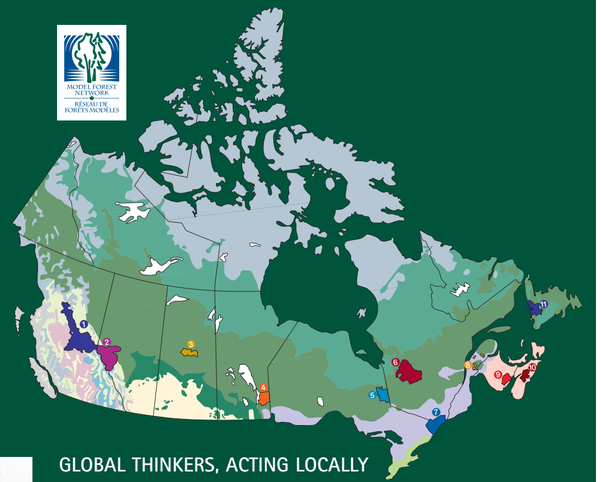

CANADIAN MODEL FOREST NETWORK

1. McGregor Model Forest
2. Foothills Model Forest
3. Prince Albert Model Forest
4. Manitoba Model Forest
5. Lake Abitibi Model Forest
6. Waswanipi Cree Model Forest
7. Eastern Ontario Model Forest
8. Bas-Saint-Laurent Model Forest
9. Fundy Model Forest
10. Nova Forest Alliance
11. Western Newfoundland Model Forest

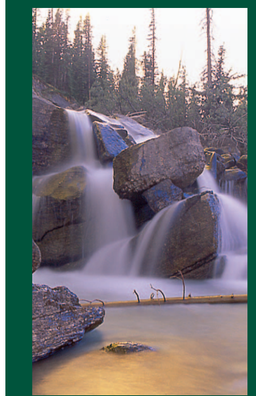

Photo: Brian Carnell

GLOBAL THINKERS, ACTING LOCALLY

In 1992, Natural Resources Canada through the Canadian Forest Service, initiated Canada's Model Forest Program in an effort to establish Canada as a leader in the area of sustainable forest management. The Canadian Model Forest Network successfully builds partnerships and generates new ideas and tools to advance sustainable forest management. Equally significant, the network focuses on applying its research findings and tools to forest management practice and policy. Hundreds of partners, across the country, are working hard to maintain healthy communities, economies and forests for present and future generations of Canadians.

Natural Resources Canada through the Canadian Forest Service, initiated and continues to support Canada's Model Forest Program.

Canada

Photo: Brian Carnell

THE FOOTHILLS MODEL FOREST

At 2.75 million hectares you could call it one of the largest laboratories on the continent. The Foothills Model Forest land base includes all of Jasper National Park, Weldwood of Canada Limited, Hinton Division's working forest, Willmore Wilderness Park and other public lands.

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Jasper National Park, Natural Resources Canada through the Canadian Forest Service, and Weldwood of Canada Limited, Hinton Division are sponsoring partners of the Foothills Model Forest. Each sponsoring partner makes a five-year commitment of financial and human resources to the Foothills Model Forest research programs. In addition to our sponsoring partners, we appreciate the support of over ninety other organizations. Their continued support in Phase III (2002-2007) is a testament to the value of our research and development. Equally noteworthy is our partners' use of world-class science when making decisions about forest management policy and practice. This approach better ensures communities, economies and forests provide opportunities for present and future generations.

Over 60 percent of the Foothills Model Forest land base is protected. The remaining area is a working forest. This model of partnership encourages the coordinated management of a large and rich landscape.

foothills MODEL FOREST
research growing into practice.

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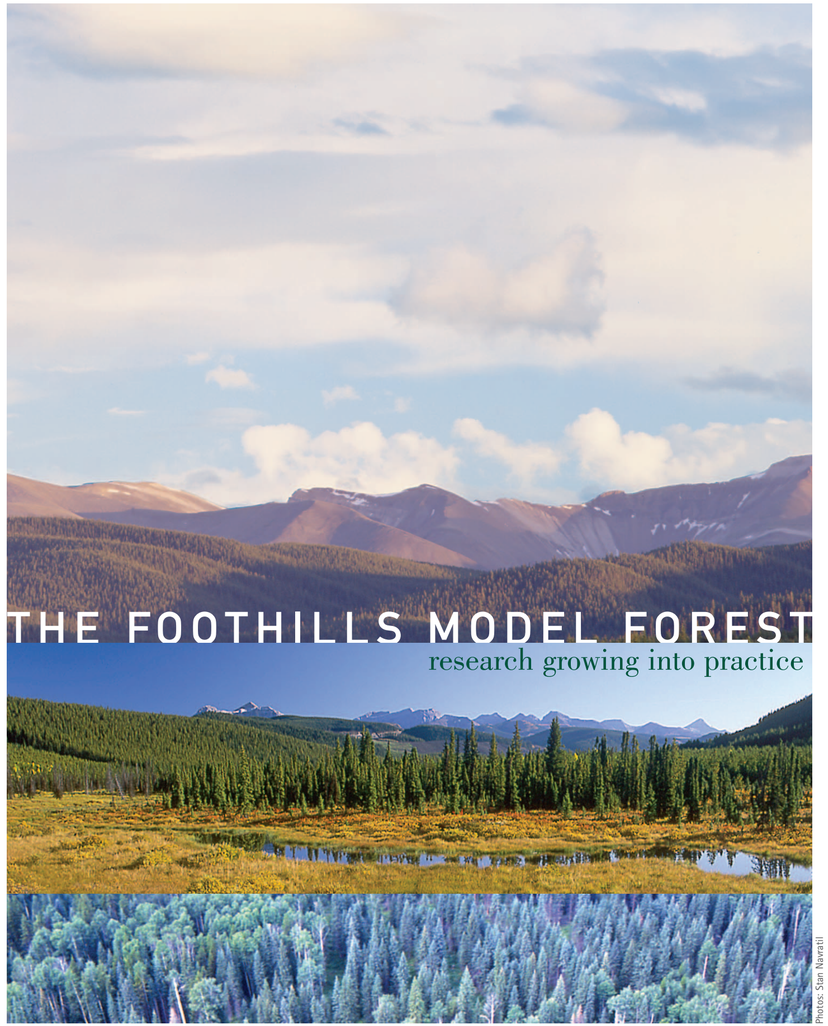


THE FOOTHILLS MODEL FOREST

research growing into practice

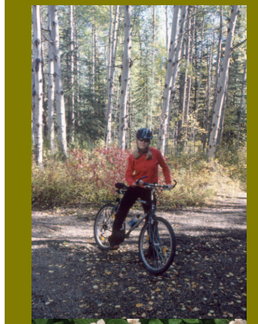
Photos: Stan Navratil

Photo: Stan Navratil

SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE LONG-TERM HEALTH OF FOREST ECOSYSTEMS, WHILE PROVIDING ECOLOGICAL, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE BENEFIT OF PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Photo: Brian Camell



Photos: Brian Camell

OUR RESEARCH IS BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE.

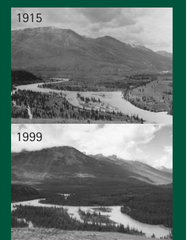
Forests are dynamic and ever-changing ecosystems. They also are rich with economic and recreational opportunities. Since 1992, the Foothills Model Forest has invested more than 25 million dollars in research that increases our understanding of the ecological, economic and social values of the forest. This investment demonstrates our partners' commitment to developing science-based solutions to forest management questions. We are taking the lessons we have learned and showing stakeholders far and wide how those lessons can be applied in the forest.

Photo: Weldwood of Canada Limited

AN UN"NATURALLY" OLD FOREST LANDSCAPE

Wildfire is a natural agent of change and renewal in the Foothills Model Forest landscape. Fire creates a mosaic of young, mature and old forests with each age class providing habitat for a diversity of plants and animals. Since the early 1950s there has been aggressive and effective fire suppression in the Foothills Model Forest land base resulting in a forest landscape that is unnaturally old. Through research, we know that in 1930 old forests (100+ years) covered approximately 20 percent of the Foothills Model Forest land base. In 2000, old forests covered at least 66 percent of Weldwood's Forest Management Area and 77 percent of Jasper National Park.

Partners in the Natural Disturbance Program (Alberta Newsprint Company, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Jasper National Park and Weldwood of Canada Limited, Hinton Division) are working to restore the forests they manage to the range of age classes that would naturally occur. This approach will help to maintain biodiversity while better protecting people, communities and natural resources from catastrophic wildfire.



Historically, fire would have burned in the valley bottoms of Jasper National Park on average every 20 years. Evidence shows that Aboriginal people used fire to create habitat for wildlife to provide for their basic needs. Today, Foothills Model Forest research contributes to Jasper National Park's use of prescribed burns and fuel modification to restore a healthy forest landscape. These activities also help protect the community and surrounding lands from catastrophic wildfire.

1915 Photo: M.P. Bridgland, 1915. Digital image copyright 2000, University of Alberta

1999 Photo: Copyright J.M. Rhemtulla and E.S. Higgs, University of Alberta

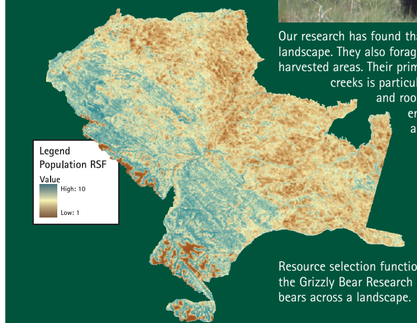
DO BEARS SIT IN THE WOODS?

We first asked this question in 1999. Since that time, the Foothills Model Forest Grizzly Bear Research Program has grown to be one of North America's most comprehensive wildlife studies. The research was initiated in direct response to industry, government and society's need to understand how grizzly bears use and move across the foothills and Rocky Mountains of Alberta's northeast slopes. Our discoveries are plentiful and by collaborating with experts from many disciplines volumes of data are translating into maps and computer models. These innovative, yet practical tools are used by industries (mining, forestry, oil and gas) and governments to minimize the impact of human activities in grizzly bear country. Our partners are working toward the long-term conservation of Alberta grizzly bears.

In 2002 a research grizzly bear and one of her two cubs were victims of a poaching incident. This unfortunate act is not an exception. Our research shows the greatest threat to grizzly bears in our study area is human-caused mortality along roads. Our partners from industry and government are beginning to use maps and computer models to better plan and coordinate road construction and use. Collaborating and using effective tools should result in fewer roads across the landscape thus decreasing the risk of human-caused mortalities to grizzly bears.

Photo: Brian Camell

Our research has found that grizzly bears use a variety of different habitats across the landscape. They also forage in recently disturbed forests and are found along the edges of harvested areas. Their prime motivation is to go where the food is. Habitat near rivers and creeks is particularly important to grizzly bears as it is rich with berries, shrubs and roots, and serves as a natural movement corridor. This knowledge enables companies and government to design and manage their activities to minimize impacts on grizzly bear habitat.



Resource selection function (RSF) maps are part of a suite of tools developed by the Grizzly Bear Research Program. RSF maps predict habitat suitabilty for grizzly bears across a landscape.