

FOSSIL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Background – For Information

The Fossil Management Framework (the Framework) for British Columbia addresses the management of fossils and fossil sites. The key components of the Framework were identified from a review of other Canadian jurisdictions (see the jurisdictional review document on this site for more information) and from discussion with representatives of the paleontological and academic communities, other levels of government, mineral tenure holders and other interested groups.

The Province designed the Framework to achieve the following outcomes:

- Raise awareness of the importance and the need to manage British Columbia’s fossil resource;
- Ensure that the stewardship of British Columbia’s fossil resource is consistent with the scientific, heritage and educational value of fossils; and
- Encourage developers as well as commercial and industrial operators to apply responsible management practices that will allow for the recovery and preservation of important fossils.

In April 2005 the Province and First Nations leaders agreed to build a [New Relationship](#). The implementation of the Framework respects the principles of the New Relationship vision statement.

Fossil Management Principles

The Framework is guided by the following fossil management principles:

1. Fossils and fossil sites are important to British Columbia as heritage resources.
2. The order of priority for fossil management is science, natural heritage, education and, where appropriate, commercial use.
3. The order of priority for extraction or excavation of fossils is science, natural heritage, education and, where appropriate, commercial use. Non-extractive commercial use has precedent over extractive commercial use.
4. A fossil management framework that recognizes the heritage value of fossils, the need to protect significant fossil sites and the interests of stakeholders is necessary.

Objectives

The two categories of the Framework are:

- 1) manage the use of fossils; and,
- 2) protect fossils and fossil sites.

(1) Elements included in the use of fossils category are:

- to clarify the rules governing the use of fossils;
- to improve the federal export process for fossils leaving British Columbia by incorporating a formal provincial review process; and
- to clarify the rights and obligations of different groups with rights to fossils.

(2) Elements included in the protection of fossils category are:

- to protect important fossil sites;
- to provide opportunities for the recovery of significant fossils; and
- to manage important impacts on fossils from other activities.

Additional elements of the Framework include:

- administration and legislative authority;
- custodianship and stewardship of fossils;
- information management and communication; and
- resource inventory.