

# Social and economic factors explored in *JEM*

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Sustainability is often presented as the balance point of three sets of priorities: social, economic, and environmental factors. In their own ways, *JEM* authors highlight these factors, or propose ways of finding balanced solutions to current management challenges. More than any previous issue of *JEM*, this issue delves into socio-economic matters, emphasizing that management of our natural resources cannot be considered in isolation from social and economic goals.

Don Gayton tackles the issue of social responsibility for the environment, describing British Columbia as fertile ground for community-based ecosystem monitoring. A well-developed network of non-government organizations, diverse ecosystems, and a trend of downsizing in the “dirt ministries” create an opportunity for people to deepen their relationship with nature while gathering needed information. We know ecosystem management decisions have to be made, despite reduced government capacity for monitoring. Gayton challenges citizens to choose: will we invest our precious leisure time in *The Simpsons*, or in salamanders and their kind?

Stakeholders in forest management are many, and their worldviews diverse. Shawn Morford and her co-authors explore the role of culture and communication styles in conflicts over natural resource management. They suggest that conflict prevention and resolution depends on mutual respect and improved understanding of differences in values and communication styles.

The Clayoquot Sound Scientific Panel was formed in 1993 to address public discontent about a perceived imbalance between economic, social, and ecological values. McNutt, Beasley, and Moeges describe how Iisaak Forest Resources Ltd. incorporated the Scientific Panel’s guidelines into a timber-harvesting regime in Clayoquot Sound. Variable retention and aerial harvesting helped Iisaak meet their objectives, which included protecting a series of wetlands and the linkages between them.

Articles by Randy Sunderman and Steve Hilbert represent the first two in a series of economic development case studies in *JEM*. This series shares the experiences of communities and ventures, highlighting both positive and painful “lessons learned.” With innovation comes risk, and we hope that these case studies will reduce that risk by guiding future efforts of communities and entrepreneurs in fruitful directions. Sunderman describes the Creston Log Sort Yard, formed in 1999 and run by community stakeholders until its privatization in 2002. He outlines factors that contributed to the sort yard’s evolution and viability. Similarly, Hilbert documents the rise and fall of the Quesnel Hardwood Co-operative, a venture aimed at using the region’s birch hardwood resource, creating and sustaining jobs, and stabilizing the area’s economy. Although the Co-op dissolved in 2000 because of a fracturing of its membership, a number of businesses are established and growing in its wake.

While focusing on silvicultural information, Stand Establishment Decision Aids (SEDAs) in *JEM* also offer context for management decisions by outlining First Nations' values and issues related to non-timber forest products. The latest SEDA, authored by Leandra Blevins and Annette Van Niejenhuis, summarizes recommendations for nutrient-deficient, salal-dominated sites in the Coastal Western Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone.

Snowmelt-dominated hydrologic regimes are the focus of a discussion paper by Robin Pike and Rob Scherer. Their overview of the potential effects of forest management on low flows identifies many knowledge, research, and extension priorities, such as the need for improved understanding of generation processes, evapotranspiration, and the interrelated effects of forest practices and climate change. The authors emphasize that many human activities, not just forest management, influence watershed hydrologic regimes, making it difficult (as always) to isolate cause and effect.

Lim, Fischer, Berbee, and Berch set out to answer a genetic question, one with ecological and economic implications. Their research indicates that the booted tricholoma is a distinct species from Japanese matsutake and pine mushroom, a finding of relevance to both forest managers and commercial harvesters.

We trust you will enjoy the articles we've compiled in this print issue, and encourage you to visit the *JEM* Web site where two special issues are in progress, along with a new regular issue. In Volume 4, Issue 1, authors share their visions and suggest strategies for sustainable management of British Columbia's natural resources, addressing the challenge of integrating science and innovation at the policy, planning, and operations levels. Volume 4, Issue 2 showcases the Robson Valley Enhanced Forest Management Pilot Project, a Province of British Columbia initiative. Articles highlight indicators of social, economic, and environmental health in the valley, as well as innovation in forest management.

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