Time to Renew Your Membership

2013
Your Practice Makes a Difference.
Be Sure to Renew Your Membership On Time.

There are three steps to renew membership for:

- **Active RPFs or RFTs**
- **RPFs and RFTs on LOA who are employed and work in BC**
- **Associate Members**
- **Transferring Forest Professionals**
- **Limited Licensees**

Step 1: Submit your 2012 Self-Assessment Declaration
Step 2: Notify the ABCFP if there has been a change in your indictable offence status.
Step 3: Pay your fees.

There are only two steps to renew membership for:

- **FITs or TFTs**
- **Retired Members**
- **Special Permit Holders**
- **Registered Members on LOA (who are unemployed or work outside of BC)**

Step 1: Notify the ABCFP if there has been a change in your indictable offence status.
Step 2: Pay your fees.

Your membership will not be renewed until you have completed all of the required steps.

**How to Renew Your Membership**

- **Renew online**
  The quickest and easiest way to renew your membership is to complete all the steps online. There is a link to the online Membership Renewal page right on the Home page of the website and in the renewal notice sent to you on October 1st.

- **Renew by mail, fax or in person**
  You can also renew your membership by mail, fax or in person by downloading the forms available on the Steps to Renew page of the website (click on Members’ Area, My Membership and Steps To Renew).

**Membership Renewal Timeline**

- **Membership Renewal Process**
  - A membership renewal notice is sent to each member: **OCTOBER 1st**
  - Annual fees are due AND, where applicable, self-assessment declarations are due: **DECEMBER 1st**
  - Administrative fee of $50 plus HST is added to the fees of members who have not paid their annual fee AND/or, where applicable, have not submitted their self-assessment declarations. Notices will be sent to those members affected: **DECEMBER 2nd**
  - Final deadline for membership renewal: **JANUARY 31st**
  - Any members who have not renewed will be struck from the register and notified accordingly soon thereafter: **FEBRUARY 1st**

**Self-Assessment Declaration FAQs**

- **When is my self-assessment declaration due?**
  Your declaration is due on December 1, 2012. If you submit your declaration after December 1, 2012, additional charges will be applied to your membership renewal fee.

- **Why is the professional practice questionnaire no longer part of membership renewal?**
  The Professional Practice Questionnaire has become part of the Change of Status process. You only need to complete a Professional Practice Questionnaire when you are applying to change your status.

- **Why is the declaration of non-practise no longer an option?**
  The declaration of non-practise is discontinued because there were wrong assumptions that it was linked to the change of status process. Also the self-assessment is still useful even when you are not practising professional forestry.

- **What happens if I don't submit my self-assessment declaration?**
  If you fail to either pay your membership fees or complete your declaration by December 1, 2012, you will be assessed an administrative fee. If you fail to pay your membership fee or complete your declaration by January 31, 2013, you will no longer be allowed to practise forestry in BC.

- **Can I submit my self-assessment declaration online?**
  Yes, you can do it online! There is a link to the online Membership Renewal page right on the Home page of the website.

**Fairness in the ABCFP’s Discipline Process**

**Forestry: The Future is Growing**
Conference and AGM 2013

**Dishonest but not Illegal: Maintaining the Public Trust**
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BC Forest Professional’s Editorial Board Needs Three New Members

• Do you find yourself ranting at the trees about forest policy?
• Do you bore people talking endlessly about forest politics?
• Would you like to play a real role in getting forestry information out to ABCFP members, forestry decision makers and elected officials?
If so, join our editorial board.
With just six meetings a year and a little reading, you can make a big impact. Please send your resume and a letter of interest to editor@abcfp.ca by November 28, 2012.

BC Forest Safety Council

It’s here!

BC Forest Professional
Volume 19 Issue 6

November - December 2012

Winter walking conditions can be hazardous. Wear proper footwear. Take smaller steps. Stretch to stay limber. It’s easier to stay well than get well.
www.bcforestsafe.org

STAYING SAFE IS A BALANCING ACT.

Photos this page: istockphoto.com

www.bcforestsafe.org

Plant Wizard Software Update

BC Forest Professional
Volume 19 Issue 6

November - December 2012

It’s here!

See back cover
Put in Your Two Cents

The BC Forest Professional Letters’ section is intended primarily for feedback on recent articles and for brief statements about current association, professional, or forestry issues. The editor reserves the right to edit and condense letters and encourages readers to keep letters to 300 words. Anonymous letters are not accepted. Please refer to our website for guidelines to help make sure your submission gets published in BC Forest Professional.

Editor’s Note: We just received this letter below forwarded by the College of New Caledonia and wanted to share it with the membership. There are some excellent soon-to-be forest professionals coming up the ranks. ForestTrust, the ABCFP’s registered charity, has 15 endowments at post-secondary institutions across British Columbia. Income earned on these endowments is used to grant scholarships and bursaries to forestry students like Jesse.

Baldredash
As I finished reading the excellent collection of articles on free growing to rotation (BC Forest Professional, September/October 2012), I momentarily rejoiced at what we as a profession do and say well. But my mind was more disturbed by the present state of forestry in British Columbia.

Today, the public forests are not in the safe hands of forest professionals. They are in the unsavory hands of politicians and corporate lawyers. For over a decade, politicians have wreaked havoc upon natural resource funding, science, planning, reporting, and stewardship while not hedging and exterminating the enemiesthoughtlessly.

A recent belt was: “The mountain pine beetle epidemic is not a result of mismanaged forests” (Vancouver Sun, 25 August 2012). Baldredash: One criterion of sustainable forest management under the Montreal Process is to maintain vital and healthy ecosystems.

As a profession, we failed to direct the forest industry to harvest more aging pine forests while ensuring they got older through fire suppression. This created unnatural and sick ecosystems providing ideal habitat for mountain pine beetles across vast landscapes of British Columbia. So, we have been complicit in creating the present state of affairs.

The challenge now is for the ABCFP to respond forcefully and politically both to the report of the Special Committee on Timber Supply and to the government’s action plan. Both offer a toxic cocktail of ad hoc and ill-conceived tenure reform on the fly, subsidy through broadcast fertilization, and continued unsustainable logging reaching into economically marginal forests and old-growth reserves previously off limits to logging.

In crafting its response to an emboldened policy of unsustainable logging rates, the ABCFP could be wise to remember Albert Einstein’s advice on problem-solving: “No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.” For government to pretend to solve the timber supply crisis with the same tired, misguided policies that created it in the first place is nothing short of lunacy.

Anonymous (B.C. RFPOE)

Letters

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Anonymous (B.C. RFPOE)
Failure Is Not an Option
When it Comes to Professional Reliance

When I heard that the Viewpoints theme of this issue of BC Forest Professional magazine was going to be professional reliance and FRPA, I knew I had to write about the topic in my column. Professional reliance is certainly a hot button issue. Some people love it, some people hate it and everyone seems to have an opinion.

Here are my two cents: Failure is not an option.

It does not matter what area of forestry you work in, our collective goal should be to make professional reliance work. The consequences of failing at professional reliance are not pretty. Government may change legislation to go back to the prescriptive Forest Practices Code or something equally undesirable. Fortunately, the evidence shows that professional reliance is definitely working.

I recently had the opportunity to speak with Murray Wilson, RPF, woodlands manager for Tolko. He told me that he and the other Tolko forest professionals are very happy with the level of professional reliance practised in the Okanagan Shuswap District and at the regional level. Murray says: “Compared in a few years ago, we have substantially reduced conflicts between professionals, have 10 guiding principles in place to further guide professional reliance development and processes, are receiving faster approvals, have captured a lot of efficiencies in various aspects of our business, and have increased the time our professionals can spend on larger and more strategic land management issues and other areas of the business, all while maintaining a fair balance between stewardship and economical goals.”

One specific example Murray gave me had to do with the First Nations referred process. He told me that the submitting forest professionals sign on the fact that they have done the necessary information sharing and identified and resolved issues that the bands may have with the plans. The ministry uses this submission as part of their consultation rather than doing the whole process again. This acceptance has helped categorize cutting permit issuance into one of three categories, expedited, standard or deferred consultation. The bulk of the district permits fall into the expedited category.

In general, cutting permits in the district are issued in an average of 21 days and have been issued in as few as two days. These are great examples of how professional reliance can make the lives of industry and government forest professionals much easier. Of course, it takes a lot of trust and commitment from the two parties to make it happen.

To see how well professional reliance is being accepted by the forestry community, the ACFCP, together with the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and industry representatives conducted two surveys on professional reliance—one in 2010 and another in 2012. Most of the people who filled out the survey are ACFCP members so we were pleased to see some improvement in several areas. Here are some survey highlights:

• Scores associated with individuals’ understanding of professional reliance, roles and accountabilities were generally high and improved over 2010.
• There was strong agreement that professional reliance is a shared responsibility between professionals and employers.
• Some comments reflected a mistrust of professionals working for a different employer group than the respondent.
• The scores received from persons responsible for preparing, reviewing, approving, implementing and monitoring plans were higher than those in 2010.
• Areas for improvement include: reducing pressure on professionals to change recommendations; communicating decisions in a timely manner; providing rationales; increasing clarity of results and strategies; and reducing the number of errors and omissions in submissions.
• Comments indicate plan quality can vary considerably between submitting professionals, as does the review and approval of submissions across districts.

It is important to look at ways to make professional reliance a success across the province. The folks in the Okanagan Shuswap have made changes to ensure it is working well in their district. I’m sure we can all work together to make it a priority.

We know professional reliance isn’t perfect—but it’s hard to be perfect. I prefer to think of professional reliance as a journey of continuous improvement. Each year we are a bit better than we were the year before.

What’s Happening with Forestry in Oil and Gas Development in the North

Oil and gas exploration and extraction has been taking place in the Peace region of BC for many years and the ACFCP has been hearing concerns about it for almost as long. We have done some work in the area and on related issues so I thought it was time to update you about our work.

In the past, the ACFCP established an Oil and Gas Task Force to look at the issues regarding forest practices by oil and gas companies in the northeast. The task force found that no one was breaking any rules and that there were different forest practice standards at play within each of the sectors. The Task Force also recommended that both the forestry and oil and gas sectors needed to communicate much better with each other on how the land is managed. A few years later, the ACFCP met with the head of the Oil and Gas Commission (OGC) to discuss forest stewardship; however, we were told at that time the OGC’s legislative mandate did not extend to stewardship. Last year, the ACFCP hired a consultant to examine whether reclamation and remediation work being done by oil and gas companies falls under the definition of the practice of professional forestry. The findings were that some of these activities are the practice of professional forestry.

When haste, not stewardship, becomes the top priority, the forest resources can suffer. Several of our members expressed concerns that oil and gas companies rush to burn merchantable wood when they are clearing land for pipelines. In addition, when well site location is the issue, in many cases oil and gas companies target the more productive forest sites containing reforestation investment because the land is elevated and, at the moment, has no merchantable timber. Forest tenure holders which were on their way to fulfilling silviculture objectives are dismayed to find that the resource development has destroyed their plantation. The silviculture investment is gone and the cumulative effects on the AAC is unknown. It seems that no one in the northeast has a clear idea of how much timber is being cut by the oil and gas companies or who is managing the land. Given that there are over 200 oil and gas companies operating in the Timber Supply Area, the pace of development is fast and the changes to the landscape dramatic.

We are also concerned about a lack of a timeline on remediation work and the insufficient restoration standard for forests. Because of the lack of a timeline, many oil and gas companies find it more convenient to continue making lease payments rather than reclaiming the land. A related problem is that restoration standard is simply “vegetation” which leaves no obligation to turn the land back into a forest, as it was previously. This standard most often results in the oil and gas companies planting grass and not returning the site to its original forest state.

The ACFCP is pursuing some courses of action which we hope will deliver results fairly quickly. First we want to work with the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Natural Gas to ensure that the management of forest and forest practices in the area of oil and gas are carried out by qualified professionals who are accountable to a regulatory body. We will also raise the issue of forest stewardship with both FNLRIO and Energy, Mines and Natural Gas. We will keep you updated on our work in the oil and gas area in BC Forest Professional magazine and in The Increment e-newsletter.
Changes to the Self-Assessment Process

We’ve noticed that over the past few years many members have been frustrated with the self-assessment process. In order to make it easier for members, we have simplified the process beginning with the current membership renewal period (which began October 1, 2012). The major change is that instead of using the professional practice questionnaire to determine if you should fill out a declaration of non-practice or a self-assessment declaration, now all members simply fill out the self-assessment form and submit their self-assessment declaration to the ABCFP.

It is important to note that if you are a member on a leave of absence (LOA) who is working in BC—regardless of whether or not you are practising professional forestry—you must now submit a self-assessment declaration. This process provides members on LOA with a tool to assess their competency for when they reinitiate.

No matter what job you do, it is always good to take a moment to assess your abilities and look at ways to improve your knowledge in relevant areas. Assessing your competency when you renew your membership or extend your LOA is a good annual exercise—the task isn’t too onerous and only requires a few minutes to complete.

ABCFP Attends CIF Conference

The ABCFP was represented at the Canadian Institute of Forestry’s annual conference in Quebec City by president Steve Lorimer, RPF; and CEO Sharon Glover, MBA. Other ABCFP members attended as part of their work with the CIF sections in BC. It was great to be at the conference and connect with our colleagues across the country.

ABCFP Meets with Community Leaders at UBCM

President Steve Lorimer, RPF; and CEO Sharon Glover, MBA, attended the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) conference in Victoria at the end of September. In addition to attending sessions, Steve and Sharon had the opportunity to meet with elected officials and Ministry of Forests, Range and Natural Resources Operations staff.

Act Enforcement: Your Help Needed

The association and its members have roles to play in helping to enforce the Foresters Act. Any member of the association (or the public), who believes that a person is practising professional forestry or using a professional title without authority, may have the association seek enforcement under the Foresters Act. Members may be aware of potential contraventions of the Foresters Act before the ABCFP.

If and when members become aware of a potential contravention of the Foresters Act, it is expected that they will refer the matter directly to the association. The association will then contact the offending party to address the matter and take the necessary steps to prevent non-members from practising from and using our titles.

You can find more information in the Act Enforcement Policy on the Policies page website. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Randy Terine, RPF at rterine@abcfp.ca, registrar and director of act enforcement.

North Island Wins Battle of the NFPs!

Congratulations to the North Island Network of Forest Professionals who have won the 2012 Battle of the NFPs! The Battle was very close this year and North Island just edged out the East Kootenay NFP for the win. North Island reached almost 800 students from 13 schools and several home-schooled families.

• Grade 8 and 10 Planning students received Careers in Forestry presentations, which included the opportunity to discuss forestry with a couple of passionate forest professionals.
• Over 450 primary level students received Predator Education presentations, which included a visit from Smokey Bear, some hands-on time with various predator pellets and skulls, and handouts.
• Over 220 intermediate-level students participated in full-day forest tours, in the vicinity of Marble City. The forest tours were held over two days, and included a hike along an interactive forest trail, an opportunity to plant trees, a mini-loggers sports competition and a salmon BBQ lunch.
• The students at Woss School were treated to their own forest tour by local Western Forest Products staff, which included a hike along an interactive forest trail, an opportunity to plant trees and pick cones, some fun activities, and a BBQ lunch.
• In addition, 100 members of the public attended two bug-themed events in honour of National Forest Week. These activities were made possible by 65 volunteers from ten organizations.

The East Kootenay NFP reached over 375 students in four schools. They planned a fun day of forest-related activities for the students including fire fighting and visits with Smokey Bear.

In this issue, we focus on Professional Reliance and the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA). We found that opinions on this topic were strongly linked to regional experience. Our Viewpoint authors all live across the province in Campbell River, Mackenzie, Victoria, 150 Mile House, Vancouver and Williams Lake. Perhaps as a result, they have a wide variety of opinions on professional reliance, FRPA and what these things mean for BC forestry. Hopefully, each reader will find someone you relate to and someone who challenges your point of view.

To the right of this introduction, you’ll see a green section titled, “Applying the Principles of Forest Stewardship to FRPA & Professional Reliance.” In the last several issues, the ABCFP’s stewardship committee has written a summary about how the Viewpoint theme applies to the ABCFP’s forest stewardship principles. Please take a moment to read this summary and refresh your knowledge of the related stewardship principles.

Also in this issue, we have the registration brochure for the ABCFP’s annual conference and AGM. Forestry: The Future is Growing will offer opportunities to explore forestry’s growth potential through innovation, human resources management and market development. A particular focus will be embracing generational change and recruiting and retaining young forest professionals. Come join us at the Prince George Civic Centre on February 20-22, 2013. –

Applying the Principles of Forest Stewardship to FRPA & Professional Reliance

The construct of the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) was developed with professionals in mind, with a particular emphasis on results rather than process or requirements. While we value how this model might evolve, it is clear that professionals are the glue holding it together. The concept would not work without relying on the knowledge, skills and accountability of professionals. Forest professionals, in turn, rely on principles of forest stewardship to guide them in their decision-making process.

A results-based environment can add risk to the decisions we make on the job, even when our fellow professionals do the job. A strong group of professional reliance contributes to how we manage that risk.

Forest professionals are particularly good at navigating circumstances with multiple risk factors. This may be attributed to the skills required in balancing competing interests, while still making a decision.

Forest professionals working within this regime also require an understanding of their own limitations. Recognizing what we can and cannot do as individuals is critical to minimizing risk and fostering greater professional reliance. The Principles of Forest Stewardship speak to this aspect of professional reliance in the Information and Understanding principle, which states: Forest stewardship often involves a multi-disciplinary team using the best available science and expert management and decision-making to provide accountability for the greater good.

Good forest stewardship, using a multi-disciplinary team who embraces adaptive practices and stays true to their forest management objectives, will affect a greater impact of professional reliance. This will in turn lead to decreased risk for professionals and their clients or employers and ultimately contribute to growing public trust.

* The main document can be seen at http://abcfp.ca/publications_forms/publications/committee_reports.asp

North Island NFP volunteers teach a young boy how to put out a forest fire. East Kootenay NFP volunteers teach a young boy how to put out a forest fire.
Hey Bob, We Need to Change the Falling Boundary!!

By Bob Craven, RPF

I was 1995 and I was working in a small woodlands operation on the west coast of Vancouver Island. It was great job for a forest professional as I was dealing with many aspects of forest operations, including road construction supervision, engineering, silviculture and fire suppression. As the only RPF at the woodlands for much of the year, I was also responsible for all the administrative duties. That year the Forest Practice Code (FPC) was in full swing. My worst fear was having a bull backer or woods foreman tell me our logging plan wasn’t working on the ground and we needed to “change something.”

Under the FPC, a falling boundary change required an amendment to our forest development plan, silviculture prescription, logging plan and the cutting permit. I spent so much time producing amendment to our forest development plan, silviculture prescription, logging plan and the cutting permit. I spent so much time producing amendments to our forest development plan, silviculture prescription, logging plan and the cutting permit. I spent so much time producing such prescriptive legislation into force. That being said, the FPC took much of the work week.

I successfully ran for ABCFP council and I was asked by my organization to join other forest professionals to work on a new framework that reduced the administrative burden by relying on the competency and accountability of resource professionals. Flexibility allowed adaptation of prescriptions to local conditions and circumstances, and shifted the focus to the results rather than the process. Flash forward a decade and here I am with 10 years of FRPA under my belt. What have I observed? Well, I have noticed an even higher level of diligence in the work being completed by our resource professionals. While the plans being developed are not being approved by government agencies (the exception being forest stewardship plans), our professionals realize their plans must withstand the scrutiny of peers, compliance and enforcement inspections, Forest Practice Board audits and special investigations, certification audits and forest and range effectiveness monitoring program. In each and every case, I have witnessed signed and sealed professional documents that have been peer reviewed and accompanied by written rationales explaining choices contemplated and made. Often, acting professionally means more than just following written rules—you have to think outside the box and take responsibility for the choices made.

These days, I occasionally catch myself mumbling negatively about some section of FRPA at a meeting with government only to have a district manager challenge me by insinuating that I shouldn’t complain “because, after all Bob, you did write FRPA!” They’re very funny. But, though it’s not perfect, I am proud to have worked on legislation that recognized an increased role for forest professionals in the stewardship of BC forests. Today, I’m honoured to be entrusted with a planning forester in BC’s Interior, I often think about how the pine beetle wood close to town has been mostly harvested because, after all Bob, you did write FRPA!” They’re very funny. But, though it’s not perfect, I am proud to have worked on legislation that recognized an increased role for forest professionals in the stewardship of BC forests. Today, I’m honoured to be entrusted with a planning forester in BC’s Interior, I often think about how the pine beetle wood close to town has been mostly harvested. It’s my understanding that the provincial government brought in the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) and professional reliance have worked, for good or bad, in light of the mountain pine beetle (MPB) epidemic and the economic recession. It’s my understanding that the provincial government brought in the FRPA to move from the prescriptive Forest Practice Code (FPC) to a results-based legislative framework. This move was supposed to foster many things such as innovative practices intended to achieve government’s stated objectives for the various forest resources. As well, fewer government staff would be required than under the FPC. Instead of government professionals reviewing and approving submitted plans and prescriptions by licensees, licensees, through the use of professional reliance, would prepare these plans to a high standard. I also recall it was supposed to get forest professionals back out into the woods instead of being stuck in front of the computer. However, the only innovation I have seen has been in reducing costs and I spend much less time in the woods than I ever did under the Forest Practice Code.

I think three factors have inhibited the movement to a results-based framework that relies on increased professional reliance. First, the mountain pine beetle, and the resulting increase in the AAC (allowable annual cut) has meant other forest values have taken a backseat to salvaging the economic value of the timber before it is lost. Second, the government did not set landscape-level objectives in light of the MPB epidemic, and those that were in place through existing higher level plans were, rightly or wrongly, relaxed in order to achieve the government’s goal of salvage. Third, the worst economic downturn the forest industry has experienced since the Great Depression occurred not long after FRPA came into effect. I believe a reasonable job was done overall to shift harvesting in to MPB infested stands as quickly as possible. I think the AAC uplift, and more specifically the Non-Replaceable Forest Licenses (NRFLs) that were awarded, should have been directed with more geographical detail and direction in order to maximize salvage in those areas where existing licensees were not addressing. In addition, the threshold for the NRFL requirements for those licenses should have been higher than 70% pine and 30% attack. This would have resulted in less non-volume pine being harvested during salvage operations. The chaos created by granting numerous new licenses over top of one another resulted in a gold-rush mentality—get all the dead timber before another license is cut and from as close to your mill as possible. This short-term mentality, in my opinion, resulted in poor forest stewardship. As the pine beetle wood close to town has been mostly harvested, our volume-based system continues to fail all players involved.

The lack of meaningful landscape level objectives to deal with such issues as hydrology has left planning forest professionals in a “no man’s land” for direction on this issue. As soon as the government decided it wanted to salvage as much of the pine as possible and increased the AAC, it should have come out and said that other forest values would be adversely affected. Then a plan to mitigate the effects on other resource users, such as First Nations, ranchers, trappers, guide outfitters, tourist operators etc., should have been implemented. Where is the one billion dollars of mountain pine beetle money that the federal and provincial government committed to the mountain pine beetle crisis? The work of the Beetle Action Coalition is to transition to a results-based forest and range effectiveness monitoring program. In each and every case, I have witnessed signed and sealed professional documents that have been peer reviewed and explained by written rationales explaining choices contemplated and made. Often, acting professionally means more than just following written rules—you have to think outside the box and take responsibility for the choices made.
As the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) came into effect, questions arose about whether the professional community truly understood, and could uphold, the responsibilities evident in the legislation. Stakeholders increasingly voiced concerns about the viability of a legal construct that relied upon principled professional conduct. There was a shared perspective within the joint sectoral policy team that expected outcomes could not be achieved by the legislation alone. The legislation had to work in concert with the applied competencies of professionals in several disciplines.

For a period of time after FRPA was enacted, the joint government/sectoral architects of forest practices policy became increasingly anxious that initiatives necessary to implement the FRPA regime, such as development of practice standards, were slow in commencing. If I were not aware of investments in purposeful advancement of professional reliance, particularly since 2010, I would remain anxious about the legal construct of FRPA. The work of the ABCFP in exploring practice standards respecting the critical role of resource evaluations and assessments, measuring and verifying results/strategies, due attention to non-statutory responsibilities, and proper consideration of the rights of First Nations and holders of government granted tenure serve to address my anxieties. The initiatives in building practice standards are consistent with the initiatives documented by the Professional Reliance Steering Committee (Strategic Direction for Advancing Professional Reliance. Ministry of Forests and Range, July 2010) that are needed to properly support the results-based legislation.

Looking back, it is not surprising that it took a few years after FRPA came into effect for the development of practice standards to take flight. There was need to develop operational experience with the legislation and marry that experience with evolutions in professional reliance. This allowed us to prioritize the development of required practice standards for key components of the regulatory regime.

As professional reliance continues to advance, I consider there to be four topics that require continued attention—the wording of legal objectives, written rationales by professionals to accompany their work, monitoring applied practice outcomes and the accountability framework.

Wording of Legal Objectives
During collaborative initiatives to establish legal objectives, I was troubled by our extensive deliberations on writing flexible objectives. Should we have established objectives that were open to wide interpretation of what was to be achieved? Was that the correct approach? I do not think so. Objectives should be clear statements of the future desired state, with the proper place for flexibility being in preserving the latitude for professionals to design means for plans to be consistent with that future state.

Written Rationales
Preparation of written rationales must become a common professional practice standard. It is increasingly important that a professional explain what, specifically, has been considered and how it is that a plan or practice prescription addresses statutory requirements, Chief Forester’s policy (such as direction on stand retention) and non-statutory considerations.

Monitoring Applied Practice Outcomes
On monitoring, I share the concerns of many respondents to the September 2010 professional reliance survey. As a learning community, we have yet to establish sufficient means to monitor the outcome of applied practice, so that we may incorporate information into continuous improvement of legislation, legal objectives and professional practice.

Accountability Framework
Regarding the accountability framework, which is to some degree linked to monitoring, is there sufficient fortitude to address the concerns of survey respondents that public trust may be lacking.

See Professional Practice Standards continued on Page 28
The ABCFP’s 65th annual conference and AGM, Forestry: The Future is Growing, will offer opportunities to explore forestry’s growth potential through innovation, human resources management and market development. Pre-conference technical sessions will provide on-the-ground skills that can be immediately applied by forest practitioners. Delegates will then explore innovations in the development of forest products and the science of forest management. The human resources dimension will address the broadening scope of forest professionals’ work, as well as identify keys to recruiting and retaining employees in a competitive, multi-industry market. The final sessions will provide a futuristic, realistic look at future markets for forest products as well as for forest professionals. The future is growing—and we’re growing it.
Cooperation and Common Sense: Professional Reliance in Mackenzie

LONG BEFORE THE Forest and Range Practices Act was established, forest professionals in the Mackenzie area worked together to advance professional reliance. But it wasn’t always that way. Previous policies of extensive submission review led to delays obtaining permit approvals and friction between reviewers and submitters. This atmosphere did not support professional reliance or accountability.

In the late 1990s the situation became critical and the provincial standing timber inventory initiative was begun. The Mackenzie resource district was an early adopter of the continuous improvement approach to streamline and manage permit approval business processes. A key principle of the continuous improvement approach is the active involvement of all parties with a stake in the process. Industry and government professionals worked together to define submission content and standards as well as target timelines and consistent approaches to deal with errors, omissions and rush requests. The agreed upon processes were documented with clear check lists and flow charts. These cooperative efforts helped build trust among local forest professionals and set a solid foundation for advancing professional reliance. But it wasn’t always that way. Previous policies of extensive submission review led to delays obtaining permit approvals and friction between reviewers and submitters. This atmosphere did not support professional reliance or accountability.

The redesign work and numerous meetings initially caused further delays and permit backlog. Within a couple of months, the new streamlined, agreed upon and documented process began to pay off. Processing times were reduced, fewer errors and omissions were found and tension between industry and government professionals was reduced. Despite the opportunities to advance professional reliance. At about the same time, fee growing declarations had the potential to become a major workload and source of friction. Once again forest professionals in the Mackenzie area adopted a cooperative approach, submission standards and business processes were defined. A risk-based audit/inspection regime was developed for government verification, and submitter risk was one of the factors applied. This was controversial at first but it was applied in a very open manner and rewarded quality submissions. The dialogue between industry and government professionals helped develop a sense of trust. An associated effort among silviculture practitioners in the Mackenzie area was the development of trust management guidelines. This has been very successful in dealing with this significant reforestation challenge.

In 2010, Mackenzie agreed to be a pilot district to apply professional reliance to permit and appraisal processes. Fully electronic submission methods were part of the pilot. Unlike previous local efforts, the pilot involved links to the northern Operational Issues Forum and Provincial Forestry Forum, joint forest industry/government ministry meetings held about every four months, as well as ministry regional and branch offices. This wider involvement brought considerably greater rigour to the discussions and resulting processes. The desire to develop data...
The Fox is Guarding the Chicken Coop:
Addressing Competing Values Within Forest Management

The province abdicated its responsibilities to manage the public forests in the public interest by shifting to professional reliance under the FRPA. Professional judgment, in some cases with inadequate guidance, is disproportionate to accountability. The result has been a sort of privatization of the forests. Employees of corporations that function, primarily, to turn a private profit, are given the discretion to factor the incalculable social and ecological values of forests into the equation. Think back to when the Forest Practices Code (FPC), with its prescriptive approach, was being instituted. BC was earning an international black eye for some of the most egregious logging practices on the planet: large progressive clearcuts on steep, rain soaked slopes, and fragmentation of sensitive species’ habitats. These practices spurred BC’s ‘War in the Woods’ and the ‘Brazil of the North’ campaigns in the early to mid-nineties. The introduction of the Code’s practices sparked a move towards the Forest Practices and Range Act (FRPA) legislation. With FRPA came a shift away from prescriptive directions for implementation, the Forest Practices and Range Act, among other measures. Just as FPC was in final transition to full implementation, the Forest Practices Board (FPB) findings in the past few years demonstrate the shortcomings. In 2006, the FPB found that the province had not developed a strategy with sufficient guidance for forest professionals to protect marbled murrelet habitat. In 2009, the FPB studied over a thousand streams across the province, and found that more than half the road crossings posed barriers to fish passage. In May of this year, the Ministry of Environment released survey results that indicated that moose populations were declining in the Interior. Salvage logging and habitat changes due to pine beetle were identified as potential contributing factors to the decline.

Under FRPA, the burden of monitoring rests largely with the companies, and Ministry of Forests Lands and Natural Resources Operations’ budgets to conduct compliance and enforcement monitoring have plummeted. Moreover, compliance and enforcement only detects whether objectives are being met, but does not measure whether the actual results to be achieved are effective. Similarly, the ABCFP’s disciplinary processes do not evaluate whether the competing values forest professionals need to choose between are the appropriate balances. While flexibility to achieve results certainly makes sense in some cases, continuing evidence suggests that the right balance between professional reliance and stewardship of forest ecosystems has not yet been achieved.

The Forest Practices Board (FPB) findings in the past few years demonstrate the shortcomings. In 2008, the FPB found that the province had not developed a strategy with sufficient guidance for forest professionals to protect marbled murrelet habitat. In 2009, the FPB studied over a thousand streams across the province, and found that more than half the road crossings posed barriers to fish passage. In May of this year, the Ministry of Environment released survey results that indicated that moose populations were declining in the Interior. Salvage logging and habitat changes due to pine beetle were identified as potential contributing factors to the decline.

Sacred Headwaters in northwest BC. For us, the big C’s—cumulative impacts and climate change—compound the current imbalance between reliance and accountability. Land use plans (many of which are out of date) and laws do not provide direction on how to handle these looming issues. This leaves forest professionals in the impossible position of considering these multi-faceted factors within the narrow scope of planning and managing at the micro-scale of cutblocks within a tenure area.

During the recent heated debates around the Interior’s mid-term timber supply, forest professionals and the ABCFP collectively spoke out against poor forest policy. This type of strong advocacy for our forests and all their inherent values will win public trust and demonstrate to politicians that our forests are not a bargaining chip in a game of roulette between economic or social and ecological values. Clear strong requirements from government would further build that public trust. All decision makers in forest management must take to heart the principle of “first among equals.” This will maintain and recover the biological richness of our forests, while a truly sustainable forest industry can thrive and keep forest professionals in the woods.

Valerie Langer is a founder of ForestEthics and joined as staff of the Canadian project in 2006. She currently heads up ForestEthics Solutions and is primarily focused on implementation of the world-famous Great Bear Rainforest Agreements. From Clayoquot Sound to the Great Bear Rainforest, Valerie has been involved in forest conservation for over two decades. Including groundbreaking conservation initiatives in Clayoquot Sound, launching a project to commercialize use of agricultural fibres in paper production in Canada and putting in ecosystem-based management into practice at a large scale.

Karen Tam Wu, RPF, is ForestEthics Advocacy’s senior conservation campaigner. Having spent over a decade of experience as a Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) auditor and consultant to companies pursuing certification, Karen supported coastal companies in their work to achieve FSC certification of nearly one million hectares of forest in the Great Bear Rainforest, the second largest area in BC to receive FSC certification. Today, Karen still dabbles in forest certification and focuses much time on protecting wild places like the Sacred Headwaters in northwest BC.
In September 2010, a survey was conducted to assess how professional reliance (PR) was working in BC’s forestry sector. The survey serves as a baseline for measuring progress of Advancing Professional Reliance (PR) initiative. A follow up PR survey was conducted in February 2012. This short report summarizes the results of the latter survey. Detailed results are posted at: www.for.gov.bc.ca/hti/pr/2012 Survey

Over 580 members of the ABCFP (greater than 10% of total membership) responded to the 2012 PR survey. Approximately 70% were RPFs, 25% RFTs and the remainder other professionals. Approximately 66% work for the BC government, 22% tenure holders and 15% consultants. This cross-section by employer group reflects that of the ABCFP’s membership. Respondents work in the south Interior (45%), north Interior (34%), coast (28%) and Victoria (10%). Only 45% of respondents attended a PR workshop in 2010-11.

The survey was divided into five sections. Respondents were asked to score their agreement with statements (strongly agree to strongly disagree) or, in the case of personal professional practice, frequency of behaviour. Scores were totalled and weighted by employer group and area, and compared to the scores of the 2010 survey. The highest (positive) mean score is 100. Over 500 written comments were also submitted.

Key Findings

The 2012 survey scores show advancements in the understanding and application of PR since 2010. However, it also indicates there is still room for improvement, specifically:
• understanding what PR is and isn’t;
• trust between members working for government and industry;
• application of PR within several business areas;
• understanding of ABCFP’s tiered disciplinary process; and
• quality of professional work and submissions.

Application of Professional Reliance

The scores respecting trust and working relationships increased since 2010, but the relatively low scores make this an area of concern. Respondents’ scores for professional competence were biased towards members working in one’s respective employer group. As for scores associated with the application of PR in different business areas, engineering remained the highest and appraisals and cruising the lowest. Some comments reflected a mistrust of professionals working for different employer groups and indicated considerable variability in consistently applying PR between districts, tenure holders and individuals.

ABCFP

Respondents scored accessibility of ABCFP’s information and standards for accepting members higher than other categories. Scores associated with ABCFP’s disciplinary processes remained low, but higher than in 2010. Comments indicate the ABCFP has improved its communications regarding PR, but some members show reluctance for holding their colleagues accountable through informal and formal processes.

Personal Professional Practice

Respondents generally scored statements in this section very high. This contrasts sharply with the lower scores found in Section Three: Application of PR. This suggests respondents believe they demonstrate higher professional conduct than their fellow professionals. Comments indicated members are challenged in maintaining their competencies as employers support for professional development has waned.

Plans and Submissions

The overall scores received from persons responsible for preparing, reviewing, approving, implementing and monitoring plans were higher than those in 2010. Areas for improvement include: reducing pressure on professionals to change recommendations; communicating decisions in a timely manner; providing rationales; increasing clarity of results and strategies; and reducing the number of plan errors and omissions in submissions. Comments indicate plan quality can vary considerably between submitting professionals, as does the review and approval of submissions between districts.

Conclusions

The scores and comments of the 2012 survey were more positive than those received in 2010. Improvements have been made, but varying understanding, application and acceptance of PR still exists amongst ABCFP members. Advancing PR represents an on-going process and a culture-shift. To achieve the target vision and desired outcomes for the PR initiative, a sustained effort and new approaches are required such as identifying and reporting best practices, fostering trust and monitoring. Keep posted for updates and next steps at: www.for.gov.bc.ca/hti/pr/

To thanks to the many people to took the 2010 and 2012 surveys. A number of persons contributed to the development and review of these surveys, but special acknowledgement and thanks are owed to Ray Crampton, RPF, Archie MacDonald, RPF, and Mike Larock, RPF.

5.2. Understanding Professional Reliance

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5.4.2. Reviews of Plans and Submissions

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Table Colour Coding Legend

- Purple: 85 points or higher (Model Achievements)
- Blue: 75 to 84 points (Successes)
- Green: 65 to 74 points (Strengths)
- Yellow: 55 to 64 points (Areas for Improvement)
- Orange: 54 points or lower (Challenges)

Brian Barber, RPF, is director of the Tree Improvement Branch within the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations. Brian served on the ABCFP’s 2012 forestry conference and AGM host committee and is chair of CIF’s Vancouver Island section.

What Forest Professionals Think:

2012 Professional Reliance Survey

By Brian Barber, RPF
Some members have expressed concern with regard to the apparent unfairness of the ABCFP’s discipline process. The purpose of this article is to review our discipline process and describe the provisions of the process that ensure it is fair to our members who are subject to a complaint.

The ABCFP’s discipline process requires that complaints be submitted in writing to the registrar. The registrar must accept a complaint only after it meets the tests required in the Foresters Act. The act requires the complaint to provide enough information to allow an investigation to proceed. This is one way of eliminating complaints that are not substantiated or may be of a frivolous nature. It offers some degree of protection to members from such complaints.

The ABCFP can then proceed with one of three options.

1. If an investigation takes place, there are two possible outcomes.

2. The complaint can be closed.

3. The complaint is investigated.

An investigation is carried out by trained volunteers including both ABCFP members and lay people. An investigation is very thorough and can take four to eight months to complete as the volunteers speak with all parties and may visit the site of the complaint.

If the complaint fails any of the four tests, the complaint is closed and the parties are notified of the decision.

The complaint can be closed.

The ABCFP can proceed with one of three options.

The complaint is investigated.

The investigation volunteers find that there are no grounds for the complaint. This means that the member(s) is/are innocent and the complaint can be closed.

The investigation volunteers find that there are grounds for the complaint. This means that we believe the member(s) is/are guilty. All parties are required to attend a formal hearing.

The registrar decides the complaint should proceed, the IC report is sent to the member and the member is given reasonable time to develop a detailed response to the report. The response to the report and the report are then assessed by the CRC and the CRC recommends to the registrar whether to issue a citation. If the registrar determines not to issue a citation, the complaint is closed and a discipline case digest is written explaining the rationale for this decision without identifying the member involved. If a citation is issued, the member has the option of tendering a settlement proposal or a date is set for a discipline hearing. In either case, the outcome of the complaint is determined by an independent panel of peers from the Discipline Committee.

At all times during the process, all parties are treated with respect, kept informed of the steps in the process, and provided with every opportunity to respond and provide evidence. All complaints are reviewed by independent committees, normally comprised of peer ABCFP members. In this way, the complaint process provides an open and fair assessment of complaints that protects the rights of all members.

If the member subject to the complaint is guilty, the registrar issues a citation, the complaint is closed and a discipline case digest is written explaining the rationale for this decision without identifying the member involved. If a citation is issued, the member has the option of tendering a settlement proposal or a date is set for a discipline hearing. In either case, the outcome of the complaint is determined by an independent panel of peers from the Discipline Committee.

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Fairness in the ABCFP’s Discipline Process

By Randy Trerise, RPF

Randy Trerise, RPF, joined the association in 2007 and is based in Grand Forks. As the registrar and director of act compliance, Randy oversees the ABCFP’s submissions, registration, discipline, enforcement and accreditation activities. Thanks to both Jeff Watsunen, LLR, MA, and Dan Graham, LLR, RPF, for their help in writing this article.
Two threads are inseparably intertwined in this readable and very frank autobiography. Though undoubtedly helped initially by family connections, Peter Bentley deservedly rose from being an immigrant lad speaking no English to becoming a respected and admired figure in Canada's business establishment, CEO of Canfor, director of Bank of Montreal and Shell Canada, and Chancellor of UNBC. Contemporaneously and far from coincidentally, the small Pacific Veneer Company founded by his father and uncle of UNBC. 

Understandably, the 18 short chapters do not follow a strict chronology, but the linked timelines for both the author's career and Canfor's growth are clearly developed from the beginnings in 1938 through to today. It's encouraging that Peter Bentley can conclude with an optimistic view of forestry in BC and, by implication Canfor, as it adapts to a changing world. He is incorrect in his assertion that the Harcourt government erred in not allowing logging in Tweedsmuir Park in 1955 so as to halt the spread of mountain pine beetle outbreaks occurred or less simultaneously throughout the Interior. Also, perhaps wood products scientists such as Dr. Otto Fonfroque and his colleagues might raise an eyebrow at the rather cavalier dismissal of wood products research. These flaws aside, this is an invaluable book for both the author's career and Canfor's growth are clearly developed from the beginnings in 1938 through to today.
due to perceptions about holding professionals to account? Late in the 2000s, a series of challenges and myths were beginning to compromise implementation of forest legislation (Assessing Professional Reliance in the Forest Sector: ARCFP, January 2010). As a person, whose role in the civil service includes encouraging, informing, and supporting resource stewardship initiatives, I consider the initiatives sponsored by the ARCFP in collaboration with government and the forest sector to establish core principles of professional reliance and in building practice standards, to be absolutely on point for realizing the benefits of FRPA working in complement with professional reliance. Further, we now see that advancing professional reliance will assist with the necessary convergence of resource stewardship responsibilities with protection of Aboriginal rights through conserving the abundance and distribution of wildlife resources (Tilouhe in Nation (Roger Williams) vs British Columbia 2007 BCSC 170 (“Williams”), William vs BC Government 2012 BCCA 285).

The transparency by which professional reliance issues are being examined bodes well for building trust and respect among stakeholders in our forest resources. Policy such as the Principles of Professional Stewardship (ARCFP, May 2012) and the discussion on matters such as non-statutory expectations, documented rationales and measuring/verifying will cement the fundamental cornerstones of professional reliance as a core element of effective forest resource stewardship.

I am optimistic that with sustained effort we will demonstrate continuous improvement of natural resource stewardship while increasing public understanding, confidence and trust in professionals. I hope my optimism will be upheld by delivery of material, visible outcomes indicative of true integration of legislative intent with professional reliance, duly informed and reinforced by rigorous professional practice standards. 

For years Budget Stewart worked face down in the water as a fish biologist, environmental assessments, First Nations fisheries and salmon farm management. After joining the provincial civil service 18 years ago, he is now the director, resource management for the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, Cariboo Region. Budger and Tanis reside in 150 Mile House, with two kids now fully fledged.

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for the pilot led to a higher workload during the pilot period. Another key element was the need for a defined accountability framework. Pilot participants agreed to an escalating accountability framework. Any apparent error or omission would require a professional conversation between the submitting and reviewing professionals with an expectation of resolution and actions to improve. Failure to reach resolution or repeated errors or omissions would require the involvement of the supervisors of both the submitting and reviewing professionals. The Association of BC Forest Professionals’ discipline procedures would be applied in the case of significant errors or omissions.

Most elements of the permit and appraisal pilot were quite successful; timber cruising proved to be the most problematic. Cruising is a complex field activity often performed by junior staff or contractors but it provides critical data inputs to the appraisal process. Only rarely has the submitting professional been directly involved in the timber cruising. Organizations with a robust internal quality assurance process fared considerably better than those without one.

The accountability framework created some concern in the early stages, but the individuals involved reported that the professional conversations had gone very well. The conversations focused on the following: Was there a real error or omission? What was the root cause? How could it be prevented from recurring? Only a couple of issues elevated to the second stage involving supervisors and none elevated beyond that stage. The pilot experience has advanced the development of trust and a cooperative working relationship among forest professionals.

The results of the pilot will be discussed at the Operational Issues Forum and Provincial Forest Forum to develop recommendations on whether they should be applied more broadly. Implementing the Mackenzie pilot processes broadly, without modification, would create a major workload problem during transition. Some modification of the pilot specifics and/or scheduling implementation over time will likely be necessary. However, forest professionals in the Mackenzie area have seen significant benefits from professional reliance over several years. Developing professional reliance isn’t easy and it isn’t fast but, as the work done in Mackenzie shows, it can make lasting improvements to the relationship between professionals and on the general practice of forestry in BC. ~

Dave Francis, RPF, is a BC boy who began his forestry career in 1974, as a compassman on the coast. Dave eventually made his way back to school for a forestry degree and became a Registered Professional Forester in 1988. After graduation, Dave joined the Forest Service and has worked in Squamish, Smithers, Houston and Mackenzie. He has been the district manager in Mackenzie since 1997.
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