

The FREP Vision:

Sustainability of Forest and Range Resources through Science and Stewardship

The FREP Mission:

To be a world leader in resource stewardship monitoring and effectiveness evaluations; providing the science-based information needed for decision-making and continuous improvement of British Columbia's forest and range practices, policies and legislation.

2009/2010 Year In Review

INTRODUCTION

FREP's role is to answer evaluative questions about the sustainability of the 11 forest and range resource values identified under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* (FRPA). These questions (see <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/about/questions.htm>) serve as the starting point for the development of appropriate monitoring indicators and protocols. Used together, indicators and protocols provide direct or indirect information on the state of resource values and help quantify baselines and trends. The following section provides a description FREP's resource stewardship monitoring and evaluation initiatives and some of the results obtained to date.

In the fiscal year 2009/10, Resource Stewardship Monitoring for stand-level biodiversity, water quality and the fish/riparian resource values took place in all 29 forest districts. Preliminary monitoring results are available for these and other resource values, including visual quality, cultural heritage, forage and the soils resource values.

Analyses of monitoring results identify resource value trends, issues, and approaches to improve resource management practices on the ground. Sharing information on initial findings is vital to support resource professionals in developing forest stewardship plans and to realize continuous improvement of forest and range practices. For detailed information about FREP, the status of each resource value, or to view the protocols and reports, go to: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/indicators/table.htm>.



Resiliency in the forest by Robert Barta, Central Cariboo Forest District

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Highlights for 2009/2010 include:

- resource stewardship monitoring for stand-level biodiversity, water quality and fish/riparian resource values in all 29 forest districts (228 riparian checklists, 215 water quality checklists and 284 stand-level biodiversity checklists)
- implementing and (or) piloting monitoring for soils (29 evaluations in six districts), visual quality (41 evaluations in seven districts), cultural heritage (34 assessments in six districts), stand development monitoring (82 site assessments in eight districts) and forage
- continuing development and testing of monitoring procedures for several wildlife species including badger, mountain goat, northern goshawk and tailed frog

In 2009/2010, FREP continued to pursue and sustain program certification through the National Quality Institute's Progressive Excellence Program. FREP achieved the Silver Award in the Canada Awards for Excellence in 2008 from the National Quality Institute, and has been promoting a quality culture to Canadian government, non-profit and business organizations.

In February 2009, the representatives from Ministry of Forests and Range and Ministry of Environment, including headquarters, region, and district staff held the sixth annual continuous improvement session. The feedback from the session helped inform the update of FREP's strategic plan and annual work plan.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2009/2010

RSM Implementation

Stand-level Biodiversity

Stand-level biodiversity monitoring during the 2009 field season took place on 284 cutblocks. These blocks were harvested between 2005 and 2008 and largely under the legislative requirements set out in the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act*. Over the last several years of biodiversity monitoring, over 1,639 sites have been assessed and numerous extension notes and other extension products have been produced see: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/index.htm>.

Fish/Riparian

In the four years of operational riparian assessments, over 1,400 streams have been assessed province-wide. Streams (all classes 1-6) were randomly sampled from a population of cutblocks harvested under the legislative requirements set out in the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act*. The majority of those sampled fell into the smaller classes (S4-S6), which is consistent

with the proportional abundance of these streams found in nature. ¹For a description of the stream classes, see the Riparian Management Monitoring Protocol: http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/site_files/indicators/Indicators-Riparian-Protocol-2009.pdf.

Cultural Heritage Resources (CHR)

During 2009, a total of 106 cultural heritage sites and features were sampled within or next to 34 forest cutblocks, in six forest districts. In 2008, 58 assessments took place. While there is significant consistency between the findings of the two pilot years, there is also some variability of results due to refinements in the field protocol, the number of assessments, and wider variety of CHR values held by participating First Nations in 2009. 2010 will be the final pilot year of CHR monitoring after which the field cards and protocol will be finalized and ready for operational implementation.

Stand Development Monitoring (SDM) (timber resource value)

In 2009/10 field season, eight districts participated in the SDM pilot collecting 82 samples of stand development monitoring.

Water Quality

In 2009/10, a total of 213 stream crossings were assessed. Since 2006, a total of 1,415 water quality assessments have taken place. In addition to its use in the provincial FREP program, the Water Quality Protocol has been adopted by a number of forest licensees working in community watersheds in British Columbia for their sustainable forest management certification requirements. Water quality extension products detailing monitoring results can be found on the FREP website at: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/index.htm>.

Visual Quality

During 2007 and 2008, 259 visual samples were collected across 15 districts. Only *Forest Practices Code* blocks within scenic areas with Recommended Visual Quality Classes or Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs) were sampled. An Extension Note detailing performance under the *Forest Practices Code* can be found at: http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/hfp/external/!publish/FREP/Publications/Extension_Notes/FREPExtensionNote13.pdf. A report comparing Code and FRPA is expected to be published in 2012.

Soils

Soils resource monitoring was implemented in seven forest districts in 2009. Sampling consisted of 29 cutblocks that were checked to determine whether forest soils are protected under FRPA. Using remote sensing and field validation, district staff fill in a checklist and

created a GPS soil survey map for each randomly selected cutblock. A report of the 2007-2009 results is planned for January 2011.

RSM Continuous Improvement Workshop

In 2009, FREP held the sixth annual Continuous Improvement (CI) Workshop. The purpose of this workshop is to help us continue on the path of achieving the FREP mission — To be a world leader in resource stewardship monitoring and effectiveness evaluations; providing the science-based information needed for decision-making and continuous improvement of British Columbia's forest and range practices, policies and legislation.

This workshop is an opportunity to:

- Continue to build and strengthen our relationships;
- Review and discuss our successes and challenges — looking for opportunities to improve all aspects of FREP;
- Review and discuss some of the monitoring and evaluation results from the past field season; and
- Provide an opportunity for all people involved in the program to contribute their voice to how the program continues to develop.

The 2009 session was conducted via Live Meeting, with eight locations across the province. This is one of the first large-scale provincial meetings implemented by the Ministry of Forests and Range using Live Meeting technology. Lessons learned from this workshop were relayed back to the Information Management Branch to help improve future video-conferencing initiatives (See <https://sharepoint.forests.gov.bc.ca/frep/ci/Shared%20Documents/2009%20CI%20Wrap%20up%20%20Report.docx>, Ministry staff view only).

People-Focus: Program and District Recognition

FREP owes much of its success to its dedicated staff. In 2009, MFR executive sponsor, Chief Forester Jim Snetsinger awarded the Chief Forester and ADM of Operations Award for Excellence in Resource Stewardship Monitoring to the Vanderhoof Forest District. This annual honour is awarded to the forest district that demonstrates the highest level of contribution and excellence during FREP's RSM field season. Accompanied by the district staff, Jim toured the field and discussed the management of riparian and stand-level biodiversity in a large-scale salvage landscape, and the use of FREP data and results in the continuous improvement in forest and range management, to the role and responsibilities of forest professionals in the achieving the objectives of FREP.

For more information on this award, go to: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/recognition/chief.htm>.

The winners of the RSM Photography Contest were announced at the CI Workshop in February 2010. Recognition for best overall photo went to the North Coast Forest District's Steve Lehnert, with a photo titled "Cabbage Patch FREPer." View all the photo entries for all the years at: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/recognition/gallery.htm>.

Quality Management and Data Integrity

FREP continues to embrace quality management (culture, principles and best practices) using the criteria from the National Quality Institute (NQI). In 2009, FREP sustained the level three NQI certification by championing quality management community of practices and participating various quality management sharing workshops. Throughout the year, FREP has shared experience with municipal governments, ministries in other provincial governments and with the Department of National Defence.

FREP has also continued the focus on ensuring superior data quality. Processes such as data logic validation, data entry verification are being performed at both district and resource value team (subject matter experts) lead levels. Because of these processes and due diligence, FREP continues to maintain a high level of data integrity.

For more information on FREP's quality management activities, go to: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/qmgt/index.htm>.

Information Management System

There was no information management system development in 2009. The IMS working group continues to track issues and improvement suggestions; however, only the most critical repairs have been made.

For more information on the FREP IMS, go to: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/ims/index.htm>.

Training

FREP delivered two Stand Development Monitoring (SDM) training sessions in 2009. In total, 22 people from seven districts received formal training. Resource Value Team Leads delivered three riparian training sessions to 27 staff in three districts. In addition, a one-day refresher session was delivered in Vanderhoof Forest District. Riparian mentoring sessions were delivered to seven forest districts.

Stand-level biodiversity training occurred in two districts locations, training 28 staff.

The Water Quality resource value team delivered one two-day training session and one refresher session. In 2009, a total of 32 people were trained in water quality.

Training for the cultural heritage resource value was a combination of video link information seminars and field-based training. The two field training sessions (Vanderhoof and Terrace) focused on the practical implementation of FREP cultural heritage resource value monitoring, and involved a mix of classroom instruction and field visits. The video seminars covered important information about the cultural and colonial history of B.C., delivered by topic experts from government, First Nations, academia and the private sector. Session topics were: Understanding the “land question”, Aboriginal case law and government’s “duty to consult”, Archaeological and cultural heritage resource management in B.C., and “How First Nations use the land”.

For more information on FREP’s training activities, go to: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/rsm/training.htm>

Communications

FREP focused on enhancing communication efforts throughout 2009/10.

Districts are encouraged to use the communication method that best suits their situation and needs. Example communication events include:

- formal presentations
- licensee/ministry joint field visits to sampling sites
- field tours/information sessions
- training sessions

In 2008/2009, FREP published three reports and a series of extension notes.

Reports

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

FREP Report #19, BC Ministry of Forests and Range. 2009. *Forest Stewardship Plan Stocking Standard Evaluation*. B.C. Min. For. Ran., For. Prac. Br., Victoria, B.C. FREP Ser. 19.

FREP Report #20, BC Ministry of Forests and Range. 2009. *Monitoring Forest and Rangeland Species and Ecological Processes to Anticipate and Respond to Climate Change in British Columbia*. B.C. Min. For. Ran., For. Prac. Br., Victoria, B.C. FREP Ser. 20.

FREP Report #21, BC Ministry of Forests and Range. 2009. *Remote Sensing Opportunities For Monitoring Indicators of Forest Sustainability*. B.C. Min. For. Ran., For. Prac. Br., Victoria, B.C. FREP Ser. 21. <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/publications/reports.htm#rep20>

Extension Notes

Extension Note # 7 (PDF)

In this note, we answer five key questions about the Forest and Range Evaluation Program (FREP): (1) As a government or licensee decision maker, can I use FREP to guide or inform my decisions?, (2) Is FREP determining whether current practices are environmentally sustainable?, (3) Is FREP key to making professional accountability work?, (4) Is FREP increasing the participation of First Nations in forest stewardship?, and (5) Can FREP help industry save money?

http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/HFP/external!/publish/FREP/extension/FREP_Extension_%20Note_07.pdf

Extension Note # 6 (PDF)

Since 2006, the Forest and Range Evaluation Program (FREP) has been collaborating with several First Nations across British Columbia to develop a monitoring framework, data collection tools, and implementation strategy that will provide insight into the following question: Are cultural heritage resources being conserved, and where necessary protected for First Nations’ cultural and traditional use as a result of forest practices in British Columbia? This extension note describes pilot monitoring results to date, lessons learned, and key messages for forestry practitioners. Results from the 2009 field season will appear in future publications.

http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/HFP/external!/publish/FREP/extension/CHR_Extension_Note_06.pdf

For more information on FREP communications, go to <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/pmgmt/index.htm> or contact Peter Bradford (Peter.Bradford@gov.bc.ca).

FREP Program Development

In 2009 FREP began the process of reviewing and updating its strategic plan based on the results of the annual quality survey, the FREP continuous improvement session and the MFR business plan.

Detailed tasks for each strategic area are outlined in annual work and improvement plans (<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/pmgmt/index.htm>) and quality control protocols (<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/qmgmt/control.htm>).

For more information on FREP’s strategic plan, go to: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/pmgmt/index.htm>.

Each year, an annual Program Improvement Plan is developed on the basis of the Strategic Plan, as well as on staff and stakeholder input. It details the major tasks and focus areas for program improvement. For a copy of the most recent plan, go to: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/pmgmt/index.htm>.

FREP FUNDING AND EXPENDITURES FOR 2009/2010

The following table (on the next page) shows an approximate breakdown of FREP expenditures for 2009/10.

KEY FREP INITIATIVES FOR 2010/2011

- Province-wide implementation of biodiversity, fish/riparian, water quality, and visual quality
- Completion of piloting of the cultural heritage and stand development monitoring protocols
- Completion of a revised soils monitoring approach
- Continued quality assurance – training, mentoring, data validation, and verification
- Moving towards sampling of only areas harvested under FRPA (e.g., increasingly fewer FPC blocks)
- Continued and enhanced reporting and communication of results to date
- Completion of an updated FREP Strategic Plan
- Continued focus on quality management with the National Quality Institute. Implementing the Level three program improvement plan will move FREP toward the Level Four Certification and the Gold Award of the Canada Awards for Excellence.
- Development and testing of a landscape-level biodiversity monitoring approach
- Assessment of a multiple-resource value assessment approach

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The FREP Working Group sincerely appreciates the significant contributions of everyone involved in helping attain the achievements and successes of the program in its sixth year of operations.

Special thanks are extended to:

- Our field staff (as there are so many field staff names, please see FREP website for district contacts) for their hard work in achieving program implementation and innovations;
- The Chief Forester, Jim Snetsinger, Phil Zacharatos, and Dave Peterson, Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations.
- Ian Miller, Lorne Bedford and Jim Sutherland for their guidance as the Forest Practices Branch Management Team;
- The resource value team leaders (Nancy Densmore, Laura Darling, Richard Thompson, Lisa Levesque, Peter Tschaplinski, Perry Grilz, Doug Fraser, Francis Njenga, Sandy Currie, Stephane Dube, Alex Woods, Frank Barber, Jacques Marc, Dave Maloney, Laura Darling, Kathy Paige and Peter Bradford) for their dedication in developing and continually improving indicators, protocols, and training; and,
- Our lead trainers and contractors (Derek Tripp, Dean McGeough, Brian Carson, Susan Bannerman, and Amanda Nemeč) for providing inspired in-house workshops, field training, mentoring, analysis and advice.

MORE INFORMATION

For additional information about FREP, please refer to our website at: <http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/index.htm>.

Expenditure Category(\$)	Approximate Expenditure 2009/10
RSM Checklist Development, Pilot Testing, and Implementation	31 000
Intensive Evaluation Projects	0
Training	55 000
Program Support, Planning, and Development	20 000
Quality Management including data validation and verification	20 000
Field-based Operating Costs (e.g., helicopter, boat and other site access)	180 000
Total (does not include salaries)	306 000

The FREP Year in Review is a regular publication of the Forest and Range Evaluation Program designed to inform stakeholders on program development and implementation, and report on the results of evaluation projects.

