

## **CFCI Update September 2005**

### **Implementing EBM**

Implementing change can be hard work and making the transition to ecosystem-based management (EBM) in the rugged and beautiful forests of BC's Central and North Coast is as hard as it gets.

Through negotiation of the Central and North Coast land use plans the companies (Western Forest Products, NorskeCanada, Timberwest, Interfor, Canfor, Triumph Timber, BC Timber Sales) that comprise the Coast Forest Conservation Initiative (CFCI) agreed to commit themselves to a new level of forest management, at both the planning and on-the-ground levels. They emphasized that making the transition to EBM would be tough especially during the early stages.

Not only is EBM a largely new concept and way of operating to these companies, but it is also new for the provincial government officials who oversee the land use plans and forest operations. It is also new to First Nations and communities. It requires new thinking and new approaches from everyone involved in bringing the land use plans to reality.

CFCI has invested a lot of money and time into voluntary implementation of EBM. Training programs have been developed and implemented for field staff; specialists have been retained to help develop operational definitions and tools for implementing EBM and staff have been hired to help manage implementation, and to interact with government officials, First Nations, environmental groups and others at a technical level.

While a full accounting of costs has not been completed it is estimated that CFCI has invested over one million dollars in EBM implementation since the beginning of 2004 not counting in-kind contribution by staff of CFCI companies.

Before the transition to EBM began, forest management in the region was guided and governed by the provincial Forest Practices Code. Forest managers and the companies' professional staff were well schooled in conducting operations according to the Code. It's a steep learning curve and in one year EBM practices are beginning to be implemented on the ground. CFCI has committed to the recommendation in the land use plans that EBM be fully implemented in the region by March 2009.

Change on the ground includes implementing retention logging that retains old growth forest habitats, increases protection around streams and lakes and generally leaves a softer footprint on the land.

Formed in 2000, CFCI is a group of coastal forest companies and organizations dedicated to working with partners to achieve a world-class level of sustainability through management and conservation in BC's coastal rainforests.