

BRANCHING OUT

FOREST RESOURCE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA (FRIAA) NEWSLETTER | MARCH 2014



FRIAA has a new president!

Thank you, Bruce Macmillan, for your commitment and dedication to FRIAA. We wish you all the best in your retirement.

Message from the president

I'm looking forward to my new role as president of FRIAA and to continuing my involvement in a unique and special organization. Thank you for entrusting this important work to me.

I'm pleased to announce that FRIAA's board of directors recently welcomed three new members—Norm Denney, David Wall, and Dave West. All have made important contributions to forest sustainability over the past years, and we're

pleased that they have brought their expertise and ideas to help FRIAA fulfil its mandate. The board of directors has been busy these past months, and I commend them for doing such an excellent job.

We are very pleased to be delivering two new programs aimed at forest sustainability. The first is the Mountain Pine Beetle Forest Rehabilitation Program (MPBFRP). The MPBFRP provides funding to members so they can carry out activities to help rehabilitate forest resources that have been impacted by mountain pine beetle.

The second is the FRIAA FireSmart Program, which is designed to improve the protection of forest communities, resources, and values through activities that prevent wildfires. With grant funding provided by Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (ESRD) for the FireSmart Program, FRIAA publishes requests for proposals and has recently approved 19 FireSmart projects for immediate start-up.

"Learning from disasters is important, and the knowledge we gained from the Slave Lake wildfire is being put into practice," said Robin Campbell, Minister of ESRD. "Our government is taking action to protect both our communities and our forests."

Both of these programs support FRIAA's mandate of improving the sustainable management of Alberta's forest and support ESRD's forest management and protection obligation.

Finally, watch for a special edition of *Forestry Chronicle* featuring FRIAA next fall. We at FRIAA are looking forward to reading it.



Murray Summers

Board of Directors

Murray Summers, President
Norm Denney, 1st Vice President
David Kiil, 2nd Vice President
Cliff Henderson, Director
Bruce Mayer, Director
David Wall, Director
David West, Director



FireSmart Program

FRIAA is excited to launch its newest program, the FireSmart Program.

The program's purpose is to provide for improved protection of forest communities, resources, and values through operational and planning activities designed to prevent wildfire occurrence and to reduce fire hazard throughout Alberta. The program supplements the work already done through the FireSmart Community Grant Program sponsored by ESRD. Both aim to:

- Support community involvement and ownership of the wildland/urban interface issues within municipal jurisdictions.
- Provide financial assistance to those communities that wish to reduce the threat of wildfire.

FRIAA issued a call for proposals on November 18, 2013, with a closing date of December 6, 2013. We received 55 proposals, and the following projects were approved under the noted FireSmart disciplines, totalling close to \$4.5 million in funding.

Planning

- Wildfire Mitigation Strategy (County of Grande Prairie)
- Lac La Biche County Wildland/Urban Interface Plan (Lac La Biche County)
- Community FireSmart Planning (Kananaskis Improvement District)
- Strathcona County Wildfire Risk Assessment and FireSmart Operational Planning for Rural Strathcona County Communities (Strathcona County)
- FireSmart Planning Project (Town of Edson)
- FireSmart Initiatives (Summer Village of Bondis)
- Development and Implementation of Fire Protection Plans in Alberta Summer Villages (Alberta Association of Summer Villages)

Public Education

- Strathcona County FireSmart Education Program (Strathcona County)
- FireSmart Canada Community Recognition Program, Local FireSmart Workshop Delivery Services (Partners in Protection Association)

Vegetation/Fuel Management

- Dunes North Vegetation and Fuel Management (County of Grande Prairie)
- Wapiti Dunes Thinning and Fuel Management (County of Grande Prairie)
- Vegetation Management (East Prairie Metis Settlement)
- Town of Hinton 131 Civic Centre Road FireSmart (Town of Hinton)
- FireSmart Proposal 1 – Facility Fuel Reduction (Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park)
- Gift Lake Vegetation Management (Gift Lake Metis Settlement)
- Peter Lougheed Provincial Park Vegetation Management (Kananaskis Improvement District)
- Kananaskis Valley North Vegetation Management (Kananaskis Improvement District)
- Vegetation Management to Reduce Wildfire Risk in Two Rural Strathcona County Communities (Strathcona County)
- West Baptiste Vegetation Management (Summer Village of West Baptiste Lake)

FRIAA issued a second call for proposals on March 14, 2014, with a closing date of April 25, 2014. Application forms and more information are located on FRIAA's website.



Branching Out

Branching Out is the newsletter of the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA). It is published quarterly to communicate the objectives and activities of the association to members and other interested parties.

The purpose of FRIAA is to enhance the timber and non-timber forest resources of Alberta for the benefit of all Albertans. It encourages improved forest management activities over and above those required by government regulation.

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Up to the challenge

New board member David Wall brings 30 years of experience to help ensure programs meet industry needs.

For David Wall, forestry runs in the family. Wall grew up in a pulp and paper town in Newfoundland where, since 1909, the mill kept almost everyone in town employed, including his grandfather and father. A passion for the outdoors combined with interest sparked by a school trip to a logging camp led Wall to a career in forestry that has spanned five provinces and three decades, and given him a wealth of knowledge that will benefit FRIAA and its members.

After earning a Bachelor of Science in forest engineering at the University of New Brunswick in 1982, Wall worked for Repap Miramichi in New Brunswick as a forest engineer, responsible for forest inventory and timber supply analyses for the company's forest management plans. At the time, he had a leg up on many of his colleagues.

"Forest companies started using PCs to run timber supply analysis in about 1984. Having worked with computers in university, I graduated with sought-after skills, which is a credit to the education I received," Wall remembers.

The next seven years were spent with Repap's New Brunswick operations in forest planning, silviculture, and log-haul supervision. The company then moved him to Manitoba, where he held various positions, including management forester, contracts superintendent, development superintendent, and woodlands manager. Wall also worked in Ontario before coming to Alberta to join Millar Western Forest Products Ltd., where he is now director of fibre resources.

When it comes to forest management, Wall acknowledges the growing complexity of the job.

"Over the years, forest companies have had to dedicate more resources



to outreach, consultation, and collaboration to ensure that we build and sustain public trust in what we do," he says. "Instilling that confidence is critical to maintaining access to the timber we need to keep our mills running and our communities thriving."

While the industry faces many challenges, Wall also recognizes and is proud of its successes. "I think it's important to realize that the forest industry has done a great job in developing innovative and progressive land-management approaches—so much so that others are turning to us for our knowledge and leadership, which is gratifying."

Respect for FRIAA's work, such as funding leading-edge research through the Forest Resource Improvement Program and maintaining effective, long-standing programs like FireSmart, led Wall to join the board of directors. As a board member, he wants to ensure that FRIAA programming

remains relevant to industry needs.

"I'll be working with the board to develop priorities, but I expect that issues like mountain pine beetle and habitat conservation will continue to loom large," he says. "We need to maintain the programs that work well while remaining responsive to emerging issues. To that end, I am looking forward to working with FRIAA staff and board members to ensure that FRIAA funds are dispensed in a way that maximizes the health and vitality of our forests."

As director of fibre resources, Wall is kept busy managing fibre supply issues for Millar Western, and he sits on numerous committees that often require him to travel. When he does have some spare time, he indulges his lifelong love of the outdoors through gardening, working on his woodlot, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling. He and his wife, Joan, also enjoy travelling.

Always a student

David West brings to FRIAA a practical understanding and a desire to learn.

Active in the forest industry for 35 years, West joined FRIAA's board of directors with the goal of understanding the various aspects of Alberta's forest industry for his own development. But after years on the ground in Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and Alberta, he also brings an extremely practical level of industry knowledge to the table to help the organization continue to improve forest management.

"I've watched FRIAA for over 16 years and have always been impressed with what they have done. The whole concept of turning industry dollars back into projects for sound forest management and public benefit purposes is very positive. It's an interesting model that seems to work really well," says West, Stewardship and Tenures lead, Prairies division, Tolko Industries Ltd.

Growing up in northern Ontario, West was surrounded by the bush and the forest industry and developed an interest in working in forestry. In 1979, he graduated as a forest technician from Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, then spent the early part of his career working as a supervisor in the bush for various companies in Saskatchewan, British Columbia, and Alberta, eventually moving to Alberta to take a position with the Alberta Forest Service. His career has also included eight years self-employed as a contractor and developing two start-up forestry companies.

FRIAA was established in 1997 to promote and initiate projects that enhance Alberta's forest resources for the benefit of all Albertans.

Working with the start-ups—Footner Forest Products in High Level and Daishowa-Marubeni Peace River Pulp Division—has been the highlight of West's career.

"They were pretty exciting times because you were starting from scratch. You had a clean slate so you had the opportunity to develop systems and methods of doing business from nothing," he remembers.

From his early days in industry, West has always focused on improving forest management. Public scrutiny of what's happening on the ground began to intensify when he was just starting out and has continued to do so. At the same time, knowledge about environmental and ecological management that takes diverse issues into account has also grown, changing the way the forest is managed.

Staying on top of evolving practices and knowledge, says West, requires knowing what's going on on the ground while paying attention to what's being developed at a strategic level, then figuring out how to integrate the two.

"You have to be very aware of what's going on in the entire realm of the forestry world, from policy development and public pressures all the way down to applications in the forest," he



says. "It's important to pay attention to the whole gambit rather than just focusing on any one specific area and to make sure there is an opportunity to integrate strategies into good forest management that can be delivered on the ground, which is really where your results are seen."

At Tolko, West oversees managing, maintaining, and improving the company's annual allowable harvest commitments as well as the maintenance of Tolko's tenures in Alberta and Saskatchewan. He also ensures Tolko meets planning requirements in those provinces. When he's not at work, he can often be found outdoors, travelling and camping with his wife, riding his motorcycle, or gardening.

Mountain Pine Beetle Forest Rehabilitation Program

On September 23, 2013, the Mountain Pine Beetle Forest Rehabilitation Program issued a call for proposals. The call closed on October 31, and the program received four proposals. The following three were approved.

Lodgepole Pine Cone Collection for MPB Rehabilitation (Canadian Forest Products Ltd.); Seed Collection

Impacts of Mountain Pine Beetle on Hydrology and Vegetative Redevelopment in Lodgepole Pine Forests of West-central Alberta: Phase II (West Fraser / Foothills Research Institute); Research

Innovative Stand Enhancement and Regeneration Systems to Rehabilitate MPB-Affected Stands on Boreal Sites North of Grande Prairie (Canadian Forest Products Ltd.); Stand Rehabilitation (Mechanical Overstory Removal/Site Preparation/Planting) and Research

FRIAA issued a second call for proposals on February 28, 2014, with a closing date of April 4, 2014. Application forms and more information can be found at friaa.ab.ca.