

NEWS RELEASE:

Local Partners Offer Agroforestry Tour in the Peace Region

The McGregor Model Forest Association, in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, the Doig River First Nation, and the BC Agroforestry Industry Development Initiative, will host a two-day Agroforestry Tour in the Peace River Region, August 22-23, 2007. The two-day event is aimed at increasing awareness that a blend of agriculture and forestry (growing crops and trees) can be a profitable business practice and good for the environment. The partners believe there is good potential for growth in Agroforestry to provide a crop diversification opportunity that can help farmers and others. When times are tough in agriculture and prices for certain crops are low, Agroforestry practitioners can rely on their forestry crops (aspen, poplar, cottonwood) to sell to local wood processing mills (OSB, Pulp, Value-Added) to provide income. Agroforestry is practiced widely in parts of Europe and elsewhere around the world, and the practice can be successful in BC, Alberta and the rest of Canada.

The two-day tour will involve participants from the agriculture sector, First Nations, forestry, oil and gas, and various federal and provincial government agencies. Keynote speakers will present their findings and experiences during field tour stops which include hybrid aspen trials and the Murdoch Lake Agroforestry Demonstration project near Manning, Alberta (Day 1), and the Doig River First Nation demonstration project and the BC Grain Producers Variety Trials near Fort St. John. BC (Day 2).

Participants will learn more about: poplar/aspen intercropping; how carbon sequestration and credits integrate into business planning; potential agroforestry contributions to bioenergy systems; projected markets for wood fibre produced through agroforestry systems; and alternate crops for intercropping and other agroforestry production systems. We invite everyone with an interest in this exciting new sector to register and take part in the two-day event. The agenda, registration form, list of accommodations, and additional information are available on the McGregor Model Forest Association website: www.mcgregor.bc.ca.

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