Timber Supply**

AAC – allowable annual cut
- rate at which timber is made available for harvesting “in response to social, economic, & environmental considerations.”

Timber Supply
- Availability of timber over time; the potential flow of logs out of the forest.
- “the amount of timber … forecast to be available for harvesting over a specified time and under a particular management regime.”

1980 cutblocks near Nadina Lake, J. Pugler
My View of BC Forest Management

Historic pattern of events:

- Company establishes processing facility (sawmill or pulpmill), its size based on anticipated markets, persuadability of investors, and a 15- to 20-year amortization period
- determines volume of wood required to run the mill, and area of forest land required to produce the volume
- acquires licences to the trees—Crown asset (common property)
- Regulatory agency (provincial Ministry of Forests) determines AAC required to keep all mills in a given timber supply area running
- THEN addresses biology of commercial tree species plus a few other forest species (mostly animals), and begins to study the ecology of the forest
- treats welfare of those other species and of non-timber forest values as constraints on timber production, rather than management goals
- conducts research on stand dynamics, growth & yield, density management, fertilization, tree breeding, and so forth
- does some arm-waving about sustainability, integrated use, biodiversity, ecosystem management, social contract

Collective BC Forestry Mythology

- Cut the decadent old forests down and replace them with thrifty young plantations.
- Compared to primary wild forests, managed forests will yield a lot more wood—quickly.
- The ‘allowable cut effect’ is valid.
- Maximum sustained yield works.
- Forest management on private land is better than management on public land.

Too Much Too Fast: It’s Still About the Rate of Cut

Allowable Annual Cut in British Columbia

The Agony and the Ecstasy

Address By:
Larry Pedersen
Chief Forester
British Columbia


UBC Faculty of Forestry
Jubilee Lecture
Vancouver
Thursday March 20, 2003

1912-1947 Unregulated Forest Industry Expansion

- Logging rates and utilization standards not regulated; reforestation not funded
- Coast: portable camps & itinerant loggers tracked (very effectively) the best, most accessible wood
- Interior: lots of small bush mills & small sawmill towns

Two issues faced government
1) Industry demanded more secure timber supply
2) Foresters worried about pattern of harvesting (including high-grading) and inadequate reforestation

Haley, David 2005.

- Chief Forester F.D. Mulholland, used formula in 1937 survey of BC’s forest resources.
- Emerging concept of sustainability & need to ensure that once seemingly inexhaustible timber supply was logged at a rate that met needs of both current and future generations.
- Goal was a ‘normal’ forest.

What’s A ‘Normal’ (i.e., Regulated) Forest?

- Burton & Coates, 1996.
1945 Sloan Royal Commission

**Origins of sustained yield in BC**

"...a perpetual yield of wood of commercially usable quality from regional areas in yearly or periodic quantities of equal or increasing volume."

**Anticipating increased yields**

'Structure can, and will, increase the yield and the optimal yield would result from an intensive use of the productive capacity of an area.'

Note invocation of the concepts of long-term even flow of timber; increasing yields; benefits of intensive mgmt; maximum sustained yield. Reflecting belief system that seemed plausible in 1945 but is now recognised as obsolete and unrealistic.

**1945 Sloan Royal Commission**

**Recommendations:**
- Increase fire protection
- Increase rate of planting
- Regulation of logging methods
- Management plans for regional working circles
- Funds and facilities for research
- A Faculty of Forestry at UBC
- Statutory recognition of profession of forestry

1947-1979 Sustained Yield Forestry

- Two major types of sustained yield mgmt unit created: forest mgmt licenses (FMLs) and public working circles
- FMLs designed to combine Crown granted land, old temporary tenures, & Crown land under a single working plan; many required a manufacturing facility
  - 1956: FMLs became tree farm licenses (TFLs) with 21-year renewable terms.
  - "During the years following the establishment of FMLs, the procedures for granting and administering them fell into disrepute, and ultimately criminal proceedings found the Minister of Forests guilty of accepting bribes in exchange for granting licenses." (Haley 2005)
  - These and other factors led to another Royal Commission, in 1995.

1947-1979 (cont'd)

- public working circles >> public sustained yield units (PSYUs)
- timber disposal supposed to be short-term, competitive sales
- by mid-1950s informal quota system had developed, allowing established operators to acquire a proportion of the AAC
- regulations favoured quota holders in bidding process
- quotas transferable; timber rights increasingly concentrated with a few larger companies
- Govt: justifiable to increase industry stability & attract investment
- "entrepreneurship stifled & competitive efficiency of the market place was eliminated" (Haley 2005)
- 1956 Deputy Minister/Chief Forester position separated

1955 – 2d Sloan Commission

- Timber cut doubled in decade after 1945 Sloan Commission; increase mostly from interior (then primarily as railway ties).
- Rapid increase helped prompt 2d Royal Commission in 1955, again lead by Sloan.
- Many of current TFLs also awarded during this time.

1947-1979 (cont'd)

- "There is a moral obligation on this generation to leave the forests in a productive state, ... not merely that they have been reforested after logging, but that the growing stock is capable of sustaining an annual yield of commercial quality."
1947-1979 (cont’d)
- Many pulp mills on Coast (only 5 in 1945: Ocean Falls, Powell R, Port Alice, Port Mellon, Woodfibre)
- 1961: pulp industry established in Interior via pulpwood harvesting agreements (PHAs)
  - Supposed to be for utilization of lower quality timber and residual woodchips from sawmills, but in early years lots of sawlogs pulped.
- 1967: timber sale harvesting licenses (TSHLs)
  - Established operators consolidated quotas into a single license (TSHL); right to harvest specified volume from PSYU each year for 10 years.
  - Precise area to be logged designated in cutting permits.
  - TSHL holders had more mgmt responsibility (esp. reforestation) & had to log to closer utilization standards.
- TSHLs became chief means of timber disposal within PSYUs.

Industrial Expansion 1955-1975
- 1966: industry shifted from using only large diameter trees to 'close utilization', as smaller & smaller pieces became economical to harvest
- species like lodgepole pine & western hemlock became merchantable (previously 'weeds')
- big increases to overall provincial AAC, >> high of almost 85 million m$^3$ in 1975
- many sawmills & pulp mills built throughout province; 100s of (mostly interior) 'bush mills' replaced with sophisticated industrial complexes

Another Royal Commission
- early 1970s – Increasing Concerns: sustainability; non-timber forest values; industry structure.
- 1976: Pearse Royal Commission
  - Big forest companies argued for status quo but with more secure tenure.
  - Independent loggers, contractors & manufacturers wanted more timber supply available on open market, more opportunity for individuals, coops, small firms & communities to manage Crown forests for logs and other forest products.
  - Pearse’s particular concerns
    - lack of competition for Crown timber & its implications
    - increasing corporate concentration & control of public forest lands
    - little opportunity for new firms to enter the industry
    - industrial inefficiency
  - concerns never fully addressed (Haley 2005)

1976 Pearse Royal Commission
- Recommendations:
  - No change in the policy of Crown ownership
  - Elimination of chart areas
  - Power to suspend cutting permits
  - Major licences responsible for fire planning and stand-by crews
  - 30-year grazing licenses with renewal opportunities
  - Can reduce the AAC by not more than 10% upon any five-year renewal
  - timber licence contracts should enable the ability to regulate other users
  - Develop-harvest optimization model for establishing harvesting limits
  - Creation of a forest planning regime
  - Creation of an interagency consultation planning process
  - Creation of process for engaging the public in forest planning
  - A review of the Forest Service’s administrative and organization structure
  - Decentralization of decision-making authority

...regulate the annual timber cut so that there will be an assured never-decreasing harvest for all time. This is the “sustained yield” policy.”
1975 BC Forest Service Brochure
1976 Pearse Royal Commission – anticipates fall-down

“... because of the present preponderance of high-volume old-growth stands that have grown much longer than the rotation periods planned for subsequent crops. Once these are depleted and replaced by new crops, the calculated allowable cut must fall to be consistent with growth.”

Belief System: “Wall of Wood”

- During the first 30 years of harvest regulation, no expectation of a 'fall-down' in long-term timber supply, because increased yields expected from managed forests. Growth & yield modelling indicates a wall of wood coming our way.
- "... while review indicated that the methodology would likely induce a fall-down, learned people were simultaneously optimistic that good forest management would balance it off." (Pedersen 2003)
- Mantra: Log the decadent old forests and replace them with thrifty young plantations.

Expansionist Not Precautionary

Pearse: fall-down won’t be long term because:
- new forests will be more productive than old forests [productivity yes but volume mostly no];
- logging and sawmill technology will increase merchantable area & volume [yes];
- ‘allowable cut effect’ can increase AACs [seriously?]?
- Rests on belief: rapid growth of new forests shortens rotation ages, making 2d-growth wood available earlier; eases constraints on harvesting current mature, increasing short- & long-term AACs

Cut More Now; Second-Growth Will Be More Productive

Pearse’s Conclusions

Allowable cuts should not be set immediately at long-term sustainable levels, but should take advantage of the higher harvest rates possible in high-volume old-growth forests.

Hints of a Ponzi scheme??

Historic Timber Yields

- have not and will not be repeated; neither volume nor quality

Trainload of spruce boomsticks, at Terrace B.C. Photographer – Cooper, 1929 Source: BOS

Transport of long cedar poles, Terrace BC to Washington D.C. 1930, Loading at Hanson’s Pole Yard. Photographer – Cooper, 1929 Source: BOS

Terrace was once considered the pole yard capital of North America. Some of the longest cedar poles came from Skeena in late 1800s and early 1900s.

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Terrace was once considered the pole yard capital of North America. Some of the longest cedar poles came from Skeena in late 1800s and early 1900s.
Once logged, these sorts of stands will not be restored.

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A New Policy Framework

- 1979 - New Ministry of Forests Act and Forest Act
- MOF objectives expanded to include resource values other than timber
- multiple-use planning process established
- new process for determining allowable annual cuts

- Hanzlik formula gone. AACs now determined by chief forester after considering wide range of information.
- By 1980, Chief Forester Bill Young had adjusted AACs to level of commitments in existing licences; total provincial AAC down from high of 85 million to 68 million m$^3$.

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1980 BCFS Reorganization

- 1980 Forest Service reorganized from Forest Districts and Ranger Districts to Forest Regions and Forest Districts
- Deputy Minister
  - Divisions – Assist. Deputy Ministers, Chief Forester
    - Headquarter Branches - Directors
    - Forest Regions – Regional Manager
    - Forest Districts – District Manager

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1979-1992 Multiple Use

- Now managing for timber, range, fisheries, wildlife, water, recreation (> folio plans, total chance plans).
- PSYU boundaries 'rationalized'; became Timber Supply Areas (TSAs).
- TSHLs & TSLs consolidated: Forest Licenses (FLs).
  - volume-based; 15-20 yr terms, replaceable every 5 yrs, often appurtenant to processing facilities
- Farm woodlots became woodlot licenses (WLs).
- Some TSLs reserved for small business.

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Bill Bennett

- 3 terms as premier (1975-1986)
- elections of 1975, 1979, 1983
- 1982 – serious recession
- 1983 – ‘restraint’ program
  - ‘restraint’ actually an unrestrained attack on public service & organized labour
  - ‘Common Sense’ operatives imported from Ontario (including Norman Spector, Patrick Kinsella)
  - battle with Solidarity Coalition; Jack Munro does controversial Kelowna deal with Bennett
  - 21 demands from Council of Forest Industries; two months after election
  - deregulation of forestry underway

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‘pendulum democracy’

BC premiers since 1952
Industry Recommendations/Demands

- reduce Forest Service staff, esp. Headquarters
- privatise timber cruising, scaling, & nurseries
- prof. reliance; trust docs signed & sealed by RPF
- give companies full harvesting benefits from intensive forest mgmt (allowable cut effect)
- convert volume-based to area-based tenures (i.e., more TFLs)
- decentralise research; more applied R & Extension
- help us find new pesticides & herbicides

Demand 21 – privatise the fleet
Related to a later demand: transfer coastal districts from Pr. Rupert to Vancouver Region (happened to Mid-Coast & QCI districts).

1982-1984

- economic recession
- Province responds with relaxed harvesting & management standards — aka sympathetic administration — so companies could reduce costs and increase revenues.
- Such sympathy, once discovered, backfired; proved controversial, contributed to increasing public scepticism about forest policy.

1985

- Rapidly increasing NSR (not-satisfactorily-restocked) land in forests became a crisis.
- >> Joint provincial - federal $300 million funding plan, the Forest Resource Development Agreement (FRDA), which re-stocked many thousands of hectares.
- Many people working in the bush, mostly doing some form of silviculture.

Reforestation

- 1979 - Ministry of Forests Act required MOF to manage, protect, conserve the forest resources of the Crown. Forest Act obliged licensees to establish a crop of commercially valuable species of timber on the area harvested. Reforestation funding largely by government.
- 1984 – MOF created Basic Silviculture Stocking Standards Policy & Basic Silviculture Monitoring Performance Policy to ensure Crown forest land had a suitable crop of trees growing after logging.
- basic silviculture – establish a free-growing stand after logging.

Tom Waterland was a mining engineer, but you don't necessarily have to know much about forestry to be Minister of Forests. Some ministers did and some were ideologues; many were +/- talking heads. It's the upper level bureaucrats who really run things: i.e., the deputy minister and assistant deputy ministers.

éminence grise
Mike Apsey was a particularly influential Deputy Minister of Forests during the Bennett Socred reign of 1975-1986. Then he went to work for Council of Forest Industries, as CEO for 14 years.
1987-1991 (V. Zalm gov’t)

- New stumpage system, “mainly designed to exempt BC from terms of US-Canadian Memorandum of Understanding on softwood lumber trade.” (Haley 2005)
- Small Business Program expanded
- Licensees made responsible for costs of basic silviculture
  - Basic silviculture is about establishing a free-growing stand of commercially valuable tree species after logging. It may require various activities such as seed collection, site preparation, artificial and natural regeneration, brushing, and density control.
- Proposal to greatly expand TFL system; dropped after widespread public opposition
- Forest & Land Use Liaison Committee (FLULC) – independent advisory committee, mid-80s to early 90s; met 3 times a year & advised Chief Forester about inventory, AAC, land use planning, research findings, etc.

Free Growing Requirement

- “A free growing stand … is a stand of healthy trees of a commercially valuable species, the growth of which is not impeded by competition from plants, shrubs, or other trees. … introduced to ensure that once adequate stocking and survival had been attained, productivity would be maintained.”
  - Time requirement – within 8-14 years, for example.
  - When juvenile forests on public land reach ‘free-growing’ status, licensee relieved of responsibility to look after the trees; responsibility returns to the Province.

Intensive Silviculture

- Planting genetically improved seedlings
- Juvenile spacing
- Commercial thinning
- Pruning
- Fertilisation
- Can bring 2d-growth stands into the timber harvesting rotation more quickly.

1988 – Sustut-Takla Transfer

Sustut-Takla Forest Licenses; timber rights transferred from Kispiox & Morice TSAs (Prince Rupert Region) to Prince George TSA

1988 – Sustut-Takla Transfer

- Minister Dave Parker (Skeena MLA), Dep. Min. Ben Marr, Chief Forester John Cuthbert
- Ombudsman Stephen Owen reported (1990) political interference. FS staff had recommended that wood go west, not east.
- Related to BC Rail machinations: Chief Forester had identified restoration of industrial railroad into Sustut-Takla as an essential management strategy for Prince George TSA Plan.

Unintended Consequences / Perverse Outcomes

Strong incentive for licensees to:
- overplant tree species that grow fast (e.g., lodgepole pine in Interior)
- such r-selected species typically high risk silviculturally; more susceptible (than slower-growing species) to damage agents of young stands
- fast-track early stages of succession; “brushing & weeding” (including with herbicides) even if not necessary

Gains From Intensive Silviculture?

1980: Chief Forester Bill Young at Canadian Forest Congress expressed concerns with “intensive forestry dream”
- massive funding required
- potential vastly overstated
- other demands on forest landbase exerting downward pressures on timber supply
- unrealistic to expect that intensive silviculture would ameliorate falldown

Gains From Intensive Silviculture?

- 1980s: MacMillan Bloedel committed to an intensive silviculture program with an estimated increase in yield of 300,000 m$^3$.
- 1991: program dropped in their Mgmt & Working Plan because it was “found to be not currently practical or economic” (Dellert 2009).
- 2000: Reid Carter, industry analyst at National Bank Financial (and former forest ecologist) says enhanced silviculture not worth the investment. (Gordon Hamilton Coastal Forest Sector Predicted to Decline, Vancouver Sun)

Long time span between investment & return, in prevailing context of uncertainty & change.

Most intensive treatments do not generate extra volume; they concentrate growth on selected trees, thus reducing total stand volume.

So you need increased product value or earlier return (quicker to reach piece size) to compensate for volume loss.

Intensive Silviculture ... The Grand Illusion

FORUM Sept-Oct 2012
( Assoc. BC Professional Foresters magazine)
Alan Vyse & Ian Cameron

- Scant meaningful monitoring—licensees or Province.
- Failure to track actual growth of regenerated stands beyond free-growing a major problem.
- “Stocking standards and reforestation practices are predicated on assumptions about how regenerated stands will grow in the future.”
- “…currently… no requirements for MOFR or licensees to check & record the growth & development of regen. stands after free growing.”

McWilliams & McWilliams. 2009.

Stand Performance to Rotation Age

- Stable predictable growth assumed after free-growing (10–15 yrs); little risk of loss to dominant crop trees.
- BUT: ‘damage agents’ target dominant trees in older plantations; natural ingress not filling voids.

Conclusions:
- Need more monitoring of secondary stands & forests
- Plant more trees & greater variety of species to compensate for losses
- Revise G&Y models to account for damage agents & climate change


Challenge to Forest Productivity Dogma

- Ill-advised reliance on G&Y models rather than rotation length & stand monitoring.
- Stable predictable growth assumed after free-growing (10–15 yrs); little risk of loss to dominant crop trees.
- BUT: ‘damage agents’ target dominant trees in older plantations; natural ingress not filling voids.

Recommendations:
- Introduction of comprehensive land use planning with full public engagement
- Creation of a new agency responsible for the land use planning process
- Movement to more area-based tenures to enable improved resource stewardship
- Complete inventories for all renewable forest resource values
- A single all-encompassing code of forest practice be established


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- 1992: Timber Supply Review (TSR) process initiated
- 1992-96: Commission on Resources & Environment (CORE)—Stephen Owen, Commissioner
  - regional land-use plans (Van I, Cariboo-Chilcotin, W Kootenay-Boundary, E Kootenay)
  - not completed; political backlash
- 1995: Land Use Coordination Office (LUCO); subregional Land & Resource Mgmt Plans (LRMPs)
- Dunsmuir Agreement multisector processes unfolded around this time. 1988 & 1991 processes helped enable changes to forestry, land use planning, environment, etc. that Harcourt’s NDP brought in. 1996 version was key to CORE and LUCO.

“Non-timber” Forest Values

pre-1975
- assumption: most (all) forest land available for logging; timber supply calculated over one rotation only (‘all sites, all types, all species’) >> AACs too high
  - example: TFL 1 once included upper Nass-Shusha drainages, which contributed to inflated AAC; consequently, southern ½ of TFL hoovered in 60s & 70s

post-1975; plus TSR & Forest Practices Code
- protected areas, biodiversity, riparian, wildlife habitats, changing practices factored into AACs (but with ceilings)
- reduced timber harvesting land-base; some mature timber no longer available for logging
- non-timber forest values: framed as constraints on timber production, not management goals

Actual Cut vs AAC

“Each year, an average of about 193,000 ha of BC forest is logged, amounting to roughly 75 million cubic metres of timber. About 70% of the harvest comes from B.C.’s interior, and the remainder from coastal areas.”

An Old Growth Strategy for British Columbia

- Started around 1989.
- Largely a planning exercise; lots of talk & meetings.
- Enabled short-term deferrals (from logging) of selected OG areas.

Eventually >> Protected Areas Strategy & Old-growth Mgmt Areas (OGMAs; homeopathic mgmt for OG features).

This kind mostly gone from BC; will not return.
Climate Change → old-growth forests are non-renewable resources

Major Ecological Impact of Logging in BC Temperate Rainforests

- Enormous change, a reversal, in age-class distribution of forests over the landscape.
- Large areas, 10s of 1000s of ha, where 90%+ old forest (>200 yrs) converted to 90% young forests (< 50 years old).

Inland Temperate Rainforests

1970s-90s – seemed like central interior forest mgmt was largely about chasing beetles (spruce, Douglas-fir, pine beetles)

Unnatural landscape-level effects of checkerboard clearcutting, near Pr. George. Partly a result of reaction against large clearcuts.

(1984)-1993/94 Clayoquot Sound Protests

- 11,000 protestors; 932 arrests
- Touched off ‘war in the woods’ & eventually market campaign overseas

Changes to Status Quo

Ecological perspective: Clayoquot experiment a success

- logging now has smaller (visible) footprint; more ecologically sustainable; less bad stuff (dense road networks, progressive clearcuts, landslides, aggraded streams)

Industrial perspective: failure (at least partially)

- AAC reduction
- more planning & resource inventories >> increased costs & approval delays; reduced cut, exacerbated deteriorating economics
- social & economic sustainability not improved (??)
  - forestry-dependent employment has declined
  - complicated story across BC, not just in Clayoquot Sound
  - decreasing number of forestry jobs (1984 – 1000 m3 to create 1 full-time year-round job; 2012 – 1312 m3 = 1 job [about 3.3 logging truck loads])

Some panel members: Dan Miller, Mike Harcourt, Mike Church, Shawn Atleo

- report: Sustainable Ecosystem Management in Clayoquot Sound Planning and Practices
- July 6, 1995: Gov’t accepted report, committed to implementing all its recommendations.
Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs) – mid-90s to present

- 1995 – Kamloops first; Kispiox, Vanderhoof, Ft St John, Ft Nelson also early ones; most interior districts by 2001
- focus on forestry; mining & energy not so much
- often not in active collaboration with First Nations
- climate change not addressed
- most now need updating

Five major constraints:
1) 12% limit on protected area of province
2) 10% limit on provincial total of biodiversity emphasis areas
3) 6% limit on impacts to AAC
4) tenure allocation removed from discussion
5) AAC determination removed from discussion

“Nobody wants to buy a 2X4 with a protestor attached to the end of it.” Bill Dumont, Chief Forester, Western Forest Products 2001

EBM – ecosystem-based mgmt
land-water embrace

1992-2001 NDP (cont’d)

- 1993: Protected Areas Strategy; part of overall land use planning process
- Preceded by Old-Growth Strategy + Parks & Wilderness for the 90s
- Original goal: boost protection from 6% to 12% by year 2000
- 2018: more than 1000 protected areas, covering over 14 million ha, 14.4% of the province
- Close to 8 million ha of forest now protected, 14%+ of BC’s forests

1994 – Forest Renewal Act

- Forest Renewal B.C. – Crown corporation
- Objectives:
  - enhanced silviculture
  - relocation/retraining of displaced forest industry workers
  - forest-dependent community development
  - ecological restoration
  - value-added manufacturing of wood products
  - Dedicated revenue from increased stumpage to FRBC


- goals: achieve sustainability, conserve biodiversity, promote multiple forest products
- comprehensive code of practice
- prescriptive: forest practices & standards (+ penalties for non-compliance) imposed on tenure holders
- regulations, standards & guidebooks
- detailed planning & monitoring procedures
- hierarchical pre-harvest operational planning system
- increased public participation
- clear legal foundation with explicit penalties for non-compliance
- made forest operators responsible for damage
- established administrative penalties to deal with non-compliance
- Forest Development Plans need joint approval by Ministry of Forests & Ministry of Environment
- independent Forest Practices Board to audit practices & investigate public complaints (lasting legacy)

Haida Gwaii Land Use Plan
They also have a long-term plan for redcedar management.

brian eccles
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Sympathetic Administration, Again

- 1998 – present
- started late-stage NDP (D. Zimhelt, Min. Forests 1996-2000), continued w. Liberals: Wilson, de Jong, Coleman, Bell, Thomson
- stumpage rates lowered
- mega-salvage logging
- deregulation
- ↑↑ whole log exports

Government Dereliction of Duty

- 1998 – present
- increasing concerns about NSR (inadequate reforestation)
  - wildfires, beetle kill (not just MPB; also spruce, D-fir, balsam bark-beetles), diseases
  - all exacerbated by climate change
- reduction of staff in natural resource ministries (and in forest companies)
- inadequate inventory & monitoring
- 2012 Auditor General report critical of gov’t stewardship of forests

1999 – COFI’s Disaster Plan for Forest Industry

- BC government launched Forest Action Plan; cut costs & improve cash flow for forest companies
- some estimates of savings to industry as high as $3 per m³ of wood
- ‘stumpage’ – rate per m³ paid for logs from Crown forests
- widespread minimum stumpage: $0.25/m³
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Whole Log Exports

https://insights.ca/2017/01/29/log-exports-update

FORUM July-August 2005

(Asoc. BC Professional Foresters magazine)

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Jane Perry, RPF, former president of ABCPF, at her loom in the Cariboo

2002 – 2017: Empire Strikes Back

- 2001: Gordon Campbell Liberals elected
  >> impose ‘new reality’
- forest industry in decline, esp. on Coast
  - 27 mills had closed since 1997, taking 13,000 jobs with them; government revenues had dropped by $600 million; industry making much less profit in BC than in other provinces
- gov’t resource ministries reorganised, centralised, ultimately (2011) uber-Ministry FLNRO
- public service purged
- Forest Renewal Act repealed so that revenue that formerly flowed directly to FRBC now went to general revenue. FRBC replaced with Forest Investment Account

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**Forest & Range Practices Act (FRPA) – 2002 (passed) – 2004 (implemented)**

- original FPC watered down, essentially repealed
- deregulation carried the day, after heavy industry lobbying
- “…establish a workable, results-based Code, with tough penalties for non-compliance.” (Premier Campbell)
- FRPA – operational planning, forest practices, protection, compliance, enforcement, monitoring—supported by several regulations.
- less prescriptive; professional reliance. Many previous Code provisions moved into non-legal realm; reliance on judgment of resource professionals to achieve required results.
- no mention of sustainability
- removed legal obligation for Crown to replant areas denuded by natural disturbances; also removed statutory requirement for Ministry to conduct & maintain a forest inventory.

**2003 – Forestry Revitalization Plan**

Changes included:

- licensees > 20,000 m² AAC in long-term replaceable licenses must return 20% of it to Crown, for redistribution to FNs, woodlot & community forest programs, and competitive auctions
- new stumpage system (to some extent, market-based)
- small business forest enterprise program became BC Timber Sales
- appurtenancy disappeared
- no more punishing companies for closing mills by taking back some of their timber license
- mills allowed to subdivide their timber supply area, trading or selling sections that weren’t as profitable

**Stumpage**

- 2008/09 – recession; BC lowers stumpage fees again, for trees cut on Coast
- 2009 average rate in coastal region less than $5/m³, about 70% lower than $18.56 charged in 2008 (as of March 2018 was $5-$12)
- Premier Campbell: reduction in coastal stumpage fee will not constitute an illegal subsidy under Softwood Lumber Agreement


- Produced by group of scientists and biologists in partnership with prov. government. Contained background reports, atlases, etc. A comprehensive, science-based assessment of the condition of biodiversity in BC at that time.
- But government uncomfortable with report and its implications, so didn’t support the recommendations. Instead chose the Conservation Framework approach (sort of an accounting spreadsheet of biotic impoverishment).

**Shock & Awe**

- beetle-mania late 1990s to 2005+
- lodgepole pine landscape transformed by MPB L. MacLauchlan
- Okanagan Mtn Park fire, Aug. 2003
- BC gov’t large destructive wildfires 2003 to present
  - McLure fire burned 26,420 ha; 3800 residents evacuated, 81 buildings destroyed, July-Sept.
  - Okanagan Mountain Park fire burned 25,000 ha near Kelowna, forcing evacuation of more than 27,000 people, destroying 239 homes, Aug-Sept.
  - MPB epidemic increased to cover 4.2 million ha, double the area in 2002.

- Jim Snetsinger, Chief Forester 2004-2012
  - mid-2000s; ‘timber uplift’ in severely affected TSAs.
  - supposed to be ‘conservation uplift’ (increased retention of forest structure in logged areas)
  - Guidance on Landscape- and Stand-level Structural Retention... didn’t happen at landscape level (FPB 2009)
Falldown mostly not the fault of present-day managers & politicians ... but not entirely the beetle’s fault either.

Partly a consequence of decades of overcutting. Even 35 years ago it was common knowledge (in forestry circles) that there was 160% over-capacity in sawmills along Hwy 16.

**Report Recommendations To Increase Mid-term Timber Supply**

- utilize marginally economic stands
- invest in fertilization (‘great white hope’ of timber supply)
- increase area-based tenures for (presumed) enhanced forest stewardship & private sector investment

**Current Gov’t Priorities/Concerns**

- Jobs, mill closures
- Forest Sector Revitalisation (coast & interior)
- Professional Reliance
- Improve flawed FRPA & revamp inadequate Forest Stewardship Plans (FSPs).
  - Forest Practices Board (2015): “… 10 years since FRPA was introduced … (FSPs) have not improved over time. They do not meet the public’s interest, are not adequate for their intended purpose and the Board questions whether they are the right tool for the job.”
- Wildfire Strategy (complicated multilevel planning & action)
- Forest Carbon Strategy? (largely greenwash, in my opinion)
- Culture of deference in some gov’t agencies, Restore District Manager authority over forest operations.

**Other Stories**

- Bourgeois, Bill, 2011-present. Healthy Forests = Healthy Communities
Sources


