



A joint Natural Resources Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada program.

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### Season's Greetings!

The First Nations Forestry Program wishes you a healthy, prosperous and happy New Year!

### 2008: A Year in Transition for the FNFP

The current five year phase of the First Nations Forestry Program is coming to a close in March 2008. To provide advice and direction for replacement programming, the program's National Council and Provincial-Territorial Management Committees across the country have been engaged over the past several months in a "Visioning Exercise" for First Nations forestry. The objective is to solicit views and develop consensus among First Nations forest practitioners on where First Nations forestry could/should be in ten years, what the opportunities are for forest-based communities, and what will be the measures of success to indicate when the vision has been realized. This exercise has been led by Michael Anderson, the National Council member for Manitoba and Manitoba PTMC representative, with the assistance of Jack Smyth and John Doornbos of the Canadian Forest Service.

The final report of the Visioning Exercise will be received for review and approval by the National Council in early winter 2008. The visioning exercise and final report will be a critical input to the government, as it considers options for replacement programming for the FNFP.

For information:

Jack Smyth  
(613) 947-4292  
[jsmyth@nrcan.gc.ca](mailto:jsmyth@nrcan.gc.ca)

Michael Anderson  
(204) 949-9184  
[manderson@mkonorth.com](mailto:manderson@mkonorth.com)



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## Forest Management Projects Developing Capacity in the Northwest Territories

The forest management initiatives of the Gwich'in Tribal Council are starting to pay dividends. Since 1996, the FNFP has supported training and workshops covering various aspects of forest management planning and operations. "The Gwich'in Tribal Council consistently demonstrates its commitment and initiative in preparing, implementing and delivering on their projects," notes Amy Thompson, member on the committee for the Northwest Territories Provincial/Territorial Management Committee for the FNFP.

This year, the FNFP is supporting the Gwich'in Tribal Council in two projects: Timber Harvesting and Processing for Community Use by the Aklavik Indian Band and Forest Management Basics and Sawmill Training by the Tetlit Gwich'in Council. It is anticipated that both projects will lead to employment opportunities for NWT First Nations.

For information:

Rebecca Motuzas  
(780) 435-7274  
[rmotuzas@nrcan.gc.ca](mailto:rmotuzas@nrcan.gc.ca)



The Gwich'in Tribal Council engaged in community monitoring of seismic line forest regeneration

## One Company's Waste is Another's Treasure

*"Poor Quality" Forest Species Being Utilized as Value-Added*

Despite the recent challenges of high energy costs and a rising Canadian dollar, the northern Ontario community of Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek has been able to attract interest from other forest sector players in their bid for a cedar value-added processing facility and the volume required to make it feasible.

“The support the community has been able to obtain through the FNFP, industry and government partners has been fantastic,” says Jean-Paul Gladu, project coordinator and President of Aboriginal Strategy Group. “The excitement is building as Chief and Council prepare for the construction of the facilities.”



Jean-Paul Gladu, project coordinator and President of Aboriginal Strategy Group

The funding provided by the First Nations Forestry Program over the past three years has assisted the community of Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek to gain a better understanding of the potential economic opportunities related to underutilized tree species. The community has successfully completed two reports on the resource use, implementation, inventory, best practices and business opportunities for eastern white cedar leading to the discovery of

several niche markets for the species.

The Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek has also received a cutting allocation from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources for sites within the Lake Nipigon Forest, which underpins the white cedar processing project. The project has also identified business opportunities for Sand Point community members. The same approach is now being considered for larch – another under-utilized forest species.

For information:

Rick Greet  
(705) 541-5592  
[rgreet@nrcan.gc.ca](mailto:rgreet@nrcan.gc.ca)

## **Envirothon Inspires Nova Scotia Aboriginal Youth**

Envirothon is an annual competition where teams of youth work collaboratively to develop their knowledge of ecology and natural resource management and to practice their environmental problem-solving skills. Aboriginal youth are actively participating in

the Nova Scotia Envirothon, which is sponsored by the Nova Scotia Forestry Association, in partnership with Canon Envirothon, the Province of Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Power, the Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, and the First Nations Forestry Program.

Youth are tested on their knowledge in five topics: Soils/Land use, Forestry, Wildlife, Aquatic Ecology and a current environmental issue that changes each year. Winning teams have an opportunity to compete at the North American Canon Envirothon competition, where over 250 students from across the U.S. and Canada are selected to participate.

“Envirothon has contributed to my academic and personal life by making me want to continue my career in the field of science,” said Michael Deny, an Aboriginal student currently enrolled in the forestry program at the University of New Brunswick.

First Nations involvement in the Nova Scotia Envirothon Program began back in 2002 as a pilot project with the Eskasoni First Nation High School in Cape Breton. It has since grown to include several other First Nations communities. Nova Scotia teams are currently preparing for the 2008 competition scheduled for next May.

For information:

Chris Pitt

(506) 452-3138

[cpitt@nrca.gc.ca](mailto:cpitt@nrca.gc.ca)