

## Definition of Professional Reliance

(Approved by council September 2004)

Forest professionals are empowered and guided by the *Foresters Act* which establishes their self-governing body and grants them rights of title and practice. They abide by the *Foresters Act*, the Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABC FP) bylaws, including the *Code of Ethics* and council resolutions (including policies and guidelines) through which they may be held accountable for their decisions, advice and professional conduct.

Professional reliance is the practice of accepting and relying upon the decisions and advice of forest professionals (Registered Professional Foresters and Registered Forest Technologists) who accept responsibility and can be held accountable for the decisions they make and the advice that they give.

Professional reliance rests on a framework in which:

- forest professionals, recognized as having the required education, knowledge, expertise and experience, are called upon to apply their judgment and make decisions for which they are accountable to the public through the ABCFP;
- respectful challenges to a forest professional's decisions are accepted and can be addressed with a sound rationale; and
- the rights and obligations of forest professionals are respected and supported by employers/clients and by government through the regime they put in place.

Supporting this framework is the requirement that forest professionals hold paramount their duty to serve and protect the public interest. Forest professionals understand that their exclusive rights of practice and title are privileges granted to them by the public who trust in and expect that, among other things, forest professionals will:

- stay abreast of current science, research, theory; and
- apply their expertise wisely as stewards of forests, forest lands, and forest ecosystems, to achieve both long and short-term sustainability of forests, forest lands and forest ecosystems.

Forest professionals therefore:

- recognize environmental, social and economic interests in forests, forest lands and forest ecosystems and the range of values they offer for both present and future generations;
- actively engage in dialogue with interested parties to build trust and understanding;
- are committed to continually improving their profession by modifying their practice to reflect what they have learned in their successes and failures; and
- accept responsibility for their decisions and the advice they give fully recognizing that society expects their decisions and advice will be rendered in the public interest to ensure sound forest stewardship.

*Ensuring BC's Forests Are In Good Hands.*