

Agroforestry *Update*

British Columbia Agroforestry Industry Development Initiative

September 2005

Page Creek Integrated Riparian Management Demonstration



Marlene Best owns and operates Page Creek Farms, a small-lot agricultural operation on the Matsqui prairie in the central Fraser Valley. She currently grows speciality mushrooms and raises a small flock of chickens for eggs. With sensitivity to the fish and wildlife requirements on the farm, most notably in the riparian area along Page Creek, Marlene will now be using her background and education in horticulture and landscape design to test new economic opportunities through agroforestry. Page Creek Farms is developing an integrated production demonstration site involving three agroforestry systems. Marlene recently undertook the Environmental Farm Planning process and is engaging Ag Renewal business planning resources to ensure the entire project fits within her overall future plans.

With assistance from the BC Agroforestry Industry Development Initiative and Shell Canada's Environmental Fund, the first of three phases in the project will create an integrated riparian management area incorporating plant species for riparian restoration that will also help the farm create new market opportunities.

Shrub species such as red-osier dogwood, contorted willow and contorted hazelnut will be planted in clusters along a 330-m strip on the north side of Page Creek. These species were selected as they have established markets in the floral industry and can also help reduce nutrient loading and improve stream bank stability in Page Creek, a salmonid-bearing stream. According to a study funded by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, there are strong water quality concerns in the Matsqui Prairie area, in particular, the low oxygen levels and their effects on salmon habitat. Other species to be used in later phases will be reviewed in conjunction with government agencies and other assistance to ensure they are suitable from both a conservation and production perspective.

Both Department of Fisheries and Oceans and BC Ministry of Environment representatives have expressed support for the project and its sustainable blending of conservation and production practices using agroforestry.

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Integrated Riparian Demonstration (continued)

Other partners supporting this project include Abbotsford Land Trust Society, the City of Abbotsford Public Works, the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Langley Environmental Partners Society and Tourism Abbotsford.

The agroforestry practices will also be strongly linked to marketing and extension activities to develop educational and agri-tourism activities in conjunction with the site. Page Creek Farms is developing relationships with local schools and the horticulture program of University College of the Fraser Valley for class trips as well as to develop skill training and community service hours for the students. The project has also capitalized on a partnership with the Abbotsford Farm and Country Market (AFCM) management, exposing the products developed on the site at the weekly Marketplace in downtown Abbotsford, thus assisting in establishing direct links between agroforestry practitioners and products with consumers.

The project also has a very accessible site for resource networking opportunities in one of BC's most concentrated areas of agriculture and agri-food activities; Page Creek will thus be able to host information and/or training workshops on site. Site tours for existing or potential growers and value-added food producers, Abbotsford and Agassiz Circle Farm Tour operators, AFCM Vendors, and other interested small lot owners will be conducted to discuss how they can adopt agroforestry practices.

The project is capturing international attention in the environmental and fisheries worlds as well. It is being featured in presentations at the upcoming American Fisheries Society conferences in Oregon and Alaska, as well as at the American Water Resources Association conference in Seattle.

For more information on this project please contact the project coordinator, **Michelle Boshard**, phone (604) 820-1181, email: michelle@ruralresource.com

Bigleaf Maple Tappers News

The bigleaf maple demonstration project took to the road this summer and met the public at two community events on Vancouver Island. The first was an old-style country fair in Coombs. The Backlunds set up a 10' x 20' shelter adjacent to the poultry barn. Half the tent space was donated for use by the poultry clubs for their showmanship and judging events, and the other half used as an information display on tapping the bigleaf maple. And yes, our west coast maple syrup makes a wonderful glaze for chicken.

The second event of the summer was a one-day *Shop the Wild* festival at Royal Roads University in Victoria. This well attended event focused on non-timber forest products from around the province and the Backlund's offered a tasting of their liquid gold (also known as bigleaf maple syrup).

According to Gary, Teesh and Katherine Backlund, the Coombs Fair was a great venue to meet rural landowners and educate the public in regard to tapping the bigleaf maple. It was a great warm-up before the Royal Roads event where the Backlund's

were overwhelmed by the interest in local sugaring. Both events had many 'transplanted easterners', and according to Gary, some were 'Doubting Thomases', but most were very enthusiastic about being able to sugar out west. The Backlunds lost count of the number of times people would say, "I didn't know you could tap these maples" and "I always wondered if you could tap these maples."

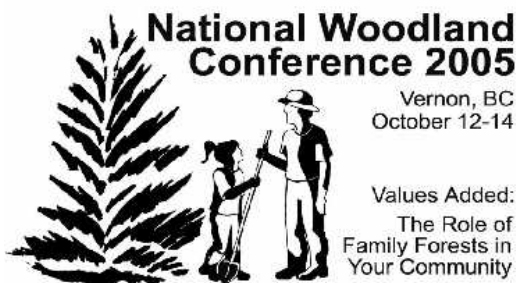
Lawrence Lampson of Glenora Farms shared the Royal Roads booth with the Backlunds. Glenora Farms now has the largest capacity evaporator on Vancouver Island and is planning to set up several small pipeline tappings this coming season and to offer contract evaporating for others. Glenora Farm is also hosting this year's Cowichan Valley Feast of Fields on September 18, and this gourmet event will have a bit of bigleaf maple flavour to it.

For more information on the Tapping Bigleaf Maple Demonstration project or other maple tapping events, please contact **Gary Backlund** at: maple@island.net or phone (250) 245-4939

Coming Events

18th Annual Federation of BC Woodlot Associations Annual General Meeting, Conference and Trade Show.

October 13 –15, 2005 at the Best Western Vernon Lodge in Vernon, BC in conjunction with the National Woodlot Conference. This year's theme is "Values Added: The Role of Family Forests in Your Community." Presentations, tours, trade show, networking and sessions themed on community stability, managing the rural-urban interface and maintaining diversity. For more information please contact: **Jan Lacko**, Conference Coordinator (ruralredcedar@aol.com), phone (250) 838-6882, fax (250) 838-6342.



National Woodlot Conference

The Model Forest – Private Woodlot Strategic Initiative (PWSI) and the Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners are proud to sponsor the National PWSI Conference, **October 12-14, 2005** at the Best Western Vernon Lodge in Vernon, BC. The conference promises a dynamic framework to take family forest issues from the national level to the local level and back. Presentations, field tours and breakout sessions will provide lots of opportunities to exchange ideas and build for the future. For more information please contact: the Conference Coordinator, **Jan Lacko**, (ruralredcedar@aol.com) or **Mike Slivitzky**, Model Forests Program, phone (613) 995-5842, or visit www.woodlotscanada.ca

Bamfield's 3rd Annual Mushroom Festival at the Bamfield Community Hall, Saturday **October 15, 2005**. 'Monster Mushroom Derby', slide show, forest mushroom walk, mushroom cooking contest, mushroom identification display, 'Fungus Feast', mushroom art raffle and the 'Toadstool Stomp' (dance). For more information contact **Jim Jones**, (250) 728-3168 or jtjones@alberni.net

Seeing the Forest Beneath the Trees: an Exploration of Non Timber Forest Products

The Kootenays Forest Innovation Society is hosting a two-day workshop **October 14 & 15, 2005** in Nelson at Selkirk College, Silver King Campus. The workshop includes a Friday keynote address at 7:30 pm by Dr. Darcy Mitchell of the Centre for Non-Timber Resources at Royal Roads University titled "The World Beneath the Trees – An introduction to NTFPs." The speech will be followed by a wine-and-cheese reception, poster displays and non-timber forest product demonstrations. On Saturday workshop participants will learn about the diverse non timber forest products opportunities including: floral greens, ecotourism, wild mushrooms, marketing and economics, horticulture, opportunities with small diameter wood, medicinal plants, NTFP inventory and more. Workshop Price: Friday evenings: by donation. Saturdays: \$59.00 includes lunch and coffee breaks (a subsidy is available for low-income participants). For more information, please visit www.kfis.ca or contact **Michael Keefer**: mkeefe@kfis.ca or phone (250) 489-0917

Upcoming Vancouver Island Maple Events

- Malaspina University-College, Nanaimo Campus. Register by Phone: 1 866 734-6252, HGTM 001 S0601 **January 21, 2006**
- Malaspina University-College, Duncan Campus. Register by Phone: (250) 746-3519, HGTM 001 S06D1 **February 4, 2006**, Cost: \$58.85 (includes book and taxes)
- The Land Conservancy at Backlund's Backwoods. Register by Phone: (250) 816-1816, Cost: members \$40, non-members \$50 (includes book & taxes)

Join the **Certified Organic Associations of BC for the COABC 2006 AGM, Conference and Tradeshow February 24, 25 & 26** at the Agrifair Ag Rec Building, Abbotsford BC For more information or registration / tradeshow booth forms, call **Michelle Boshard**, Conference Coordinator at 604 820 1181, email: michelle@ruralresource.com or visit www.certifiedorganics.bc.ca

Peace River Group Tests Agroforestry To Integrate Livestock and Aspen Management



Alley cropping in aspen stands is being tested to integrate timber –range management in the Peace Forest District

In the Peace Forest District (PFD), overlapping forest and range tenures often result in some form of unresolved impact and or conflict between livestock and timber interests. Currently, the PFD has approximately 138,000 animal unit months (AUMs) of range use within the 900,000 ha that makes up its timber harvesting area. This represents an approximate 50% tenure overlap within the District. In the past efforts to resolve overlap issues (including forage accessibility in dense aspen stands and livestock damage to regenerating trees) tended to address more the symptom rather than the problem. Accordingly, movements to more strategically address impacts remained stalled despite the growing land base pressures and tenure holder frustrations. It was these growing pressures and frustrations that inspired the need to develop new and effective working partnerships.

Hence, the Timber Range Impact Mitigation Committee (TRIMC) was established. The Committee has brought together various regional stakeholders to work towards viable integrated management solutions, including:

- BC Ministry of Forests and Range (Peace District, BC Timber Sales and Northern Interior Region staff);
- Peace River Cattlemen’s Association;
- Louisiana-Pacific;
- Slokan-LP OSB;
- BC Ministry of Environment;

- BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands,
- University of Northern BC; and,
- Agriculture and Agrifood Canada – PFRA.

Over the past two years the TRIMC has deliberated over the ways and means to assess and mitigate impacts of overlapping resource uses, primarily between timber tenure holders and range tenure holders. The results of TRIMC’s efforts are a consolidation of issues, review of new and old management mitigation options and strategies, development of new operational tools, increased understanding of issues, and increased communication between stakeholders.

With funding and resources from the Peace River Cattlemen’s Association, the BC Ministry of Forests and Range, Louisiana-Pacific, the University of Northern BC and the BC Agroforestry Industry Development Initiative, TRIMC is testing integrated tree - livestock production utilizing alley cropping in regenerating aspen stands. An overarching goal of this project is to integrate and actively manage both the agriculture and forestry crops in a manner that minimizes negative and maximizes positive interactions in the system. In so doing this project will increase awareness of the environmental and economic benefits of agroforestry systems as well as the social benefits of reducing conflict among stakeholder groups on Crown tenures.

Mulching machines, normally used in the oil and gas industry to clear seismic lines, are being used to establish 1.7-meter wide alleys 30-meters apart over three sites containing regenerating aspen stands. These alleys will be seeded with an approved Peace District seed mix (creeping red fescue 25%; timothy 23%; birdsfoot trefoil 15%; alfalfa 15%; red clover 12%; and crested wheatgrass 10%) in order to promote and ensure optimal forage production. The alleys will be oriented such that some will receive near full sun during morning hours while others will receive near full sun around mid-day. The corridors will provide livestock with unimpeded access and enhanced forage production.

(Continued next page)

Aspen Agroforestry (continued)



A double pass with mulcher creates near full-sun corridors for forage production in dense aspen stands

At the same time, this system will ensure successful regeneration of the aspen stands as required under the Forest and Range Practices Act. At maturity, an average aspen stand in this area contains approximately 600 - 800 stems/ha (PFD value indices); this equates to an inter-tree distance of 3.8- to 4.4-metres. Given that the alleys are only 1.7-metres wide there should be no net loss of merchantable aspen volume at harvest. Keeping livestock production concentrated within the alleys should also minimize any unintended browsing and trampling damage to trees elsewhere in the blocks.

Each year grazing by approximately 100 cows is expected to commence at each site around June and will continue for three months. It is expected that livestock will target peavine, vetch, timothy and alfalfa in the forage stand. Vegetation monitoring will confirm the forage species used by livestock as well as annual forage production and utilization levels. The density of the tree belts between the alleys is such that livestock use of these areas is expected to be very limited.

Annual sampling will also determine the level of livestock forage use in the tree belt areas, and tree growth and any tree damage will also be recorded.

As results become available, field days will be held and data presented in order to validate and confirm that the objectives have and will continue to be achieved. An information summary will be printed on an interim basis, and made available at the Ministry of Forests and Range, Peace District office.

For more information on this demonstration project or TRIMC's other activities, please contact either:

Jason Labonte, Stewardship Forester, BC Ministry of Forests and Range, phone (250) 784-1291, jason.labonte@gov.bc.ca or

Todd Bondaroff, Resource Stewardship Agrologist, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, phone (250) 784-0143, email: Todd.Bondaroff@gov.bc.ca

Tours Showcase Case Silvopasture Opportunities in BC

Agroforestry Tour and Barbecue held at Jay Springs Ranch, Pinantan Lake



Tour participants inspect newly planted tree seedlings in one of Jay Springs Ranch's silvopastures.

Some midday rain failed to dampen the spirits of the attendees of the inaugural agroforestry tour at Jay Springs Ranch in Pinantan Lake on July 8th. Chris and Jennifer Cunningham led the tour on behalf of the three generations of the Jay Springs' Family including Jennifer's parents Geoff and Shirley Bodman and her siblings Jocelyn Atkin and Dean Bodman and their families. Joining the tour were members of the provincial Agroforestry Management Committee, on which Jennifer volunteers her expertise in addition to her many duties on the ranch, in the markets and other volunteer work serving BC's agricultural community.

The 2-hour walking tour covered all aspects of Jay Springs' operations and provided insight into the reality of integrating sheep and woodlot management. Discussions touched on animal performance, forage and tree species selections and techniques to prevent tree seedling damage. Direct marketing lamb at the farm gate and through farmer's markets has been key to the survival of this family farm. And certification of their forest management helps sell their naturally raised lamb in the urban markets: "people want to know where their food comes from how it's produced and they appreciate that we are managing our land sustainably" noted Jennifer.

The afternoon was concluded with some refreshments and mouth-watering, barbecued

racks of lamb in the rose garden at the ranch headquarters. For more information on Jay Springs Ranch, please visit their website: www.jayspringslamb.ca

Kootenay Landowners Tour Silvopasture Operations in Cranbrook

As part of its efforts to test and promote silvopasture in the province, Kootenay Tree Farms (KTF) hosted a tour of Christmas tree production areas located in the Rampart and Picture Valley areas east of Cranbrook on September 7th. A diverse group including forestry personal, Christmas tree producers, ranchers, a Kootenay Livestock Association representative, and a member of the local MLA's staff were in attendance.

The purpose of the tour was to demonstrate the benefits of producing trees and forage together and to promote understanding from industry to non-industry personal. KTF is heading a project that over the next 4 years will monitor forage growth in response to different Christmas tree management techniques and forage combinations.

Project coordinator Charlie Willis was pleased with the tour and note "most could not believe the amount of forage at this point" in reference to the abundant growth that results from pruning and fertilizing the trees.

KTF has been in production about 25 years and now manages about 520 ha. A site located on a power line right-of-way viewed on the tour has been in production for 15 years. Major pruning and fertilization work was started 3 years ago and is beginning to show promise for integrated use. KTF's Picture Valley Christmas tree Permit area still has a partial overstory and the group was invited to return to view the understory changes over the next 4 years of the project.

For more information on the Christmas tree silvopasture demonstration or future tours in the region please contact Charlie Willis at kootenaytreefarms@shaw.ca

Changes at British Columbia's Agroforestry Industry Development Initiative

Agroforestry Initiative Administrator Named

The Federation of BC Woodlot Associations on behalf of the provincial Agroforestry Management Committee is pleased to announce it has contracted April Anderson, RPF, as the Agroforestry Initiative Administrator.



April is a registered professional forester, and has a Masters degree in landscape architecture. April's interpretation of 'landscape' in the latter discipline is in her words "invariably a large one, focusing on ecology, and how people live in, and use the landscape – the 'architecture' comprised of this ecology and this land use. Agroforestry is a landscape response that fits well with my idea of landscape architecture, in urban as well as rural landscapes." April's previous experience includes fieldwork in silviculture and forest research, project management, program administration and extension.

"Bringing people together to exchange information and ideas has been a large and rewarding part of my career in forestry, and I look forward to this aspect of my new position with the Agroforestry Initiative."

April can be contacted as follows:
Mail: 3121 Slocan River Road West,
Slocan Park, BC V0G 2E0
Phone / Fax: (250) 226-7641
Email: aaa@netidea.com

April replaces Carmen Wheatley who is thanked for her dedicated service to the Agroforestry Initiative since its inception in 2003. We wish Carmen continued success with her work with the Small Tenures Program of the Forest Investment Account.

AMC Welcomes New Member

The Agroforestry Management Committee (AMC) welcomed new member Reg Whiten, P.Ag., MCIP at its July 8th meeting in Kamloops. Reg brings valued experience and particular insight into the needs of First Nations stakeholders in the Peace Region and around the province.



Reg holds a BSc (Agriculture) from University of Guelph and a Masters of Environmental Design (Urban and Regional Planning) from University of Calgary. Since 1993, he has worked as a planning and agrology consultant through his firm, InterraPlan Inc. Specializing in land use planning, resource management and access negotiations, Reg has provided strategic research and planning for a number of organizations including: Peace River Watershed Council, Moberly Lake Community Watershed Stewardship Committee, Boreal Centre for Conservation Enterprise, Peace River Regional District, Saulteau First Nations, Forest Stewardship Council, BC Ministry of Community Development, and the BC Science Council. Reg has also done resource management research and consulting in the Philippines. Through his work in establishing the Boreal Centre, Reg has completed marketing studies on northern NTFPs and botanicals and was among the first to introduce agroforestry in the Peace region through workshops sponsored by the BC Small Woodlands Program in 2001.

The AMC oversees the **BC Agroforestry Industry Development Initiative** and is working with stakeholders around BC to achieve its vision of a dynamic, self-sustaining agroforestry sector. **For more information** please visit the Initiative's website: www.woodlot.bc.ca/agroforestry/

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George Powell
Agroforestry Update Editor

The Federation of BC Woodlot Associations administers the Agroforestry Initiative



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