

FREP Continuous Improvement Workshop 2008 Evaluation Summary

Date: February 26 and 27, 2008
 Location: Laurel Point Inn, Victoria
 Number of participants: 103
 Number of surveys completed: 70 (or 68% of attendees)

<p>Rating Scale: 1 – very unsatisfied 2 – unsatisfied 3 – neutral 4 – satisfied 5 – very satisfied</p>
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Presentations

How do you rate the presentations and discussions?

(Note: The average ratings and percentages below are based on the 70 completed surveys only. The number of responses received is indicated for each question separately, as some surveys were submitted incomplete.)

Day One – February 26, 2008

Changed Facilitation Format	
Average rating	4.3
Number of responses received	63 (or 90% of surveys received)
Chief Forester's Award	
Average rating	3.8
Number of responses received	64 (or 91% of surveys received)
1. District Feedback	
Average rating	3.9
Number of responses received	65 (or 93% of surveys received)
2A. Biodiversity	
Average rating	4.1
Number of responses received	70 (or 100% of surveys received)
2B. Resource Features	
Average rating	4.0
Number of responses received	67 (or 96% of surveys received)
2C. Cultural Heritage	
Average rating	4.2
Number of responses received	68 (or 97% of surveys received)
2D. Riparian and Fish Passage	
Average rating	4.3
Number of responses received	70 (or 100% of surveys received)
2E. Wildlife	
Average rating	4.2
Number of responses received	69 (or 99% of surveys received)
2F. Visual Quality	
Average rating	4.1
Number of responses received	70 (or 100% of surveys received)
2G. Soils	
Average rating	3.9
Number of responses received	68 (or 97% of surveys received)
3. Range	
Average rating	3.8
Number of responses received	65 (or 93% of surveys received)

2008 Photo Contest	
Average rating	4.5
Number of responses received	61 (or 87% of surveys received)
Digital Photography Presentation	
Average rating	3.8
Number of responses received	58 (or 83% of surveys received)
Loon Tale Challenge	
Average rating	4.7
Number of responses received	58 (or 83% of surveys received)
Music – FREPstock	
Average rating	4.5
Number of responses received	57 (or 81% of surveys received)

Day Two – February 27, 2008

4. FREP IMS Overview	
Average rating	3.9
Number of responses received	62 (or 89% of surveys received)
2H. Water Quality	
Average rating	4.2
Number of responses received	62 (or 89% of surveys received)
2I. Timber	
Average rating	4.1
Number of responses received	62 (or 89% of surveys received)
5. Quality Management	
Average rating	3.9
Number of responses received	59 (or 84% of surveys received)
6. Communication	
Average rating	4.1
Number of responses received	58 (or 83% of surveys received)
10. Training	
Average rating	4.2
Number of responses received	54 (or 77% of surveys received)
7. Fish Sensitive Watersheds	
Average rating	4.1
Number of responses received	54 (or 77% of surveys received)
8. Invasive Plants	
Average rating	4.1
Number of responses received	54 (or 77% of surveys received)
9. Field Process Manual (FREP and GIS)	
Average rating	4.4
Number of responses received	52 (or 74% of surveys received)
10. FRPA Administrative Evaluations	
Average rating	4.2
Number of responses received	25 (or 36% of surveys received)

Presentations (continued)

Comments and suggestions:

What Worked
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Feedback: Good discussion. • Biodiversity: Very informative. • Wildlife: Good. • Visual Quality: Good. • FREP IMS Overview: Good, brief, succinct. • Music: Excellent.
What Didn't Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training: Needed more time. • Cultural Heritage: Don't ignore the timer. Could use more time. • Communication: More. Too long to do presentations. A bit long, especially before lunch. • Chief Forester's Award: Why did Nadina get the award? • District Feedback: Groups too large. Needs a facilitator. • Riparian and Fish Passage: Needed better time management. • Range: Needs a "PowerPoint 101" course – incomplete sentences in presentation. • Resource Features: Too long. Speakers rather mono-toned.
Improvements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music: It was very difficult to talk with the music playing; bar-like atmosphere. Don't take the music out of the agenda, but maybe be more sensitive to everyone in the room. • Resource Features: More linkage between presentations is needed. • GIS is a tough one to present. Great to know a manual has been created and is available, but it is of limited use to the majority of us non-ARC users (pertinence).

Workshop Agenda

How do you rate the workshop agenda?

Workshop Agenda	
Average rating	4.2
Number of responses received	65 (or 93% of surveys received)

Comments and suggestions:

What Worked
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much better than the 2007 CI Session. Liked the use of many facilitators. • Very well done. Very useful. Very tight, but it went off on time. Great. • It was a very busy workshop with many very interesting presentations. Nice variety of topics. Enjoyed hearing about the protocols being developed. Really liked the breakout sessions instead of the district reports. "Bums in Seats" was a good idea. • Caught most of the important stuff. Pre-reading materials were good.
What Didn't Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agenda was too full. Too many time constraints – presenters didn't have enough time or were rushed, resulting in unclear information and results. The talks were either too broad (not focused enough) or too rushed for the time available. • Too much information in the agenda – time, presenter, topic and maybe one presentation objective would be adequate. No time for questions leaves one feeling a bit run over with information. • More time necessary for breakouts and summaries (2x). Breakout sessions either need to be longer or a different format to ensure everyone gets their say. Everything was great except for the district breakouts – somehow it didn't produce as much "meat" as last year. • Didn't like the printed version of the agenda – would have preferred one page per day. • Even pages on the agenda were printed upside down. • Got more slack on the second day about keeping on time. Please keep to the agenda (timing).

Workshop Agenda (continued)

Improvements

- Format of agenda page could be portrait rather than landscape.
- Need to leave more time and opportunity for questions following the Resource Value presentations (8x) and district feedback sessions. Leave 10 minutes for questions at the end of each section to stimulate discussion and feedback. Fewer speakers and more time for questions per speaker. Maybe do a Q&A session with a table of RVTL's each day – like a TV talk show. Or one day. For key values. Allot time for Q&A, rather than relying on presenters to save enough time at the end of their talk for questions. Either ask people to speak less or provide more time.
- Could there be time for a general question period where districts could send in ahead of time 1 or 2 questions that the team leads could answer at the CI session? Encourage as much discussion as possible. Maybe include some posed questions by the presenters to initiate a discussion.
- Need to keep speakers from the breakout groups to a "reporting out" time limit, or a facilitator (2x) should keep them moving along on time.
- Need to plan for more networking time instead of cutting into it.
- Strategic plan – any changes? Even if there aren't, we should refresh our "vision".
- Maybe include some "optional" topics and/or presentations in the agenda that can be dropped if people want more time for questions and discussions, or presenters run late. It would be nice to include these optional talks if time permits, but they are not vital to the overall agenda (extra padding).
- Comprehensive agenda, but it needs maybe 5 minutes more time allotted for each of the Resource Value presentations. Could include some information about effects on FREP fieldwork (ie. new WorkSafe requirements about bush travel and work).
- More breakout sessions, maybe 4 in total. One more facilitated breakout would have been nice. Maybe have one or two general topic issues for discussion from the entire group, building on the feedback from the breakout groups.
- At least part of the meeting could also include licensees, other ministries, the general public, and First Nations, etc. Would it be worthwhile to include some licensees to keep them aware of our plans?
- Quality Management survey could have been e-mailed.

Workshop Materials

How do you rate the quality of the workshop materials?

Binder and Printed Materials	
Average rating	4.1
Number of responses received	65 (or 93% of surveys received)
Seating Arrangement	
Average rating	3.9
Number of responses received	66 (or 94% of surveys received)
Audio-Visual Equipment	
Average rating	4.3
Number of responses received	67 (or 96% of surveys received)

Comments and suggestions:

What Worked

- Tough to improve upon. Excellent work by all involved. Liked the two screen/projector setup (6x).
- Good job (2x). Good job Thomas. The updates from each leader were great.
- The organizers were responsive to the audio-visual challenges on Tuesday morning by moving a laptop to the front of the room.
- Seating was fine, but doesn't leave much room for expansion. The posters were excellent, but not a lot of time was available for viewing them.
- Liked the pre-reading package – you could even give us more pre-reading materials.
- Despite having no contents or index, the binder was great.

Workshop Materials (continued)

What Didn't Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abstracts seemed a little too short. They should focus on the key messages or results, without as much information about methods. • The pre-reading materials were printed by most attendees. Two copies of the majority of information is unnecessary and a waste of paper (4x). Duplication of the pre-reading materials and the contents of the binders. The binder is not really necessary – the same information is available electronically. Perhaps a waste of resources? We were asked to print out a lot of the material, and then it was provided in the binder. Never used the binder (2x). • Audio-visual: speaker needs a monitor to view the screen, and an easier remote mechanism to move through their slides. • Need better chairs to sit on. The room was a little cramped (2x) and the seating was too crowded, therefore screens had to be viewed directly. From the center of the room, you couldn't see the full screen view for presentations (only the backs of people's heads). Maybe add another screen for this. Some side tables were at an awkward angle for viewing the screens. • Binder needs to be improved with more information. Alternatively, perhaps an FTP site with all of the PowerPoint presentations can be made available. • The microphone seemed a little quieter on the second day. • Was missing one presentation page from my binder – Karst abstract (section 2).
Improvements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nametags of every participant should include what district/region, branch/agency or ministry the people are from (5x). • Rectangular tables in rows might be better to allow audience to face screens more easily. • Remind presenters not to use slides that are either too busy or too dark. • Would like to have copies of the presentation slides made available online or placed on the FREP website (4x) – but glad it wasn't printed out. Would like access to the preliminary results from all of the evaluations – PowerPoint slides would be fine. • The binder needs either a table of contents or an index (2x) to summarize what was in each tab, and more organization overall. Maybe eliminate it entirely and just provide the pre-reading materials (2x). Perhaps leave out the pre-reading materials from the binder (and only provide back-up copies at the meeting), or tell participants beforehand that the documents will also be distributed at the session to reduce unnecessary printing (3x). • The summaries were good, but some information was not included. • More swag – can be a "green" item. • Although the desire to reduce paper is appreciated, some might prefer the side handouts to be included in the binder to capture more information and allow additional space for taking notes. • Having the laptop on the podium for presenters would be helpful (3x) so the speakers can preview their slides and/or presentation notes. • Ensure pages in the binder are double-sided properly (ie. not backwards) to allow easier viewing. • Copies of the posters – can we be e-mailed these?

Facilities and Meeting Logistics

How would you rate the following components?

Meeting Facilities	
Average rating	4.2
Number of responses received	67 (or 96% of surveys received)
Service	
Average rating	4.2
Number of responses received	67 (or 96% of surveys received)
Food	
Average rating	3.5
Number of responses received	68 (or 97% of surveys received)

Facilities and Meeting Logistics (continued)

Length of Breaks	
Average rating	4.2
Number of responses received	66 (or 94% of surveys received)
Meeting Location (Victoria)	
Average rating	4.4
Number of responses received	64 (or 91% of surveys received)

Comments and suggestions:

What Worked
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although you will receive comments about the evening meal, I support the approach – it is probably cheaper, is keeping with less of a footprint, and no one needs to overeat these days (a health issue). • Good job by the organizing committee. Very well done. You outdid yourselves. • The meeting location was excellent. The breakout session and dining room is beautiful. For those of us from the chilly north, Victoria is a much needed break. Victoria is a bit far to travel, but it is nice. • The food was good (snacks, etc.) but there wasn't enough dinner. The vegetarian options were pretty good – better than other venues I've been at. Less food than last year, but still adequate. • Great time control using the bell system (2x).
What Didn't Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The room was a bit stuffy and warm. The room layout was challenging due to its dimensions – it would be better if the room's shape was squarer. The room is getting too small for our group. • May be time to change venues (2x). This facility is very noisy and the acoustics are poor. Need a better room layout for speakers to view their slides while presenting. Look at other facilities in the Victoria area instead. It is unfortunate that renovations were going on at the hotel (ie. noise). Renovating was an issue, and the facilities were a little costly. • More food at supper (5x). Dinner was inadequate. Huge amounts are not necessary, but something more hearty. The food tasted good (8x), but it was cold and the portions were too small (10x). Dinner needs to be more realistic – it was too fancy and too small. Dessert was a raw pear with a fork. The food wasn't so good this year (3x). Preferred the buffet style of dinner last year (3x). The quality was good, but I was still hungry. Many guys did not find dinner to be of sufficient quantity. Dessert at lunch would have been nice, or more food. Don't offer muffins in the morning if that's also the coffee break snack (or tell people this, so those who need a bigger breakfast are covered). • My meal was great (vegetarian) but I had to wait 15 minutes for it. I was informed that special meals were all pre-booked a few days before the session, but I didn't see anything about this. • Length of breaks: too much material, not enough network time. Breaks are an important opportunity to network and meet others – they were short to begin with and shouldn't be shortened further. Breaks were a bit short; however, we needed to cover agenda topics. • For the breakout groups, we need at 10 metre separation between tables, or partly enclosed meeting spaces, so that there is no overwhelming sound competition.
Improvements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More healthy snack alternatives (3x) during the coffee breaks would be nice – fruit, nuts, yogurt. • It is difficult to find a location within the province that is easy for all districts to reach – you may want to reconsider Richmond (2x) in the future – it's one less flight for many people, and reducing the number of short-haul flights from/to Vancouver means less CO₂ emissions. Perhaps we can change the meeting locale to suit other participants (ie. Prince George, Kamloops, Williams Lake, Nelson). • Everything was good except the food. We need to look at holding the workshop at a place with cheaper and better food and drinks.

Overall Impressions

1. Did this workshop meet your expectations?

Expectations Met	
Average rating	4.5
Number of responses received	68 (or 97% of surveys received)

Comments and suggestions:

What Worked
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciated the changes made in consideration of the previous session's comments. Looking forward to next year. Keep it up. Great job – lots of significant improvements over last year. Thank you. • At one of the breakout sessions, we had the value team leader there to discuss the protocol – it was great. Breakout sessions are far better than district updates (2x). Lots more information shared and discussed. It's a better use of time over 2 days when people have group discussions. • Well done – good agenda. Kudos to the planning group. • Better than ever. The breakout groups on the first day were especially effective. Also, the short bios for all of the speakers placed a very personal touch on the group. Maybe all attendees should provide them. • I learned so much in these 2 days. This workshop has far exceeded my expectations.
What Didn't Work
(no comments received for this section)
Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could do some district networking on what is working in the districts, and what's new or innovative. • Kind of rushed – a lot crammed into 2 days. How about 3 easier days? • More drinks (juice) during the coffee breaks. Thought dinner was going to be a bit bigger. More veggie options – healthier choices for everyone. • Didn't hear what the future holds for FREP (ie. money/funding). Would like to know if some values will be scaled back as more come on board. • Please post all of the presentations from the meeting up on the website. • Allow more time for questions during the breakout sessions and summaries.

2. Was the time you invested participating in this workshop worthwhile?

Time Invested Was Worthwhile	
Average rating	4.6
Number of responses received	68 (or 97% of surveys received)

Comments and suggestions:

What Worked
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I always learn new things and come up with new ideas of how to do the business of FREP better. I like that the Resource Value leads were there, as well as research people and senior management. Nice to know the results and where it's going. Hoping to present something next year. • The session was very useful this year. Absolutely worthwhile – I learn something every time. • Very worthwhile – I talked to experts and practitioners, and learned lots. Definitely worthwhile. • First timer – well worth it. Excellent opportunity to learn and network. Very much worthwhile to have the face-to-face interaction. It's always worthwhile to know what is going on. Very worthwhile – I just hope that I am kept on as an auxiliary so that I can continue working on FREP. • Glad to have been on the CI organizing team. It was busy and time consuming, but all worthwhile. • Very beneficial to learn from the other districts and to gather feedback. Great opportunity.
What Didn't Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only the seating arrangement was a problem – but that is always an issue no matter where we go. The seating was a little awkward for people with their backs to the front.

Overall Impressions (continued)

Improvement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the binder materials be made available 1-2 weeks before the session for keeners who want to read up on their special interests? • Two comments for improvement: 1) facilitators are necessary for group breakouts; 2) more time needed for questions to the team leaders. 	

3. How would you rate the meeting overall?

Overall Rating	
Average rating	4.5
Number of responses received	68 (or 97% of surveys received)

Comments and suggestions:

What Worked
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good job (2x) with the changes and breaking up the team leader updates. Much better than last year. • Very good – great opportunity to network. Fun (3x), upbeat and positive session. Great overall learning environment. Keep up the great work. The CI workshop is the best way so far of creating and sustaining FREP team interest, continuity and loyalty. • This meeting was very well organized (3x), as usual. Keeping people on time (2x) was much appreciated (thanks Joan). The serious approach to time and focus helps keep the meeting from becoming bogged down. Small activities (ie. "Bums in Seats" and the "Coin Toss") were good elements to add. • Liked the breakout groups and the discussions that went along with them.
What Didn't Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facility was noisy. • Keep presenters to their designated time limits – be harsh, if necessary. Cut off speakers when they run overtime.
Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be nice to see industry and other ministries represented in the room. • Need more regional FREP presence. There seems to be a lot of district and branch staff, and technical experts present and providing input. But where are the regional stewardship personnel and what is their role in FREP?

4. Given our commitment to be carbon neutral and our continuous effort to be environmentally friendly, do you think we should meet face-to-face again in 2009?

Should We Meet Again	
Percentage of Yes votes	87%
Percentage of No votes	4%
Number of responses received	64 (or 91% of surveys received)

Comments and Suggestions – Other Options To Consider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible change of venues to reduce travel time and expense. We should meet on the mainland where most FREP people live (although Victoria is great). Consider hosting the conference in the interior of the province (5x) – Kamloops, perhaps? Or another central location that has an airport. Vancouver is also good (2x), or another venue in Victoria. Richmond is more convenient for most participants. Have FREP headquarters staff visit the regions – branch tour bus. A provincial session is very useful. • Keep meeting until everyone is comfortable with the current values being assessed and the ones in pilot stage are in full swing, then look at scaling back after the 2009/10 fiscal year end. • Not necessary, unless some key issues need to be discussed prior to the field season, so many protocols become mandatory. It is only useful if there is more dialogue involved, not just presentations.

Overall Impressions (continued)

- Video conferencing (3x) and e-mail updates are other options to explore.
- It's only an annual workshop – our carbon footprint is not that significant to consider cancelling the session. Forget the carbon – "in person" meetings are far more valuable. Please continue, knowing that the benefits outweigh the pitfalls. Find other ways to be "greener" without sacrificing the huge benefit of meeting face-to-face. These are the very best workshops many of us have ever had. Huge benefits.
- It makes sense to have everyone in one room to learn, grow and improve. It's very important to meet face-to face (9x) once a year – lots more interaction, great networking opportunities and team building, personal relationships and linkages. Need to get updates and discuss relevant issues. This is the best method to pass information along. You don't get the same level of interaction via a conference call or weblink, and it allows us to share information and experiences better than by other methods. This is the only true team that I'm involved with (or know of) in the current MFR.
- Hold more small regional-based meetings (4x) as the district staff levels increase, and a bi-annual meeting as the program size grows. Not sure how much "greener" this option would be in the end (2x), especially if more people attend the regional meetings. Maybe split the conference into two different groups – not north/south, but maybe east/west. Or coordinate the session with other FREP training or meetings that participants have scheduled in Victoria.
- How about every 18-24 months – something less obtrusive. Have a longer bi-annual conference, perhaps with virtual mini-conferences in between. Offer video conferencing to those staff who cannot make it to the CI session in person, so they can conveniently join or leave the conference as needed.
- Maybe we could do some sort of LearnLinc session every other year. Or have speakers videotape their presentations, compile the videos onto one media source, and send these out to the districts. Have questions answered by conference calls – this group is too large for video conferencing.
- Challenge or encourage staff to begin carpooling from districts, and/or between the venue and airport, or around town. Purchase carbon offsets. If we want to be carbon neutral, we can't meet face-to-face. No meeting means a loss of continuity, networking, team building and sharing of experiences.

5. Do you have any additional general comments or suggestions for improvement?

What Worked

- Good session. Diversity of the agenda is better than the previous year's session.
- This is one of the best sessions going. It is well run, helpful, and provides opportunities to network with other FREP staff. It is evident that a lot of work went into planning this session – thanks very much.
- A huge effort – many thanks to the organizing committee. Excellent job. Excellent facilitation and organization. Loved the evening events. Awesome work, team.
- Thank you for changing the district report out (feedback) forum. It is greatly improved over the previous year's district reports (too many echoes). This new format has better information sharing and is a better use of time. Really liked the new format breakout sessions, particularly having districts submit 3 issues, consolidate these, and separate into groups – then present the results to everyone else at the workshop. Really helped to diversify the format of the meeting and keep it interesting. The format still included the districts, yet kept the time efficiency. I also like that the district reps were involved in the meeting preparation and proceedings.
- Good job staying on time and on track with most of the presentations. Joan did a brilliant job of keeping most people on schedule. Great work by the planning committee.
- Overall, this session was an excellent value. Even the music was good. I loved the "Bums in Seats" and the "Coin Toss", although a few more coin flips to keep us moving would have been good.
- Keep up the fun level – it makes learning a little easier.

What Didn't Work

- Don't duplicate handouts (pre-reading materials and binder contents).
- There were a few too many MC's. Screens were not fully visible to all tables (they were too low).
- More comfortable seating is needed.
- District reporting: many topics were not discussed, or the reasons for things were not explored. Missed listening to the district reps this year. The format should be revised for 2009.

Overall Impressions (continued)

Improvements

- Not enough time for questions during the conference – build more time into the agenda for this. Need to start clapping or make noise when people go too long with their presentations, as a signal to complete their talk. The brief bios were good before each presentation.
- Make the FREP IO song available on the FTP server.
- Save paper and expenses by not printing the binders. Tighten up paper consumption.
- Always include the PowerPoint presentations as a PDF file on the FREP website.
- The minister or Tim Sheldan needs to tell those managers who are not buying into FREP that they best do so. This is a core business requirement and an important part of the results based area.
- Training sessions: give out nice certificates for trainees (like the first year).
- Needed a chairperson or facilitator for the breakout sessions. Give some direction for report outs of breakout sessions (ie. 3 key messages) and make sure the groups are reminded to create their key messages 5 minutes before the time limit is up. Need to have smaller breakout groups or use a different approach in breakout time. The group discussions were often driven by the most vocal people, and there was sometimes limited chance for the quiet people to speak up. Use L.I.D. (Learn Information Sharing Dialogue). Some suggest that 33% of the agenda should be in each category.
- This agenda may have been too heavy on information sharing. More time on learning and dialogue (learning through dialogue) would be beneficial to ensure that the audience's ideas are included in the CI process. More breakout sessions. Move to a 3-day session format.
- Enjoyed the breakout session, but I have a suggestion – why not try using an L.O. tool, such as the interview matrix? This tool would allow everyone in the groups to participate.
- Perhaps having rotating presentations in the breakout sessions that people can add to on their own initiative (ie. choose their interest area).
- If we are to go completely green, maybe try webcast or webcam meeting sessions in the future.
- Need more time on the training and scoring of how we are doing our field work, as this will help us to improve out in the field. Meetings for resource value teams (or just the leaders?) are needed.
- More networking time is needed during coffee breaks. Less PowerPoint presentations. Should have the breakouts in the afternoon, when everyone is feeling low energy.
- It helps to have an appropriate expert/mentor/trainer at each appropriate table topic during the breakout sessions to be sure everyone gets the context and background behind the flipchart notes (and to keep the group on track, given the limited amount of time).
- Include dessert with the meals. Tell the chief to add more potatoes and cookies. Consumable "swag" is good – perhaps go with fair trade/organic chocolate? Local companies do provide this.
- If people have extra data sticks, send them to Victoria to have the binder information uploaded onto the stick, so you don't have to print out the binders for next year.
- A few more (maybe 2 or 3) breaks would help to digest information easier.