
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Sept. 21, 2009

Ministry of Forests and Range
Chilliwack Forest District

FOREST STEWARDSHIP PLANS

1. What is a Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP)?

A Forest Stewardship Plan is a legal requirement under the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) that forest licensees prepare. The document explicitly states how forest licensees plan to conduct logging and other forest development activities (e.g. road building) so that environmental standards are upheld.

The plan shows how forest values, including, soils, fish and wildlife, water quality, and biodiversity are protected.

Forest Stewardship Plans have a term of up to five years and can be periodically amended. The plan must be made available for review by the public, First Nations, and other stakeholders before it is submitted to government (usually the local forest district manager) for approval.

The plan must be approved by government before any logging can start.

2. What is a Forest Development Unit (FDU)?

A forest development unit is an area identified in the FSP where timber may be harvested, roads may be constructed and forest values will be managed.

While maps in FSPs generally do not show the actual locations of planned cutblocks or roads, it is important to note that an entire forest development unit will not be completely harvested because of land base and operational constraints. These include non-forest lands, wildlife habitat areas, ungulate winter ranges, old growth management areas, riparian areas, and visually constrained areas. A detailed explanation of the area potentially available for harvesting within a FDU using the Chilliwack Landscape Unit is provided on:

<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/dck/Topics/FSP/Chilliwack LU-FDU example-09212009.pdf>

3. How can the public be involved with Forest Stewardship Plans?

By law, FSPs must be made available for public review and comment. Generally, a licensee must advertise that the plan is available, and allow at least 60 days for public review and comment. This process allows the public, First Nations, and those who might be affected by logging to provide input on these plans.

For more details on the review and comment process, see the “Be Heard: Get Involved in FSP Review” brochure: http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/code/training/frpa/FSP_brochure.pdf

Government cannot approve a FSP unless the licensee proves that it has provided the public and stakeholders with the opportunity to review and comment on the plan and considered comments relevant to the FSP in a manner required by law.

4. What does the Government consider when reviewing and approving a FSP?

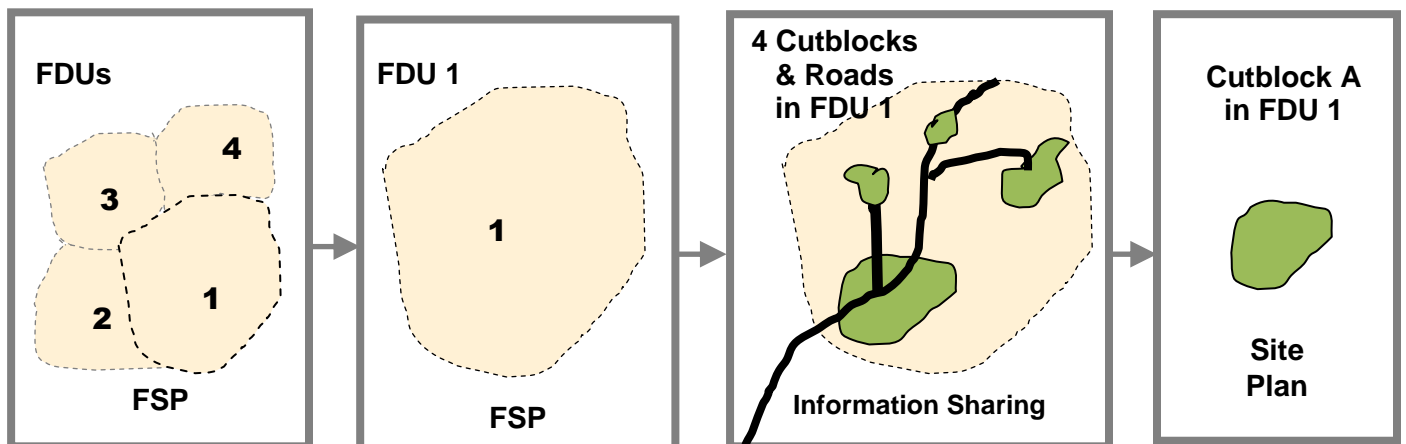
The delegated decision maker for approving FSPs is the forest district manager. The district manager must approve the plan if the proposed results, strategies, measures and stocking standards are consistent with the objectives set by government and conform to the FRPA and its regulations. Objectives set by government includes soils, visual quality, timber, water, fish, wildlife, biodiversity, recreation resources, resource features (such as karst), and cultural heritage resources.

Approval of a FSP is approving how licensees will manage for the forest resources when harvesting or constructing a road; it is not the approval of harvesting, as that takes place at the cutting permit and road permit stage.

5. What is the planning process from FSP to when trees get harvested?

The FSP identifies the locations of FDU where harvesting and road construction could potentially occur and the “rules” that must be followed during road building and harvesting so that forest values are protected. It is then up to a registered professional to determine how those rules must be applied at the cutblock level and what site specific concerns and issues need to be addressed. In some cases, the professional may need to conduct site specific assessments (e.g. terrain and hydrological assessments) to determine the most appropriate rule(s) to be applied at the cutblock level.

Prior to road building or harvesting, licensees are required to develop a site plan which describes how the results, strategies, measures and stocking standards in the FSP apply to the site (i.e. specific cut block or road). The site plan is a legal plan requirement and may be requested from the public.



The Ministry of Forests and Range grants legal authority to cut trees and build roads through the issuance of cutting permits and road permits, respectively. Or in the case of BC Timber Sales, the BC Timber Sales Manager may issue timber sales licenses. Prior to submitting a cutting or

road permit (or issuing a timber sales license), licensees generally share information about these site specific development activities with First Nations and affected stakeholders.

6. How is legislation and environmental standards verified after forest development activities are conducted?

There are a number processes to ensure legislation is upheld before and after forest development activities are conducted:

- The Ministry of Forests and Range (MFR) inspect cutblocks, roads, and FSPs through a risk-based process. Under FRPA, the government has the authority to intervene before environmental damage is done and issue stiff monetary penalties. For more information on the MFR compliance and enforcement program: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hen/>
- Professional accountability and due diligence has increased under FRPA. Registered professional foresters and other resource professionals are accountable for their work (e.g. the FSP and forest development activities) and must abide by the Foresters' Act to practice good forest stewardship and uphold public interests. The public can file a complaint with the Association of BC Forest Professionals if an association member has breached the Foresters' Act. For more information on the association: <http://www.abcfp.ca>
- The Forest Practices Board is an independent public watchdog to determine licensees' compliance with government regulations, and government's own enforcement of those regulations. The Board conducts audits, investigates public complaints, participates in appeals and produces special reports with recommendations for improving practices. For more information on the Board and filing a public complaint: <http://www.fpb.gov.bc.ca/>
- Under the Forest and Range Evaluation Program, specialist teams from government gather and review on-the-ground results against objectives. This allows government to monitor and improve its policies based on scientific data. The results of these effectiveness evaluations are publicly available at: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/>
- The public can also participate by providing their concerns and requesting information from the forest licensees and the government.

For more information on the Forest and Range Practices Act: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/code/>

For more information about Forest Stewardship Plans in the Chilliwack Forest District:

http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/dck/Lim/dck_fsp.html

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