



Province of  
British Columbia

Ministry of  
Environment,  
Lands and Parks

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CIRCULAR  
LETTER  
NO. 385

OUR FILE .....

December 13, 1995

**CIRCULAR LETTER TO ALL BRITISH COLUMBIA LAND SURVEYORS**

**Re: Cutting of Merchantable Timber**

It has come to our attention that a firm of land surveyors has, while carrying out a legal survey requiring ties to three provincial control survey monuments, cut a substantial amount of merchantable timber around the three control monuments, in order that GPS methods could be used to make the necessary ties.

While Section 138(1)(e) of the *Forest Act* allows surveyors to cut Crown timber in the course of their duties, common sense would, of course, dictate that cutting should be kept to a minimum.

The exemption clearly allows the cutting of a reasonable amount of timber when running or traversing boundaries. Where GPS observations are being made or excessive cutting may be required, land surveyors must very carefully consider using remote sites or alternate methods in order to keep the destruction of merchantable timber to a minimum. It should be recognized that timber values have increased dramatically in the past few years.

If, because of accuracy considerations, network design or the excessively high cost of using remote stations or other control points, it is necessary to occupy a station surrounded by merchantable timber in order to take GPS observations, land surveyors should discuss this with the local Ministry of Forests district office prior to cutting a wide area. This will enable the Ministry of Forests to develop salvage and utilization plans, if appropriate, such that the timber will not be wasted.

This office would be pleased to discuss this matter with both surveyors and representatives of the Ministry of Forests in order to assist in determining appropriate survey methods in unique circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Ringwood  
Acting Surveyor General