



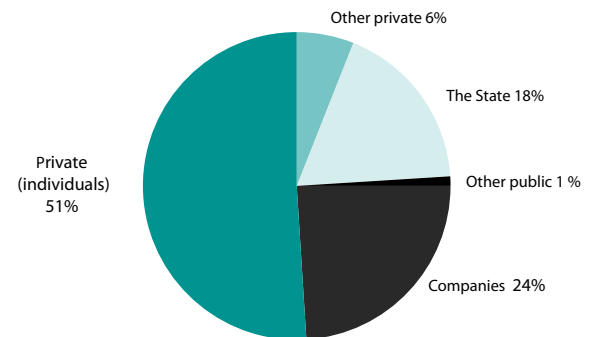
# South Sweden truck loggers tour British

by Davide Cuzner, Extensionist, Forest Dynamics and Ed Proteau, Extension Specialist, FORREX/FPIInnovations

FORREX staff members were pleased to guide 22 delegates from the South Sweden Truck Loggers Association “Träfrakt Götaland AB” during the last portion of their two-week guided tour to Canada. The field visit gave the Swedish Truck Logger delegates an opportunity to see first-hand the challenges facing our forest industry and to gain insights on issues affecting their transportation logistics: using wood waste, road infrastructure and road network maintenance, and global market supply and demand.

Träfrakt Götaland AB is an association of about 200 forestry transportation companies that operate mainly in the southern half of Sweden. Combined, their members own a fleet of 450 forest-product transportation vehicles that are highly modernized to operate on both highway and standard logging roads with impressive performance and fuel-efficiency records. These trucks carry a wide range of log dimensions and forest waste and biofuel products. While their industry is primarily focused on forest-product transportation, they also collectively own a bio-energy terminal and freight-forwarding company to offset the high cost of fuel and cover unforeseen cost overruns.

The typical truck owned and operated by Träfrakt Götaland AB is a non-dismountable, self-loader, with a retractable “rear-boggi-axle” trailer, which is very uncommon in British Columbia and most of Canada. Most of their trucks run the highly fuel efficient Euro 4 or Euro 5 engines, which can produce



Ownership of forest land in Sweden. (Swedish Forest Agency)

between 500 to 550 horsepower, yet run on an average of 5.5 litres of fuel per Swedish mile (roughly 5.2 mpg).

Ownership of the forested land in Sweden is structured almost completely opposite to British Columbia. A large portion of Träfrakt Götaland AB customers are private landowners and, to compete against other transportation companies, Träfrakt purchased and operates a bio-energy terminal and freight-forwarding company that maximizes waste from raw logs. In doing so, Träfrakt can lower the transportation costs for their clients.

In a proactive effort to explore alternate and innovative options to offset transportation costs, some of the new concepts Träfrakt is looking at to maintain a competitive edge are:

- Exploring transporting various types of by-products (such as bark, hog-fuel, and residual waste from chips) and goods other than raw logs and pulp on trucks when they are not carrying loads.
- Finding innovative truck solutions that would increase the volume of a product in coordination with potential new clients, or, in other words, “to find the right transportation equipment for the right product.” For example, standard trucks used for specific forestry-related operations could be used on shorter transportation routes, while the newer, lighter, and more fuel-efficient trucks would be used for transporting the actual product and not logging equipment.
- Increasing awareness of the industry within the Swedish education system to inform students, and even the existing workforce, of what it

New multifunctional and fuel-efficient logging truck driving through a hardwood forest in southern Skåne, Sweden (2008).



Jon & Gunbritt Johanssons photo



# Columbia seeking answers and offering solutions



The 22 delegates from Träfrakt Götaland AB at Cathedral Grove, Port Alberni BC.

**Top row (left to right):** Jan Johansson (Jan Johanssons skogstransporter), Conny Gustafsson (Bräkne-Hoby Flistransporter), Åke Månsson (Åke Månssons åkeri), Thorbjörn Bennesved (Bennesved Åkeri AB), Inge Persson (Styrelseordförande, Träfrakt), Anders Svensson (Anders Svenssons åkeri), Göran Fransson (Göran Franssons åkeri), Jan Gustafsson (Sture Gustafssons åkeri).

**Bottom row (left to right):** Birger Karlsson (Br. Johanssons Karosserifabrik), Ann-Louise Gustafsson (Bräkne-Hoby Flistransporter), Birgitta Månsson (Åke Månssons Åkeri), Irene Persson, Irene Göransson (Sture Gustafsson åkeri), Per Olov Svensson (HIAB Sverige), Erling Karlsson (Erlings skogstransporter), Rickard Dahl (Erlings skogstransporter), Pehr Sundblad (Träfrakt), Bert Johansson (Br. Bertssons Åkeri), Kent Karlsson (Bengt Karlssons Åkeri), Lena Eriksson (Anders Svenssons Åkeri), Christian Göransson (KM Göranssons Åkeri), Gun-Britt Johansson (Jan Johanssons skogstransporter)

Davide Cuzner photo

can offer to drivers, mechanics, engineers, and business entrepreneurs. The industry recognizes there will be increasing demands for those working within the transportation industry to be certified, at one level or another, to European Union standards. Incorporating a series of required courses into the education system would increase the chances of students selecting a career within the forest-product transportation industry.

During their time with FORREX staff, the Träfrakt delegates were given an opportunity to see what kind of regulatory challenges coastal BC is facing. Mostly, the delegates were impressed with BC's vast potential, particularly if policies were changed to provide incentives for diversifying into bio-energy and biofuels, and if government and licensees worked together to invest in road infrastructure and to develop road-maintenance agreements, as is done in Sweden. Understanding that BC is also dealing with a huge downturn in the forest industry, the delegates were amazed at the potential long-term opportunities for BC if its tenure system was restructured to allow for long-

term collaboration agreements. Some of their recommendations included establishing long-term road infrastructure investments with incentives for companies to modernize their equipment, especially considering the global pressures surrounding carbon emissions and fuel-efficiency strategies.

International tours such as this one benefit everyone, regardless of global market competition. Associate members of Träfrakt Götaland AB said they welcomed anyone to tour their operations and facilities in Sweden to learn what Träfrakt has done to survive in challenging times.

To find out more about the challenges that Träfrakt Götaland AB has overcome, including the infamous 2005 hurricane that levelled more than 75 million m<sup>3</sup> of privately owned forest and worries over uncertain future supply and demand in the global forest industry, please visit their website at [www.trafrakt.se/](http://www.trafrakt.se/) or contact their international trades correspondent at [pehr.sundblad@trafrakt.se](mailto:pehr.sundblad@trafrakt.se)

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