

## Terms of Reference for a Special Report

### *Managing Forest Recreation Resources Values under FRPA*

---

#### INTRODUCTION

Forest recreation is important in British Columbia. It helps to support a thriving tourism industry,<sup>i</sup> and contributes to a lifestyle for many British Columbian's who enjoy BC's natural beauty and recreating in outdoor areas. Forest recreation occurs throughout the province and, given BC's diverse landscapes, it comprises many different types of activity and levels of intensity. Outside of parks and protected areas, recreational activities are often accessed using forestry roads on lands where forestry activities occur and there is often a strong interplay between forest management and recreation.

Forest recreation is part of the *Forest and Range Practices Act* (FRPA) framework in several places. The recreation resource is one of the 11 FRPA values for which government may set objectives to manage and protect under FRPA. If government sets objectives, then forest licensees must have results or strategies, consistent with the objectives, within their forest stewardship plans prior to logging or road building. Objectives relating to recreation may arise from land use plans and *Government Actions Regulation* orders as well.

The FRPA definition for recreation resources is very broad and includes recreational features, scenic or wilderness settings that have recreational significance, and recreation facilities. As well as setting objectives, government may control uses of Crown land under FRPA section 58 to manage public recreation or protect a recreation resource. Recreation sites and trails are established under section 56 of FRPA, with uses controlled under the *Forest Recreation Regulation*. Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC), a branch of the Ministry of Forests Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRO) is the agency that administers sites and trails.

This special report has been prompted by multiple concerns and complaints received by the Forest Practices Board about outdoor recreation activities and how recreation values are managed under FRPA. Examples include: management of forestry activities within designated recreation sites;<sup>ii</sup> impacts of forestry activities on recreation resources;<sup>iii</sup> and perceived gaps in management of forest recreation values including underutilization of the management tools provided in FRPA. The Board has observed that problems can occur when there is no planning for recreation resource values or where objectives and desired outcomes for these values are not clear.

In preparing the terms of reference for this report, the Board interviewed staff and/or board members from the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC, Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC, RSTBC and FLNRO. The interviewees identified several issues related to the management of forest recreation values with the most common of these being tied to planning, including gaps in the FRPA framework and its application. A key concern is that recreation is something of an orphaned value under FRPA. It is a forest resource and, at the same time, it is not part of forestry or range activities and does not

have its own legislation and government program to fully manage its diverse activities and requirements.

## OBJECTIVE

This report will determine how forestry planning and practices are addressing forest recreation values under FRPA. Specifically, the report will look at the following:

1. How the FRPA framework addresses management of forest recreation values.
2. The strengths and weaknesses of the FRPA framework.
3. Opportunities to improve management of forest recreation values.

## SCOPE

This special report will focus on planning to maintain the quality of forest recreation values under FRPA. It will be provincial in scope but will use local case studies to illustrate strengths and weaknesses in recreation planning and management. The report will focus on forestry impacts to recreation values, not on recreation user impacts to forest values.

## APPROACH

Board investigators will review relevant government, Board, and other documentation and conduct interviews with recreation experts, government staff, forest and range tenure holders, universities, non-governmental organizations, and commercial tourism operators. The Board will conduct case studies in coastal and interior areas with a focus on areas where there have been successes or challenges in recreation planning and management. Board staff will do site visits for the case studies.

## REPORTING

The report will describe the current framework for recreation management under FRPA, describe common issues, and identify opportunities for improvement. The report may make recommendations for improving legislation, policies, structures and processes to manage forest recreation under FRPA.

---

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/Files/5fba2481-01e9-4579-83d3-6b6c6c1c15c8/BCGDPbyIndustryCurrentDollars.xlsx>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.bcfpb.ca/reports-publications/reports/clearing-of-trees-and-brush-at-a-recreation-site/>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.bcfpb.ca/reports-publications/reports/harvesting-near-a-recreational-trail-on-the-sunshine-coast/>