

Algonquin Section Assists with International Biomass Conference in North Bay by Andree Morneault

Over 350 delegates from across Canada, the US, and Europe spent October 23 and 24, 2009 in North Bay and Nipissing University discussing Biomass Harvesting. It was a lively conference with many opportunities for networking and discussion. Many excellent speakers provided facts and technical information to help us understand the state of the technology. The agenda covered many perspectives – from forest management planning (where potential volumes of wood for biomass harvesting are calculated), to the foresters and loggers, to the forest companies, to the users, and the equipment manufacturers. There were architects who described how alternative energy systems need to be integrated at the very beginning of designs for new buildings, to an example of a large school in the states where oil furnaces were converted to the burning of wood chips and other alternative heating and energy sources.

Several Algonquin Section members gave outstanding presentations including: Peter Street on biomass opportunities on the Nipissing Forest, Stephen Mitchell on the supply of biomass from private land in the Huntsville-North Bay corridor, Murray Woods (section treasurer) on the use of LIDAR for biomass inventory, and Jeff Dech (section councillor) on an ecosite approach to estimating stand productivity. Al Stinson (past director) played a pivotal role in this conference: he was our esteemed moderator for the first day (his birthday), and he organised and lead the field tour to Block 196, a full-tree harvesting site where all tree biomass was used, including bark and tops for chips and hog fuel. John Pineau, also on the organising committee did a stellar job in chairing the session on Wood Pellets and, with Mat Belanger's assistance, organised the logistics and provided

the safety equipment for the field tour. Andree Morneault and Brian Batchelor also helped with the field tour.



John Pineau, Mat Belanger, Megan Smith, and Andree Morneault set up a CIF booth in the main hallway at Nipissing University just outside the meeting room. Clean Air Kits attracted a lot of attention and provided a great opportunity to talk to students and delegates about the CIF, the role of trees in climate change, and the Forests without Borders program. Algonquin Section designed a T-shirt that was sold at this event as a fundraiser for Forests without Borders.

Andree Morneault, Megan Smith and Peter Street at the CIF booth with the new t-shirts.

John Pineau, Mat Belanger, Al Stinson, and Jeff Dech were part of the highly effective organising committee for this conference and were instrumental in making it such a resounding success.



Al Stinson moderating the first day of the conference.



Jeff Dech (left) and Murray Woods (right) presenting at the conference.



Brian Batchelor (centre) on the field tour.