

# **2011 ABCFP Public Opinion Poll Results**

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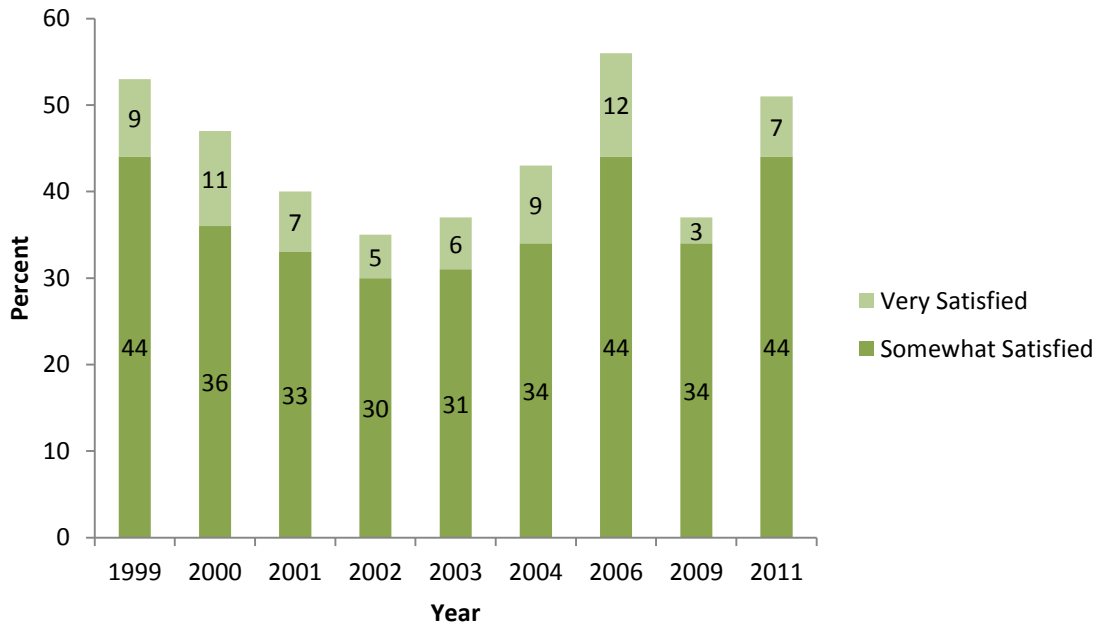
## **Introduction**

The ABCFP Public Opinion Poll is conducted every two or three years to in order to gauge how BC adults view forest professionals and forestry management. Results may also be also used to inform future strategic planning by the association. The poll was conducted in July 2011 by Public Opinions Inc. and 561 BC residents responded. Results are considered to be 95% accurate (by +/- 4.1%, 95 times out of 100). That means that we can be 95% sure that the results garnered from this survey are accurate within 4.1%.

## Quality of Forest Resources Management in BC

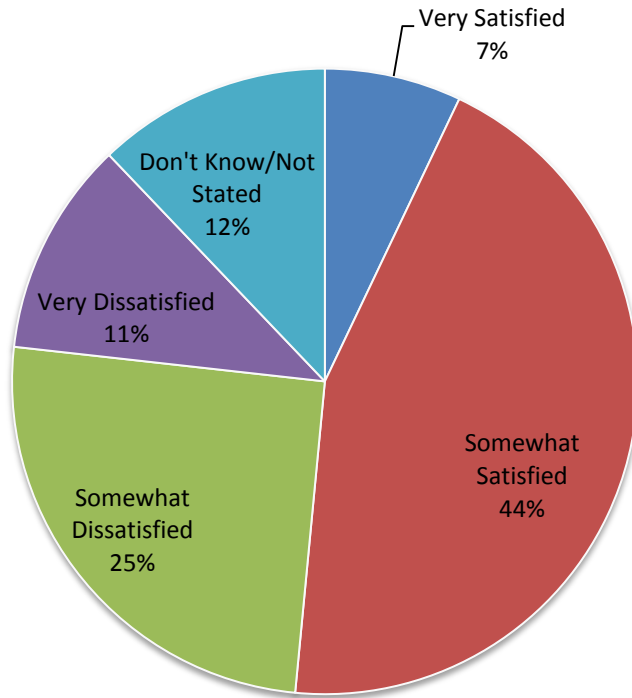
Over half of British Columbians (51%) are satisfied (somewhat satisfied 44% and very satisfied 7%) with the quality of forest resources management in BC today. This level of satisfaction is significantly higher than reported in 2009 and represents one of the highest levels of satisfaction since the association began polling in 1999.

**Figure 1: Satisfaction with the Quality of Forest Resources Management by Polling Year**



On the converse, 36% of British Columbians are dissatisfied (somewhat dissatisfied 25% and very dissatisfied 11%). These results indicate that while progress has been made, there is still room for improvement. Respondents aged 18 to 24 are most likely to report being somewhat or very satisfied with forest resource management in BC (70%) while those aged 45 to 54 are most likely to be somewhat or very dissatisfied (43%).

**Figure 2: Satisfaction with the Quality of Forest Resources Management in BC**



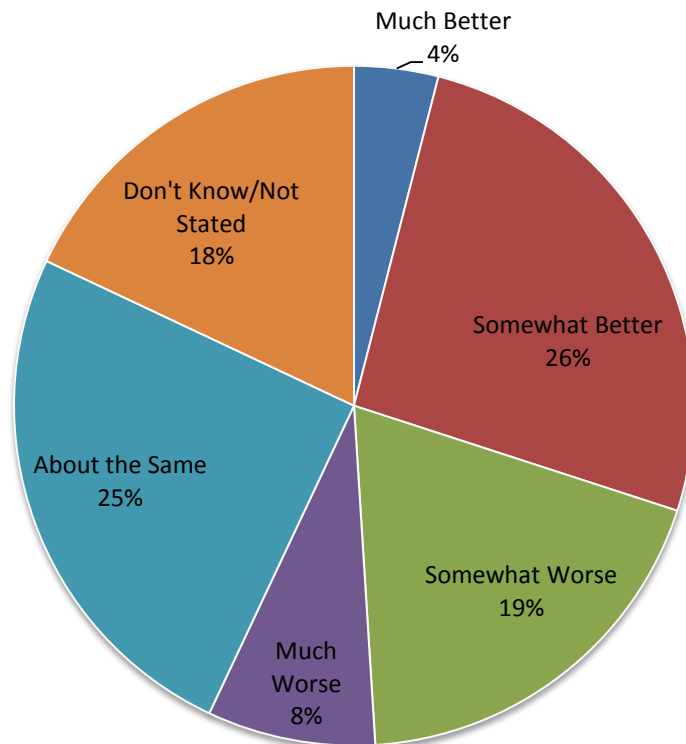
## Quality of BC Forest Management Then and Now

About one-third (30%) of respondents feel that the quality of forest resource management in BC has increased in the past five years (is much or somewhat better). This result is significantly higher than was reported in 2009 when 17% of respondents felt the quality of forest resource management had improved.

Just over a quarter of respondents (27%) believe that the quality has decreased (is somewhat or much worse) while one-quarter (25%) of respondents feel the quality has remained the same.

Residents ages 18 to 24 are most likely to perceive an improvement in the quality of forest management while residents ages 45-54 are most likely to perceive a decline.

**Figure 3: Perceived Quality of Forest Resources Management in BC Compared to Five Years Ago**

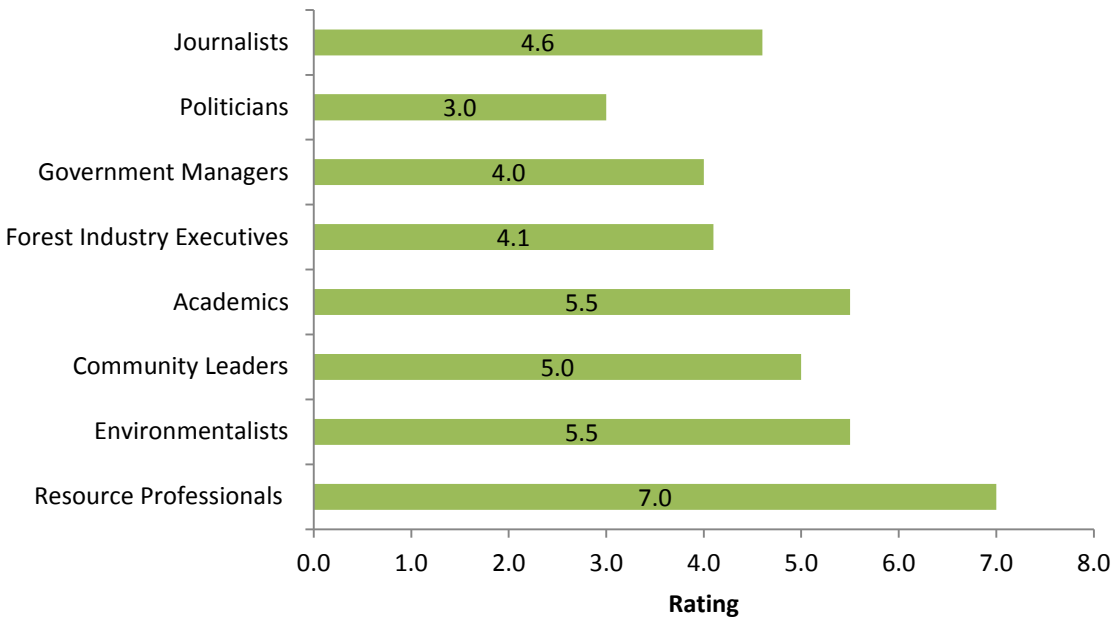


## Trustworthiness of Resource Professionals

Resource professionals (including Foresters, Forest Technologists, Biologists, Engineers, Geoscientists and Agrologists) are the most trusted source of information about BC's forest resources (scoring at rating of 7.0 out 10.0). This result is consistent with the 2006 and 2009 surveys. Environmentalists and academics follow both achieving a rating of 5.5.

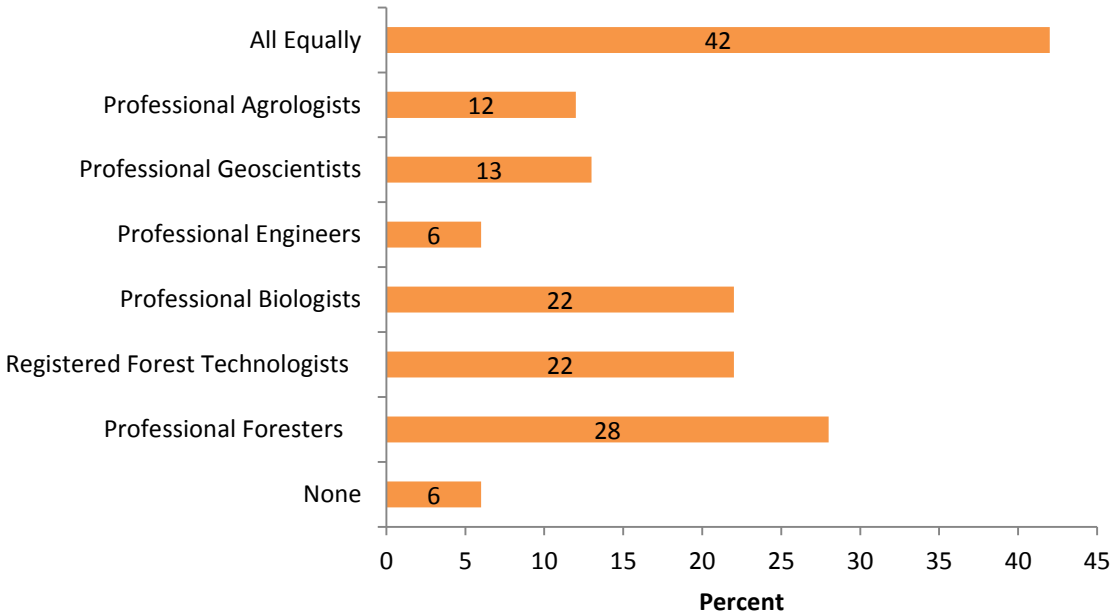
No significant difference in the rating of resource professionals was found when comparing residents living in urban (7.0) vs. rural (6.7) areas.

**Figure 4: Trustworthiness of Information Source Groups**  
(Average rating out of 10.0)



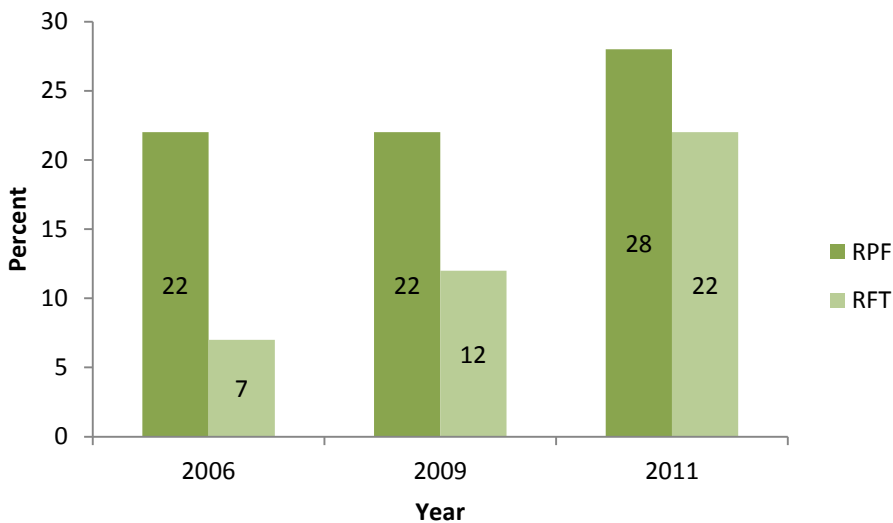
When breaking down the group of resource professionals further, it was found that Registered Professionals Foresters were perceived as the most trusted (28%). Registered Forest Technologists (22%) and Biologists (22%) tied for second place.

**Figure 5: Trustworthiness of Resource Professionals**



As compared to 2009 results, the trustworthiness level of Registered Professional Foresters increased 6% and the trustworthiness level for Registered Forest Technologists almost doubled (increasing from 12% to 22%). It is of note that the trustworthiness level of Registered Forest Technologists has risen from 7% to 22% since 2006.

**Figure 6: Trustworthiness of RPFs and RFTs by Polling Year**

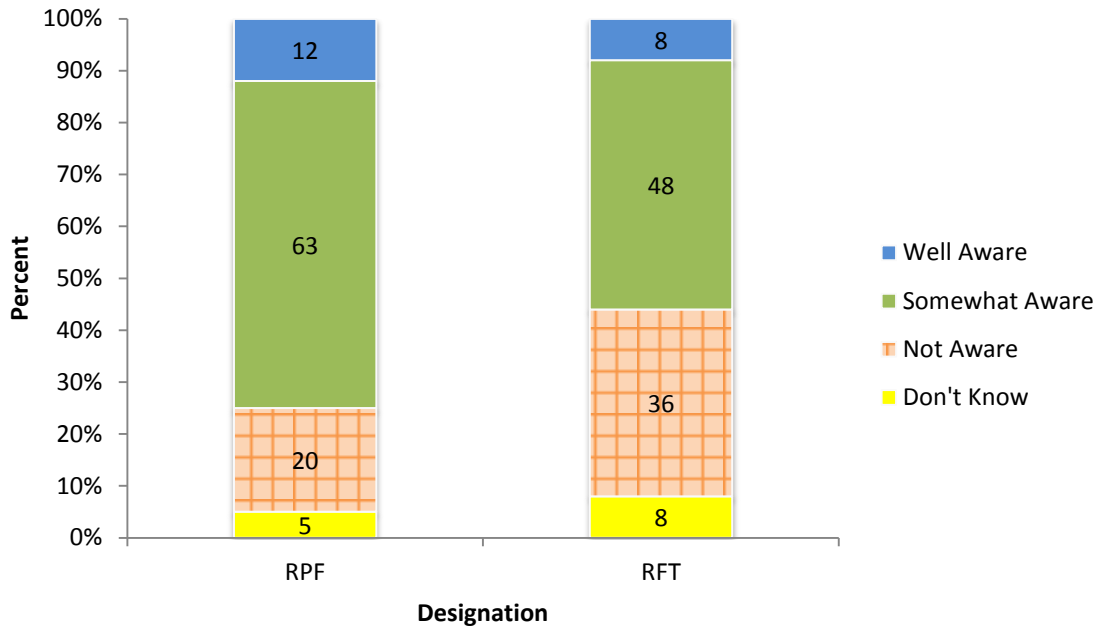




## Public Awareness

Three-quarters (75%) of BC residents are aware (well aware and somewhat aware) of what a Registered Forest Professional (RPF) is. The level of awareness for Registered Forest Technologists is 56% – considerably lower than that of RPFs.

**Figure 7: Public Awareness of RPFs and RFTs**



Male residents of BC are more aware of RPFs and RFTs than females (81% RPF and 62% RFT for males compared to 68% RPF and 51% RFT for females).

**Figure 8: Public Awareness of RPFs and RFTs by Gender**

	Male Respondents	Female Respondents
Well and somewhat aware of what an RPF is	81%	68%
Well and somewhat aware of what an RFT is	62%	51%

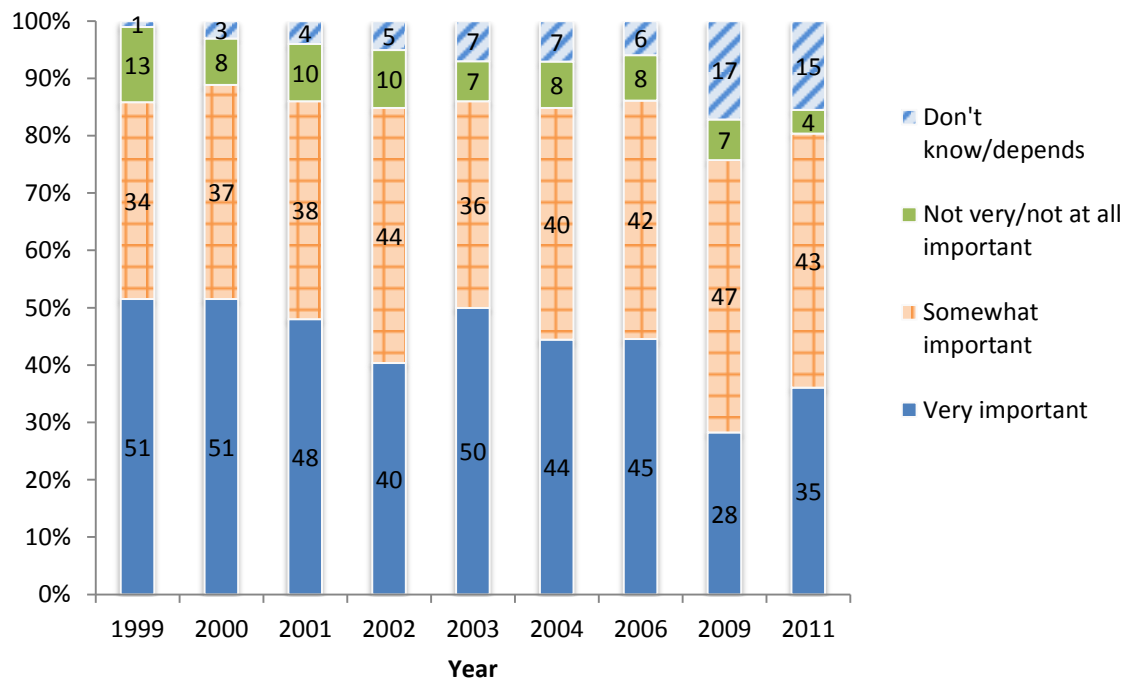
Both rural and urban residents are similarly aware of RPFs (79% vs. 75%) but those living in rural areas are more aware of RFTs than those living in urban areas (70% vs. 54%).

Although percentages of awareness are high, 20% of BC residents are not aware of what a Registered Professional Forester is and 36% of residents are not aware of what a Registered Forest Technologists is. As compared to 2009 results, awareness across the board has increased and the percentages of residents who report not being aware of what forest professionals are has decreased.

## Restricting the Practice of Forestry to RPFs & RFTs

The majority of BC residents (78%) think that it is important to have the practice of forestry restricted to Registered Professional Foresters and Registered Forest Technologists. This result is consistent with previous public opinion polling results.

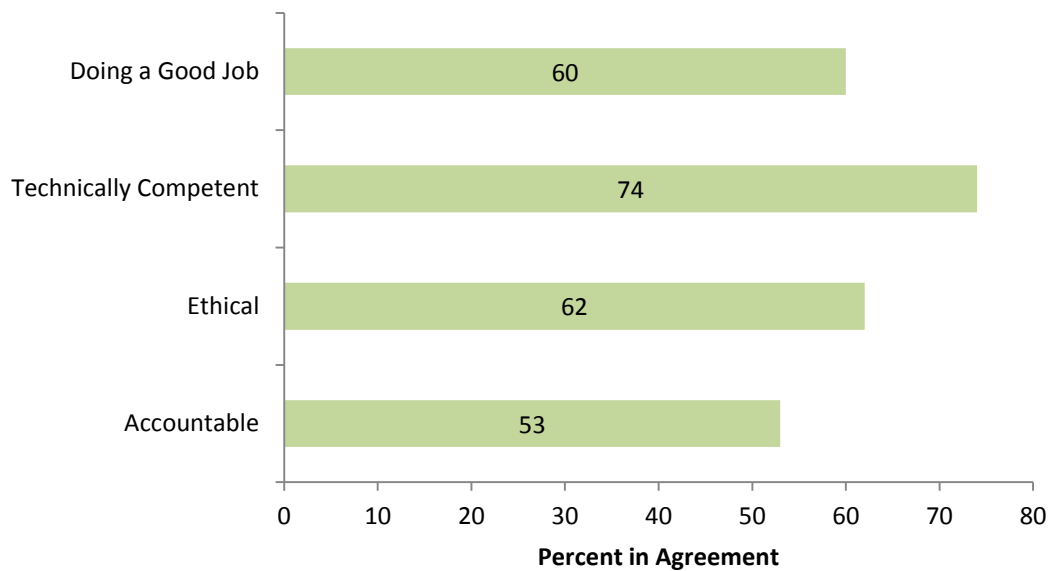
**Figure 9: Importance of Restricting the Practice of Forestry to RPFs and RFTs**



## Perceived Job Performance

Several questions regarding the perceived job performance of Registered Professional Foresters and Registered Forest Technologists (collectively known as forest professionals) were asked. When asked if forest professionals are doing a good job of managing BC's forest resources, 60% of BC residents agreed (strongly and somewhat agreed). 74% agree that forest professionals are technically competent, 62% feel that forest professionals are ethical in the forest resource management decisions they make and 53% feel that forest professionals are accountable for their actions.

**Figure 9: Perceived Job Performance**

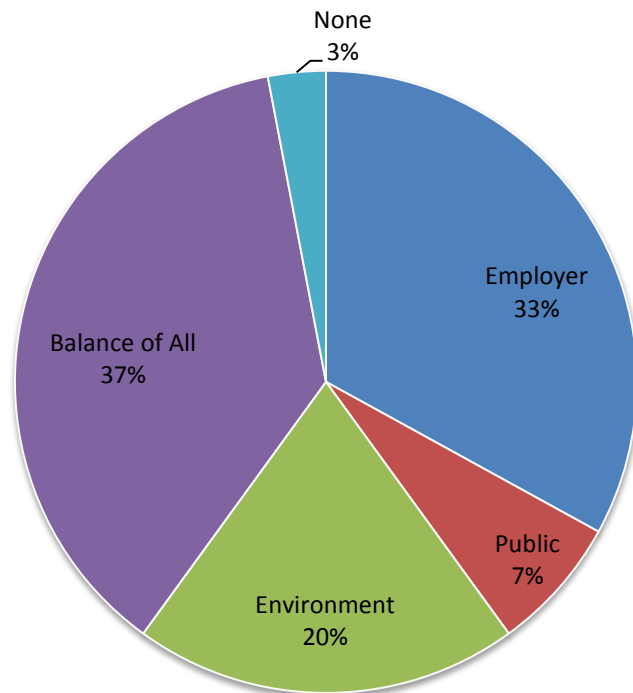


## Decision-Making When Faced With a Conflict Between Interests

When asked how forest professionals would deal with decision-making when faced with a conflict between interests, about one-third (37%) felt that forest professionals would choose to balance the needs of their employers, the public and the environment. 33% of respondents felt that forest professionals would follow the directives of their employers, while 20% felt forest professionals would do what's best for the environment.

### Figure 10: Decision-Making When Faced with Conflicting Interests

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



## Summary

Overall, results indicate that BC residents are satisfied with the quality of forest resource management and feel that the quality has improved over the last five years.

The majority of BC residents feel that it is important to have the practice of forestry restricted to professional foresters and registered forest technologists. In addition, RPFs and RFTs are the most trusted sources for information regarding BC's forest resources.

Public awareness of RPFs and RFTs continues to increase yet there is room for improvement. Younger people (those ages 18 to 54) and females are more likely to be unaware of what forest professionals are. It may be advantageous to target future public awareness activities to these groups.