

**Ministry of
Forests, Lands, Natural
Resource Operations
and Rural Development**

**2020/21 – 2022/23
SERVICE PLAN**

February 2020



Minister Accountability Statement



The *Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development 2020/21 - 2022/23 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Donaldson".

Honourable Doug Donaldson
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural
Development

February 5, 2020

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Purpose of the Ministry

The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (the Ministry) is the Province's agency responsible for land and resource management in British Columbia, including the protection of the Province's archaeological and heritage resources. Operating on a provincial land base of over 94 million hectares, the Ministry ensures the sustainable management of forest, wildlife, water and other land-based resources, and works with Indigenous and rural communities to strengthen and diversify their economies. The Ministry is also responsible for wildfire management and facilitates public access to a wide range of recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, and access to B.C.'s wilderness and backcountry. The Ministry is working to address climate change by enhancing the role of forests and forest products as carbon sinks, and by preparing and responding to the impacts of climate change already underway. By providing services British Columbians can count on, a commitment to sustainable natural resource management, and through the advancement of new transformational initiatives, the Ministry supports activities that provide environmental, economic, cultural and social benefits to all British Columbians. This work directly contributes to the achievement of the Province's goals of reconciliation, clean growth and a strong, sustainable economy.

The Ministry oversees policy development, operational management and implementation, and administers all or part of over [58 statutes and associated regulations](#).

Strategic Direction

The Government of British Columbia remains focused on its three strategic priorities: making life more affordable, delivering better services, and investing in a sustainable economy.

Ministries are actively working to provide quality, cost-effective services to British Columbia families and businesses. By adopting the Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens and Business and Economic Implications Framework to budgeting and policy development, Ministries will ensure that equity is reflected in budgets, policies and programs.

Additional key initiatives underpinning lasting prosperity in 2020/21 and beyond are the implementation of:

- A Framework for Improving British Columbians' Standard of Living which will provide the foundation for quality economic growth in our province and a pathway to a more inclusive and prosperous society,
- The [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, demonstrating support for true and lasting reconciliation, and
- The [CleanBC](#) plan, putting B.C. on the path to a cleaner, better future – with a low carbon economy that creates opportunities while protecting our clean air, land and water.

The Economic Forecast Council (EFC) expects B.C.'s real GDP to grow by 2.4 per cent in 2020 and 2.3 per cent in 2021. Meanwhile for Canada, the EFC projects national real GDP growth of 1.7 per cent in 2020 and 1.8 per cent in 2021. As such, B.C.'s economic growth is expected to outperform Canada's in the coming years. Risks to B.C.'s economic outlook include ongoing uncertainty regarding global trade policies and weak global economic activity, as well as lower commodity prices and slower domestic economic growth. Meanwhile, LNG development in the province is expected to have a positive impact on B.C.'s economy.

This 2020/21 service plan outlines how the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development will support the government's priorities, including selected action items identified in the July 2017 [Minister's Mandate Letter](#). Over the previous fiscal year, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development made progress on these and other key priorities by:

- Launching a regionally driven renewal of B.C.'s Interior forest sector and engaging with communities throughout the Interior on ways to develop a competitive, sustainable future for forest companies, workers and communities;
- Implementing policy changes to limit waste and drive fibre utilization and manufacturing through the Coast Forest Sector Revitalization Initiative;
- Introducing the [Forest Employment Program](#), part of a new series of measures introduced by government to support B.C. forest workers and contractors impacted by mill closures and shift reductions in the B.C. Interior;
- Establishing the \$5 million Coastal Logging Equipment Support Trust to support forestry contractors, their families, and communities on the Coast;
- Investing in forest carbon projects across the province in support of CleanBC, through the Forest Carbon Initiative;
- Enacting legislative amendments to the [Forest and Range Practices Act](#) that improve the forest stewardship planning framework to make it more inclusive and responsive;
- Completing comprehensive discussions with Indigenous communities, a wide range of stakeholder groups and the public to build a draft [Together for Wildlife Strategy](#) to improve wildlife stewardship;
- Collaborating with Indigenous governments, communities and stakeholders to modernize land-use planning, building on an area-based approach which has resulted in agreements to partner on preparation of three land-use plans for Sechelt, Fort St. John and the Nicola Watershed;
- Holding 16 public engagement sessions involving more than 5,000 people about the challenges, opportunities and plans for caribou recovery across the province;
- Launching the Steelhead Action Plan in partnership with the Government of Canada to protect and restore Steelhead populations in the Thompson and Chilcotin watersheds;
- Partnering with Indigenous communities and the Government of Canada to successfully address the emergency need at the Big Bar landslide to transport fish past the barrier in order to reach spawning grounds, while also implementing short and long term solutions to enable natural fish passage on the Fraser River;
- Launching an [Old Growth Strategic Review](#) to inform decisions on new approaches to old growth forest management in British Columbia; and
- Implementing phase one of changes to the [Heritage Conservation Act](#) in May 2019, and pursuing additional opportunities to facilitate and enhance the protection and conservation of heritage in British Columbia.

The following performance plan outlines how the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development will continue to track progress on key mandate letter commitments and other emerging government priorities.

Performance Planning

Goal 1: Economic Benefits for all British Columbians with Strong, Resilient Rural Communities

This goal addresses the Ministry’s role in creating conditions that support a vibrant and healthy provincial economy through the forest sector, and promoting community resilience to ensure support through economic disruption and natural hazard events.

Objective 1.1¹: Work with rural communities to strengthen local economies and build resilience to economic disruption

Key Strategies:

- Support British Columbia forest workers and contractors impacted by mill closures and curtailments in the B.C. Interior through implementation of the Forest Employment Program, creating employment opportunities and reducing job losses in many B.C. communities;
- Provide rapid response to economic disruption events through enhanced on-the-ground supports and services to B.C.’s rural communities, workers and families;
- Work across government to include considerations of Indigenous and rural communities in the development of provincial policies, programs and services, and ensure economic opportunities are explored and advanced;
- Implement the [Community Support Grants Program](#) to enable communities in the B.C. Interior impacted by a permanent or indefinite mill closure or shift reduction to augment community transition services and support impacted workers and businesses.

Performance Measure	2019/20 Baseline	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
1.1 Cumulative percent of Forest Employment Program budget spent ¹	20% (\$3 million)	80% (\$12 million cumulative)	100% (\$15 million cumulative)	n/a ²

¹ Data Source: Rural Opportunities, Tenures, and Engineering Division

² Forest Employment Program is implemented over the fiscal years 2019/20, 2020/21, and 2021/22.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

The Province announced \$69 million to support forestry workers and contractors impacted by mill closures and curtailments in the B.C. Interior. As part of this, the Ministry developed and is administering the Forest Employment Program (FEP). The objective of FEP is to create short-term employment opportunities for contractors and workers in the B.C. Interior who have been affected by indefinite and permanent closures in the forest sector.

This new performance measure for 2020/21 reports on the amount spent of the total \$15 million budget using a cumulative percentage. It tracks the dollars spent by the program (based on budget allocations received on a fiscal year basis), ensuring that all funds are allocated. Eighty percent of the

¹ The numbering of objectives under Goal 1 has changed from the 2019/20-2021/22 Service Plan.

funds are expected to be spent by the end of fiscal year 2020/21, increasing to a cumulative total of 100% spent in 2021/22. This performance measure demonstrates the Ministry’s commitment to ensuring that the allocated funds are spent in support of B.C.’s impacted workers and communities.

This new measure replaces performance measure 1.3 in the 2019/20-2021/22 Service Plan, which reported the percentage of eligible communities applying for Rural Dividend funding.

Objective 1.2 Revitalize B.C. forests and the forest sector

Key Strategies:

- Implement the [Interior Forest Sector Renewal](#) through policy, regulatory and legislative changes that benefit communities and First Nations, maintain a competitive forest industry, and ensure excellence in stewardship;
- Continue with the delivery of Coast Forest Sector Revitalization through implementation of policy and program changes that will limit waste and drive fibre utilization and manufacturing in B.C.;
- Invest in reforestation activities that rehabilitate and restore forests by improving utilization, increasing density, and expanding fertilization;
- Work with other Ministries and Crown Agencies to promote the use of B.C. wood and mass timber in domestic and international markets to diversify economic opportunities;
- Facilitate the growth of B.C.’s bio-economy through key partnerships that advance new and innovative forest product facilities such as engineered wood, supporting forest revitalization and the Province’s CleanBC plan;
- Support the federal government and represent B.C.’s interests in Canada-U.S. litigation on the softwood lumber dispute;
- Continue to modernize B.C.’s forest stewardship planning framework through the transformation of *FRPA* to advance reconciliation with First Nations and help address local issues.

Performance Measure	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
1.2 Annual timber volume sold through BC Timber Sales ^{1, 2}	11.8Mm ³	11.3Mm ³	11.0Mm ³	11.2Mm ³

¹ Data Source: BC Timber Sales Cengea Resources System

² This performance measure was numbered 1.1 in the 2019/20-2021/22 FLNRORD Service Plan.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

Timber supply is being impacted by recent and ongoing events, including record-breaking wildfire seasons, the mountain pine beetle infestation, and species at risk such as caribou and goshawks. Despite these challenges, the Ministry is committed to achieving its targets over the next three years. This measure indicates that [BC Timber Sales](#) (BCTS) is effective in supporting the Market Pricing System, and meeting its objectives to sell its apportionment and generate net revenue. In doing so, BCTS supports thousands of well-paying jobs, industry sustainability and thriving rural communities

– Indigenous and non-Indigenous – that enables residents to achieve their desired objectives for themselves and for future generations.

Objective 1.3: Improve community resilience through proactive and collaborative natural hazard management

Key Strategies:

- Reduce risk and increase community resiliency through implementation of the [Government’s Action Plan: Responding to Wildfire and Flood Risks](#) in response to [Addressing the New Normal: 21st Century Disaster Management in British Columbia](#);
- Deliver funding through the [Community Resiliency Investment \(CRI\) program](#) to support work in treating the wildland-urban interface through delivery of [FireSmart](#) activities, and strengthen capacity of local emergency authorities and Indigenous communities to prepare and respond to wildfire events;
- Support the development of the [Provincial Disaster Recovery Framework](#) to improve recovery policies and strategies, and proactively coordinate recovery activity across government agencies, Indigenous peoples and other partners;
- Implement a provincial risk reduction strategy to reduce wildfire risk through targeted wildfire management activities in high wildfire risk landscapes;
- Develop a new drought management strategy in collaboration with other Ministries, stakeholders, and Indigenous peoples that will help British Columbians better prepare for future drought and climate change impacts;
- Work with Indigenous peoples, stakeholders and local governments to develop and implement a flood risk strategy to ensure the Province is continually adapting and improving its flood management and governance approach.

Performance Measure	2018/19 Baseline	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
1.3 Number of higher risk Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities ¹ actively engaged in wildfire risk reduction activities ^{2, 3}	0%	20%	40%	50%	60%

¹ Higher risk communities include: First Nations reserve areas, treaty settlement lands, municipalities and unincorporated areas within regional districts that are located within a Wildland Urban Interface risk class 1 or 2 area or have a locally approved plan that has identified high or extreme threat areas.

² Data Source: BC Wildfire Service

³ This performance measure was numbered 1.2 in the 2019/20-2021/22 FLNRORD Service Plan.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

This measure tracks the number of higher risk Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities that are actively involved in wildfire risk reduction activities aligned with FireSmart disciplines, including vegetation management. These activities address wildfire risk near public and private infrastructure through preventative activities that reduce the negative impacts of wildfires to communities.

Goal 2: Partnerships that Support Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

Furthering Government’s commitment to work toward true and lasting reconciliation, the Ministry is taking action to increase opportunities for collaboration in the stewardship and economic development of B.C.’s land, natural and cultural resources.

Objective 2.1: Strengthen partnerships and increase engagement with Indigenous peoples in the management of B.C.’s natural resources and land base

Key Strategies:

- Implement the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* in alignment with the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, and other Ministries;
- Advance the First Nations Forest Strategy to include Indigenous peoples as a full and active partner in the forest sector and support economic development of Indigenous communities;
- Explore greater opportunities to promote partnerships through program-level operations and government-to-government mandates;
- Partner with Indigenous governments and engage stakeholders and communities to identify and set land-use objectives through [modernized land-use planning](#), ensuring sustainable natural resource management reflects shared social, cultural, economic and environmental values;
- Review recommendations from the [Old Growth Panel](#) Report and develop a strategy for improving old growth stewardship.

Performance Measures	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
2.1a Number of policies that have been reviewed in cooperation and consultation with Indigenous communities ¹	15	20	20	20
2.1b Number of programs or policies modified in response to cooperation and consultation with Indigenous communities ²	5	10	10	20

^{1,2} Data Source: Indigenous Relations Branch

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

This measure highlights the Ministry’s commitment to ongoing cooperation and consultation with Indigenous communities in the development of policies and programs to ensure that Ministry operations reflect shared values and objectives. Examples of policies and programs include those that fall under the following areas: *Forest and Range Practices Act*, Coast Forest Sector Revitalization Initiative, wildfire management, modernized land-use planning, [Cumulative Effects Framework](#), Collaborative Stewardship Framework, and an improved wildlife management strategy.

Goal 3: Sustainable Natural Resource Management

The Ministry is committed to delivering its stewardship responsibilities in the best interest of the citizens of British Columbia.

Objective 3.1: Improve wildlife management and support the recovery of species at risk

Key Strategies:

- Together with Indigenous Peoples, rural communities, wildlife organizations, natural resource development industry stakeholders and the public, finalize and implement the Together for Wildlife Strategy to improve wildlife management and habitat conservation in B.C.;
- Apply new and existing tools that reflect Indigenous values to recover priority species at risk, and provide certainty to affected natural resource users;
- Finalize and deliver the [Provincial Caribou Recovery Program](#) with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, through habitat restoration and protection, maternity penning, captive breeding, predator management, research, monitoring, and enforcement actions;
- Report on the condition of key stewardship values through cumulative effects value assessments, the [Forest and Range Evaluation Program](#), and integrated monitoring.

Performance Measure	2019/20 Baseline	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
3.1 Wildlife habitat conserved, restored or enhanced through Ministry management activities. ¹	TBD ²	5% increase from 2019/20 Baseline	10% increase from 2019/20 Baseline	10% increase from 2019/20 Baseline

¹Data Source: Resource Stewardship Division

²A baseline will be established as of March 31, 2020, informing future targets for this performance measure.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

Furthering its commitment to improve wildlife management and habitat conservation, the Ministry is introducing a new performance measure for 2020/21 to demonstrate the result of efforts taken to support wildlife populations and help recover species at risk. The Ministry identifies opportunities to manage and protect Crown land to improve the health of the provincial land base. These efforts result in improved habitat for wildlife and fish, while also realizing additional co-benefits including the restoration of forests impacted by wildfire and pests, and increased carbon sequestration. This measure highlights the effectiveness of Ministry management activity to enhance, conserve and restore wildlife habitat.

Objective 3.2: Expand and strengthen climate change mitigation and adaptation activities

Key Strategies:

- Develop a new Ministry climate action strategy that will outline the steps the Ministry will take to prepare for the impacts of climate change on B.C.’s natural resources;

- Demonstrate the potential of forests as a natural climate solution by investing in a portfolio of forest management activities that reduce emissions and increase carbon sequestration;
- Coordinate with government’s CleanBC plan and [Climate Ready BC](#) strategy.

Performance Measure	2019/20 Forecast	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	2022/23 Target
3.2 Greenhouse gas emissions reduced or sequestered through FCI activities ^{1,2}	2.5	3.2	2.7	N/A ³

¹ Data Source: Climate Change and Integrated Planning Branch

² Emission reductions and sequestration resulting from FCI activities delivered in the current fiscal year are measured in units of MtCO₂e (Millions Tonnes Carbon Dioxide Equivalent) and are modeled up to the year 2050 (cumulative).

³ The Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund funding currently ends March 31, 2022.

Linking Performance Measure to Objective:

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recognizes that land management, including forest management, is critical to addressing climate change and its impacts. With that in mind, the Province launched the Forest Carbon Initiative (FCI) in 2017, supported by the federal Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund (LCELF). The FCI is investing in fertilization, reforestation, tree improvement, and road rehabilitation to increase carbon sequestration, and is encouraging better use of wood fibre to reduce the burning of woody biomass in slash piles. By 2022, the Province will have planted at least 70 million trees through FCI activities. This performance measure projects the amount of greenhouse gas emissions reduced or sequestered by 2050 for each year of the FCI. Projections are updated annually to reflect changes in program delivery as well as methodological improvements.

Resource Summary

Core Business Area	2019/20 Restated Estimates ¹	2020/21 Estimates	2021/22 Plan	2022/23 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Integrated Resource Operations	36,955	34,791	35,340	35,348
Resource Stewardship	104,775	100,735	102,338	102,576
Office of the Chief Forester	27,787	28,616	30,829	30,964
Rural Opportunities, Tenures and Engineering	65,440	63,902	64,302	63,874
Forest Policy and Indigenous Relations	9,414	9,087	10,199	10,203
Fire Preparedness	46,453	42,806	43,343	43,348
Regional Operations	149,488	150,086	152,824	152,861
Executive and Support Services	60,472	59,103	59,922	59,923
Fire Management	101,122	136,310	136,310	136,310
BC Timber Sales Account	213,462	218,512	220,563	214,547
Crown Land Special Account	20	20	20	20
Total	815,388	843,968	855,990	849,974
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Executive and Support Services	32,182	37,343	24,848	24,761
Fire Management	525	525	525	525
BC Timber Sales Account	48,689	50,629	48,859	46,486
Total	81,396	88,497	74,232	71,772
Other Financing Transactions (\$000)				
BC Timber Sales Account Disbursements	108,923	104,302	103,121	96,982
Crown Land Administration Disbursements	6,382	6,382	6,382	6,382
Crown Land Administration Receipts	0	0	0	0
Tourism Development Disbursements	600	600	600	600

Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Core Business Area	2019/20 Restated Estimates¹	2020/21 Estimates	2021/22 Plan	2022/23 Plan
Habitat Conservation Trust Disbursements	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
Habitat Conservation Trust Receipts	(6,500)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(6,500)
Net Cash Requirements	115,905	111,284	110,103	103,964
Total Receipts	(6,500)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(6,500)
Total Disbursements	122,405	117,784	116,603	110,464
Total Net Cash Requirements (Source)	115,905	111,284	110,103	103,964

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2019/20 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2020/21 Estimates.

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

Forest Practices Board Resource Summary

The Forest Practices Board independently monitors and reviews forest and range practices in B.C.’s public forests and rangelands. The Board audits both tenure holders and government ministries for compliance with forest and range practices legislation, carries out special investigations and issues reports as appropriate, investigates concerns and complaints from the public, and participates in appeals to the [Forest Appeals Commission](#). It informs both the B.C. public and the international marketplace of forest and range licensees’ performance in carrying out sound practices and complying with legal requirements.

The Board’s mandate is provided by the *Forest and Range Practices Act* and the *Wildfire Act*. While the Board operates independently from the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, its budget vote is the responsibility of the Minister. The Board reports its accomplishments and priorities through an annual report found at: www.bcfpb.ca.

Forest Practices Board	2019/20 Restated Estimates ¹	2020/21 Estimates	2021/22 Plan	2022/23 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Total	3,862	3,861	3,861	3,861

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2019/20 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2020/21 Estimates.

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

Appendix A: Crowns, Agencies, Boards and Commissions

The following organizations are responsible to, or associated with, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development and fall within the Province of British Columbia's government reporting entity:

Creston Valley Wildlife Management Authority

The Creston Valley Wildlife Management Authority manages the conservation of wildlife, particularly waterfowl, in the Creston Valley.

Forest Appeals Commission

The Forest Appeals Commission is an independent tribunal granted authority under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* to hear appeals from decisions made under a variety of statutes administered by the Ministry.

Forest Enhancement Society of British Columbia

The Forest Enhancement Society of British Columbia (FESBC) supports the Ministry by identifying, funding, advocating for and advancing environmental and resource stewardship of B.C.'s forests.

Forest Practices Board

British Columbia's Forest Practices Board provides independent oversight of compliance with the *Forest and Range Practices Act* and the *Wildfire Act*.

Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board

The Muskwa-Kechika Advisory Board advises government on natural resource management in the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area.