

# **Timber Supply Review**

## Timber Supply Areas

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Forest Analysis and Inventory Branch  
Ministry of Forests, Lands and  
Natural Resource Operations



### Timber supply review in BC

The Timber Supply Review (TSR) program began in 1992 to regularly update timber supply<sup>1</sup> in each timber supply area (TSA)<sup>2</sup> and tree farm licence (TFL)<sup>3</sup> throughout the province. By law, in British Columbia (BC), allowable annual cuts (AACs)<sup>4</sup> for TSAs and TFLs must be determined at least once every 10 years.

### The objectives of TSR

- Identify the best available economic, environmental and social information to support the chief forester's AAC determination. This should reflect current forest management practices, including their potential impact on short- and long-term timber supply.
- Identify the First Nations and public interests and concerns that may be impacted by an AAC determination.
- Identify where improved information is required to support future timber supply reviews.

### The role of the chief forester

Determining AACs for Crown forest land in BC is one of the chief forester's most important responsibilities since it affects local and provincial economies, community stability and the environment—now and into the future.

The chief forester is an independent statutory decision maker and the AAC determination must be made with full administrative fairness. This requires utilization of the best available information for a wide range of environmental, social and economic factors as specified in Section 8 of the [Forest Act](#) including:

- the rate of timber production that may be sustained from the area;
- the short- and long-term implications to the province, of alternative rates of timber harvesting from the area;
- constraints on the amount of timber produced from the area due to use of the forest for purposes other than timber production;
- the economic and social objectives of the Crown, for the area, the region and the province as expressed by the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO);
- abnormal insect or disease infestations and major salvage programs planned for the area.

Some of these factors can be measured and analysed — others cannot. Ultimately, the chief forester's determination is an independent professional judgment. The chief forester is not directed by the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations when setting an AAC.

After the chief forester sets an AAC, the minister apportions the AAC to various categories of agreements. These two processes occur independently.

If significant new information becomes available or major changes occur to the land base or management assumptions, the chief forester may revisit the determination sooner than the 10 years required by legislation.

The chief forester may also choose to postpone a new determination by up to five years if timber supply in the unit is stable and there have been no significant changes in management or land use.

<sup>1</sup>**Timber supply** is the amount of timber that is projected to be available for harvesting within a specified time period, under a particular management regime.

<sup>2</sup>A **timber supply area** is an area of provincial Crown land designated by the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations in accordance with Section 7 of the [Forest Act](#) and managed for a range of objectives including timber production.

<sup>3</sup>A **tree farm licence** is an agreement between the provincial government and a licensee which grants the licensee the rights to manage the land and harvest the timber on a defined area of Crown land in accordance with Section 35 of the [Forest Act](#).

<sup>4</sup>**Allowable annual cut** is the maximum rate of timber harvest determined for an area under Section 8 of the [Forest Act](#), specified as a volume of wood (cubic metres) per year.

### The timber supply review process for TSAs

The process for determining AACs for TSAs is based on the following sequence shown in Figure 1. It is initiated with engagement of all First Nations with interests in the timber supply area, along with meetings between FLNRO branch and regional/district staff. The total length of the timber supply review process may vary depending on the complexity of management issues in the timber supply area; the timeline shown below is only a guideline.

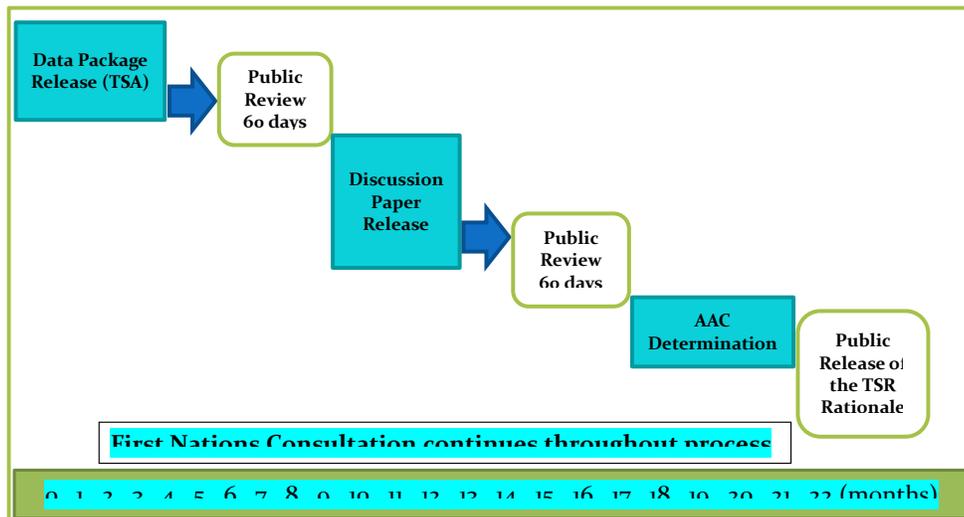


Figure 1. Timber Supply Review Process for TSAs.

### **Data package**

The *data package* identifies the current assumptions regarding the definition of the timber harvesting land base, growth and yield rates, current forest management practices, and management requirements for habitat, biodiversity and other values. The *data package* identifies sources of data, modelling criteria and sensitivity analyses that are done to support the timber supply analysis.

### **Review of the data package**

After the *data package* is released, there is First Nation consultation and a 60-day public review period. Comments and concerns are considered in finalizing the content of the *data package*.

### **Discussion paper**

Using the data, assumptions and modelling criteria from the data package, computer models are used

to generate an analysis of timber supply over multiple decades. As part of this timber supply analysis, a base case is created to reflect the effect of current forest management on timber supply. It is **not** an AAC recommendation, but rather, it is one of many pieces of information that the chief forester will consider when determining the AAC. Additional modelling through sensitivity analyses may be done to examine the potential impact of uncertainty in land base or management assumptions on timber supply.

The timber supply analysis results are published in a *Discussion Paper*.

### **Review of the discussion paper**

After the *Discussion Paper* is released there is First Nations consultation and a 60-day public review period. During this review period, the ministry may hold meetings with interested parties or open houses in communities within the TSA.

All First Nations' and public comments on the *data package* and the *discussion paper* are summarized and presented to the chief forester for consideration at the AAC determination.

### **AAC determination**

When the chief forester determines an AAC, all the factors that were considered in the decision are outlined in a written rationale statement.

When the chief forester announces the new AAC, the written rationale statement is released to the public.

### **First Nations engagement and public involvement in the timber supply review**

First Nations and public input are important in the timber supply review. During the TSR process, there are opportunities to attend meetings, review reports and provide input which the chief forester considers in an AAC determination.

First Nations engagement occurs throughout the TSR process. Figure 1 indicates where there are additional opportunities for First Nations and the public to review the information during the timber supply review.

### **A commitment to incorporate change**

The [Forest Act](#) requires the chief forester to re-determine the AAC for each TSA and TFL at least once every 10 years to ensure AACs are current and to reflect new information, forest management practices and government policies.

Implementation of major government initiatives, significant land use changes or threats to the sustainability of the timber supply (e.g., insect epidemic) may have significant impacts on the timber supply in specific TSAs and TFLs. In these cases, the chief forester may determine the AACs more frequently than every 10 years.

For more information and to learn more about the Timber Supply Review process, please visit our website at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/managing-our-forest-resources/timber-supply-review-and-allowable-annual-cut>

### **Or contact:**

Forest Analysis and Inventory Branch,  
Ministry of Forests, Lands and  
Natural Resource Operations,  
PO Box 9512,  
Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, BC V8W 9C2

Telephone: (250) 356-5947

Fax: (250) 387-5999

Email: [\*\*Forests.ForestAnalysisBranchOffice@gov.bc.ca\*\*](mailto:Forests.ForestAnalysisBranchOffice@gov.bc.ca)