FREP
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# Developing a Process Indicator Framework for Cultural Heritage Resource Management

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British Columbia's forest managers are increasingly recognizing the importance of First Nations' cultural resources and values. Yet, understanding the diverse and often unique perspectives held by First Nations about cultural heritage resources is an ongoing learning process. What exactly are these values, and how can we manage them effectively?

Compounding this challenge is a frequent lack of detailed information about where cultural resources are located, concerns around the sensitive and often confidential nature of this information, and the need to identify landscape-scale management priorities for these resources and their associated values. Also critical to successfully managing cultural heritage resources is effectively communicating this information between First Nations and both industry and government forest managers.

*FREP - Hupacasath First Nation field visit, Port Alberni BC, July 2007*

Since June 2006, the Forest and Range Evaluation Program (FREP) has been building relationships with several First Nations across British Columbia. The objective of this work is to collaboratively develop a monitoring framework and approach that will provide a meaningful answer to the following priority evaluation 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 article provides a brief overview of the Cultural Heritage Resources Pilot Project under FREP, with a specific focus on the work of the "Process Indicator" Working Group.

***Quality Assurance...***
*...is the consciousness and the discipline to meet the highest standard through systematic processes and continuous improvement.*

***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.*
*http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/index.htm*

# A Brief Overview

FREP is a resource stewardship initiative established by the BC Ministry of Forests and Range (MOFR) to monitor and evaluate the status of British Columbia's forest and range resources. Established as an underpinning of the new results-based *Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA)* in 2004, FREP aims to:

- assess whether forest and range practices under *FRPA* are effectively maintaining 11 defined resource values; and
- determine whether these practices, and the legislation itself, meet the government's broader commitment to sustainable resource management.

The multi-agency FREP team collects scientifically rigorous field monitoring data to inform and improve on-the-ground forest practices. Where systemic problems are evident, this data may also inform policy or legislative changes over the longer term.

The *Forest Act* defines a cultural heritage resource as "an object, a site or the location of a traditional societal practice that is of historical, cultural or archaeological significance to British Columbia, a community or an Aboriginal people." While the management and protection of archaeological resources remains regulated by the *Heritage Conservation Act, FRPA* governs the conservation or protection of cultural sites and resources that are the focus of a traditional use by an Aboriginal people, *and that are of continuing importance to that people*.

The cultural heritage resource value is one of those discreetly identified under *FRPA*, yet it is arguably linked to many other forest and range values. Achieving effective management of cultural heritage resources therefore requires the following:

1. Forest management planning and implementation *processes* that meaningfully incorporate First Nations' interests and that function effectively and respectfully.
2. On-the-ground management *strategies and practices* that effectively and meaningfully conserve or protect cultural heritage values.

To address these distinct, yet interrelated issues, the FREP team is developing separate "process" and "outcome" indicator frameworks, and will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to evaluate these indicators.

# Developing a Process Indicator Framework

To build relationships and identify important issues, local information-sharing workshops were held in November 2006 with a small number of First Nations, forestry proponents, and government staff from multiple agencies. These initial discussions revealed several common concerns. A provincial dialogue session, held in March 2007, explored these concerns in more detail and provided the opportunity to determine the next steps for the Cultural Heritage Resources Pilot Project.

In June 2007, a joint First Nations-government working group was formed with representatives from the Nak'azdli, Tl'azt'en, Hupacasath, Tseshaht, and Ulkatcho First Nations, and government staff from the MOFR and the Integrated Land Management Bureau (ILMB). The working group has since met bi-weekly to develop a "process indicator framework." This framework outlines key indicators of effective forest management planning and implementation processes that meaningfully incorporate First Nations' cultural heritage values, resources, and interests (see below).

To evaluate these indicators, the FREP team will combine quantitative measures with the results of in-depth interviews with First Nations' representatives, forestry proponents (i.e., licensees and BC Timber Sales (BCTS) offices), and MOFR staff. Throughout the summer, the working group developed interview questions, which have since been reviewed and revised by subject experts from the MOFR, ILMB, and BC Stats. Interviews will take place on a voluntary basis in selected pilot areas in January 2008 and a final project report will be released in March 2008.

Results from the pilot project will be used to revise and improve both the indicator framework and the interview questions. Once revisions are complete, the interview process will be conducted more widely across the province. Over the longer term, the FREP team will continue to build working relationships with First Nations and industry across British Columbia.

*For more information about this pilot project, please visit the FREP Web site: http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/frep/values/heritage.htm or contact the project co-ordinator, Lisa Levesque at: 250-356-9331 or Lisa.Levesque@gov.bc.ca.*

# FREP PROCESS INDICATOR FRAMEWORK (NOVEMBER 2007)

## INDICATOR 1: MEANINGFUL FIRST NATIONS PARTICIPATION IN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANNING, PRIOR TO FOREST STEWARDSHIP PLAN (FSP) APPROVAL, UNDER *FRPA*.

Element 1.1 Level of collaboration between First Nations and proponents, prior to FSP approval.

Element 1.2 Effectiveness of the approach used by proponents to gather input from First Nations during the planning process, prior to FSP approval.

## INDICATOR 2: CLEAR AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCE INFORMATION DURING POST–FSP PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION BETWEEN FIRST NATIONS, FORESTRY PROPONENTS, AND GOVERNMENT STAFF.

Element 2.1 Clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.

Element 2.2 Properly functioning and mutually acceptable information sharing protocols have been established.

Element 2.3 Effective referrals and (or) information-sharing processes are in place.

Element 2.4 First Nations are informed of how identified cultural heritage resource concerns have been addressed.

## INDICATOR 3: TECHNICAL, LOGISTICAL, AND CROSS-CULTURAL CAPACITY EXISTS TO ENABLE INFORMED AND MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT IN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING AFFECTING CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCES.

Element 3.1 Adequate human resources are available.

Element 3.2 Adequate infrastructure is available.

Element 3.3 Adequate knowledge and information resources are available and accessible.

Element 3.4 Stable and long-term funding is available to support the management of cultural heritage resources.

## INDICATOR 4: STRATEGIC, OPERATIONAL, AND SITE-LEVEL MANAGEMENT PLANS MEANINGFULLY INCORPORATE THE CONSERVATION OR PROTECTION OF ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUES AND RESOURCES.

Element 4.1 Specific cultural heritage resource values of concern identified by First Nations are directly addressed in management plans at multiple scales.

Element 4.2 Level of confidence among First Nations that management plans meaningfully address Aboriginal and cultural interests.

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