
BRANCHING OUT

JUNE 2019



WORKING TOGETHER TO MANAGE OUR VITAL FOREST RESOURCES

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 forest resources of Alberta for the benefit of all Albertans. It encourages improved forest management activities over and above those required by government regulation. It is, uniquely, an organization able to collaborate with academia, government, municipalities, industry and the Ministry. It has supported practical and applied research on-the-ground forest improvement strategies as well as innovative approaches to forest inventory and planning that helps Alberta manage its forest resources in a sustainable manner. Editorial material in this newsletter may be reproduced and disseminated with the following credit attached: "Courtesy of Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta"



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President's Message

2018/2019 was a great year for making meaningful connections with Albertans. We continue to see many innovative and collaborative projects being proposed and are excited to announce new funding opportunities to help them move forward.

Mountain Pine Beetle projects saw a multitude of funding awards and include control and prevention, log yard maintenance and ground surveys. We're optimistic these projects will play an important part in managing the Mountain Pine Beetle in Alberta's forests.

The FRIAA FireSmart Program has seen several successes this year. Funding was awarded for projects throughout Alberta, ranging from planning to vegetation management. The collaborative effort made to help protect the Waiparous Back 40 from wildfires was another great achievement. FireSmart activities will build resiliency in the community for many years into the future.

FRIP, the Forest Resource Improvement Program, has more than doubled the level of funding for projects and has continued to help fund projects that make important connections with young Albertans, especially in urban areas. Every year, we make forests and forestry more accessible to all Alberta students, helping create stewards for generations to come.

Lastly, we introduced a new program, for the Enhanced Reforestation of Legacy Disturbance (EnRLD) to provide funds to sequester carbon by reforesting public lands disturbed by wildfire. As wildfires become more prolific in our province, programs that help regenerate affected areas are essential in mitigating the impacts.

We look forward to the coming year and are excited by our new funding opportunities and progress. If you'd like to find out more, join us at the FRIAA Annual General Meeting, June 20 in Edmonton. We're grateful for your continued support and interest and are always happy to receive feedback and input.

Thank you,



Murray Summers
FRIAA President



Enhanced Reforestation of Legacy Disturbance Program



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- The Enhanced Reforestation of Legacy Disturbance (EnRLD) program provides funds to sequester carbon by reforesting public lands that have been disturbed by wildfire.

Program Description

While Alberta's boreal forest areas are commonly impacted by wildfire, natural regeneration of these forests can be marked by a significant delay. The Enhanced Reforestation of Legacy Disturbance (EnRLD) program is designed to reforest sites on Alberta public land that have been disturbed by wildfire that may be slow to regenerate naturally. This will enhance carbon sequestration while improving the forest resource in a cost-effective manner. Furthermore, the program will create reforestation jobs in rural areas, further encouraging thriving communities.

This program is funded in part by the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada's Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund (LCELF).



Request for Proposals

ENHANCED REFORESTATION OF LEGACY DISTURBANCE
PROGRAM (EnRLD) - 2019 SITE ASSESSMENT PROJECT



- The goal of this RFP is to assess previously burnt stands in order to understand which areas are most desirable for planting efforts.

The successful proponent(s) of this RFP will be required to conduct site assessments on areas affected by recent wildfires (within the last five years). This initial RFP will allow FRIAA to assess the naturally disturbed areas in Alberta and determine which previously forested areas require assistance to regenerate efficiently.

THE DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS IS IN JUNE 2019.

Visit www.friaa.ab.ca for more information on FRIAA's Enhanced Reforestation of Legacy Disturbance Program and this RFP.



Being FireSmart in the Back 40

FIRESMART ACTIVITIES AND
COORDINATION WITH SV WAIPAROUS



- The Summer Village of Waiparous is a small community in the Municipal District of Bighorn located East of Calgary. The village is near the Back 40 Recreational Lease which supports a trail system maintained through the Ghost-Waiparous Trails Association, MD of Bighorn, SV of Waiparous and the Government of Alberta.

The Back 40 contains a dense, older forest that is at high risk for forest fires. In the past, residents have been skeptical of the FireSmart program due to the high level of concern for the area's natural environment and delicate ecosystem. However, this past year has proved very successful in terms of working with the community to implement FireSmart and manage the Back 40 in a way that preserves the rustic environment while also lowering its risk of forest fire.

By thinning and pruning the forest, planes can more easily drop retardant and crews can establish and hold containment lines to keep fires from spreading from the forest to the community. With support from the Municipal District of Bighorn, the Back 40 is now being managed in a preventative way that protects the safety of humans and homes in the area.

Dene Cooper, Reeve of the Municipal District of Bighorn and the project proponent, is enthusiastic about the program's implementation and says he's relieved. He, among others, believes the program will have a lasting positive impact for all life in the Back 40.

“...it’s about FireSmarting, setting ecological succession back and creating a forest that’s more manage[able] from a fire perspective.”

Dene Cooper
Reeve, MD of Bighorn

Office of the Auditor General Applauds FireSmart

IN THEIR RECENT REPORT, THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL (OAG) FOUND FRIAA'S FIRESMART PROGRAM TO BE WELL DESIGNED AND ADMINISTERED.

- "Albertans have experienced devastating losses over the last few years due to wildfires. And unfortunately, research indicates that future wildfire seasons may increase in length and severity because of climate change.

Wildfires threaten human lives, communities, natural resources, wildlife habitat, industrial facilities and infrastructure. That's why it's so important to have programs like FireSmart in place."¹

In their role of examining and publicly reporting on Alberta's management of public resources, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) must be honest and forthright in its reports. Due to their necessarily stringent process, approval from the OAG can be difficult to obtain. FRIAA has been pleased to see the OAG recognizing the success we have had running FRIAA FireSmart and is proud to announce that, due to our excellence in reporting, we have received approval from the OAG. The FRIAA FireSmart Program has been very effective since it was created, with team members working with communities to identify, develop and get funding for projects. These projects include mitigation strategies, wildfire preparedness guides and vegetation management.

We're proud of how far the FRIAA FireSmart Program has come and the positive impact it's had for communities and forests.

¹ Alberta Agriculture and Forestry Wildfire Management: Processes for Prevention and Review and Improvement, Report of the Auditor General of Alberta, November 2018



We'll continue to work hard
to improve and expand on the
wildfire management services
we offer for Albertans.

FireSmart funding announcements May 2019

- The February 2019 FRIAA FireSmart Request For Expressions Of Interest received 43 applications, asking \$4,468,692. In May, the Review Committee approved 28 proposals for \$2,782,0158.

Approved projects include:

- 10 FireSmart Planning
- 3 Public Education
- 15 Vegetation / Fuel Modification

A few sample projects are described here. The full list of approved projects is available on our website.

1. **Lethbridge Goat Grazing Wildfire Prevention** (*City of Lethbridge Fire Department*)

- FireSmart discipline: Vegetation Management
- Term of project: September 2019 – October 2019
- The objective of this project is to prevent and reduce the spread of wildfire in open grasslands by using goat grazing to reduce fine fuels. Vegetation measurements will contribute to research on grazing as a means of fuel reduction on the landscape.

2. **Saddle Hills Hazard and Risk Assessments** (*Saddle Hills County*)

- FireSmart discipline: Planning
- Term of project: June 2019 – March 2020
- The objective of this project is to provide the Saddle Hills County and their stakeholders with an assessment of the hazards and risk of incoming wildfire in communities across the County.

3. Fishing Lake (*Fishing Lake Metis Settlement*)

- FireSmart discipline: Planning
- Term of project: June 2019 – December 2019
- The objective of this project is to complete a Wildfire Hazard and Risk Assessment for wildfire within the Fishing Lake Metis Settlement complete with all the rural properties included in the area. Based on the outcome of this assessment, a determination will be made to either further complete mitigation planning or identify areas where fuel modification or vegetation management can be implemented.

FRIAA expects to announce a new FireSmart funding opportunity in early July, so keep checking our website, email announcements and Twitter for details. Expression of Interest applications will be due in mid-September with awards being made in late December for 2020 projects.

4. Sandy Beach Vegetation Management

(Summer Village of Sandy Beach)

- FireSmart discipline: Vegetation Management
- Term of project: December 2019 – March 2020
- The objective of this project is to treat conifer and mixedwood forest on the East side of the Summer Village to prevent a wildfire from spreading into the community. Dead and down trees will be bucked into firewood lengths and the limbs and tops will be burnt, standing trees pruned to 2m, and the coniferous understory will be thinned or removed.

5. Whitefish Lake First Nation #459 Vegetation Management

(Whitefish Lake First Nation #459)

- FireSmart discipline: Vegetation Management
- Term of project: June 2019 – April 2020
- The objective of this project is to prevent and reduce the risk of wildfire in the undeveloped forests in the northern area of the community. Specifically, 20.3 hectares will be targeted by thinning and pruning the coniferous vegetation as well as removing any dead and down, with standing vegetation to be used as firewood or disposed of on-site.





A new generation of growth

STUDENTS PRACTICE FOREST STEWARDSHIP WITH PROJECTS FUNDED BY
THE FOREST RESOURCES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (FRIP)



- 2018 was a big year for FRIP. The projects funded by FRIP enhance forest resources and improve the integrated management of Alberta's forested lands for the benefit of all Albertans. One project that has had a profound impact this year was Inside Education's project, "Forest Education Field Trips".

An outstanding 3,467 Alberta students from grades 4-12 participated in forestry field trips at three of Inside Education's six forest education sites. To top that off, an additional 2,912 students, teachers and adults were reached during high school Work Wild presentations and special community events throughout southern Alberta.

During the Forest Student Field Trips, students enjoyed programming at three sites:

- the Jumpingpound Demonstration Forest
- the Huestic Demonstration Forest, and
- the Des Crossley Demonstration Forest

Educators and programs at each site received glowing reviews from participating schools, with many wanting to return for the 2019 season.

On May 31, a special tree planting event was held at the Huestis Demonstration Forest. Grade 4 students from Alexis Nakota First Nations School, Ecole St. Joseph and Whitecourt Central each had the opportunity to plant a tree in a cut block with their names recorded along with the tree tag number. This will allow them to go back and visit so they can watch their tree grow.

FRIP has a long history of funding essential projects that preserve and protect one of our most precious resources. One of our goals is to continue to raise awareness about the unique challenges faced by Alberta's forests and to foster a new generation of passionate forest advocates.

“My students loved it! They especially loved being able to see what we were talking about and apply it to their forest exploring...”

Michelle Savoie

Eleanor Hall School, Clyde, about the Huestis Demonstration Forest

Project Awards

FEBRUARY 2019 CALL FOR PROPOSALS: MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE (MPB) PROJECTS APPROVED IN APRIL 2019

Thirteen Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) control projects totaling \$478,693.76 in funding were approved in April 2019. The MPB control program includes several different types of eligible activities that include long distance dispersal monitoring, containment baiting, log yard management, aerial detection surveys, ground surveys, level 1 control, protection of genetic trials, orchards, and research plots, and regional planning initiatives. Below are four samples of projects that were approved for the 2019 season.

1. **MPB Detection, Control and Prevention at the Huallen Seed Orchard** (*Canadian Forest Products Ltd.*)

- Term of project: May 2019 to October 2019
- Project category: Seed Orchard/ Genetic Trial(s) Protection.
- The objective of this project is to protect two lodgepole pine orchards.

2. **2019 Log Yard Management Plan** (*Millar Western Forest Products Ltd.*)

- Term of project: May 2019 to November 2019
- Project category: Pheromone Baiting/Dispersal – Log Yard Management.
- The objective of the project is to monitor and contain mountain pine beetle populations at the mill yard and 12 satellite log storage yards.

3. **2019 MPB Dispersal Baiting Program** (*Sundre Forest Products Inc.*)

- Term of project: June 2019 to September 2019
- Project category: Pheromone Baiting/Dispersal – Long Distance Dispersal Monitoring.
- The objective of the project is long distance dispersal baiting in 62 townships to ensure early detection of MPB on the Sundre Forest Products' FMA and follow up control activities as required.

4. **2019 Ground Surveys (R-Value)** (*Hinton Wood Products, A Division of West Fraser Mills Ltd.*)

- Term of project: April 2019 to July 2019
- Project category: Ground Surveys.
- The objective of the project is to prepare and implement a mountain pine beetle R-value survey program on the Hinton Wood Products' FMA that compliments the Alberta Agriculture and Forestry plans.





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