



How FREP Can Help You Meet Your Professional Obligations

THE FOREST AND RANGE EVALUATION PROGRAM (FREP) can help resource professionals meet their obligations and contribute to building a sustainable and vibrant forest industry.

FREP is the science-based foundation of the *Forest and Range Practices Act* (FRPA) that measures, validates and provides for continued improvement of legislation, policy and practices to ensure sustainable management. This information is critical in helping policy makers, resource professionals and decision makers effectively balance social, environmental and economic values in the interest of all British Columbians.

The ability to manage and harvest Crown forests into the future depends on maintaining public acceptance or social licence. Sustainable management of British Columbia's forests is both a key marketing niche for our forest products and an obligation to future generations. From this perspective, monitoring and evaluating the sustainability of forest resource values is of fundamental importance for government, resource professionals and licensees in a society and marketplace increasingly concerned with conservation, sustainability and accountability.

In order to fulfill professional obligations, resource professionals must be informed of the results of their plans, prescriptions and on the ground practices. They must be able to adapt their practices, where appropriate, based on objective, scientifically credible assessments of the outcomes and effectiveness of their plans and practices.

The five areas where the FREP can help resource professionals meet their professional obligations while helping to build a sustainable and vibrant forest industry are:

1. Advocate and practise good stewardship of forest land based on sound ecological principles in order to sustain its ability to provide the values assigned by society (Bylaw 11.3.1: Code of Ethics), and
 2. Keep informed in your field of practice... maintain sufficient knowledge in your field of practice (Bylaws 11.4.6 and 12.2.1)
- FREP indicators, protocols, data, reports,

extension notes and recommendations can be a key part of professionals enhancing their ecological understanding of the 11 FRPA resource values. These products also provide a powerful tool for communicating that information to others. FREP monitoring can provide resource professionals with critical data on the status and trend of resource value sustainability based on the current science related to the 11 FRPA values.

3. Ensure professional opinions or judgements satisfy a balance between environmental, social and economic values, (Applying Professional Reliance Under FRPA, ABCFP, April 2008)
 4. Guide principled decisions that consider the medium- and long-term implications on the values assigned by society. (ABCFP, April 2008)
- Understanding the resource value trends associated with various practices will enable professionals to base their considerations of medium and long-term implications on science-based data collection, analysis and reporting. FREP is primarily focused on the environmental value side of the balance, but also provides social value information through visual quality and cultural heritage monitoring. Professionals can use this information, along with information from other sources to help inform balanced decision-making.
5. Use FREP to help build a vibrant and sustainable forest industry.
 - Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) certification monitoring – FREP indicators, protocols and data could save licensees money when developing and implementing their SFM monitoring requirements. FREP protocols are available for biodiversity, water quality, fish/riparian, range/forage, visual quality, cultural heritage, karst, soils and other resource values. The FREP water quality indicators are eligible for FIA funding.
 - Communication, trust and relationship building – FREP has potential to develop or enhance relationships among First

Nations, industry and government through evaluating cultural or other resource values important to First Nations. Relationship building, in turn, has potential to help with tenure approvals, enhance certainty of tenure, and possibly avoid litigation and remediation.

- Enhance social licence – FREP monitoring results provide continuous improvement opportunities to build public trust and maintain long-term social licence and secure market access.
- FREP can help validate and improve the FRPA model thereby saving costs associated with developing and implementing a new forest management model in the future.
- Early detection of opportunities to improve practices can help avoid environmental damage and/or costly remediation.
- Protocols and indicators – Identification of the resource value monitoring indicators can help provide clarity on what government considers most sensitive to harvesting with respect to the 11 resource values.

A credible, results-based resource management framework founded on professional reliance requires a process of monitoring and evaluation designed to keep practices aligned with current knowledge and status of natural resources, and for the continuous improvement of the policy and legislative framework under which resources are managed.

FREP products can help professionals remain current and informed on resource health and environmental sustainability, which is key to practising good stewardship of forest-land based on sound ecological principles and ensuring long-term economic sustainability.

For more information on FREP, contact Peter Bradford, RPF, at Peter.Bradford@gov.bc.ca or 250.356.2134, or go to www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/index.htm.

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