



PRIVATE
MANAGED
FOREST LAND
COUNCIL

**Private Managed Forest Land Program
Audit Report 2005**

Executive Summary

In the summer of 2005, the Private Forest Land Council commissioned an audit of the Private Forest Land Program. Twelve private managed forest land properties were selected. A combination of large, mid-size and small properties on Vancouver Island/Sunshine Coast and the West Kootenay were selected. The audit was conducted between July 18 and September 16, 2005. The purpose of the audit was to assess compliance of forest practices with the Private Managed Forest Land legislation and to assess the effectiveness of the legislation in protecting key environmental values.

The *Private Managed Forest Land Act* establishes objectives for the key public environmental values, which are fish habitat, water quality, critical wildlife habitat, soil conservation, and reforestation. The minimum standards of practice for the protection of these key values are set out in related regulations.

This audit report presents the findings of the auditors and a description of the objectives, scope and methodology used.

The audit examined operational activities and obligations in the areas of harvesting, road construction, maintenance and deactivation, and reforestation for the period August 3, 2004 up to the day of each field audit. These activities were assessed for compliance with the Private Forest Land Council Regulation requirements for fish habitat, water quality, forest soils and reforestation.

The audit process involved on-site meetings with each selected owner. The owners were interviewed during the audit on issues specific to each field site and the management activity on their lands. For each property, audit findings were developed from an evaluation of information collected through interviews, map and document reviews and site-specific field observations, measurements and tree counts.

The audit findings for compliance and effectiveness were derived from an evaluation of the sites and activities audited, and the findings are presented separately for each of the key environmental values.

The auditors found that the forest management practices evaluated in the Managed Forests audited comply with the practice requirements of the Private Managed Forest Land Council Regulation for soil conservation, reforestation, water quality and fish habitat. Additionally, the auditors found that the harvesting, road construction/maintenance, and reforestation practices on all properties carrying out these activities during the audit period were effective in meeting the requirements.

The owners are implementing the legislation effectively. Operational practices on all properties are consistent with the intent of the legislation, and operations are protecting key environmental values. Overall, reforestation is being completed, there is conservation of the growing capacity of the soil and there are appropriate measures in place to protect fish, fish habitat and water quality. It is evident the owners are managing their land for growing timber and are protecting key environmental values.

The owners were found to have planning, implementation and monitoring systems in place to ensure compliance and effectiveness in meeting regulatory requirements. The level of detail in the plans tends to be guided by the size of the ownership, and the requirement for environmental protection based on risk management.