Chief Forester Order
Respecting the AAC Determination for the Bulkley 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 November 26, 2001, the former chief forester determined a new Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) for the Bulkley Timber Supply Area (TSA). The current AAC of 882,000 cubic metres came into effect on January 1, 2002 and excludes all volume issued to woodlot licences. The determination also includes a partition as follows:

- 520,000 cubic metres per year for sawlog stands;
- 362,000 cubic metres per year for marginal sawlog/pulpwood stands.

In August 2005, I formally postponed the next AAC determination to a date prior to November 26, 2009 or 8 years since the last determination. I provided reasons for the postponement in my *Chief Forester Order Respecting the AAC Determination for the Bulkley TSA*, dated August 30, 2005. I based this decision on my review of the factors discussed in the *Rationale for AAC Determination* dated November 26, 2001; the limited new data available at that time; the limited demonstrated harvesting performance; my knowledge of the timber supply dynamics of the TSA; and my review of consultation with First Nations.

I have again reviewed the above information as well as the most recent harvesting performance data including the 2001-2006 period; the findings of a new site productivity (SIBEC) project; the results of a recent Predictive Ecosystem Mapping (PEM) project for the TSA; and a letter from Pacific Inland Resources on behalf of the Bulkley TSA Vegetation Resource Inventory stakeholders group, dated December 15, 2005.

I am aware that there has been a significant undercut in the AAC during the past 6 years. The total undercut volume between 2001-2006 is over 3.6 million cubic metres representing about 68 percent of the total AAC during the corresponding period. In addition, 1,275,000 cubic metres of AAC were transferred out of the Bulkley TSA from 2004 to 2006 to address mountain pine beetle-infested stands in other TSAs.

I note that the SIBEC project has significantly increased the reliability of site index estimates which suggests potentially greater mid- and long-term stability than was projected in both the 2001 timber supply analysis and the "revised" base case analysis referred to in the 2001 AAC rationale. Regarding the PEM project, I am aware that the project results did not pass verification standards and because of the low accuracy, the information is not appropriate for use in assessments of timber supply. I acknowledge that a significant Vegetation Resources Inventory project is currently underway in the TSA and valuable new information arising from the project will be available for inclusion in the next timber supply review.

I have also reviewed the status of the mountain pine beetle (MPB) infestation in the Bulkley TSA and note that about 18 percent of the timber harvesting land base is comprised of lodgepole pine-leading stands. I am familiar with a new provincial-level timber supply analysis of the impact of the MPB and recognize that mid-term timber supply in the Bulkley TSA is likely to decline eventually regardless of the MPB infestation. I note that these timber supply projections are broadly consistent with the results of the 2001 timber supply analysis for the Bulkley TSA.

Having reviewed the above information, I conclude that the timber supply in this management unit is not at undue risk given the current AAC, low harvesting level and occurrence of at-risk lodgepole pine-leading stands. 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 November 26, 2011 which is 10 years since the last AAC determination. If additional 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 Snetsinger, R.P.F.
Chief Forester

Aug 9/07
Date