



Ministry of Forests



# FFT Backlog and Impeded Stands Data Review Standards for the Northern Interior Forest Region Effective Nov.30, 2008

These standards apply, in addition to the [General FIA Standards \(FS 1001\)](#), to all impeded and NSR stands data review activities funded under the Forest for Tomorrow (FFT) Program.

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## 1.0 PREAMBLE

The purpose of this standards document is to describe the process by which Standards Units (SU's) and/or openings with no free growing obligations will be reviewed in order to:

- assess the stocking status of the SUs;
- update their status in RESULTS;
- forward plan any necessary activities.

Many of these SUs will be at a point where it is too costly to do any further treatments. The designations not satisfactorily restocked (NSR) and free growing (FG) will be used for management purposes, providing a flag on what actions to take.

- Areas that will have no further activities planned will be designated as FG.
- Areas designated NSR must be scheduled for further silviculture activity.

## 2.0 DISTRICT APPROVAL

- 2.1 The district manager or designate must approve this standard, and any amendments to this standard, before the applicant can proceed with impeded or NSR stand data reviews.
  - (a) Where a TSA / TFL crosses district boundaries, the district manager or designate of the district in which the opening/SU is located is the approving authority.
  - (b) The district manager may designate a regional representative as the approving authority.
- 2.2 Arrangements must be made with the district in advance to arrange
  - (a) Office space to review the files or develop protocols for taking the files off site; and
  - (b) The use of any Ministry office equipment.
  - (c) It is recommended that the applicant contacts the district a minimum of 10 working days in advance to make the above arrangements.

## 3.0 INVESTIGATION

### 3.1 Data Source

- (a) Where the applicant does not have the authorization to access and update RESULTS data, the applicant will be required to take the steps as outlined on the RESULTS web page, in order to gain the appropriate access level. <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/his/results/accessx.htm>
- (b) The applicant will review backlog impeded and NSR data posted on the FFT website (<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/fft/nsr/impededstands.htm>) and obtain
  - i) any relevant opening/SU information held electronically by RESULTS
  - ii) any relevant information found in hardcopy opening files
  - iii) any district established protocol/guidelines for updating openings/SUs if available;
  - iv) any regional established protocol/guidelines
  - v) any provincially established protocol/guidelines, if available;
  - vi) the stocking standards for applicable TSA/TFLs;
  - vii) Transfer limits for seed lots (if required, see Section 3.2 (d));
  - viii) in consultation with the district and FFT staff, develop a specific treatment decision process for assessing SUs. An initial starting point for the creation of this process is to review the following documents, which can be found on the FFT website.
    - Ministry Policy Manual 2.22 – Backlog Management;
    - 1.0 Preamble, Internal Rate of Return Workbook; and the
    - Backlog Cost Calculator.

### 3.2 Report Detailing

- (a) The applicant will list the openings / SUs into five categories:
  - i) 'RESULTS FG': SUs which are free growing based on the existing stocking standards for the SU held in RESULTS and/or, SUs which are free growing based on the provincially approved default stocking standards for the dominant site series of the SU. Provincially approved default stocking standards are housed in RESULTS.
  - ii) "File FG": SUs which are free growing based on the existing stocking standards for that SU contained in the paper opening file.
  - iii) "Likely not FG – Brush": SUs that are not free growing, and may have brushing or spacing opportunities.
  - iv) "Likely not FG – Survey": SUs with insufficient information to determine status. A survey will be scheduled.
  - v) "Likely FG – Non-recent Survey": SUs that will have a low intensity survey to determine status (see section 3.3b)
- (b) The applicant will provide the following two spreadsheets to the District Manager and the FFT Regional representative.
  - i) Spreadsheet 1 must contain:
    - (1) The Opening and the SU
    - (2) The category from 3.2 (a)
    - (3) Area
    - (4) Action taken

- (5) Declaration/ Acknowledgement
  - (a) No – not free growing
    - NSR – an opening or SU will have NSR status until further treatment
    - Reclassification – an opening or SU will be reclassified for ecological reasons (i.e. WTP, Riparian reserve, NP, NCBR etc)
    - Economical – an opening or SU will be too costly to treat based on ROI
  - (b) Yes – meets free growing stocking
  - (c) Yes – meets Backlog Management Policy 2.22
- ii) Spreadsheet 2 must summarize the declaration / acknowledgment by
  - (1) Opening
  - (2) Whole opening declared/acknowledged? Yes or No
- (c) The applicant will list the detailed cost for updating information into RESULTS (see 5.0 RESULTS data entry).

### 3.3 Decision guidelines

- (a) Openings/SUs can be acknowledged free growing after completing an extensive review of the available information if:
  - i) There is recent field data within the opening file or within an attachment to RESULTS that shows that free growing stocking standards for the applicable district have been met and the stand is not comprised (from Silviculture label) of greater than 50% pine with an average diameter exceeding 12.5 cm. (see 3.4(a))
    - (1) Recent means a reasonable period of time since the data was collected
  - ii) The survey information existing on file shows the opening specific standards that were assigned to units in accordance with the criteria developed in consultation with the district, have been met.
- (b) If there is any doubt that a stand is still free growing based on the time elapsed since the field information was collected then
  - i) the recipient must conduct a low intensity survey on these areas to determine the correlation between older field data and current field conditions.
    - (1) if the low intensity survey shows that the stands still meet free growing status then this is sufficient rationale to acknowledge the remaining blocks as FG providing the survey information existing on file shows that the block' specific standards that were assigned to units in accordance to the criteria developed in consultation with the district have been met
      - (a) Documentation must be placed in RESULTS (PDF file)
    - (2) if the low intensity survey does not show that the stands still meet free growing status then there is not sufficient rationale to acknowledge all older field data. All older field data will need to have a field inspection scheduled.
      - (a) Documentation must be placed in RESULTS

### 3.4 FG declarations/acknowledgement

*(Foresters Act states that the practice of professional forestry means engaging in and reporting on the inventory, classification, ..., silviculture and rehabilitation of forests, forest lands, forest resources and forest ecosystems; therefore, declarations/acknowledgements will need to be made by a RPF)*

- (a) If a hard copy of a FG declaration is found on the opening file signed by a registered professional forester (RPF) as defined in the *Foresters Act* (S.B.C. 2003 Ch.19), a non-RPF may make the declaration in RESULTS. Exceptions are conditions listed in section 3.3(b)(i).

- (b) If a hard copy of a FG declaration is not found on file then a RPF must declare the opening FG in RESULTS and attach a PDF file.
  - i) If FG is declared, an adequate rationale must be given by an RPF to justify a FG declaration/acknowledgement and attached to RESULTS as a document.
    - (1) The rationale will be considered a "professional document" that the RPF has prepared or was prepared under his/her supervision.
      - (a) Given the professional nature of the document, the signing RPF may wish to conduct a field inspection.

## 4.0 FIELD REVIEW

- 4.1 Before field work is carried out the applicant must
  - (a) be given approval by the third party administrator to carry out this section of the standard (to assure funding availability).
- 4.2 For openings/SUs that are recommended for field review, based on information collected in 3.0 Investigation and recorded in RESULTS data entry, the applicant will:
  - (a) Inspect the openings to verify that the information contained with the opening and/or RESULTS is correct.
  - (b) Complete ground based assessments where required.
  - (c) Create a report per opening/SUs detailing:
    - i) What is held by RESULTS
    - ii) Outcomes of hardcopy file review
    - iii) Details of field review
    - iv) Recommendations for next step
  - (d) Update RESULTS database as necessary

## 5.0 RESULTS DATA ENTRY

- 5.1 For openings/SUs that are categorized as '**RESULTS FG**' (see 3.0 Investigation), the applicant will make the required milestone declaration/acknowledgement in RESULTS:
  - (a) Declarations/acknowledgements can be done directly through RESULTS or using extensible markup language (XML)
    - i) All FG declarations/acknowledgements must follow protocol as stated in 3.4 FG declarations
    - ii) The date of the survey should be the applicable reference date for the declaration / acknowledgement.
  - (b) The Net Area Reforested (NAR) must be rationalized with the best available information.
    - i) If the entire opening or a portion of the opening is declared / acknowledged FG then the Net Area Reforested will need to be rationalized against the total area less roads, landings, NP and reserves and other areas that can not be reforested.
    - ii) Update RESULTS Stocking Standards with minimum SU data (SU, NAR and BEC) where required
  - (c) Opening spatial is required when the Opening either does not have spatial in RESULTS or the existing Opening spatial in RESULTS is incorrect

- 5.2 For openings that are categorized as **'File FG'** (see 3.0 Investigation), the applicant will:
- (a) Load the data found in the file into RESULTS directly or use extensible markup language (XML).
    - i) Spatial data in geographic markup language (GML) format is required if a change in Forest Cover is uploaded into RESULTS
    - ii) No forest cover spatial data updates are required where no changes in inventory are uploaded into RESULTS or corrections (via edits) to the existing forest cover, however maps that are related to the data found in the opening file and entered into RESULTS must be placed into RESULTS as a PDF attachment.
  - (b) make the required milestone declaration/acknowledgement in RESULTS
    - i) All FG declarations/acknowledgements must follow protocol as stated in 3.4 FG declarations
    - ii) Update RESULTS Stocking Standards with minimum SU data (SU, NAR and BEC) where required
  - (c) The Net Area Reforested (NAR) must be rationalized with the best available information.
    - ii) If the entire opening or a portion of the opening is declared / acknowledged FG then the Net Area Reforested will need to be rationalized against the total area less roads, landings, NP and reserves and other areas that can not be reforested.
  - (c) Opening spatial is required when the Opening either does not have spatial in RESULTS or the existing Opening spatial in RESULTS is incorrect.
- 5.3 Openings that are **'likely not FG'**, based on all available info from 3.0 Investigation, the applicant will:
- (a) Prepare a PDF document containing pre-field review recommendations for further actions to be taken, and attach this to the openings/SUs in RESULTS. These recommendations may include a field inspection (see 4.0 Field Review).
  - (b) Schedule the next activity in RESULTS.
  - (c) The Net Area Reforested (NAR) must be rationalized with the best available information.
  - (d) Opening spatial is required when the Opening either does not have spatial in RESULTS or the existing Opening spatial in RESULTS is incorrect. Exceptions to this would be if the scheduled activity is required to determine Opening area.

## 6.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 6.1 All Work must be inspected by a person (the "Inspector") who is:
- (a) the Registered Professional Forester (RPF), or operates under the direction of the RPF, who will sign and professionally seal reports for the Work;
  - (b) experienced in silviculture record keeping;
  - (c) familiar with Return on Investment (ROI) and cost guidelines;
  - (d) familiar with appropriate Silviculture Treatment Recommendation options; and
  - (e) who did not undertake the review.
- 6.2 The Inspector must inspect the Work in accordance with an approved quality inspection Method in a timely manner to ensure the results of the work conform to the FFT Standards.
- 6.3 Unless otherwise specified by a District Manager, the methodology given in this Article shall form the basis for the approved quality inspection method.

- 6.4 The Inspector must carry out field and office inspections to intensity necessary to confirm the items in Sections 3.0 and 4.0 and must make a written record of the inspection. The primary focus of an inspection is to verify that the declarations/acknowledgements are made in accordance to the FFT standard.

#### **Inspection Method**

- 6.5 An Inspector must use one or more of the following inspection methods which form part of the approved inspection method and must document the rationale for the choice of methods in the inspection report:
- (a) an office review;
  - (b) a field reconnaissance;
- 6.6 If an Inspector conducts an office review, the Inspector must review all files and RESULTS data available for the Opening/SU to ensure they meet the requirements of the FFT Standards.
- 6.7 If an Inspector conducts a field reconnaissance, the Inspector must conduct a reconnaissance of a portion of the 10% field check and carry out an overview assessment of the determination.

#### **Satisfactory Work Quality Defined**

- 6.8 The Inspector must generally examine each Opening/SU to the extent necessary to determine that the review has been undertaken and reported in accordance with FFT Standards, and specifically may determine a review to be satisfactory when the Opening/SU has been placed in the category (3.2 (a) that meets the decision guidelines (3.3) based on the data source (3.1).

#### **Ministry Quality Assurance Check**

- 6.9 The Ministry of Forests and Range may conduct an Independent Quality Assurance Check.