Canadian Institute of Forestry – Looking Back, Looking Forward

Alberta’s forest history, and the

Forest History Association of Alberta

Bruce Mayer
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Alberta’s forest history

• a young province (1905), young forest history (1800s)

• part of Rupert’s Land - the area granted in 1670 to the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England (Hudson’s Bay Company)

• after Confederation, Prime Minister John A. Macdonald negotiated the purchase of Rupert’s Land
Alberta’s forest history

- most of Alberta’s forests are on Crown land
- designation evolved from early Colonial regulations
- in 1826, the Crown reservation of timber was modified to allow for public sale deemed ‘not fit and proper’ for Britain’s Royal Navy
- the new regulations for sale of timber included Crown ownership, leasing of harvesting rights, selling by auction or tender, and renewable permit rights
Alberta’s forest history

• in 1849, ‘An Act for the Sale and Betterment of Timber upon Public Lands’ was enacted

• legislation incorporated principles of 1826 – formed a model for later forest laws

• continued the arrangement under which harvesting rights were leased while forest land remained public

• concept remains in force in Alberta today
Alberta’s forest history
Alberta’s forest history

- *Dominion Lands Act of 1872*
  - Timber Berths and permits
  - exclude timberlands from sale or settlement
  - requirement to prevent ignition and spread of wildfires

- 1884 report by J.H. Morgan – duty of government to ‘arrest further destruction of our remaining forests’ and to appoint a Forest Commission
Alberta’s forest history

• Morgan also commented on:
  • a lack of forest inventory
  • consequences of uncontrolled cutting and fires
  • need to organize a system of forest management
  • importance of forestry schools to train qualified staff

• prairie fires continued to be a persistent and growing problem
Alberta’s forest history

• in 1899 Dominion Forestry Branch was created with Elihu Stewart appointed as Chief Inspector of Timber and Forestry

• first two rangers appointed in Alberta – McPhail and Cameron

• Alberta established in 1905, with natural resources remaining in federal control
Alberta’s forest history

- Harvest for settlement, railroad ties and mine props
Alberta’s forest history

• Forest Reserves established to limit settlement and to protect watersheds

• Ranger Districts established, rangers hired

• 1913 – 59 rangers that covered 14.55 M acres
Alberta’s forest history
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• 1929 – Natural Resources Act

• 1930 – Alberta Natural Resources Act

• 1930 – Alberta Forest Service created
Alberta’s forest history

- 1931 – Oliver Tree Nursery established
- Priority focus continued along the eastern slopes
Alberta’s forest history

• Early lookout towers linked by phone lines; in 1935 radio’s were installed

• WW II – increased need for forest products

• Period of recovery began, oil discovered in 1947
Alberta’s forest history

• 1948 - Green Area legislation

• 1948 – Eastern Rockies Forest Conservation Board

• 1949 – Phase I forest inventory
Alberta’s forest history

• 1949 – *Forests Act*

• new clause enabled the government to enter into agreements for areas able to support pulp mills

• ‘sustained yield’ included in new legislation

• 1947 – first formal forestry training for returning vets

• 1949 – Rocky Mountain Section, CIF formed
Alberta’s forest history

• 1950 – joint AFS and National Parks Service training course in Banff

• 1951 – Forestry Training School in Kananaskis

• 1951 – bulldozers authorized for fire use

• 1954 – first Forest Management Agreement with North Western Pulp and Power Ltd. – Hinton pulp mill

• 1957 – first Junior Forest Warden club
Alberta’s forest history

- 1957 – AFS purchased first fixed wing
- 1957 – first helicopter contract
- 1958 – one of first airtanker missions
- 1958 – Bertie Beaver becomes mascot
- 1960 – Forestry Training School opens in Hinton
Alberta’s forest history

• 1965 – Junior Forest Ranger program

• 1966 – Timber Quota system

• 1966 – Phase II forest inventory completed

• 1968 – Vega and other settlement fires

• 1969 – Forest Protection Area defined

• 1970s – forest industry development
Alberta’s forest history

• 1974 – first Graduating Class, U of A Forestry
• 1977 – Reforestation and Reclamation Branch
• 1980 – Forest Research Branch
• 1980 – AFS celebrated 50th anniversary
• 1980 – Pine Ridge Forest Nursery completed
• 1983 – Presuppression and Preparedness System
Alberta’s forest history

• late 1980s – laser disc wildfire simulation training

• 1970s through to today – huge increases in oil and gas activity

• 1984 – revised Eastern Slopes Policy

• mid 1980s – sustainable forest management

• 1985 to 1992 – eight pulp mills, numerous sawmills
Alberta’s forest history

• 1991 – Free to Grow reforestation standards

• 1993 – Land and Forest Service

• Period of centralization and closing of field offices

Alberta’s forest history

- 1997 – Alberta Forest Legacy
- 1997 – Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta created
- 1998 – new forest management planning standards
- 1999 – Alberta’s Commitment to Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management
- 1999 – *Regulated Forestry Profession Act*
Alberta’s forest history

• 2000 – 40th anniversary training centre in Hinton
• 2001 – Special Places program concludes
• 2003 – Shifting Gears and Respect the Land
• 2004 – Integrated Land Management
• 2005 – 100th anniversary of Alberta; 75th of AFS
Forest History Association of Alberta

- 2002 – name was registered
- 2004 – first Constitution and By-laws
- 2006 – amended Objects
- 2006 – registered Charitable Organization
Forest History Association of Alberta

• promote recognition, preservation, display, understanding, and development of history of forestry

• research and study history of forestry in Alberta

• acquire, collect, loan, and display items, materials, documents, interviews presenting and conserving history of forestry

• forum for public contact and communication
Forest History Association of Alberta

- Board Membership – 9 total; 3 forest industry, 3 AFS/ESRD, 3 public at large
- Annual General Meetings – typically in March
- Trails and Tales newsletter – goal is 2 per year
Forest History Association of Alberta

• Ongoing projects – digital scanning of photographs, oral interviews, archive room, website upgrades

• Financially supported:
  • *The Resilient Forest: After the Stumps*
  • *Mountain Trails*, the Jack Glen story
  • CD *The Roots of the Present Lie Deep in the Past*
  • *Don Hamilton: Bush Pilot and Entrepreneur*

• Volunteer effort is an important aspect
Forest History Association of Alberta

• Foothills Research Institute Adaptive Forest Management History program
• Self-guided auto-based tour through the foothills and Rocky Mountains
• Initially developed by CFS 1970s
• Bias-balanced view into the landscapes and how natural and human factors shaped them
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Thank You
The Jackladder: Tie Logging on the Whirlpool
Grand Trunk Pacific – Jasper -- 1911
Whirlpool River Timber Limit
1919

Moab Lake
JASPER FOREST RESERVE

WHIRLPOOL RIVER TIMBER LIMITS

COMPASS SURVEY

Scale: 1000 ft. = 1 in.

Jasper, Alta.
30th June, 1919

Note: The estimated number of trees on the 5 square miles is approximately 1,200,000.

The remarks on plan relative to No. of trees per acre apply to only 75% of the area included, there being many intervening tracts of young growth in low ground and along the river banks.
J. Grant MacGregor

Guelph-Goderich RR to 1909

Alberta Central RR Red Deer 1910

WW I Canadian Army Engineer 1916

Resident Road Engineer Jasper 1919 - 1920

Chief Highway Engineer Manitoba 1921
Alberta Central Railway – 1914 Proposal
J. Grant MacGregor
Resident Engineer
Tie Point:
Large Boulder
Survey Control Line

[Old Columbia Trail]
James McNiece
Austin
1866-1922

Highest Bidder
Whirlpool
Timber Berth
1919
AUSTIN & NICHOLSON
CHAPLEAU, ONTARIO

Largest Producers of Railroad Ties In the Dominion

Pine and Spruce—Lumber—Lath—Piling
Railroad Ties—Pulpwood

FIRST CLASS PLANING-MILL EQUIPMENT

Facilities for delivering Pulpwood to Michipicoten Harbour, Lake Superior
Splendid facilities for Dressing and Matching in straight car lots, one or more widths

Mills at NICHOLSON, ONTARIO, Main Line C.P.R.
Astoria and Portal Creeks Highway 93A in 1949

1920s Tote Road in yellow
Otto’s Cache – Otto brothers
Moab Lake -- "Slide"

W. Ruddy 1962
Rapids by Moab Lake
Moab Lake and the Columbia Trail

-- Trail location based on 1919 Timber Berth Survey --
Whirlpool Tie Camp Locations

Whirlpool River Tie Logging Camps
1919 - 1927

Bob Stevenson photo - 2007
First Camp – A Metaphore
Second Camp
Simon Creek area
Whirlpool Tie Camp 2
“Simon Creek” – Camp 2
Third Tie Camp
Otto Brothers
Contractors

James C. Gibson
David E. Conroy
Tom Stapley
Dennis ("Dinny") Hogan
Jack, Bruce and Closson Otto
Otto Brothers - guides, outfitters, garage, taxi
Pocahontas Coal Mine c. 1915
David E. Conroy 1928 Proposal

JYMA PA 39-23
Canadian Militia
North-West Rebellion 1885

Glenbow Archives NA-3205-3

Thomas B. Stapley -- Militia
Lethbridge sawmill
Broad Axe – tie hacking
Hauling a sleigh-load of wood.
Sleigh-load of Railway Ties
Tie Landing
Watering Ties from a Jam
Pointer – log-driving skiff
Log-driving Pointer – Camp 2

Tom Peterson photo 1987 – Roy Richards & Wally Butler
BODY RECOVERED IN BRIDGE PIER

Identified As Ernest J. Sorenson, a Tie Worker, Who Disappeared

Missing for more than a month, the body of Ernest J. Sorenson, who has been employed with Allen and Hogan, tie contractors, near Jasper, was found last week caught in the pier of the Whirlpool River bridge, a few miles from his place of employment. Sorenson, a Dane, only landed in this country on July 18.

A pole and cap were found on the banks of the Whirlpool River a tributary of the Athabasca, on August 1, and it was presumed at that time that Sorenson had been drowned. The body, lying some feet under water, was found by Dennis Hogan, the man’s employer, and although his clothing had been entirely washed away, identification was still possible.

The R.C.M.P. have had the matter in hand, and the dead man’s only known relative, a brother living in Illinois, has been notified.

Ernest J. Sorenson
Tie Driver
d. 1 August 1924
“Deadman” at Maligne River
Jackladder, Piers and Log Boom -- 1920s
“Tie Island” Pier
Pier in Athabasca -- Jackladder Area
Holding Boom
Tie Production 1921 - 1927

90 K
60 K
40 K
20 K

Whirlpool Railroad Tie Production

96
The Jackladder – End of the Drive
Pine Stump & Spruce Release
A HARD ROAD TO TRAVEL

LAND, FORESTS AND PEOPLE IN THE UPPER ATIAABASCA REGION

MURPHY / UDELL / STEVENSON / PETERSON
Let the Northern Rockies Ecotour set your compass for a remarkable journey of discovery through the northern part of the Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage site. 265 photos, 22 maps and 133 Ecopoints present the region's rich First Nations history, exploits of early fur-traders, artists, missionaries, tourists, and scientists; and the ongoing interplay of people, wildlife and their inspiring mountain ecosystem. The authors draw on current research to discuss key environmental issues such as climate change and biodiversity conservation.

You will explore the eastern foothills (Chapter One) ending in historic Grande Cache, then travel west on the Yellowhead Highway (Chapter Two) following major rivers across the continental divide from Hinton to Valemount, British Columbia. In the concluding Chapter Three, the Ecotour turns southwards from Jasper along the spectacular Icefields Parkway through the Rockies, ending near Lake Louise.

See the full route map on page 5.