

SIX YEARS OLD AND STILL GOING STRONG

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FREP

NEWSLETTER 12

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This fall, the Forest and Range Evaluation Program (FREP) celebrates its fourth year of province-wide field monitoring for three core values and its sixth year overall. In that time, FREP has emerged as a respected source of the science-based information needed for decision-making and continuous improvement of British Columbia's forest and range practices, policies, and legislation. With continued support from B.C.'s Chief Forester, FREP plays a key role in sustainable forest management in B.C. Resource Stewardship Monitoring for the stand-level biodiversity, fish/riparian and water quality resource values, along with multi-year monitoring of visual quality and soils now takes place every year. Protocols and monitoring checklists are being piloted for the cultural heritage, range/forage and wildlife resource values. Preliminary monitoring results from Forest Practices Code cutblocks (data collected over the first three years) are becoming available for stand-level biodiversity, riparian, and some other resource values. The Code data provides us with a valuable reference point for assessing practices under FRPA. In the future, resource stewardship monitoring will take place on FRPA cutblocks. The results are shared through our published FREP reports which are peer-reviewed by experts to ensure accuracy.



Figure 1. Forest and Range Evaluation Program sampled more than 1000 streams over the first 3 year of riparian monitoring

CONTENTS

Six Years Old and Still Going Strong	1
Program Highlights	2
E- Seminar Series.....	2
Chief Forester and ADM Operations Award for Excellence in RSM.....	2
2009 Continuous Improvement Workshop.....	2
2009 Performance Measures.....	2
Recent Publications	3
Quality Counts	3
Focus on a District	4

Recently, Jim Snetsinger, B.C.'s Chief Forester, published his first Chief Forester's Report on FREP in which he reflects on the progress of the program and the successes and challenges in forest and range practices that FREP has identified. Based on the monitoring results to date for three resource values—biodiversity, fish/riparian, and water quality, the Chief Forester provides his thoughts on important considerations for forest and range stewardship. By sharing the information, Mr. Snetsinger seeks to encourage a dialogue among professionals that will lead to continued improvements in practices and the success of professional reliance under FRPA. The Chief Forester's Report is available on the FREP website - http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/publications/chief_forester.htm

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

This section summarizes some highlights from the FREP over the past year.

E-SEMINAR SERIES

On **May 7, 2009** FREP held the first E-Seminar in a new series that will raise awareness of the program and issues relevant to various resource values. Geoff Moyse, Senior Solicitor responsible for the Aboriginal Law Group of the Legal Services Branch, Ministry of Attorney General, and Diane Goode, Manager of Litigation and Policy Analysis with the Aboriginal Affairs Branch, Ministry of Forests and Range, gave an informative talk about the influence of early legislation and case law on land rights and title in B.C. and government's duty to consult with First Nations. An estimated 100 people from 20 locations around the Province participated in the E-Seminar, 12 via video conference. A total of seven E-seminars have been held. For more information contact Alanya Smith (Alanya.C.Smith@gov.bc.ca)

CHIEF FORESTER AND ADM OPERATIONS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN RSM

Ten Forest Districts were nominated for the 2008 Chief Forester and ADM Operations Award for Excellence in resource stewardship monitoring. The award, in its third year, is presented to the district that achieves the highest level of contribution and excellence during the Forest and Range Evaluation Program's resource stewardship monitoring field season. The winning district is given the original yellow cedar award, created by an Ahousaht Nation carver, at an event in their district. The winner of the 2008 award was the Vanderhoof Forest District.



Photo: Vanderhoof FD, joined Haida Gwaii (2007) and Nadina (2006) as recipients of the Chief Forester and ADM Operations Award for Excellence in RSM

2009 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT WORKSHOP

In **February 2009**, the Forest and Range Evaluation Program's 4th Annual Continuous Improvement Workshop, a two-day event held via video conferencing, bridged staff from across the Province. FREP uses the learning opportunities created through this workshop to find ways to improve over time – an approach that has earned FREP high recognition from the National Quality Institute. FREP, recognizing how unique the experience was for the Forest Service, captured key lessons learned to share with others. It is hard to ignore the benefits of using video conferencing technology to reduce expenditures and environmental impacts. FREP spent \$10,900, saving \$53,900, compared to last year's face-to-face meeting in Victoria. The estimated carbon consumption for this year's workshop was 5,520.3kg compared to 7,303.5kg estimated last year.

2009 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

FREP performance measures are important for a couple of reasons. First, districts are required to meet performance measures and therefore FREP becomes part of staff E-Performance planning, supported by the District Management Teams. Secondly, performance measures help FREP to evaluate the progress that is being made over time. FREP internal performance measures can be viewed on the [Sharepoint site](#). Currently, the Strategic Policy and Planning Branch, Ministry of Forests and Range is reviewing them to determine if any should be part of the corporate performance measures in the future.



Photo: Collecting data for Biodiversity

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

All FREP Publications can be found at <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/publications/index.htm>

- ❖ FREP Year in Review (2009)
- ❖ Chief Forester's 2009 FREP Report: Considerations for Forest and Range Stewardship Under the Forest and Range Practices Act
- ❖ FREP Technical Guidance: A Guide to Past Projects, Current Initiatives, and Future Visions for FREP Spatial Data
- ❖ Report: Monitoring Forest and Rangeland Species and Ecological Processes to Anticipate and Respond to Climate Change in British Columbia



Photo: On a block in the Haida Gwaii Forest District

QUALITY COUNTS

Prepared by: Thomas Chen

In November 2006, FREP staff and partners within government gathered in Victoria to craft the FREP Five Year Strategic Plan. Since then the Strategic Plan and its six themes have been guiding the direction of the program. During this session, Vision and Mission Statements for FREP were also crafted. A foundation of any organization is to have a Vision and Mission that are endorsed by staff, sponsors, partners and stakeholders alike, and demonstrating crucial support for the program. From the perspective of quality management, it is especially critical as it helps to align all program activities to a common purpose.

In the day-to-day work of FREP, the Vision and Mission help us identify our priorities and stick to them. In the language of the Strategic Plan this is called *Clarity of Priorities*. Whether collecting data in the field, entering data in IMS, balancing budgets, communicating to First Nations and licensees, or sharing best practices with other professionals, the focus on clear priorities

helps ensure that we are all working together to achieve FREP's goals and sustainability of the 11 FRPA resource values.

For the past three years we asked everyone involved in FREP for feedback including their understanding and support for the Vision and Mission statements, and how they are linked to Ministry priorities using the Quality Assessment Survey (See Figures 1 & 2). From the responses, we have learned what worked, what didn't work, and suggestions for improvement. This information is valuable to the continuous improvement of the program. We summarize the results from the survey and prioritize the action items into an improvement plan. In the improvement plan, projects are scoped with appropriate deadlines and responsible team leads assigned. The 2009/10 FREP improvement plan will be available soon on the Program management tab on the FREP website - http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/site_files/pmgmt/FREP%202009-10%20Improvement%20Plan.pdf

Figure 1: I believe in the FREP Vision and Mission statements:

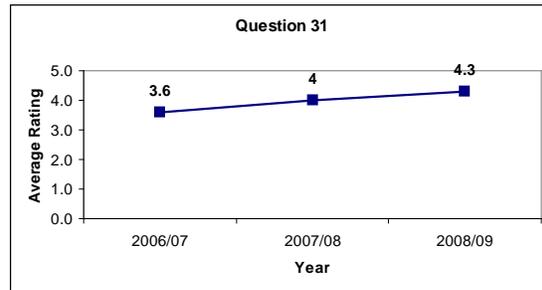
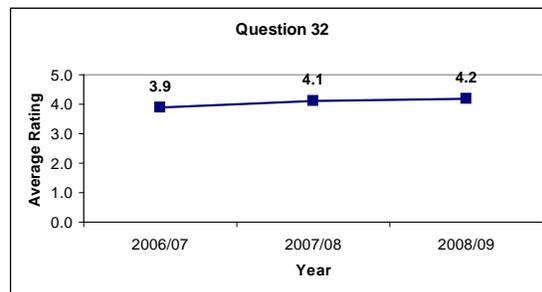


Figure 2: I understand how the FREP Vision and mission statements contribute to the achievement of MFR's overall mission:



Note: Rating scale 1 to 5, 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

The upward and positive trends show how FREP staff and partners are supportive of FREP's Vision and Mission. More importantly, people recognized that the FREP Vision and Mission will ultimately contribute to the achievement of the Stewardship mandate and the Ministry's overall mission.

As always, we welcome your thoughts. What are some things FREP can do to ensure that there is *clarity of priorities* in the program? How are we doing now?

FOCUS ON A DISTRICT

Every district contains dedicated staff who make FREP successful every year.

HEADWATERS FOREST DISTRICT

The stewardship program is alive and well in Headwaters Forest District. Staff have their management team's support to improve forest management practices through their participation in RSM. The daily efforts and enthusiasm of FREPers, Norma Stromberg-Jones and Heather MacLennan, is exemplary –leading to Heather's affectionate nickname 'Mother FREP'. Data collected by Headwaters is among the highest in quality in the Province.

The Headwaters stewardship staff work together, in spite of being in offices three hours apart, to coordinate field sampling and district communications. For 2008, they synchronized their annual leave to maximize the field season. They strategically work with their blocks to be most efficient and reduce overall travel. This district has forged ahead in preparing and presenting district RSM results for stand-level biodiversity, riparian and visuals to licensees, the district management team and district staff. Stewardship staff pre-schedule the field season and invite other staff and clients to get involved.



Photo: Steve Gillette and Heather checking maps above Kinbasket Lake

Headwaters district is committed to continuous improvement and data quality. They endeavour to collect a few field samples early in each field season to help recall the protocols and be better prepared at refresher training. The district has chosen to take on one voluntary pilot per season so that when that value becomes mandatory they are already initiated to the value and can better understand how it fits into forest and range management. This approach also helps ensure greater success and better data quality when the protocol becomes mandatory.



Photo: Norma sings the 'Thunder River' song for the Loon Tale Challenge

Norma and Heather regularly consult with district licensees to confirm what their communications needs are in order to best use their time and provide the most value. They have developed excellent presentation materials that the FREP communications team 'borrowed' to build the Communications Toolkit presentation. Their communications consist not only of the objectives and results of FREP monitoring but also of the value of this information to forest and range professionals and decision makers.



Photo: Heather searching for invertebrates

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the FREP Website

<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/>

Contact Peter Bradford (Peter.Bradford@gov.bc.ca)

If you have ideas for the FREP Newsletter contact

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