

**January 14, 2011**  
**FREP Publication Survey**  
*Results and Proposed Improvements*

**Introduction**

In November 2010, FREP distributed a Publication survey to a list of 554 clients, partners and stakeholders representing government, industry, academics and First Nations. The purpose of the survey was to determine the effectiveness of FREP extension products (extension notes and reports) and to find opportunities for continuous improvement of these documents. The survey was designed to answer two key questions:

1. Are FREP extension products having an impact and making a difference by influencing practices, policies and (or) legislation?
2. How can FREP extension products be improved in order to provide maximum possible value to the natural resource management community?

The purpose of this document is to present the survey results to clients, partners and stakeholders, and to communicate the changes FREP will make because of the survey responses. The target audience of this document is resource professionals who are current or potential users of FREP extension products.

This report has two sections, Survey Results and Proposed Improvements. The Survey Results section summarizes the responses for each survey question (or group of questions). In addition, all qualitative responses are included. These comments have not been edited, with the exception of minor punctuation and spelling corrections. Based on these survey results, the Proposed Improvements section outlines 14 actions that FREP will take to improve the effectiveness of FREP extension products.

**Survey Results**

**Questions 1-4: Age Group, Employer, Position Category and Geographic Location**

There were 97 survey respondents. Of the survey respondents, 61% were in the 30-50 year old category and 36% were in the 50+ year old category. Government staff accounted for 91% of respondents; the remainder were from industry, consulting or the academic community. For position (job) category, 62% were field operations, 31% management, 16% policy development and 6% academics. Respondents represented all regions of the province.

**Question 5: “I read FREP extension products”**

Table 1: Question five responses showing percentage of respondents and position category.

Position Category	Percentage of Respondents			
	Always	Frequently	Rarely	Sometimes
Field Operations	4	38	11	47
Management	15	30	0	55
Policy	0	55	0	46
All others	0	89	11	0
Average (All)	6	44	7	44

**Question 6: “FREP extension products provide the resource value status, trend and continuous improvement opportunities that support ongoing enhancement of my professional knowledge”**

Table 2: Question 6 responses showing percentage of respondents, position category and employer

Position Category/ Employer	Percentage of Respondents				
	Totally Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Disagree	I Don't Know
Field Operations	43	32	15	9	2
Government MNRO	40	39	12	8	2
Government MFML	47	27	13	13	0
Industry	60	40	0	0	0
Average (All)	44	36	10	8	2

Table 3: Qualitative Feedback for Question 6.

Agreement Category	Qualitative Feedback
<b>Totally Agree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension notes are great and short executive summaries highlighting the high points are great as well.</li> </ul>
<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to include solid guidance based on the findings.</li> <li>• More direct link to FRPA requirements, i.e., FSP content.</li> <li>• Suggestions for improvement, written in operational language, more prominent</li> <li>• Celebrate a licensee success under FREP</li> <li>• Publish reports on a wider range of values</li> <li>• Need more hard hitting language that speaks to professionals and their obligations</li> </ul>
<b>Disagree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor natural conditions first</li> <li>• Not clear whether or not FREP information should be accepted as recommendations for best practices or the 'official' method for monitoring the impact of forestry activities. Is it the standard?</li> <li>• Standard reporting format &amp; summary - adopt the state of forests 'indicator' model.</li> <li>• Focus FREP activities on more timber values</li> <li>• Extension products not always clear on their purpose, and why they were written</li> </ul>
<b>Comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggestions for improvement, written in operational language, more prominent field operations</li> <li>• Extension notes are great and short executive summaries highlighting the high points are great as well.</li> <li>• Monitor natural conditions first</li> <li>• More direct link to FRPA requirements, i.e., FSP content.</li> <li>• Focus FREP activities on more timber values</li> <li>• Celebrate a licensee success under FREP</li> <li>• Need more hard hitting language that speaks to professionals and their obligations</li> <li>• Need to include solid guidance based on the findings.</li> <li>• Standard reporting format &amp; summary - adopt the state of forests 'indicator' model.</li> <li>• Extension products not always clear on their purpose, and why they were written</li> <li>• Not clear whether or not FREP information should be accepted as recommendations for best practices or the 'official' method for monitoring the impact of forestry activities. Is it the standard?</li> <li>• Publish reports on a wider range of values</li> </ul>

**Question 7: “FREP extension notes provide the information needed to support the environmental component of balanced decision-making”**

Table 4: Question 7 responses, showing percentage of respondents, position and employer category

Position Category/ Employer	Percentage of Respondents				
	Totally Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Disagree	I Don't Know
Field Operations	28	47	9	6	11
Management	35	50	5	10	0
MNRO	29	48	10	6	8
MFML	20	53	14	7	7
Industry	20	60	0	0	0

Table 5: Qualitative Feedback for Question 7.

Agreement Category	Qualitative Feedback
<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should have one-pagers that provide the results as well as your typical reports. This would increase readership.</li> <li>• The more recent reports are the right length and I've been reading them. The older ones were quite lengthy and I rarely made the time to review them.</li> <li>• Two pages would be a good maximum -- it's difficult, I know.</li> </ul>
<b>Neutral</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It provides "SOME" of the info needed... Not all of it...</li> <li>• For example, WQ provides a direct answer/feedback; stand level biodiversity is simply data collection at this point too subjective what is good management?</li> </ul>
<b>I Don't Know</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I do not understand what is meant by "the environmental component of balanced decision making"</li> </ul>
<b>Disagree</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FREP - as published - needs to be simpler and more readable. Adopt a single reporting document and post in with values as a 'report card'.</li> <li>• Need more specific recommendations not just observations. Need more statistically valid data to make informed recommendations.</li> <li>• Many of the notes really are not clear on purpose so it sometimes hard to discern the information useful for decision making</li> </ul>
<b>Comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We need to be firmer in our language on the results the data is providing. We are soft on the issues to be soft on the licensees.</li> <li>• Need more specific recommendations not just observations. Need more statistically valid data to make informed recommendations.</li> <li>• For example, WQ provides a direct answer/feedback; stand level biodiversity is simply data collection at this point too subjective what is good management?</li> <li>• Many decisions in forestry legislation are must issue or must approve. The information that is gathered in FREP should also look at how those test should change to allow decision makers the ability to use some of this information for their decisions. I think FREP's bigger value is for the professionals in terms of making better decisions.</li> <li>• More focus on key improvements that will make a difference without much cost. Provide examples of where changes were implemented on the ground and the positive outcomes</li> <li>• It provides "SOME" of the info needed... Not all of it...</li> <li>• More landscape-level (more than one value) trends etc...</li> <li>• FREP - as published - needs to be simpler and more readable. Adopt a single reporting document and post in with values as a 'report card'.</li> <li>• FREP reports are one source of information to support decision making</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many of the notes really are not clear on purpose so it sometimes hard to discern the information useful for decision making</li> <li>• FREP extension notes are the right length</li> <li>• you are doing an incredible job with the resources and mandate that you have been given...but I think we need a bigger picture approach</li> <li>• I do not understand what is meant by "the environmental component of balanced decision making"</li> </ul>
--	--

**Question 8-11: FREP extension notes and reports are the right length and level of detail and technical complexity**

Combined results showed that approximately 40% of respondents “totally agreed” with the statement: “FREP extension notes and reports are the right length”, while 40% somewhat agreed, 17% were neutral and 5% disagreed. The results were similar when asked on whether the respondents agreed with the statement: “FREP extension notes and reports are the right level of technical detail and complexity”.

Table 6: Qualitative Feedback for Questions 8-11.

	Qualitative Feedback
<b>Extension Note Length</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The more recent reports are the right length and I've been reading them. The older ones were quite lengthy and I rarely made the time to review them.</li> <li>• Sometimes, a bit more detail would be helpful</li> <li>• Should have one-pagers that provide the results as well as your typical reports. This would increase readership.</li> <li>• Two pages would be a good maximum -- it's difficult, I know.</li> <li>• Make them shorter. Provide yearly update of all values in one page.</li> <li>• make them shorter, summarize the results</li> <li>• A summary up front with all the findings. Then if the reader wants to go through the note for more detail then they can</li> <li>• A summary up front with all the findings. Then if the reader wants to go through the note for more detail then they can</li> </ul>
<b>Report length</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some are getting very long....i.e. riparian, CHR</li> <li>• Augment reports with one-pagers with results and key pieces. Most forest managers do not have time to read the longer notes.</li> <li>• Prefer to read the extension note because quicker</li> <li>• Extension - networking, facilitation</li> <li>• Reports are a bit long</li> <li>• Prefer to read the extension note because quicker</li> <li>• Very detailed and they have a very small target audience</li> <li>• Shorter is better!</li> <li>• They are a little too long and detailed. write them shorter and faster</li> <li>• Reports could be any length depending on requirements of the subject matter</li> </ul>
<b>Extension Note and Report –Level of Technical Detail and Technical Complexity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [totally agree] but, I know what goes behind as I collect the info - external clients might feel differently</li> <li>• Firmer on the best practices</li> <li>• less in report body, more tech details in appendices</li> <li>• Clarity of the sample is important. For instance, do they summarize FPC blocks only or do they include blocks harvested under FRPA?</li> <li>• I would be tempted to put in more detail</li> </ul>

**Question 12: “Do you have any other suggestions to improve the communication FREP results?”**

Table 7: Qualitative Feedback for Question 12.

Position Category	Qualitative Feedback
<b>Academic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They fulfill the need adequately</li> <li>• I do not, or am unaware if I do, receive FREP and therefore cannot evaluate them</li> </ul>
<b>Extension - networking, facilitation specialist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to make us (FORREX) aware of the latest reports and extension notes and we will continue to include them in our monthly electronic mailing list postings. Another opportunity might be to do a short synopsis of the recent FREP publications for inclusion in our newsletter - LINK.</li> <li>• There are certainly mechanisms to increase the distribution of your information such as linking the announcements of your publications to other electronic newsletters that distribute information to potentially different groups. Have you done any sort of analysis to determine how your audience is using your communication products - i.e., are they using them in decision-making or as background information, etc. I think that you have covered your technical</li> </ul>
<b>Field Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to get licensees to pay attention by comparing them to FSP etc. whatever documents they have that have results or hard numbers to compare FREP data to</li> <li>• Annual workshops in geographic centers, provided for CI purposes</li> <li>• Local information that is pertinent to local conditions is more useful than provincial summaries. Perhaps a key reference could be provided on the documents for easier search of documents that apply to certain BEC Zones for example, to allow a licensee to focus on key info that they require, quickly.</li> <li>• A very slick, well documented web site. Always able to find lots of relevant information. Website structure makes easy sense to follow.</li> <li>• Can't see the impact of the FREP results on field practices or the linkage to any kind of legislated changes to promote better practices?</li> <li>• As the effectiveness of the FSP model is yet to be valued, the aspects of communication that need adjustment will or should become apparent, therefore at this time I am not sure how or if communication of FREP results improvements.</li> <li>• Keep going forward as you have been doing.</li> <li>• There are ways more people that do not read reports and extension notes than do read them. How can we synthesize the key messages and deliver them with punch and pictures on an annual (or regular) basis to the non-reading crowd?</li> <li>• Keep up the good work; continue to do presentations wherever and whenever possible highlighting trends or good performance by a licensee. Remember some corporations have said they will continue to bang on branches door until they knock it down! Do not give in to fear mongering.</li> <li>• The documents have an obviously positive spin to them. I think they are somewhat misleading in their messaging. Take the riparian document for example. Even using a relatively conservative assessment protocol the data shows we have issues related to impacts to streams from harvesting. The report however portrays these as minor (lumping together all the properly functioning regardless of risk) and other than, in a few recommendations from the chief forester around areas for improvement, major issues are not easily gleaned.</li> <li>• So far, very good. I can't quite wrap my brain around why some of the BRANCH policy folks won't buy into the data (i.e. SDM). The key question is, "what will it take for BRANCH to buy into the data/findings and change policy?"</li> <li>• Partner with the ABCFP and get them to promote the work FREP is doing by providing these reports through the ABCFP as well as telling professionals that reviewing these documents will count towards their continued competencies.</li> </ul>

<b>Management/ Supervisor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short videos/YouTube of the results... some good some bad and how some issues have been resolved.</li> <li>• It just needs to have more exposure. Press releases maybe?</li> <li>• Encourage FREP field practitioners to present their findings to the professional networks.</li> <li>• Don't be afraid to reiterate results in different ways/documents/venues...</li> <li>• Looking from the outside the documentation is too 'cluttered', I see the following: - Technical Reports (details, details, details...) - FREP Evaluation Reports (summary of the 'state' of the resource - given current operational and legal requirements, as at [time stamp]. Apparent opportunities for improvement (i) operationally within existing legal framework, and (ii) for the legal framework.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It would be great to have a single place to go to find all the monitoring data that is being collected in BC, including FREP</li> <li>• Groups such as licensees have to be engaged in a conversation about the RESULTS otherwise the documents get lost in the workload shuffle. Use conferences or other pre-established groups (TSA steering committees) to get the results of FREP work out.</li> <li>• Improve spelling in surveys :) The emails and posting on the website are good.</li> <li>• Previously, I was manager of a medium sized TFL in the BC interior. I was busy all the time and had little time for reviewing long reports. Periodically, I would come across a piece of technical writing that had what I wanted -- 1) information that I needed to improve forest management, 2) skilfully written by a knowledgeable author, 3) SHORT, 4) with more information available if needed. FREP products in my opinion have excellent information written skilfully -- but could be improved by have one-page initial documents with the key findings with links to the longer documents. Key segments of your potential audience are not reading the long reports and extension notes. You need to use all your authoring skills to produce short docs with the key information!</li> </ul>

**Question 13: “Please provide your suggestions for FREP extension and communication products that you would find useful.”**

Table 8: Qualitative Feedback for Question 13.

<b>Position Category</b>	<b>Qualitative Feedback</b>
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More qualitative suggestions for improvement from an operational forester's perspective. Involve development foresters, logging supervisors, etc in developing the suggestions for improvement.</li> </ul>
<b>Field Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interaction and discussion around monitoring results, staged in a professional forum</li> <li>• Visual products such as the YouTube videos are a great idea. Sharing FREP extension and communications products at local TSA meetings with licensee's is probably the best site for making significant contact with licensee's to make the most impact. Inviting Licensees in the field on FREP field assessments of all values - once a season - is the best way to show them what FREP is about. The next best thing is to have them join a FREP mentoring day.</li> <li>• Move into more accessible Live Meeting/e learning type training that can be recorded and others can view when they have time to. Budgets and staff time is too limited to insist that training must be completely in person.</li> <li>• Perhaps, organizing occasional presentations in various locations/offices would be helpful to those who don't have access to FREP reports.</li> <li>• Less and more useful reports!</li> <li>• A simple summary of what our 100's of evaluations for the various values have found and what the next step is for this data and when will we have collected enough.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The soils protocol is improving from my perspective to give a truer site valuation.</li> <li>• You-tube is a great idea. Let's see more of that. We need to connect what we are finding through analysis of data with what it means for forest practices in order to effect meaningful improvements. Perhaps set up some interviews with experts to discuss on You Tube or other media what we've learned is successful and what needs changing so far, for various resource values.</li> <li>• I would find it very useful that the detailed riparian report promised to be published this year is completed.</li> <li>• Looking forward to the SDM summaries for OK-Shuswap, Kootenays, and summary of all.</li> <li>• Ask professionals what questions they need answered (maybe via the association) or what kind of information they are seeking within the realm of FREP possibilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Management/ Supervisor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show linkages where and how decisions makers can use the notes. Many seem to fall within the realm of guidance to submitting professionals.</li> <li>• Keep them brief, to the point, and most of all keep 'em coming</li> <li>• I appreciate the products that are provided. Thanks.</li> <li>• Simplify the website [it] looks good but it's cluttered. Otherwise great job but some opportunities for improvement :)</li> <li>• Keep them coming, and focus on the areas of highest risk around the province. We need monitoring results to support Professional Reliance and operation plan preparation, review and determinations. Especially now with C&amp;E spending very little time looking at forestry-related activities, monitoring results are an extremely important source of info to understand how we are doing out there and improve.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do FREP results compare to standard practice? How are they regarded in terms of verifiable evidence-based guidance to operational practice? Examples of more pertinent questions for a survey might be, "Are you comfortable implementing FREP recommendations in an operational setting?", "Has a FREP Report or Extension Note caused you to change a development or operational plan? In what way?" etc.</li> <li>• Keep reports short. Keep projects to be developed and completed within 6-12 months with short reports. Publish reports quickly and concisely. Do not venture into RESEARCH land</li> </ul>

### **Proposed Improvements**

Responses to Question 5: *"I read FREP extension products"*, indicate that there is a wide range of people who "always, frequently or sometimes" read FREP extension products. However, 11% of FREP's key audience (field operations) are not reading the extension products.

FREP will increase readership of its extension products by:

- Improving extension products by actively engaging and communicating with clients and partners to ensure understanding of their extension needs and preferences
- Actively seeking opportunities to distribute the extension products through professional associations, Forrex, First Nations, Industry and Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations

Responses to Question 6: *"FREP extension products provide the resource value status, trend and continuous improvement opportunities that support ongoing enhancement of my professional knowledge"*, indicate that many responding resource professionals are using FREP extension products to enhance their knowledge. These results also highlight opportunities for improvement such as improving clarity and consistency in the purpose, format and intended audience for FREP extension products. The

overall recommendation was that FREP extension products need to be non-biased and in operational language to be most effective and useful.

FREP will improve efforts to enhance professional knowledge by:

- Clearly identifying the purpose and target audience(s) of all extension products
- Whenever possible, including opportunities for continued improvement (e.g., professional guidance) of practices and (or) policies based on FREP findings
- Improving the operational review of recommendations to ensure extension products are written in operational language
- Ensuring that FREP documents report facts without judgement and (or) bias
- Further standardizing key components of future reports and extension notes such as format and style of recommendations
- Increasing FREP extension products for resource values with that have not been previously reported on.

Responses to Question 7: “*FREP extension notes provide the information needed to support the environmental component of balanced decision-making*”, indicate that resource professionals are starting to use FREP extension products in their balanced decision-making. There are significant opportunities to increase the use of FREP extension products for decision making.

FREP will further increase efforts to assist resource professionals in balanced decision making by:

- Ensuring the Chief Forester’s FREP report provides a clear and concise summary of FREP findings and recommendations, and also includes contacts, references and linkages to more detailed information
- Approaching organizations such as the Association of BC Forest Professionals, Forrex, the Forest Practices Board and others to partner with and deliver workshops on natural resource monitoring results directly to resource professionals in the field
- Complementing the above mentioned workshops with Live Link and other tools
- Continuing to expand the use of reporting on localized data and results
- Expanding FREPs current use of YouTube and (or) other social media to communicate monitoring results
- Updating and simplifying the FREP website

## **Conclusion**

FREP will begin immediate implementation of the extension and communication improvements in this document. Thank you to all of the people who took the time to provide valuable input to ongoing improvement of Forest and Range Evaluation Program extension products.