



**COMMUNITY FOREST PROGRAM
THREE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
07/08 – 09/10**



AUGUST 2007

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THREE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to outline the Ministry of Forests' (MFR) strategy for the Community Forest Program (CFP) for the next three fiscal years (07/08-09/10).

The report is intended to present ministry staff and community forest clients the goals and strategies to achieve the stated objectives.

The strategy takes into account the funding and staffing resources, which have been allocated to the ministry as well as the recommendations included in the "COMMUNITY FOREST PROGRAM REVIEW" June 2006.

2. INTRODUCTION/HISTORY

The Community Forest Program was derived from government's desire to ensure communities had access to practice community based forestry. The goal was to provide long-term opportunities for community management of Crown forest land. In doing so, communities would have greater flexibility to manage local forests and are provided with opportunities for achieving a range of community objectives, including local employment, forest related education and skills training and other social, environmental and economic benefits.

In 1998, the *Forest Act* was amended to include community forest agreements, which became the 11th form of forest tenure in BC. The legislation included the provision for community forest pilot agreements (subsequently changed to probationary agreements) with a five-year term and long-term community forest agreements (25-99 years).

The initial model developed by MFR, and CFAC (Community Forests Advisory Committee) was to "pilot" the community forest concept in a few communities across the province for a probationary period. Expressions of interest were advertised and 27 communities responded. Of these 27, eight were chosen as pilot/probationary communities. After approximately five years, an assessment would be done on these initial pilot/probationary communities, and if successful, they could be granted long-term licence. The program as a whole would also be evaluated at this time.

For a variety of reasons, the CFP went into full implementation mode with 5 long term licences and 14 probationary licences currently issued, 30 more direct invitations to communities to apply, constituting approximately 1.1 million m³, and approved plans for a further 281,000m³ (See Appendix 1), for a total of approximately 1.4 million m³.

The rapid expansion, shift from RFP to direct invitation, and the move from pilot phase to full implementation has resulted in parties from both inside and outside the

MFR to question the construct of the present program and the need for changes to the program to streamline the administrative burden.

The rapidly expanding and changing program precipitated a program review to seek answers to questions and/or confirm the program direction. The program review was completed in the summer of 2006 and 36 recommendations were put forward. Some of the recommendations are quite benign, agreed to by all parties, and easy to implement. However, there remain some recommendations that are not as straight forward nor agreed to by all. In an effort to address this issue a Provincial Community Forest Agreement Working Group (PCFAWG) has been formed. The group is comprised of MFR staff from the 3 Regions, District, and Branch as well as BCCFA executive. The PCFAWG had its inaugural meeting in July 2007 in Kamloops and continues to meet on a regular basis. One of its first achievements was the development of a work plan (Appendix 2). This strategic document is part of that work plan.

3. VISION, MISSION, AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMMUNITY FOREST PROGRAM

In British Columbia, a community forest can be described as any forestry operation managed by a local government, community group, or First Nation for the benefit of the entire community.

VISION:

Forests managed by the community for community values.

MISSION STATEMENT:

To provide opportunities for communities to practice community forestry.

OBJECTIVES

This form of tenure is intended to provide opportunities for community management of Crown forest land.

By providing communities with flexibility to manage local forests, government seeks to:

- provide long-term opportunities for achieving a range of community objectives, values and priorities
- diversify the use of and benefits derived from the community forest agreement area
- promote community involvement and participation
- provide social and economic benefits to British Columbia
- undertake community forestry consistent with sound principles of environmental stewardship that reflect a broad spectrum of values

- foster innovation
- advocate forest worker safety, and
- promote communication and strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities and persons

Goals for 2007/08 through 2009/10:

The goals for the next three years are to:

- complete the disposition of approximately 281,000m³ (Appendix 1)
- Improve the monitoring and reporting of community forest accomplishments relative to provincial CFA Program objectives; and,
- Resolve outstanding issues and policy questions regarding community forests as identified in the Workplan (See Appendix 2).

Strategies to Achieve the Goals:

- Continue to improve the processes and procedures associated with the advertising, evaluating, awarding and monitoring of community forest agreements.
- Develop and implement a monitoring and reporting system
- Conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of community forest agreements with respect to meeting the ministry's objectives identified above.
- Resolve the outstanding issues facing community forests which have been identified, prioritized and listed in Appendix 2. Recommended time frames for resolution of the issues have also been identified.

4. COMMUNICATION PLAN

In light of the program's history and the high level of expectation and demand, it will be important to communicate effectively with ministry staff, communities, First Nations and other key stakeholders.

In addition to this three year strategy, various directives, bulletins, templates, presentations, and policy updates will be developed. These documents will be posted to the ministry's community forest public webpage:

<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hth/community/index.htm>. A link to the documents will also be posted on the BCCFA website at www.bccfa.ca

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Disposition

TSA	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	Total
Queen Charlotte		25,424		25,424
North Coast	15,000			15,000
Mid Coast				0
Kingcome				0
Strathcona				0
Arrowsmith			16,000	16,000
Soo	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000
Sunshine Coast				0
Fraser				0
CFR Totals	25,000	35,424	26,000	86,424

Arrow				0
Boundary				0
Kootenay Lake				0
Lillooet				0
Merritt	20,000			20,000
100 Mile				0
Kamloops				0
Robson				0
Cranbrook				0
Invermere				0
Quesnel	5,000			5,000
Okanagan	21,500			21,500
Revelstoke				0
Golden				0
Williams Lake	60,000			60,000
SIFR Totals	106,500	0	0	106,500

Prince George	20,000			20,000
Mackenzie				0
Dawson Creek		20,000		20,000
Ft St John	20,000			20,000
Morice				0
Lakes				0
Fort Nelson	18,000			18,000
Bulkley				0
Kispiox		10,000		10,000
Cranberry				0
Cassiar				0
Kalum				0
Nass				0
NIFR Totals	58,000	30,000	0	88,000

Prov Totals	189,500	65,424	26,000	280,924
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APPENDIX 2

PROVINCIAL COMMUNITY FOREST AGREEMENT WORKING GROUP PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS AND WORKPLAN July 5, 2007

RECCOMENDATION	RANK	COMMENTS / PROPOSED STRATEGY	TIME AND ACTION
1 - No change to Long Term Community Forest Agreement	In Progress (IP) H	Length of term should be changed but requires legislative change Review license agreement and process	Spring 2010 completed fall 2007
2 – 25 year term	IP	Leg change required	Spring 2010
3 – Retain Long Term Community Forest Agreement and eliminate Probationary Community Forest Agreement	IP	Ensure legislative change addresses FRO requirements for FN PCFA incentive for treaty	Spring 2010
4 – Strategic plan and revised Government Objectives for the CF Program	H	Develop vision, strategic objectives and implementation plan which includes monitoring and auditing segment. Government's Objectives for Community Forest Agreements (as per strategic plan)	Develop strategic plan (done fall 2007). MFR endorsement of revised objectives (done March 2008) BCCFA to seek endorsement from Board of Directors (done fall 2007) post on MFR website once endorsed (done April 2008) Update Work Plan semi-annually

5 – Improved consultation and communication	H	Actively ongoing through BCCFA MFR collaboration in PCFAWG, monthly conference calls. Include updates on regulation and legislative changes in calls.	ongoing
6 – PCFA Application Package Review and Revisions	H	<p>X Goal to achieve province wide consistency and create a streamlined provincial application and requirements with allocation for regional tailoring</p> <p>X Make it consistent for who ever the client is. What is the goal of the group? The standards are this, everyone must reflect/id in their management plan. End product should be the same regardless of the client.</p> <p>Review and revise the evaluation template. Ensure the assessment framework is integrated into the application – Include document as an attachment to the PCFA Application.</p> <p>X Look at streamlining business plan aspect. Important for the community to go through this process yet not necessary for MOFR to assess for viability. Find a different mechanism</p> <p>Checklist is useful to ensure a complete application, however evaluation requires a more thorough read of the application.</p> <p>Point scoring only on competitive applications</p> <p>X Management plan content – simplify and avoid duplication or conflict with FSP development</p> <p>End product is a Community Forest Program administration package that will include the business map (with timelines)</p>	<p>Business plan maps – each region to develop and circulate for review (completed Spring 2008)</p> <p>Subgroup to create a new draft for review Feb 2008</p> <p>Timeline for Application Package approval TBD with the understanding that the sooner it is completed the better it will be for new applicants</p>
7 - Transition from PCFA to Long Term	H	<p>Cut control, management plan extension or new and timelines, undercut carry over of cut, overcut attribution</p> <p>Possible bulletin to clarify</p>	MFR clarify policy and gaps

8 –PFCA and Long Term Community Forest Agreement	IP H H	Length of term should be changed but requires legislative change X Review license agreement and process. Provide templates Look at mandatory long term management plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing of approval and content • Accountability and Reporting: There must be a check to be sure they are continuing to meet their stated goals. Possible at 10 year interval in the evergreen. Could be a mgt plan or a template for reporting. Could be annual reporting 	Done (fall 2007) Timeline for approval TBD with the understanding that the sooner it is completed the better it will be for new applicants
9 – Minimum level of MOFR support	H	Again important to clarify to ensure consistency	
10 – Regional Executive Director decides on AAC	H	Regions sort out designate OR Objectivity is the goal when this is the case the decision is typically moved up the ladder OR Allow to happen at both places. Community to request RED to do it if there are issues the community can request. District is responsible for implementation and should do it to gain ownership for the future management	
11 – Policy Guidance	H	Opportunity for BCCFA input to provincial policy development. CFAs need to be considered in development of blanket policies.	ongoing
12 – Annual workshop on community forest policy and procedures for MOFR staff	M - H	Includes district Invite BCCFA where appropriate	As warranted
13 – Study on structure of alternative tenure arrangements for community forests	M	Long term issue	Long term

14 – Include high risk MPB areas	M	Include wording in the application package to require communities to demonstrate awareness of implications related to managing this risk over the long term	
15 – Review results to MPS changes	M	Tab rate on the coast and interior may cause alienation and land based operability issues in areas otherwise appropriate for CFAs due to large investment requirements (roads, bridges). May not be influenced by this working group	Revenue branch working with BCCFA on this issue
16 - Use woodlot regulations for community forests with small AACs	M	MOFR has other similar accommodations for small tenures	Deferred till H priority items are resolved
17 – Evaluate appropriateness of woodlot regulation for larger community forests and administrative processes to streamline	M	Many CFAs are larger	Deferred till H priority items are resolved
18 – Soliciting applications	L	Current direction is a direct invitation process. No action unless current direction is changed.	No action
19– Handbook for community forests on BC Government resource rights tenures and permits	L	Group consensus not to move forward with this	No action
20 – Interface fuel management should not be main focus of a community forest	L	N/A	No action

21 – Financial viability and AAC offer	L	Communities must decide viability and their own criteria for this balance. It is very situational and individualized based on acceptable levels of risk and values	No action
22 – Multiple uses and Management Plan AAC	L	Same as above. Not an issue for this table	No action
23 – CFAC Memoirs	L	collate & summarize CFAC experience/wisdom so it's not lost	Deferred till H priority items are resolved