

Foothills Stream Crossing Program



Enhancing fish habitat by improving stream crossings.

The Foothills Stream Crossing Association is an independent, partner driven program that has the main objective of improving the management of stream crossings on the Foothills Research Institute land base. The Foothills Research Institute is the coordinating agency for the program and has established a close working relationship with the Foothills Stream Crossing Association.

The Foothills Stream Crossing Program focused on the initial inspection protocols to cover safety, sedimentation and fish passage. Draft protocols were field tested in fall 2005, and with the cooperation of the Woodlands Operations Learning Foundation, financial support from Department of Fisheries and Oceans and considerable input from the Fish and Watershed Program; the actual field inspection manual was completed in the spring of 2006.

During the summer of 2006, a total of just over 300 crossings were inspected. The findings and results from these inspections were presented to the members and the steering committee for review and follow up.



The focus for 2007-08 includes minor revisions to the inspection manual (based on findings from the 2006 field work) and development of a possible strategy for remediation work on selected watersheds. This strategy will test the benefits and the practicality of a joint or watershed approach to remediation based on the results of the crossing inspections.

The Foothills Stream Crossing Program will continue to provide information on the program to other interested companies and agencies in the Province and will continue to seek additional members to include all crossing owners in the Foothills Research Institute.

Stream Crossing Manual

Environmental stewardship and safety are key considerations in stream crossing design, construction and maintenance. This is a shared responsibility among the various resource industries and the government agencies in Alberta. Due to the negative impacts that stream crossings potentially have on water quality, many stakeholders got together in 2005 and established the Foothills Stream Crossing Program.

Each stream crossing has an owner who is responsible for the initial design and construction, as well as monitoring, maintaining and de-activating the crossing as part of its stewardship commitments. This process requires a formal and timely inspection process that is based on agreed to protocols. This will help to ensure crossings are functioning effectively.

In 2006 Foothills Stream Crossing Program created a Stream Crossing Manual. This manual is the first comprehensive treatment of inspections for the procedures in use today. The crossing inspection protocol is designed for situations where a permanent road crosses a defined channel. The inspection includes the crossing structure and the road and ditches on both approaches to the crossing. It is hoped all crossing owners will adopt these protocols within their respective stewardship programs and certification protocols.



Foothills Research Institute is a leader in developing innovative science and knowledge for integrated resource management on the forest landscape through diverse and actively engaged partnerships.

The Foothills Research Partnership Ltd. landbase is located in west-central Alberta, and is based in the resource community of Hinton, some three hours west of Edmonton. It covers roughly 2.75 million hectare (27,500 square kilometres), and embodies Jasper National Park of Canada, the Willmore Wilderness Park, and the Forest Management Area of Hinton Wood Products, a Division of West Fraser Mills Ltd. It also includes some provincial "crown forest management units" and the Hinton Training Centre's Cache Percotte Training Forest. Within its boundaries are three forest areas—boreal, montane, and sub-alpine—and many forest uses including timber, petroleum, and coal extraction, tourism, and recreation.

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