Partner Profile

MANNING DIVERSIFIED FOREST PRODUCTS LTD.

Manning Diversified Forest Products Ltd., located near the Town of Manning, produces dimensional softwood lumber and value-added wood products for domestic, US, and Pacific Rim customers. MDFP Ltd. also has a re-manufacturing plant that produces specialty wood products such as siding and flooring. This helps to maximize the value the mill gets from our forest resources.

Since start-up in 1993, Manning Diversified Forest Products Ltd. has proven itself as a community leader, partnering with the people of North Peace and promoting the economic growth of the region. Jobs have been provided to local residents and contractors, resulting in the creation of a critical mass of skilled forestry workers, positioning MDFP Ltd. and the region to further expansion.

MDFP Ltd. is a major employer in Alberta's North Peace Region, providing direct employment for 150 Albertans at the mill site, and for 26 full-time equivalents (more than 100 seasonal workers) in woodlands operations. MDFP Ltd. is also responsible for the creation of 190 indirect jobs in Alberta.

In February 1997, Manning Diversified Forest Products Ltd. was awarded the "Premiers Award of Distinction in Business". This award is given to a company in Alberta which shows outstanding accomplishments both in business achievements and community partnerships. Management and staff both attribute their success to teamwork.

Manning Diversified Forest Products Ltd is committed to community-orientated education. In order to meet a future supply of employees, who are ready to meet the challenges facing industry, MDFP Ltd. has undertaken several education initiatives within the North Peace Region, individually and in partnership with other regional stakeholders.

These initiatives include:

- The Boreal Forest Research Centre in Peace River, which is operated in partnership with Fairview College. The Centre's focus is promoting the wise use of forest resources and promoting student awareness through events such as Forest Explorers
- The Manning Diversified/K P Wood Ltd. Scholarship Program for students pursuing post-secondary education; which has sponsored $67,150 in student financing over the past six years.

MDFP Ltd. is committed to the North Peace. The company plans to operate in the region for a long time, continuing to grow and add new products. Their partners will benefit from more jobs and more contributions to the economic, educational, and environmental growth of the region.

Manning Diversified Forest Products Ltd. Trust Fund

Manning Diversified Forest Products Ltd. launched a trust fund to promote much needed boreal forest research. MDFP Ltd. was the first company in Alberta to tie its annual contribution to forest and wildlife research directly to ongoing operations (i.e., a per cubic metre contribution based on harvest activity). This adds up to approximately $500,000 per year. The trust fund, which is guided by a community-based steering committee, contributes to environmental research and various community projects.

Approximately 55 different research projects have been supported to date. Organizations receiving support include: the University of Alberta, Alberta Research Council, Canadian Forest Service, Alberta Environment, Beaverhill Bird Society, Foothills Model Forest, Centre for Excellence in Sustainable Forestry, Alberta Forest Wardens, and the Alberta Conservation Association.

For more information, please visit our website
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Newsletter

Boreal Forest Research Centre
R & D, Public Awareness Technology Transfer & Education

Fall 2002

Envirothon 2002

The internationally acclaimed Envirothon competition this year was held in Amherst, Massachusetts from July 29 to August 4, 2002 - and Manning was there.

Ashley Klymiuk, Rebecca Hauser, Barret Ferris, Kelsey Asmussen, and Robyn Guenette, all high school students from Paul Rowe High School in Manning, attended the 2002 Envirothon after beating out other Alberta teams last fall. The team got to go with the help of a $3000 donation from the Boreal Forest Research Centre.

Envirothon, sponsored by Canon, is a high profile, environmentally focused competition that gives youth a chance to flex their research and critical thinking muscles - all with the intent of passing on valuable knowledge of environmental issues of the day.

This year 49 teams, 42 from the USA and seven from Canada, competed in the Canon Envirothon, North America's largest high school environmental competition. Organized through the National Association of Conservation Districts, the Canon Envirothon is the final competition in a series of contests beginning each spring that involves more than 500,000 teenagers throughout North America. In written and field tests, as well as oral presentations, five member teams from schools or organizations compete in these preliminary rounds for the distinction of representing their state or province at the Canon Envirothon. Key knowledge areas include: soils, forestry, wildlife, aquatics and a current issue, which changes from year to year.

The theme was how introduced species impact biodiversity. Though they did not return home with first prize, team Alberta's experience was the greatest reward. The first day included carrying Alberta and Canada's flag. "Carrying Alberta's flag into the opening ceremony was, I think, the proudest moment of my existence," as Ashley, who was team Alberta's captain.

The next day was learning day, where teams divided off to learn about such areas as soils, aquatics protection legislation in Massachusetts and introduced species. Mute swans, they learned, have aggressively invaded habitat of native species of New England. There are also invasive grasses and plants in Massachusetts which are outpacing native species.

The team also learned that the history of New England forest involved permanent clear cutting for agriculture and devastation of native species such as white pine. Because of loss of forests, most large forest animals have vanished from the New England states. "New England, and particularly Massachusetts, have learned the value of conservation - they've lost everything already," says Ashley.

The next day, teams were tested on their knowledge of what they'd learned through study and field trips. The final day was the oral competition, in which teams were given a goal to allocate $200,000 toward community preservation, including preservation of historic sites, of biodiversity and of affordable housing. The teams learned perhaps most of all that issues of environment won't simply go away. They need serious thought and a new generation of environmentally aware citizens.

"As environmental problems are drawn more frequently into the public eye, it becomes necessary to understand them..... Envirothon is educating this continent's youth about the real issues and real concerns facing us, as well as establishing a firm network between future environmentalists, government agencies, personal interest groups and industry," says Ashley.

Boreal Forest Research Centre Partners

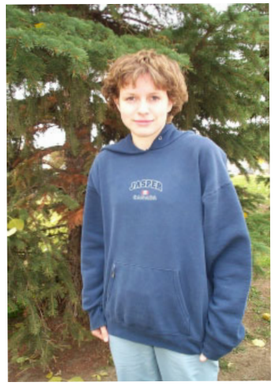
Alberta Conservation Association
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Boucher Bros. Lumber Ltd.
Canadian Forest Products Ltd.
Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd.
Fairview College
K P Wood Ltd.
Manning Diversified Forest Products Ltd.
Zavisha Sawmills Ltd

High school student gaining insight into boreal forest

Julie Bliss spends two weeks with forest researchers at EMEND

The boreal forest is taking on new dimensions for Julie Bliss. The grade 12 student from Peace River High did forest research in the field alongside scientists and university grads, from July 9 - July 26 this summer. Her locale was the EMEND site, located about three kilometres northwest of Sulphur Lake. "I went to help out. After two weeks, I got a good feel for the work that goes on there," says Julie of her experience.

Known as Ecosystem Management Emulating Natural Disturbance, EMEND was established by member organizations to determine which forest harvest and regeneration practices are ecologically sustainable. Researchers look at biotic communities, forest structure and biodiversity in harvested stands in comparison with mixed wood landscapes that have originated through wildfire and other natural disturbance. The idea is to re-create post natural disturbance characteristics, through harvest practices.



Julie describes her experience there as a wonderful chance to work with University of Alberta researchers doing field studies. "They were doing research to finish their theses," she says. "I learned a lot about forestry, from a lot of different people." Julie basically tagged along, getting a real life feel for how researchers at EMEND go about gathering data. There were plots in each different site, or trail. Julie was helping out with biodiversity and biomass studies.

"I was involved with harvesting shrubs, for biomass measurements." They also had her making bug traps for biodiversity studies."We then compared the data from each site," she explains. There was also "a lot of tree identification and plant identification", and she was introduced to what she likes to call 'orienteering' using a compass and map to get her bearings on the terrain.

Working at EMEND was just one opportunity out of a growing list for Julie. She first encountered forestry related work while with junior forest wardens. She's also attended the forest expo in Prince George, provided last year through the Rotary, and she attended Forest Explorers with about 300 other high school students in Peace River, last fall.

Julie was also invited as a student rep, along with a classmate, to attend an 'insects and the forest seminar', June 6 in Peace River. She jumped at the chance. There, she heard how scientists describe the forest and some of the issues surrounding insect damage and management. "It was really interesting," she assures. That happened because of her forestry teacher, Mark Ladd, who told her about the seminar. He had in turn heard about the workshop from Hugh Seaton, at the Boreal Forest Research Centre.

Mr. Ladd was the one to get her into EMEND, as well. "My current bio teacher introduced me to it. He saw I was an environmentalist, and asked if I was interested. I was so excited. I was thrilled at the chance," she says. Julie is truly a budding environmentalist. She's picked up an expanded awareness of the boreal forest through her classes, her own interest and reading.

"I knew a fair bit before I went to EMEND, but I wasn't near as knowledgeable as at a university level. Julie says she draws on her attraction to the natural setting around her for inspiration to delve deeper. She lives on an acreage outside Peace River where it's not unusual to see deer, moose, bear and coyotes.

"I was always raised in the country. I love animals. I think it's always been an interest of mine," she says. Julie who is considering a bio major, and the University of Victoria is catching her eye. Or, she'll travel for a year around Canada. Whatever her future, she's acquiring an acute sense of the diversity of the boreal forest."I'm getting a sense that the forest is more complex than I thought. It's one large living thing, there's a certain beauty to it."

She said her experiences have made her more aware of her own place in the forest setting, and the consequences of disturbances to the forest, natural or human made. "It makes you think about what you take for granted every day," she says.

Manning Diversified / K P Wood Ltd.
Scholarship Program

Education funding is offered to North Peace Region residents who wish to pursue careers in forest management and forest industry manufacturing. Post secondary education funding on a more general basis is also available to residents of the Manning area.

Funding is awarded once per school year with the application deadline being the first Friday in June of each year.

Over the past six years, 105 awards were granted for $67,150 in program funds, and $58,750 in matching funds through the Northern Alberta Development Council Bursary Program. This is a total of $125,900 committed.

Congratulations to the following 13 successful applicants for the 2002-2003 school term:

Sara Blanton.....Bachelor of Education
Crystal Burrows.....Forest Technology
Steven Harpe.....Forest Technology
Lisa Hasenack.....Practical Nursing
Thomas Hasenack.....Computing Science
Jodie Henitiuk.....Business Administration
Trista Johnson.....Pre-Optometry
Amber Kamieniecki.....Business Administration
Keith King.....Bachelor of Science/Nursing
Jill Murrant.....Education
Greg Nichiporik.....Agriculture/Pre-Veterinarian Medicine
Jason Potts.....Mathematics/Bachelor of Arts
Christine Vandemark.....Bachelor of Science/Nursing

Applications for the 2003/2004 Scholarship Program will be available from the Boreal Forest Research Centre at Fairview College, P.O. Bag 3500, Peace River, Alberta T8S 1V9. For more information, please feel free to visit the Boreal Forest Research Centre or phone (780) 618-2623.

Ash from wood-fired furnaces could be next hot forest product

Article courtesy of The Edge magazine

Turning a $1.8-million annual expense into a $2-million revenue is one of the benefits of an ambitious research & development project being undertaken by Alberta's Wood Ash Development Group.

The group is promoting the commercial use of wood ash from industrial furnaces as a soil supplement and, in the process, reinforce bridges between the forestry and agriculture sectors. The wood ash is produced by a growing number of forest product and power generation companies that burn wood to produce energy.

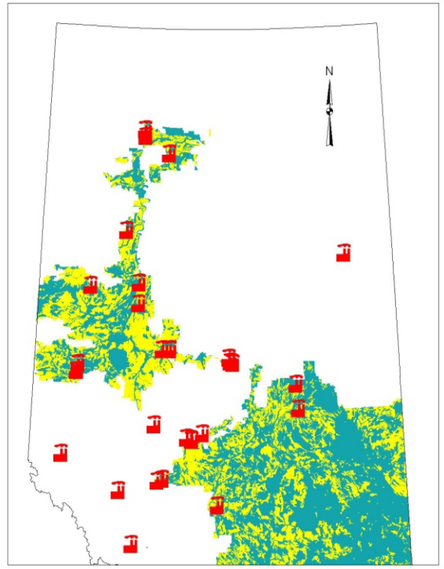
The Boreal Forest Research Centre in Peace River, whose studies support the commercial use of wood as agricultural liming agent, organized the Wood Ash Development Group last year. Traditionally, considered strictly waste material, wood ash was reclassified by Alberta Environment as a by-product earlier this year. Now the group representing government, industry, and the private sector - promotes the use of the ash as an amendment to neutralize acidic soils.

"We're trying to build a commercially viable industry sub-sector around wood ash," says Hugh Seaton, Manager of the Boreal Forest Research Centre. "We want to make farmers more aware of the benefits of wood ash. Through our respective partners, we're doing a lot of research and development out in the field and building farmer awareness around the benefit of wood ash. Currently, the group is putting together a strategic plan and is looking at various strategies of branding wood ash."

Alberta's forest products sector produces approximately 3.8 million tonnes of wood residues annually in the form of bark, sawdust, shaving, and woody debris. Approximately 1.6 million tonnes of that total are deposited in landfills or burned every year. But Seaton says there are potentially many uses for wood residues, including agricultural uses such as liming agents.

Fourteen forest products companies in Alberta as well as energy systems and co-generation plants produce wood ash. Seaton said there is a potential to landspread up to 180,000 tonnes per year from these sources. Activities currently underway include field-testing programs, development of techniques that will allow farmers to calculate the benefits of using wood ash, and creation of a storage and distribution network for wood ash.

Seaton said with a market potential of $15.00 per tonne, wood ash sales could generate $2 million annually. In 2000, about 7,000 acres received wood ash treatment.



There are more than 1.5 million acres of acidic soils throughout central and northern Alberta. Acidic soil limits fertility and crop yield, as well as the range of crops that can be grown. Seaton said the application of wood ash can increase barley production by 10-12 bushels per acre and alfalfa by 1.5 tonnes per acre. With close to a third of all agricultural lands in the Peace Country suffering from acidity, a neutralizing additive like wood ash seems a good fit. Wood ash can replace expensive liming agents as a means of raising soil pH, and also contribute nitrogen and phosphate fertilizers.

For more information, please contact the BFRC at (780) 618-2623.

Aspen Value-Added Workshop - November 14, 2002
9:00 a.m. To 4:30 p.m. Travellers Motor Hotel Peace River

Aspen Market Opportunities for Western Canada - Rhonda Lindenbach-Gibson
Manufacturing in the Secondary Wood Industry - Mike Fiedler
Hardwood Lumber Drying for Value-Added - Dave McRae
Machining for Hardwood Species - Darrell Wong
Primary Manufacturing of Aspen Lumber - Derek Goudie

For more information, please call (604) 222-5670