

## Harvesting in the Boreal Workshop and Field Tour

By John Pineau

On February 12<sup>th</sup>, the Lake Abitibi Model Forest, the Forestry Research Partnership and Tembec hosted a one day workshop and field tour for several local citizens committees and First Nations groups focusing on harvesting in the boreal forest. The event was held at the Travel Lodge Hotel in Timmins, with a total of 25 individuals taking part. Speakers included Gordon Kayahara of Northeast Science and Information, OMNR, Denis Gagnon, Regional Planning, OMNR, Sue Pickering and Jeff Leach of Tembec, Ben Kuttner of the University of Toronto, and Chris McKay, and Community Resource Information Specialist with Mattagami First Nations.



The objectives of the workshop were to provide a solid understanding of clear-cutting as a common harvesting practice in the boreal forest, and to present information on new and existing harvesting techniques and the science supporting these methods. The session was also intended to allow open exploration and discussion of objectives and constraints with respect to clear-cutting, and to determine the balance between ecological pattern emulation at the landscape scale and a socially acceptable block size. Over all, it was hoped that a consensus could be achieved on a socially endorsed maximum or range of clear-cut sizes that can be considered for Forest Management Planning.

“The word clear-cut has always been controversial but we have to face the issue head-on,” said Sue Pickering, Divisional Forester with Tembec Northeast. “Today’s forestry practices leave a lot of vertical structure and standing trees behind in cutblocks. It tends



to surprise people on field tours when what we present as a clearcut actually still has a lot of standing trees. The workshop and tour allowed us to demonstrate this, and to get solid feedback from our local citizens committees and First Nations stakeholders with respect to their comfort and concerns about forestry practices. We hope to have many more events like this one.”