



Information Bulletin

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Protecting Trees in Waskesiu ~ Spruce Budworm Spray Program a Success

WASKESIU, SASKATCHEWAN, August 2005

Cool, wet weather during the spring 2005 provided a second year of ideal growing conditions for white spruce trees and inhibited the growth of spruce budworm. For a third year, Prince Albert National Park protected white spruce trees in the village of Waskesiu by spraying for spruce budworm (Foray 48B, active ingredient *Bacillus Thuringiensis Kurstaki*, BTK). The spray was completed June 7 and 10, 2005. This concludes the third year of a three-year spray program.

BioForest Technologies Inc. noted the 2005 spray program was successful. The spruce tree defoliation rates at the time of the spray in 2005 in most spray areas are only 5-10%. This is consistent with results reported in 2004 where the defoliation rate in the townsite was only 7% (down from 64% in 2003). Defoliation rates at the time of the spray outside the townsite in 2005 generally range between 30-40%. This is also consistent with results reported in 2004 where defoliation outside the townsite was 34% (down from 81% in 2003). This trend is consistent with results found at the end of the growing season. Defoliation rates at the end of the growing season in the townsite dropped from 60% in 2003 to 2% in 2004 and from 91% in 2003 to 17% in 2004 outside the townsite. The final report for 2005 including year-end growing season results will be available in December 2005.

BioForest Technologies also noted, spruce tree shoot development is excellent. These results confirm what visitors and residents witnessed this summer – the spruce trees in Waskesiu are much healthier and under much less stress than they were two years ago.

Protecting trees in Waskesiu by spraying for spruce budworm provided two consecutive years of low defoliation. This means that the trees in Waskesiu are much healthier and able to withstand future years of severe defoliation with only moderate impact.

A thorough environmental assessment into the health and environmental impact of spraying was conducted in 2003 and concluded no significant, immitigable, adverse impact. The active ingredient in Foray 48B, *Bacillus thuringiensis, kurstaki* (BtK), is a naturally occurring soil bacteria known to kill moths and butterflies. Regulatory authorities in Canada, the United States and at the World Health Organization agree that BtK can be used safely in residential areas. BtK is also used directly on organically grown food crops, has been used safely throughout the world for over 30 years and does not affect other animals, plants, soils or drinking water.

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