

# **Foothills Landscape Management Forum (FLMF)**

## **FINAL REPORT FOOMOD-01-06**

**Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta  
(FRIAA)**

**Forest Resource Improvement Program**

Prepared by:

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Submitted by:

**Foothills Research Institute**

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March 31, 2012

## Project Summary

### *Applicant*

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### *Sponsors*

<b>Company</b>	<b>Contact Person</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
Alberta Newsprint Company	Greg Branton	(780) 778 7000
West Fraser Hinton	Jim Lelacheur	(780) 865 8120
Weyerhaeuser	Wendy Crosina	(780) 733 4203

### *Project Information*

Type: Integrated Landscape Management

Term: April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2012

Total Amount of funds: \$120,000 FRIP funds to Applicant for membership in FLMF

Individual Company contributions: ANC two years at \$20,000/yr. = Total \$40,000  
West Fraser two years at \$20,000/yr. = Total \$40,000  
Weyerhaeuser two years at \$20,000/yr. = Total \$40,000

### *Attachments (see data CD on back cover)*

#### Appendices

1. FRI (FLMF) Cost Statements (March 31, 2012)
2. FLMF MOA (April 2008)
3. Greenlink Forestry – Little Smoky Lineal Inventory Final Report (October 2010)
4. Berland Smoky RAD TOR (June 2009)
5. Berland Smoky RAD final draft (October 2011)
6. GOA ASRD letter (December 2011)

### *Acknowledgement by Applicant*

The Applicant (jointly with the Sponsors and severally the "Signatory") acknowledges having read and agreed to the terms and conditions described on the attached schedule to which the Application under the Program is made subject. The Applicant acknowledges and agrees that by its submission of this application it shall be bound by the terms of the Program, FRIAA's policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines. It is also acknowledged and agreed that this application may be accepted by FRIAA on further terms or conditions, which shall be binding on the Signatory once the Signatory undertakes the proposed project.

Applicant: Wayne Thorp



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## 1. FLMF

### 1.1 Background

In response to interest by the forest industry, gas and oil companies and government, the Foothills Research Institute facilitated collaboration among a number of industrial operators to create a Forum for industrial footprint management within the Little Smoky and A la Peche Caribou ranges. The forum is named the Foothills Landscape Management Forum (FLMF) and has been in operation since 2005. For the previous 5 years the forum has operated by charging an annual dues payment some of which was funded by forest member companies under FRIAA project FOOMOD-01-04.

This FRIAA project, FOOMOD-01-06, ended on March 31, 2012. This project funded three of the forest company’s membership dues that contributed to the total budget shown in **Appendix I - FRI 2011/12 year end cost statements to March 31, 2012.**

Since the FLMF was formed, the forum includes 14 companies from the forest and energy sectors. Current membership is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. FLMF members in 2012**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ANC Timber Limited (ANC)</li> <li>• Aseniwuche Winewak Nation of Canada (Grande Cache)</li> <li>• Canadian Natural Resources Limited (CNRL)</li> <li>• Canadian Forest Products Limited (Canfor)</li> <li>• ConocoPhillips Canada Resources Limited (ConocoPhillips)</li> <li>• Devon Canada Corporation (Devon)</li> <li>• Encana Corporation (Encana)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foothills Forest Products Incorporated (FFP)</li> <li>• Hinton Wood Products, a division of West Fraser Mills Limited (HWP)</li> <li>• Husky Oil Operations Limited (Husky)</li> <li>• Shell Canada Limited (Shell)</li> <li>• Talisman Energy Incorporated (Talisman)</li> <li>• Tourmaline Oil (new in 2009)</li> <li>• Paramount Resources Ltd. (new in 2009)</li> <li>• Weyerhaeuser Canada (new in 2010)</li> </ul>
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The members each have one representative on a steering committee which governs the FLMF and approves its annual work plans and budget (**Appendix 2 - MOA**). In addition, the members are active participants in workshops, access plan development, and reporting. There have been up to 40 individuals from industry and government who have played an active role in FLMF access plan development. The accomplishments of the FLMF over the past seven years are significant and have added value to government, industrial partners, and ILM in Alberta.

The Forum’s vision statement is:

***“In North America the FLMF will be viewed as an exemplary industrial leader in regional Integrated Landscape Management.”***

The FLMF provides a forum for a group of progressive companies from the primary industrial sectors of energy and forestry who have recognized the importance of integrated management.

Integration of the two industries in planning and operations is a first step in management of the industrial footprint.

In addition, integration of industrial footprint will be required for input into specific strategies such as watershed, grizzly bear, caribou and mountain pine beetle. It is hypothesized that with integration, the industrial footprint will be less than past practices of “plan as you go”. With good management and integration, the likelihood of land use decisions that could affect the industries ability to access resources will be lessened. In turn, this reduces the cumulative effects of industry activity on other resource values and contributes to resource conservation.

## **1.2 Purpose of FLMF**

Overriding objectives for the term of this plan will be to support the FRI vision and goals, provide ongoing support to its industrial partners, and to continue to support efforts of Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) and industry to implement recovery plans for caribou in the Little Smoky and A la Peche ranges and grizzly bear. Ongoing close collaboration with the SRD ILM department is intended to ensure that the work of the FLMF supports and/or complements existing projects.

## **1.3 FLMF operations**

The Foothills Landscape Management Forum (FLMF) is a non-profit partnership to facilitate implementation of proposals for integrated landscape management and conservation actions for caribou herds in the Alberta Foothills. The FLMF will develop and promote sustainable forest management solutions within the Integrated Land Management (ILM) principles of the Province of Alberta, focusing on opportunities to cooperate and partner with the Alberta government on population management of key wildlife species such as Grizzly Bear and Caribou. The forum will operate on behalf of Members within the existing resource planning and approval process. The appropriate government authorities must approve plans and programs developed by the forum before they are implemented. It is anticipated that the forum will be able to rapidly develop plans, implement necessary actions, and coordinate industrial and commercial activities related to industrial footprint and its effect on other values.

## **1.4 FLMF objectives 2010- March 31, 2012**

The FLMF director develops annual work plans and budget which is firstly approved by the membership for submission to the Foothills Research Institute (FRI) Board of Directors for final approval.

The FLMF 2010-12 objectives were:

1. Continue to provide ongoing support to FRI’s vision goals and objectives.
2. Provide and enhance business value to supporting members through the continued maintenance of the access data layer by May of each year to support ongoing resource development and reporting.
3. Utilizing our up to date dataset, complete and submit to ASRD an annual monitoring report of key anthropogenic footprint attributes for the Berland Smoky RAD plan area by September 30 of each year. Key attributes include: ongoing anthropogenic footprint reporting for caribou and open route access densities for grizzly bear.

4. Continue to influence and proactively work with government departments (Energy, ASRD, & Environment) in resource development policies and risk management strategies as follows:
  - The FLMF will work with industry members and associations (CAPP and AFPA) to collaborate when appropriate and develop common positions between the sectors on resource management issues (e.g. implementation of caribou and grizzly bear recovery strategies)
  - The FLMF will continue to play an active role in development of “enhanced AOA” processes and “Oil and Gas regulatory reform” and provide an area for members/government to test and validate new procedures in the spring of 2010.
  - The FLMF will provide its forestry members with support in development of their respective planning processes (DFMP’s) as it relates to ILM and collaboration in landscape level initiatives and strategies.
  - Full implementation of the RAD plan and achieve objectives for both government and industry.
  - Using the learning’s from the RAD planning process, the FLMF will work with government to remove barriers and revise mitigation guidelines/policies as necessary to improve and advance ILM in Alberta.
5. Utilizing the lineal inventory data collected for the Little Smoky caribou range in 2009, design and implement a landscape level restoration plan. This will include related work in development of natural and artificial recovery rate trajectories for lineal and non-lineal disturbances, update habitat and population models ([Appendix 3 – Greenlinks Final Report](#)). Note: Development of trajectories may require funding beyond that of FLMF dues which would require member companies and /or ASRD to support as a special request.
6. Work with Weyerhaeuser and energy sector partners to develop a specific work plan for their FMA area with a focus on access management and mitigation strategies.
7. Using the RAD plan as a basis of projected industrial development for the Berland Smoky area, the FLMF will provide direct input into the Land Use Framework “regional plan” when it is implemented.
8. Develop in partnership with ASRD a communication/education plan for government and industry regarding enhanced ILM planning (e.g. RAD plan) in Alberta.
9. The FLMF will support FRI in the development of, and provide leadership in, heading up caribou research for Alberta.
10. The FLMF will collaborate with and support ASRD in full implementation of adaptive management for grizzly bear and caribou recovery plans including monitoring, research, and data management.
11. The FLMF will work with other industrial associations (i.e. CAPP) to conduct research and complete priority projects to assist both government and industry throughout the province as they are identified.

## 2. PROJECTS

The FLMF meets the objectives listed previously through specific projects as outlined in the FRIAA proposal and listed below. The deliverables for the time frame of this FRIAA Project associated with the objectives is summarized below:

### Sub-project 2.1 Management of the Forum

Membership is open to all individuals or organizations that have management, tenure, disposition, or other interests in the area that the Forum encompasses. Members who pay an annual fee will be called Voting Members. Other organizations and individuals can participate in the affairs of the Forum but do not have voting privileges.

The Forum will operate on a non-profit basis. Voting Members will pay an annual fee for membership. The annual fee will be as determined from time to time by the Steering Committee. The current annual is \$20,000/year. Some of the Forest companies applied for FRIAA funding for this. These annual fees will be used to fund activities specified in Annual Work Plans and to continue to pay for the independent managing director.

In addition to Membership fees, Members may fund forum activities according to their interests and involvement. A Member may agree to fund specific actions related to their own activities that are complementary to Forum activities.

Forum Members will be encouraged to provide data, support, and other in-kind resources to support the work plans. These contributions will be recognized and considered in Steering Committee determination of Membership fees.

Management of the Forum will be done by the Managing director under the umbrella of the Foothills Research Institute (FRI) as outlined in [Appendix 2 - MOA](#).

#### Relevant Objectives:

*Obj.1. Continue to provide ongoing support to FRI's vision goals and objectives.*

*Obj.2. Provide and enhance business value to supporting members through the continued maintenance of the access data layer by May of each year to support ongoing resource development and reporting.*

*Obj. 3.Utilizing the up to date dataset, complete and submit to ASRD an annual monitoring report of key anthropogenic footprint attributes for the Berland Smoky RAD plan area by September 30 of each year. Key attributes include: ongoing anthropogenic footprint reporting for caribou and open route access for grizzly bear.*

*Obj.6. Work with Weyerhaeuser and energy sector partners to develop a specific work plan for their FMA area with a focus on access management and mitigation strategies.*

*Obj. 11.The FLMF will work with other industrial associations (i.e. CAPP) to conduct research and complete priority projects to assist both government and industry throughout the province as they are identified.*

**Deliverables:**

The objectives listed above are met through the maintenance of an up to date data set for lineal disturbances in the planning area. In addition, the FLMF lead and FRI staff have well developed relationships with ASRD staff and industry associations through its planning work and provincial leadership in Integrated Land Management (ILM). The FLMF has become known provincially for having the best lineal disturbance dataset in the province. This data is readily shared with ASRD land planners and the membership of the FLMF under ongoing data sharing agreements through a web-based server. The FLMF dues fund a full time technician to store, maintain, and serve the data as well as paying for services provided by the FRI GIS team for support and analytical work. Annual reports are generated from this dataset which support ongoing industry development and ILM planning.

In addition, the FLMF worked with Weyerhaeuser (GP) to update and validate their lineal data sets so that integrated access plans could be developed in the near future (pending the outcome of the RAD planning process below).

**Sub-project 2.2 Access planning – Regional Access Development (RAD) Plan**

To address industry's increasing demand for road access into the area while at the same time looking after other values, the Berland Smoky Integrated Industrial Access Plan was developed between 2006 and 2007. Plan development involved timber and energy companies active in the area, the FRI, and advice and local expertise from Alberta government staff from SRD and Energy. The plan was endorsed by SRD and Energy in July 2008 through an Information Letter (IL 2008-05). The Information Letter outlines procedures and expectations for primary access development and management, and directs that all future access into the area uses the primary access corridors. If primary access not previously identified in the plan were to be required, then companies active in the area would have to reconvene to renegotiate their access into the region.

Several developments since 2008 reinforced the approach that industrial development needs to consider more than economic values and more than primary access:

- the Alberta Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan identified the need to manage open-route densities in core and secondary areas to reduce the risk of human-caused bear mortality;
- the ILM Program identified operational principles which support engagement of stakeholders in efforts to reduce and better manage the size of the industrial footprint;
- the Land Use Framework (LUF) recognized the need to manage cumulative socio-economic and environmental impacts; and
- the Action Plan for West Central Caribou Recovery called for management and planning of the industrial footprint.

As a demonstration of the commitment of all participants to the ILM process, a Regional Access Development (RAD) was initiated by the FLMF in late 2008 to advance ILM to the next level. In 2009 the government agreed to partner with the FLMF to determine how far the process could be implemented. The environmental elements to be tested and verified with industrial footprint



targets are the thresholds for both grizzly bear and caribou habitat. This level of ILM has never been tested before in Alberta and the government has indicated that the knowledge gained from this will be applied to other areas of Alberta.

**Relevant Objectives:**

*Obj. 4. Continue to influence and proactively work with government departments (Energy, ASRD, & Environment) in resource development policies and risk management strategies.*

*Obj. 7. Using the RAD plan as a basis of projected industrial development for the Berland Smoky area, the FLMF will provide direct input into the Land Use Framework “regional plan” when it is implemented.*

*Obj. 8. Develop in partnership with ASRD a communication/education plan for government and industry regarding enhanced ILM planning (e.g. RAD plan) in Alberta by the summer of 2010.*

*Obj. 9 The FLMF will support FRI in the development of, and provide leadership in, heading up caribou research for Alberta.*

The deliverables and objectives of the RAD plan require a sustained commitment by industry to be successful. The RAD plan process (**Appendix 4** – Berland Smoky RAD TOR dated June 19, 2009) has benefited from the FLMF’s ongoing commitment (outlined in the initial IAP) to maintain an up-to-date access data layer and annual reporting of progress towards reduction of the industrial footprint.

The knowledge gleaned from the RAD planning process is being documented by the FLMF and government, and a manual will be produced by summer 2012 so that the knowledge can be applied by other individuals, companies, or associations that wish to undertake a similar initiative. The FLMF is committed to informing others of its accomplishments and is eager to share its environmental and operational successes. For all its members, the FLMF maintains a secure website that allows 24/7 access to data. Any annual reports and quarterly progress reports (called quick notes) are published on the FRI website<sup>1</sup>. FRI Annual Reports and a series of executive presentations, which highlight the FLMF, are widely distributed throughout Canada. The FLMF continues to make a number of presentations to various groups, including the College of Alberta Professional Foresters and College of Alberta Professional Forest Technologists, FRI, Alberta Chamber of Resources, Alberta Forest Products Association, and Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. The RAD plan process was highlighted by the FLMF in an article in The Edge magazine, a quick note posted on its web site, various presentations have been made to industry and government, and it was highlighted in a public outreach event in Hinton in October, 2009. In the future, a more comprehensive communication and extension strategy will be developed to educate, inform, and influence others within and outside of government and industry on the value of this endeavor.

**Deliverables:**

The RAD planning process took over three years to complete with a concerted effort from industry and government (primarily ASRD). The RAD was submitted by industry for ASRD to review in August 2011 (**Appendix 5** – RAD plan). After a few months of ASRD review the

government provided partial approval of the plan and expectations going forward (**Appendix 6 - ASRD letter of Dec 19, 2011.**)

The planning process used in the development of the RAD was presented publically at various venues including the past two years of FRI AGM's. Once the next steps outlined in the ARD approval letter are complete a communication strategy will be developed and implemented by ASRD and the FLMF.

### **Sub-project 2.3 Lineal Inventory of historical seismic lines**

The FLMF, in partnership with SRD, completed an assessment of current "open route access" for grizzly bear, and an access-control inventory. FLMF also completed a vegetation inventory of historical seismic lines in October 2010 (**Appendix 3 – Greenlink final report**). All of these data layers were utilized to establish a baseline report to measure/assess the success of (a) reducing the industrial footprint in the future; and (b) any restoration/rehabilitation measures implemented.

#### **Relevant Objectives:**

- Obj. 5. Utilizing the lineal inventory data collected for the Little Smoky caribou range in 2009, design and implement a landscape level restoration plan by September 30, 2010.*
- Obj. 10. The FLMF will collaborate with and support ASRD in full implementation of adaptive management for grizzly bear and caribou recovery plans including monitoring, research, and data management by the end of the 2010 work plan year.*

#### **Deliverables:**

The inventory was completed in October 2010 which will form the basis of the completion of a landscape level restoration the first of its kind in Alberta. The Task force to complete the TOR for the development of the plan has met on two occasions early in 2012. The FLMF work plan for 2012/13 has been approved by the FRI BOD and FLMF members which include the development of the restoration plan as follows:

**Excerpt from FLMF 2012/13 work plan.** "This project will directly contribute towards implementation of enhancing or restoring habitat of woodland caribou (species at risk); as listed in the Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou, Boreal Population threat 1 is Habitat Alteration (Loss, Degradation or Fragmentation) as a Result of Human Land-use Activities. Habitat alteration occurs when changes are made on the landscape that adversely impacts the ecosystem, either temporarily or permanently, reducing overall function. Habitat loss is the change to a landscape, resulting in areas with no current or immediate future value to boreal caribou (e.g., conversion to agriculture, development of industrial facilities) whereas habitat degradation implies a reduced but not total loss of habitat value for boreal caribou (e.g., reduction in the availability or quality of boreal caribou habitat following timber harvesting or seismic line development). Habitat fragmentation is the dissection of habitat by human-made linear features (e.g., roads, geophysical exploration lines, pipelines, hydroelectric corridors) that may negatively affect how boreal caribou use habitat. The Little Smoky caribou range has the highest density of seismic lines of any other caribou range in Alberta 386 kilometres of line per township (Source: FLMF inventory 2010).

Currently restoration/reclamation is carried out only when industry no longer needs an access route. There is no requirement to restore historical seismic lines or deal with redundant roads (duplicate roads to an area by different owners). This approach tends to be ad hoc and very unpredictable and lacks a coordinated effort to reclaim where the maximum benefit would be accrued for caribou. This project will provide a landscape level plan, natural regeneration trajectories, and a methodological framework to guide and coordinate efforts to maximise the benefit for caribou.”

### **3. RATIONALE FOR FRIAA**

This Section further describes how the Projects fulfill the key proposal evaluation criteria of FRIAA.

#### **3.1 Application of Results**

The Project will enhance the management of forest resources by providing a continually improved and credible basis for:

- Integration of the Forest and Gas and Oil sectors.
- Reducing the industrial footprint on the landscape through ILM access planning
- Identifying and supporting research to improve practices over time.

#### **3.2 Relationship to Existing Responsibilities**

The work proposed pertains to the voluntary enhancement of forest management information and practices, and is not the responsibility of the industrial sponsors under any legislation, regulation, tenure, policy or specific agreement. The Project will assist the Government of Alberta in meeting its responsibilities for sustainable resource management, by providing improved integration of industrial activity

#### **3.3 Impacts**

The Projects are not anticipated to have any adverse impacts on any other forest resource values or users. It has the active support of the land management agency involved (Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Land and Forest Division), and has been reviewed and endorsed by the Board and partners of the Foothills Research Institute, representing a broad spectrum of forest stakeholders and researchers.

#### **3.4 Standards**

High standards of work will be ensured by use of qualified personnel, extensive networking with experts and analysts and modelers, and submission of plans and practices to the government for approval.

#### **3.5 Fair Market Value**

Work will be undertaken using a combination of contractors and employees of the Foothills Research Institute and sponsors. Equipment will be leased. General benchmarks, used to ensure that fair market value is obtained for planned expenditures, will include:

- Project Manager. Prevailing consulting or salary rates for senior registered professional foresters with qualifications in forest resource management and twenty or more years relevant experience.
- GIS Coordinator. Prevailing salary or contract rates for a registered professional forester with a minimum of five years leadership experience in GIS and data management.
- Other contractors and field personnel. Prevailing contract or wage rates based on the respective categories of work.
- Equipment rental. Market rates where these can be established. If equipment is leased (e.g. by the Foothills Research Institute to the Project) for which comparable market rates are not available, values will be based on an appropriate depreciation rate on capital value.

### **3.6 Project Management and Responsibilities**

The Association is a cooperative project involving voting members (who are all FRIAA members identified as the “sponsors” in Section 1 above), Alberta Sustainable Resource Development and the Foothills Research Institute (as Coordinating Agency).

The responsibilities of each level are outlined in **Appendix 2**.

#### **3.6.1 Sponsors**

The Forest Companies listed are the project sponsors.

Responsibilities of the sponsors will include:

1. Provision of error-free data, in a format defined by the Coordinating Agency and the Technical Committee, in support of the affairs of the Forum.
2. Participation in the affairs of the Forum at their own cost.
3. Application, as the Members deem appropriate, of results from Forum projects to their own tenures and dispositions.

Each voting member shall:

1. Appoint a representative to the Steering Committee with authority to represent the Member’s strategic and financial interests.
2. At their discretion, assign a representative to the Technical Committee with authority to represent the Member’s technical views and interests.
3. Undertake agreed activities as specified in the work plan approved by the Steering Committee.
4. On or before April 1 each year, and commencing before May 15, 2010, pay a Membership fee approved by the Steering Committee to support the direct costs incurred by the Coordinating Agency in the management of the Forum.

Additional sources of funds to support the Forum will be solicited from outside partners and funding institutions.

#### **3.6.2 Alberta Government**

Association recommendations that have land and resource management recommendations must be approved by the relevant government agency before they are implemented. These approvals can be through individual plan approvals or endorsement of higher-level Association programs.

The Alberta government may:

1. Assign the Executive Director of ASRD Forest Operations, or an equivalent senior official, or officials, to participate on the Steering Committee in a non-voting advisory capacity. The current member is Aniko Parnell, ILM manager.
2. Assign a technical expert, or experts, knowledgeable in resource management and caribou ecology, to the Technical Committee to provide advice on matters pertaining to project planning, experimental design, quality control, data acquisition, project evaluation, and regulatory requirements for consideration.

### **3.6.3 Independent Director**

The FLMF Director is Wayne Thorp, who is contracted to the Foothills Research Institute as Director of the Forum.

The Director shall, subject to the approval and supervision of the Steering Committee:

1. Prepare an annual work plan and budget.
2. Act as chairperson to the Technical Committee.
3. Ensure that project plans and all aspects related to implementation, evaluation, and reporting, are developed in a timely manner.
4. Supervise a field coordinator or other staff approved by the Steering Committee.
5. Consult with the Technical Committee regarding the selection, implementation, evaluating, and reporting of all projects related to the Association program.
6. Ensure the timely compilation of Association data consistent with approved project plans and quality standards.
7. Undertake, or direct the undertaking of, analysis of data and preparation of technical reports.
8. Report the results of Association projects to Members and others as approved by the Steering Committee.
9. Provide quarterly and annual progress reports to the Steering Committee and the Coordinating Agency.
10. Act as Secretary to the Steering Committee if requested to do so by the chairperson.
11. Collaborate, cooperate, and confer with other agencies as appropriate and necessary to further the interests of the Association.
12. Arrange the dissemination or publication of data and results when so directed by the Steering Committee.
13. Solicit and consider input from non-voting Members and other interested parties.

#### 4. FRIAA Payment Schedule

##### SCHEDULE "A"

On acceptance by FRIAA of appropriate reports, payment will be made to the Foothills Research Institute as follows:

<u>Approximate Date</u>	<b>Payment</b>	<b>Report</b>
May 1, 2010	\$60,000.00	Signed Project Acceptance
March 31, 2011	\$60,000.00	2011/12 Annual Report
Total	*\$120,000	

\* Payments made under this Agreement in eligible FRIP expenditures are not to exceed **\$120,000.00.**