

NEWS RELEASE



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ABC FP Responds to Forest Stewardship Plan Report

(Vancouver, BC) As the provincial regulator of forest professionals, the Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABC FP) supports long-term sustainable forestry and is mandated with supporting its members to provide excellence in forest stewardship. A recent Forest Practices Board (FPB) report analyzed Forest Stewardship Plans (FSPs), pointing out deficiencies and making recommendations on how they can be strengthened.

As the report noted, FSPs — operational roadmaps that publicly outline plans governing forest activities and which must be approved by government — are significant because they allow government to hold industry accountable for their actions on forest lands. The report, however, references some of the early FSPs written in BC and points out weaknesses in results and strategies that it contends were not measurable or verifiable. As early FSPs are about to be renewed or resubmitted again, the FPB report provides important information and a solid basis from which to make improvements. And while the ABC FP recognizes work is required, there were many results or strategies contained in the FSPs from the first 10 years that were measurable and/or verifiable.

“While not everything in the forest environment is easily measured, the ability to verify the content contained in FSPs is crucial,” says Sharon Glover, CEO. “In an effort to maximize measurability of results, our members recently voted for a bylaw change that requires forest professionals to include measurable or verifiable results or strategies in new FSPs, along with a written rationale as to the methods used in measuring or verifying the result.”

The FPB has recommended the following to the ABC FP:

4) *The ABC FP should ensure that forest professionals, and their employers, are cognizant of the forest professionals’ independent responsibilities regarding:*

- *results, strategies and measures that are measurable or verifiable,*
- *results or strategies that are consistent to the extent practicable with government’s objectives, and*
- *measures that are reasonable and appropriate.*

The Board requests that the Association of BC Forest Professionals advise it of progress made and timelines for implementing recommendation #4 by November 30, 2015.

ABC FP Response to FPB Recommendation Request #4

The ABC FP has reviewed the recommendation by the FPB and will undertake the following tasks in support of achieving the recommendation #4.

1. The ABC FP will enhance the recently established “*Measure or Verify*” professional practice standard by communicating the content of the standard with forest professionals. The standard was not in place for previous versions of FSPs that were completed and will inform forest professionals involved in FSPs after that date.
2. The ABC FP will communicate the content of other professional practice guidance documents that support the FSP process including “Professional Quality Rationales and Commitments,” “Supervision of

Professional Work” and the document series on “Non Statutory Expectations.” This guidance to forest professionals can play a significant role in supporting the FSP documents including improving forest practice and communicating forest practice to the public.

3. The ABCFP will produce a communication advisory for employers regarding the independent role and responsibility of a forest professional in the FSP process, including their role related to a) results, strategies and measures that are measurable or verifiable, b) results or strategies that are consistent to the extent practicable with government’s objectives, and c) measures that are reasonable and appropriate.
4. The ABCFP will meet with other regulators and stakeholders regarding the profession’s role in communicating and improving the use of the FSP.

The ABCFP will report to the FPB by November 30th, 2015.

*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.*

For more information: www.abcfp.ca

For a more detailed backgrounder on FSPs or to schedule an interview:

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