

2006 Public Opinion Poll Results

Public Perceptions & Attitudes Towards Forest
Professionals and Forest Management in BC

**Prepared by:
ABCFP and Synovate (July 2006)**

2006 PUBLIC OPINION POLL RESULTS

The results from the ABCFP forestry poll are in. This survey provides some clues about the way BC’s public (our most important stakeholder) views forestry professionals and forestry management in the province and may help to guide future strategic planning by the association. Data was gathered from 500 people throughout the province and the results are considered to be 95% accurate (by +/- 4.4%, 95 times out of 100). That means that we can be 95% sure that the results garnered from this survey are accurate within 4.4%.

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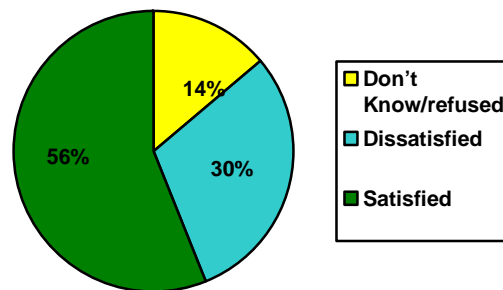
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QUALITY OF FOREST RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN BC

The 2006 level of public satisfaction is the highest result gathered since the association began public polling in 1999. It represents an upward trend that hopefully will continue.

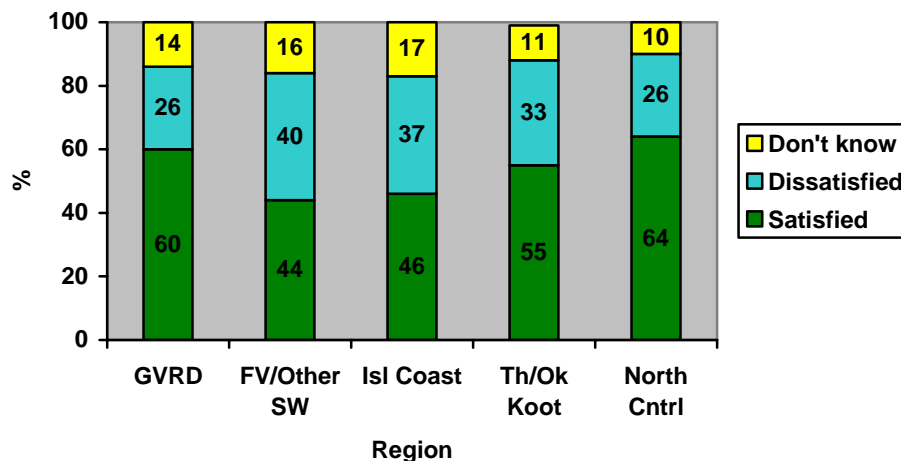
Over half of British Columbians (56%) are satisfied (somewhat satisfied 44% and very satisfied 12%) with the quality of forest resources management in BC today. These satisfaction results show a significant improvement over the 2004 results (2004 was the last year the survey was done). In 2004, 43% were satisfied with 34% being somewhat satisfied and 9% being very satisfied. These results indicate a generally favorable impression yet leaves room for improvement as 30% of British Columbians are dissatisfied.

Satisfaction with the Quality of Forest Resources Management in BC



People residing in the north central area of the province are most satisfied with BC's forest resources management while those residing in the Fraser Valley and other south western areas of the province (not including in the GVRD) are the least satisfied.

Satisfaction with the Quality of Forest Resources Management by Region

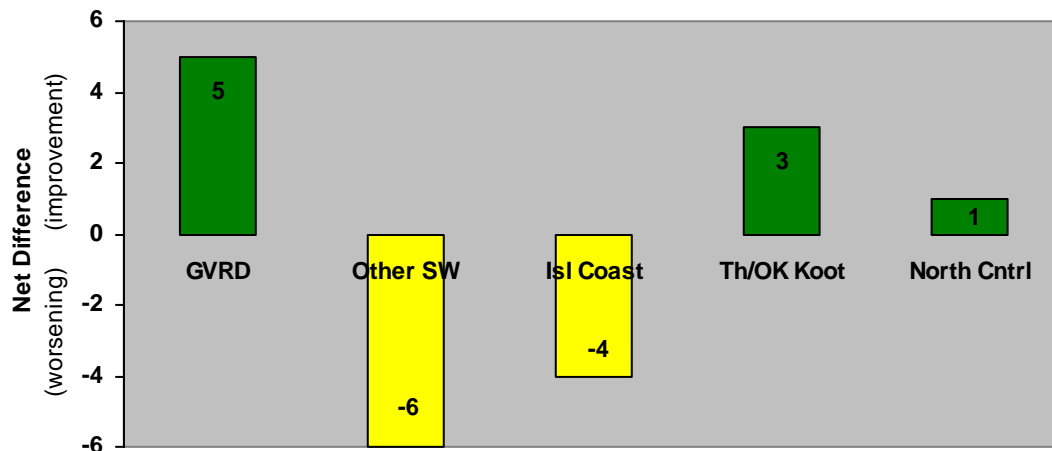


QUALITY OF BC FOREST MANAGEMENT THEN AND NOW

When asked about the quality of forest resources management in BC as compared to five years ago, almost half of respondents (47%) felt that the quality was the same while nearly equal numbers of respondents (19% and 17%) felt the quality was either better or worse. If we look at the difference between those who say forest resources management has improved and those that say that it has worsened, more people feel that it has improved (represented by a difference of +2%). This difference has increased over the past three surveys and is a significant improvement over 2004's net difference of -6%.

GVRD residents are slightly more likely than those living in the rest of BC to perceive a net improvement in the quality of BC's forest resources management.

**Perceived Quality of BC Forest Management by Region
as Compared to Five Years Ago**



TRUSTWORTHINESS OF RESOURCE PROFESSIONALS

Resource professionals (including Foresters, Forest Technologists, Biologists, Engineers, Geoscientists and Agrologists) are the most trusted source of information about BC's forest resources. This result is consistent with the 2004 survey. There is no significant difference in measures of trustworthiness by region. GRVD residents gave resource professionals a high score of 7.4 out of 10 on the trustworthy scale while North Central residents gave a low score of 6.6.

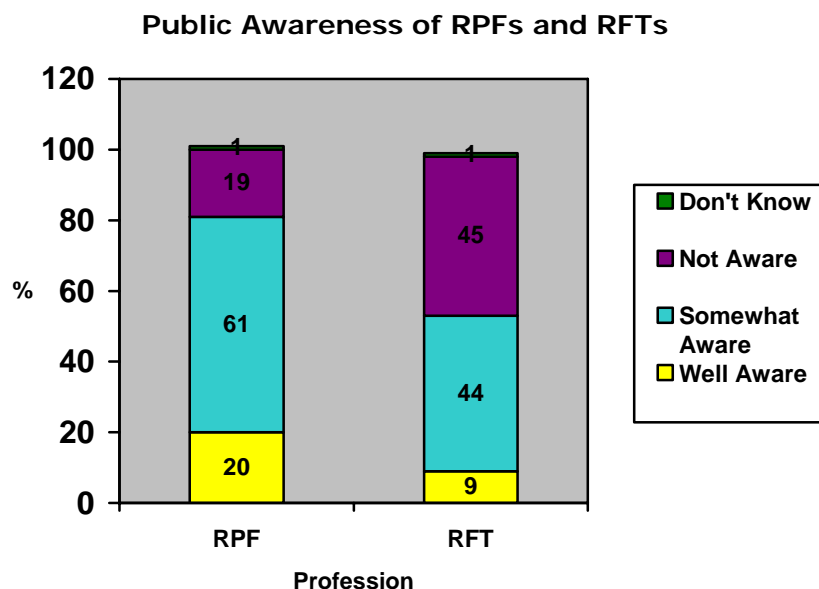
When further breaking down the group of resource professionals, it was found that Biologists were perceived as the most trusted (24%). Registered Professional Foresters were second (22%) and Registered Forest Technologists placed fifth (7%). These findings are different, although not significantly, from 2004 when foresters were the most trusted (at 27%), followed by biologists at 21%. RFTs were in fourth place with 9%.

It is interesting that residents satisfied with forestry management in BC are significantly more likely to trust Professional Foresters the most than those who are dissatisfied.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

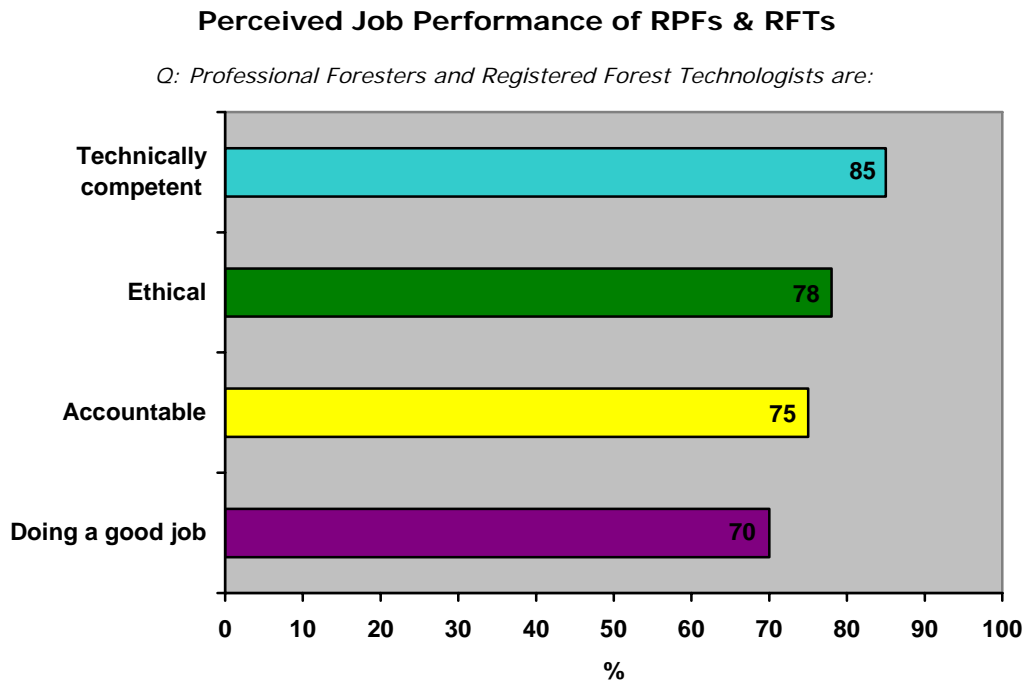
While the majority of BC residents are aware of what a Registered Professional Forester is (81%), less are aware of what a Registered Forest Technologist is (53%). Non-GVRD residents and men are the most aware of both professions. There wasn't a significant difference between these findings and those of 2004.

The flipside of these results indicate that 19% of BC residents are not aware of what a Registered Professional Forester is. The responses for Registered Forest Technologists are also poor with 45% of respondents not aware of what a Registered Forest Technologist is. These results indicate a need to increase the public's awareness of forestry professions. Other professional groups enjoy widespread awareness (like doctors, dentists, lawyers, accountants, etc.).



PERCEIVED JOB PERFORMANCE

To answer the question of how Professional Foresters and Registered Forest Technologists are doing in terms of job performance in the eyes of BC residents, several questions were asked. The results show that BC residents believe RPFs and RFTs are performing well with the majority agreeing that RPFs and RFTs are technically competent, ethical in their decision making, accountable for their actions and doing a good job managing BC's forests.



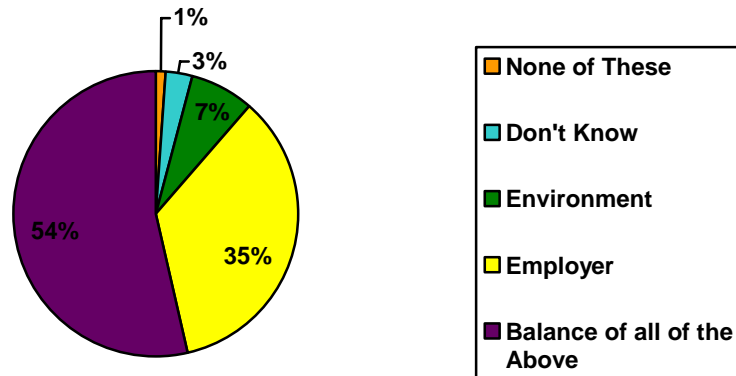
The 2006 job performance rating received in all categories improved when compared to 2004 levels. This result indicates that British Columbians believe that RPFs and RFTs are carrying out their occupational duties with more skill.

DECISION-MAKING WHEN FACED WITH A CONFLICT BETWEEN INTERESTS

When asked how forest professionals would deal with decision-making when faced with a conflict between interests, over half felt that forest professionals would choose to balance the needs of their employers, the public and the environment. About one-third of British Columbians felt that forest professionals would follow the directives of their employers, while less than one-tenth felt forest professionals would do what's best for the environment.

Decision-making with Conflicting Interests

Q: When faced with a conflict of interests, do you believe forest professionals would choose...

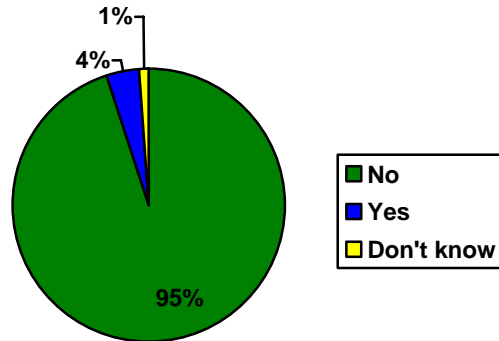


ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

The ABCFP placed some ads on radio stations and in newspapers this past year and according to poll results: 4% recalled the newspaper ads and 10% recalled the radio ad.

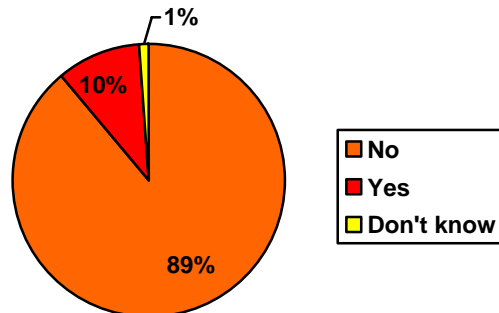
Recall of ABCFP Newspaper Ads

Q: Do you recall seeing any newspaper ads recently featuring new forest professional members?



Recall of ABCFP Radio Ads

Q: Do you recall hearing any radio ads recently recruiting new students for the forest professional program?



SUMMARY

Overall, results of the public poll indicate many positive trends in British Columbians' perception and understanding of forest professionals. It also illustrates that BC residents' value the contributions of forest professionals, believe them to have high levels of job performance and trust their performance in matters related to BC's forest resources management.

Results also point to areas of improvement such as the need to increase public awareness of RFTs and the effectiveness of advertising.

Source: Winram, Julie. Public Perceptions & Attitudes Toward Professional Foresters, Registered Forest Technologists and Forest Management in BC. July 2006. Synovate.