



BRANCHING OUT

FOREST RESOURCE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA (FRIAA) NEWSLETTER | JUNE 2012



Reason to Celebrate: FRIAA Marks 15 Years of Service to Albertans

This year marks the celebration of 15 years of success for the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta. Established in 1997, FRIAA was created with a mandate to serve all Albertans by improving forest resources, enhancing the management of Alberta's forests, and reforesting public land. As we celebrate this important anniversary, FRIAA is proud to share the moment with everyone that has contributed to the success story—including FRIAA members, the forest industry, government, researchers, educators, stakeholders, and rural and urban communities. FRIAA has touched many people in positive ways through its focus on forest resources.

Since April 1, 1997, FRIAA has been fulfilling its delegated mandate by collecting dues related to the harvest of timber throughout the province and arranging for grant funds to support projects that help ensure long-term sustainability and health of our forests. Trevor Wakelin, long-standing president of the FRIAA Board, says that this milestone and FRIAA's accomplishments are even more important than he imagined they would be back in 1997 when FRIAA was first established.

"Our prime mandate is to enhance the forest resource for the benefit of all Albertans," says Wakelin. "Today, society demands that development of natural resources be done in a sustainable way, and that is what FRIAA has taken on as its major role."

Wakelin goes on to explain that it is critical to effectively manage our collective footprint in the forest while ensuring that the demands of society for a balance between economic, social, and environmental values are met. "Albertans treasure our forests and we have a responsibility to protect and sustain it. It is important to continually find better ways to improve how we can sustainably manage these renewable resources that so many Albertans rely on, through activities related to field operations, integrated management, applied research, public education, and protection efforts," he says.

Over the past 15 years, under Wakelin's leadership, FRIAA has established a variety of programs aimed towards improved forest sustainability. In addition, these programs have helped create employment for forestry workers in forest-based communities.



The success of these programs has gone beyond just forest resource improvement, but has touched on people's livelihoods and well-being.

Cooperation among members, industry participants, government, and the forestry sector overall in pursuing FRIAA's goals is what makes FRIAA unique and effective. The past year is a true success story for the way Albertans support the sustainability of Alberta's forest resources. FRIAA intends to build on that success in future years to ensure that the vision is achieved and all Albertans continue to benefit.

FRIAA's Landmark Accomplishments

- Continued to deliver the Community Reforestation Program, which has reforested 57,000+ hectares in Alberta
- Donated \$1.25 million to create the Royal Alberta Museum's Forest Exhibit
- Delivered the Fire Hazard Reduction and Forest Health Program, channelling \$30 million into FireSmart and other related projects
- Delivered the Forestry Worker Employment Program and CRP Enhancement Program, directing \$6.0 million and \$6.5 million towards planting and stand tending, respectively
- Provided ongoing funding support for a variety of community-based public education and awareness projects

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Message from the President



Trevor Wakelin

The Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta has been a significant contributor to the well-being of our province, by managing a wide range of forestry enhancement programs, and I am quite proud to announce its 15-year landmark. By working with various members, associations, stakeholders, and government, FRIAA is helping to sustain Alberta's forests for all Albertans, now and in the future. I am privileged to be president of an organization that looks to the future as it manages its programs and supports such important work in our forests. I'm proud that so many of our projects have been delivered through cooperation and collaboration with people so closely linked with the forest, including professionals such as foresters and forest technologists, researchers, educators, and Aboriginal people.

When FRIAA's mandate and objectives were being developed 15 years ago, I had no idea we could accomplish so much. Today FRIAA continues to be responsible for five core programs; over the past two years FRIAA has delivered

three additional programs, all aimed at improving our forests and benefiting Albertans.

We have come a long way since FRIAA's creation. Our core programs are expected to carry on for the long term, and other programs that have been completed have accomplished their goals. Our core programs include the Forest Resource Improvement Program, the Community Reforestation Program, the Wildfire Reclamation Program, and the Mountain Pine Beetle Program. These programs collectively help government to ensure that major sustainability issues in our province are dealt with in a timely manner. The short-term programs recently delivered by FRIAA include the Fire Hazard Reduction and Forest Health Program, the Forestry Workers Employment Program, and the Community Reforestation Program Enhancement Program. These programs truly demonstrated the ability of FRIAA to quickly design and deliver programs that require the management of funds, processes, and outcomes to meet multiple objectives.

FRIAA works closely with the Government of Alberta towards their strategic goal of innovative, responsible, and sustainable resource development. This goal encompasses finding innovative solutions to developing Alberta's resources while protecting our environment for future generations. I believe that FRIAA has done a remarkable job in this regard.

I would like to thank all of you who have been involved with FRIAA projects over the last 15 years. If you wish to participate in or obtain additional information about FRIAA, the Board of Directors and I invite you to visit our website.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Wakelin'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light-colored background.

Trevor Wakelin, President



Branching Out

Branching Out is the newsletter of the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA).

Branching Out 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.

Please return undeliverable copies to:

FRIAA

Box 11094, Main Post Office
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3K4

For more copies of this issue or to be added to the mailing list, please contact FRIAA in Edmonton:

Phone: (780) 429-5873
Fax: (780) 428-5190
Email: admin@friaa.ab.ca
Web: friaa.ab.ca

ISSN: 1703-1044

Editorial production/management:
FinalEyes Communications Inc.

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Bringing the Forest to Albertans

Wild Alberta Gallery includes forest-related displays, thanks to FRIAA,

It's been five years since FRIAA invested \$1.25 million in a partnership with the Friends of Royal Alberta Museum Society to enrich the Wild Alberta Gallery. Since then, the gallery, which features the latest environmental research and educates visitors on how ecosystems work, has been brought to life.

"It's the largest single donation we've ever had, and it enabled us to put interpreters into the Wild Alberta Gallery. By doing so, we have been able to create a more lively gallery for the public's enjoyment. This also allows us to better interact with the public. Now there is dialogue, and the information flows better," says Bruce Bolton, Director of Business Operations, Royal Alberta Museum.

So far, new interpretive elements in the gallery include a theatre that holds about 25 people, where visitors can view a newly created seven-minute, high-definition video about the life of a forest after a fire. The video, narrated by actor Tom Jackson, illustrates how a forest comes back to life. It shows

the different plants and animals that are present and in various stages of forest development.

"We use lighting and graphics to really immerse the viewer, so that you feel like you are in the middle of the forest," says Bolton. "It's an interesting, engaging, and educational experience."

FRIAA's Board previewed the video to ensure the facts were correct.

Thanks to FRIAA, the Wild Alberta Gallery also has a new entrance with trees and benches to bring people straight into the boreal forest. Funds were also used for new programming, computer upgrades, and operational expenses. The remainder of the funds won't be used until the museum is in its new building.

About 100,000 people visit the Wild Alberta Gallery every year. FRIAA's donation ensures that these visitors have the opportunity to better understand Alberta's forests and their value to the province.

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FRIAA administration:

Phone: (780) 429-5873

Fax: (780) 429-4026

Email: admin@friaa.ab.ca • Website: www.friaa.ab.ca





Program Updates

FRIAA's five core programs are aimed at improving the forests of Alberta and enhancing the management of Alberta's forests for the benefits of all Albertans. Updates and key accomplishments in administering FRIAA's programs are as follows:

1) Forest Resource Improvement Program (FRIP)

The FRIP activities directly align with the goal of sustaining the high quality of Alberta's forested environment. The FRIP continues to deliver project activities in spite of historic low levels of FRIP dues. Since the inception of FRIAA in 1997, over \$208 million has been contributed to forestry projects that enhance Alberta's forests and improve the management of Alberta's forest resources. These projects all contribute towards key aspects of sustainability and resource enhancement through operational improvement activities, enhanced planning and inventory work, applied research projects, public education, and forest protection initiatives.

2) Community Reforestation Program (CRP)

The CRP is funded by reforestation levies paid directly to FRIAA by timber permit-holders. The levies are pooled and used to pay for reforestation by service providers who can deliver the full range of reforestation activities. Excellent results have been attained with the program, as all cutblocks included in the program are treated and returned to productivity. The CRP is key to sustaining the Community Timber Program that supports small loggers and sawmillers.

A number of improvements have recently been made to processes by government and FRIAA, including collecting revenue and tracking reforestation responsibilities. This helps to ensure the long-term success of the program by making sure the program is fully funded while maintaining reforestation levies at affordable levels.

3) Wildfire Reclamation Program (WRP)

All eligible participants in the 1998 WRP have been working hard to complete activities under this program. The 1998 portion of the program was extended for one year until May 31, 2013, so participants could complete regeneration surveys. Once completed, a total of \$36.4 million will have been spent on over 25,000 hectares of productive forest land that was previously reforested and subsequently destroyed by wildfire.

The 2006 portion of the WRP has been very active. To date, 4,989 hectares of reforested cutblocks damaged or destroyed by wildfires from 2006 to 2010 are being initially treated and will be returned to productivity. The devastating 2011 wildfires in the Slave Lake area and elsewhere in Alberta resulted in a large area of reforested cutblocks being destroyed. SRD and FRIAA identified over 12,000 hectares of cutblocks requiring treatment. The province is providing approximately \$23 million to fund the remediation and reforestation of these areas.

4) Mountain Pine Beetle Program (MPBP)

On April 1, 2007, the MPBP was established to deal with the effects of the mountain pine beetle infestation spreading throughout Alberta. Funding provided by the province to FRIAA has allowed FRIAA's members to be an integral part of the critical detection and control efforts related to mountain pine beetle. These activities included single tree control, pheromone baiting, and log yard management.

To date, the MPBP has distributed over \$17 million to key projects delivered by members and their contractors. In 2011, FRIAA adopted a call for proposals process for identifying the best projects to implement with these funds. The process is functioning very well.

5) Incidental Conifer Program (ICP)

The ICP was scheduled to expire March 31, 2010. Not all funding was used by eligible participants by that date, so the Minister of Alberta SRD has decided to extend the program until December 31, 2016. Activities that sustain coniferous timber supplies are still being implemented.

What FRIAA Means for Alberta

Interview with Foothills Research Institute's Tom Archibald

What is FRI's role in promoting and sustaining forest in Alberta?

Foothills Research Institute is a non-profit organization that was formed in 1992 to conduct applied research and promote the cultural, ecological, economic, and social values for Alberta's forest and landscape. Over our history, we have worked with about 120 partners including provincial government ministries, federal government, and companies in the forest, oil and gas, and coal industries; universities; and other like-minded research organizations. Our mandate is broader than simply sustaining forest in Alberta. Companies come to us with questions related to improving sustainable forest management and we develop research programs around those questions to help them find solutions. Our main goal is to find solutions that make our partners' jobs easier.

Describe the relationship between FRI and FRIAA.

We have a long-standing relationship with FRIAA, and I can't count the number of projects that FRIAA has funded over the years. Our relationship is very strong and we work very closely with FRIAA to make sure that we are delivering value to our partners. FRIAA members ask us questions and we find solutions. We work not only with FRIAA members, but also with FRIAA itself, working closely with its staff to ensure we are designing appropriate research projects that fit partners' needs and fit within our mandate.

How does FRIAA funding help FRI and the forest sector achieve common goals?

Our goal is to provide our partners with knowledge and tools so they can achieve their goal of operating on the forested landscape in a sustainable manner. Some of the projects FRIAA has funded directly focus on ways to work with the various industries to

develop specialized knowledge and tools to mitigate the industrial footprint on our forested landscape and ensure sustainability.

What are highlights or notable projects that FRIAA supports?

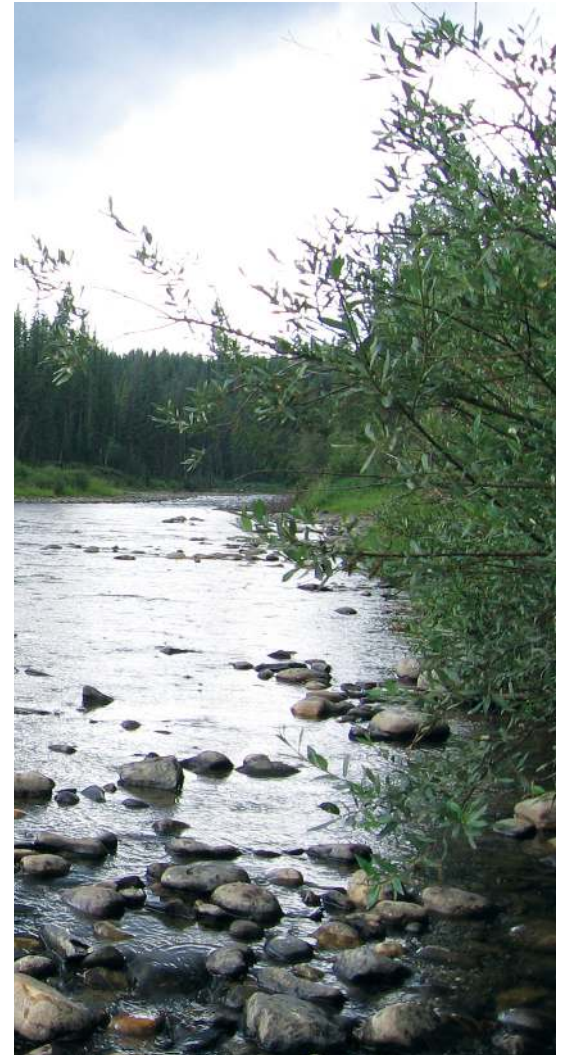
There are about 100 projects. Some are very important to the economy of Alberta and to the long-term sustainability of the forest industry. The Mountain Pine Beetle Project that has been funded through FRIAA includes the monitoring of mountain pine beetle. This project is important to the Government of Alberta as well as to the long-term sustainability of the forest resource. FRIAA also contributed to a decision support tool developed in collaboration with the Foothills Growth and Yield Association. That tool is helping resource managers to work on various infestation scenarios and the project's outcomes help them manage stands and mitigate infestation and the spread of the mountain pine beetle.

The other interesting project has been to develop, validate, and deliver grizzly bear habitat maps and tools. The tools help partners or people operating on the landscape understand what type of habitat grizzly bears live in so they can avoid or mitigate damage in those habitats. It helps the forestry and oil and gas industries, and others, look at potential access issues. By understanding where the grizzly bear habitat is, they can maybe lessen the impact.

How do you see the relationship between FRIAA and organizations like FRI developing in the future?

As FRI celebrates 20 years, we recognize that FRIAA has played an important role in the successes of our organization and we continue to consider FRIAA one of our major funding partners. We take pride in giving our partners and supporting partners, like FRIAA, the best value. That means working with the Canadian Forest Service,

University of Alberta, other educational institutions, and research organizations to ensure our partners are getting real cutting-edge research. We will continue to strive to give FRIAA, and our other partners, the best value.



Interview with Weyerhaeuser's Wendy Crosina

What is Weyerhaeuser's role in promoting and sustaining forest in Alberta?

With two forest management agreement (FMA) licences in Alberta, Weyerhaeuser has been granted the responsibility of managing the forested land base by the Alberta government. Within the bounds of regulation and policy, we have the opportunity to promote good stewardship and responsible land management. We manage the landscape for multiple values, including timber, wildlife, and other forms of biodiversity. It is Weyerhaeuser's core policy to be responsible stewards of the environment wherever we do business. We practise sustainable forestry, set and meet goals to reduce pollution, conserve natural resources and energy, reduce waste, and continually improve our environmental performance, all of which showcases Alberta forestry positively and proactively.

Describe the relationship between Weyerhaeuser and FRIAA.

Weyerhaeuser and FRIAA share the goal of enhancing Alberta's forest resource for the interest of others. Weyerhaeuser has

in-depth knowledge of the forest condition, allowing us to identify opportunities for projects and programs to improve the forest resource. Weyerhaeuser works with FRIAA to develop and implement these projects. The relationship is highly cooperative with Weyerhaeuser using on-the-ground expertise to support FRIAA's resource improvement goals.

How does FRIAA funding help Weyerhaeuser and the forest sector achieve common goals?

FRIAA provides the resources that support the initiation and development of a number of non-required, but very key, programs in the areas of growth and yield, ecology, and stakeholder relations. Forestry companies would be hard-pressed to find the resources to support some of these programs to the level we have without FRIAA. There would be far less good, technically sound information available. Some of the initiatives would have gone forward, but with limited funding support.

The forest sector is interested in knowing as much about the resource as possible in order to better manage the forested land base. Some of the research projects for example, have furthered our understanding of the way the ecosystem is interconnected, which has allowed us to better understand and mitigate our impacts.

What are highlights or notable projects that FRIAA supports?

FRIAA has supported a number of Weyerhaeuser initiatives. Highlights include our long-term woodland caribou research and monitoring program and support for the Foothills Research Institute's Grizzly Bear Research program. We also support growth and yield associations and have done some fantastic work on growth and yield models. A number of short-term projects have helped us answer immediate questions. Larger-scale FRIAA programs provide significant resources to help manage large-scale issues.

How do you see the relationship between FRIAA and organizations like Weyerhaeuser developing in the future?

I would like to see FRIAA continue to play a prominent role in research and information gathering. FRIAA funding and support are key to the forestry sector's ability to continue to learn about the forest, address and mitigate impacts to wildlife and other values, and successfully grow the resource. FRIAA has supported the research community with sustained funding on relevant forest management issues, which provides enhanced value back to the forest industry. Continuing this relationship will provide a multitude of long-term benefits, not only to the forest sector, but also to the Alberta government and other stakeholders.



Interview with Alberta SRD's Ken Greenway

What is SRD's role in promoting and sustaining forest in Alberta?

Our mandate is to promote sustainability, and our main role is forest management planning and developing or reviewing forest management plans proposed by industry. We care for the whole forest as opposed to just the trees. If there is no corporate FMA-holder in an area, we develop the forest management plans. If there is an FMA-holder, we work with them to see that plans are developed. SRD, as the land manager, must try to accommodate everybody to the best of our ability while managing the damaging agents in order to help maintain the forest.

Describe the relationship between SRD and FRIAA.

The relationship involves cooperation and collaboration on a number of programs; FRIAA is responsible for specific forest management programs that SRD delegates. These programs involve trees and forestry as opposed to bigger land management or land use planning programs. FRIAA and SRD work together to improve the forest resource.

How does FRIAA funding help SRD and the forest sector achieve common goals?

FRIAA delivers notable programs and helps government achieve sustainability objectives in innovative and different ways. It is a delegated authority, so FRIAA reports to the Minister of Environment and SRD. In some cases, the department grants money for programs under a grant agreement, so FRIAA is essentially accountable through a contract. For other programs, such as the FRIP and CRP, FRIAA is accountable through the *Forest Resources Improvement Regulation*. Overall, FRIAA is accountable to the Minister through the regulation, which sets up the authority and accountability framework. FRIAA is accountable financially and must meet objectives and report on them to the Minister.

What are some highlights or notable programs?

The Mountain Pine Beetle Program (MPBP). SRD's mandate is to maintain forest health and productivity and obviously the mountain pine beetle is a significant threat to that. SRD provides direct funding based on the grant agreement to help manage mountain pine beetle infestation and support companies to do monitoring and planning.



The other significant funding that FRIAA manages is through the Community Timber Program. FRIAA collects dues directly from small forest operators to support reforestation activities. SRD delegated the authority to directly collect a reforestation levy from the small operators, and this is put back into reforestation of harvested area. People also pay dues to help support the Forest Resource Improvement Program, which ensures forest management, reforestation, or other needed activities.

Another notable program, the Wildfire Reclamation Program, supports the forest industry in reclaiming previously reforested cutblocks destroyed by wildfires.

How do you see the relationship between FRIAA and SRD developing in the future?

We have had a really productive relationship and there is still opportunity for FRIAA to help deliver SRD programs in emerging areas. Seven or eight years ago, the MPB program would never have been thought of as program, and now it is a significant annual delivery effort, illustrating the benefit of FRIAA. FRIAA is well known, well understood, and ready should a program come up.

Provincial Priorities

How FRIAA's members support enhanced sustainability

Alberta's natural forests are a provincial treasure that must be managed in a sustainable manner if we are to pass on its benefits to future generations. Over the past 15 years, FRIAA has made significant strides in promoting enhanced sustainable forest resource management—we could not do it without our members.

Today, FRIAA has 31 members who support projects that are crucial in meeting local and provincial needs. This support is provided directly, through FRIP dues and the completion of projects, as well as indirectly when members support others who deliver projects.

By participating in FRIAA programs, members make the organization viable and effective. It is the support and participation of these forward-thinking organizations that will ensure Alberta's forest is bringing value to all stakeholders for generations to come.



FRIAA's 15th Annual General Meeting

5 p.m., June 21, 2012

at the Old Timers Cabin

9430-99 Street NW (Scona Road)

Edmonton, Alberta

FRIAA's Partners

FRIAA's 31 members

Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Ltd., Alberta Plywood Ltd., ANC Timber Ltd., Askee Development Corporation, Blue Ridge Lumber Inc., Boucher Bros. Lumber Ltd., Canadian Forest Products Ltd., Crowsnest Forest Products Ltd., Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd., Foothills Forest Products Ltd., Gordon Buchanan Enterprises Ltd., Hinton Wood Products Ltd., Koinonia Corporation, Little Red River Forestry Ltd., Manning Diversified Forest Products, Medicine Lodge Timber Products Ltd., Millar Western Forest Products Ltd., Northland Forest Products Ltd., Rocky Wood Preservers Ltd., Seehta Forest Products, Slave Lake Pulp Corporation, Spray Lake Sawmills (1980) Ltd., Spruceland Millworks Inc., Sundance Forest Industries Ltd., Sundre Forest Products Ltd., Tall Pine Timber Co. Ltd., Tolko Industries Ltd., Vanderwell Contractors (1971) Ltd., Weyerhaeuser Company Ltd., Zama Mills Ltd., Zavisha Sawmills Ltd.

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development

Foothills Research Institute

Universities and colleges

Forestry consultants and contractors

Western Economic Diversification Canada