

**Chief Forester Order  
Respecting the AAC Determination for the Boundary 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.*

On October 25, 2001, the former chief forester determined a new allowable annual cut (AAC) for the Boundary Timber Supply Area (TSA). The current AAC of 700,000 cubic metres came into effect on January 1, 2002 and excludes all volume issued to woodlots.

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

- each of the factors potentially affecting timber supply on the TSA;
- the previous *Rationale for AAC determination* dated October 2001;
- the *Boundary Timber Supply Analysis Report* dated November 2000.

In reviewing each factor, I have also discussed current practice and the availability of new information with Ministry of Forests and Range (MOFR) district and branch specialists.

I note that the base case timber supply forecast in the 2000 analysis report projected a non-declining harvest flow of 700,000 cubic metres per year, and I am aware that a maximum non-declining harvest flow of 749,000 cubic metres was also modelled.

I am aware that there have been numerous legislative changes since the previous AAC determination, notably:

- the enactment of Kootenay Boundary Higher Level Plan Order, which the former chief forester considered in his determination, but which was not entirely modelled in the base case,
- Visual Quality Objectives were established under the Government Actions Regulation (GAR) on December 31, 2005. Analysis of the objective showed a 2 percent decrease in timber availability across the forecast horizon,
- Ungulate Winter Range was established under GAR. Analysis showed no impact on timber supply due to the establishment of this objective.

I have also taken into consideration the implications on an AAC determination of the recent changes in interior log grades.

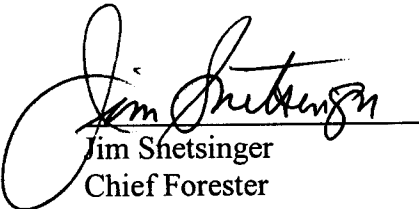
Timberline Forest Inventory Consultants have recently conducted timber supply analyses around several management issues in the Boundary TSA, and provided a professional opinion regarding the mid- and long-term impact of maintaining the current harvest level for the next two decades. In formulating this opinion, Timberline used current management assumptions, and found that maintaining the current harvest level would not unduly affect timber supply. I have considered this professional opinion in my determination.

Finally, I have considered the mountain pine beetle infestation, both its current status and spread predictions. I note the need for ongoing aggressive harvesting of priority pine types. A significant proportion of the current AAC must be directed to moderate and high risk stands to capture pine volumes that otherwise will become non-recoverable losses and to conserve non-pine volumes necessary to maintain mid-term timber supply. If such direction is followed, management of the mountain pine beetle infestation can occur within the current AAC level. I urge the licensees in the Boundary TSA to continue moving their operations into pine types to the greatest extent possible and to consider mid-term timber supply implications in cut block selection.

I have reviewed the First Nations consultation process undertaken by MOFR staff with the following First Nations (bands and tribal councils): Okanagan Indian Band, Osoyoos Indian Band, Lower Similkameen Indian Band, Penticton Indian Band, Spallumcheen Indian Band, Westbank First Nation and the Okanagan Nation Alliance. I am aware that District staff sent a letter to the aforementioned First Nations providing them with information regarding the proposed AAC determination postponement and asking them for information relative to their aboriginal interests, and how a possible decision to postpone the AAC determination may impact these interests. One response was received from the Westbank First Nation that expresses the general concern about alienation and land use within the First Nation's asserted territory. However, I note that it was not specific to the determination to be made, and when further contacted by MOFR staff, Westbank did not note any concerns regarding this determination.

In making his October 2000 determination, I recognize that the former chief forester identified significant uncertainty in a number of factors, including physical and economic operability, unstable terrain, site productivity estimates and target densities associated with dense pine stands. In reviewing each factor I find that the magnitude of the uncertainty is largely unchanged and therefore continue to encourage MOFR staff to undertake the appropriate studies in collaboration with local licensees to help reduce this uncertainty prior to the next determination.

Based on my review of the factors noted above, I have determined that the AAC for the Boundary TSA would not likely change with a new determination made according to the existing schedule. 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 October 25, 2011, which is 10 years since the last AAC determination. I also request that MOFR staff monitor the impact of the beetle infestation annually. If 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 at an earlier date.

  
Jim Shetsinger  
Chief Forester

Nov 2/00  
Date