



# **MANAGEMENT OF RIPARIAN AREAS IN ALBERTA**

**June 17 - 18, 2002**

**Rocky Mountain House, Alberta**

**FOREST MANAGEMENT BRANCH**

# STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

- Are the present operating ground rules achieving key objectives of riparian management?
- If not, what practical and feasible changes are needed?

# THE ISSUES

- **Defining riparian areas**
- **Riparian management objectives**
- **Options for riparian management strategies**
- **Options for watercourse classification**

# ASSUMPTIONS

- Enhancements to existing system
- FMB's position "to maintain and enhance environmental values in the management of riparian areas"
- Evaluation criteria used throughout the session will be
  - relevance
  - practicality

# DECISION MAKING CRITERIA

- **Relevance**
  - does the revised “objective/ definition/ strategy & classification” represent an improvement over the existing system?
- **Practicality**
  - are the new objectives/ definition/ strategies & classification methods practical in terms of
    - managing risk, cost, required planning and layout in the field

# Decision Making Criteria - cont'd

- Decisions will be “scientifically informed but made with social and economic consideration”

# STATUS OF THE RIPARIAN MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

- Background paper - February 11, 2002
- Workshop held February 20, 2002
- Summary Report - March 9, 2002

# COMMON GROUND - Riparian Functions

- see list (handout)



# COMMON GROUND - Riparian Areas Definition

- *“Three dimensional zone in which terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems interact. It extends down to the groundwater, up to canopy height and laterally to an arbitrary distance of defined influence (ie. vegetation, topographic features, etc.)”*

# COMMON GROUND - Riparian Management Objectives

- see list (handout)

# CONCLUSIONS FROM THE WORKSHOP

- no “overwhelming” sentiment to alter the OGR’s in near term
- need for common understanding of values and critical riparian functions; ecological functions be confirmed and compared to a range of water body classifications

# CONCLUSIONS (cont'd)

- have no basis to determine whether the OGR's need to be fixed; efficacy of the current OGR's need to be assessed
- management strategy must account for variability in ecozone (ex foothills vs boreal forest)

# CONCLUSIONS (cont'd)

- of the original 6 strategies presented, not one emerged as being significantly more relevant and significantly more practical; 8 new strategy options were suggested

# CONCLUSIONS (cont'd)

- option I “*Status quo plus zoned/variable width pilot study in Boreal and Foothills; includes full planning phase, implementation and follow-up (monitoring and planning costs)*”
- Option I was more highly regarded as relevant than the current system by all groups combined (83% of all participants rated this option as 3-5 in relevance as compared with 46% for current system), and 86% of participants rated it medium to high in practicality.

# CONCLUSIONS

- there is a key opportunity now to explore and evaluate some of the management concepts, using the Dogrib burn area as a theatre, with collaboration by industry, research and regulators.



**FOREST MANAGEMENT BRANCH**





**FOREST MANAGEMENT BRANCH**



**FOREST MANAGEMENT BRANCH**