



News Release

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Keys to Successful Forest Management Are Independent and Accountable Forest Professionals

(Vancouver, BC) The Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABCFP) read with interest the report released by the Professional Employees Association (PEA). There are a few items that require clarification.

The ABCFP is the regulatory body for forest professionals in BC. In addition to regulating those who practise professional forestry in our province, we also advocate for and uphold principles of stewardship of forests, forest lands, forest resources and forest ecosystems.

The practice of professional forestry in BC has been a right-to-title, right-to-practice profession since 1947. This means that, by law, anyone practising professional forestry must be a member of the ABCFP. Forest professionals include Registered Professional Foresters (RPFs) and Registered Forest Technologists (RFTs). Many RPFs who work for the government belong to the PEA while RFTs who work for the government belong to a different union. Like RPFs, they too are required to uphold principles of forest stewardship. Legally, all employers must hire a forest professional to carry out the practice of professional forestry in BC.

It is the duty of the association to serve and protect the public interest. Our members are bound by our Code of Ethics which requires them to be responsible to the public; the profession; their employer and other members. Specifically, it requires them to uphold professional principles above the demands of employment. It is this tenet of independence combined with exclusive right to practice, that ensures our members will act in the public interest.

In addition to independence, another key to successful forest management is professional reliance. It is the act of relying upon professionals and them being held accountable to their professional association for their actions. Managing forests takes a team. The forestry team includes foresters, forest technologists, engineers, biologists, geoscientists and more. They work together – relying on the professional work of each other – to ensure the forests are managed for the benefit of the public of BC. Maintaining a sufficiently resourced team of professionals is critical for businesses and government operating in the public's forest. You can learn more about professional reliance in the video we created and posted on the ABCFP's website (www.abcfp.ca).

Because all forest professionals are bound by the ABCFP's Standards of Professional Practice, Code of Ethics and Bylaws, the public can expect that members are independent and acting in the public interest

– regardless of their employer. Professional reliance isn't perfect but the entire forestry team is improving it each and every day.

All employers are legally bound to employ forest professionals where the practice of professional forestry is engaged. And it is wise to employ forest professionals in business and strategic roles involved in the management of forest resources.

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The Association of BC Forest Professionals is responsible for registering and regulating British Columbia's professional foresters and forest technologists. Today, it is the largest professional forestry association in Canada and the first to include forest technologists. Here in BC, the practice of professional forestry has been regulated since 1947 when foresters first agreed to help protect the public's interest in the province's forests in return for the exclusive right to practise forestry.

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