Forest Practices Board

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2027-2031

**To serve the public interest as the independent watchdog for sound forest and range practices.**



Forest Practices Board

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**TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We acknowledge, with gratitude and respect, the territories of the Indigenous Peoples across British Columbia.

We are committed to incorporating Indigenous views and values in our work and to encouraging practices and stewardship of forest and range lands that support reconciliation.

# A clear direction for an evolving forest and range system

The Forest Practices Board serves the public interest as the independent watchdog for sound forest and range practices in British Columbia. Through its audits, investigations, special reports and review of determinations and appeals, the Board plays an important role in the oversight system for forest and range activities in BC.

The 2027–2031 Strategic Plan sets out the priorities the Forest Practices Board will focus on, serving as the Board's compass and guiding its work through the complex and evolving landscape of modern forest and range management.

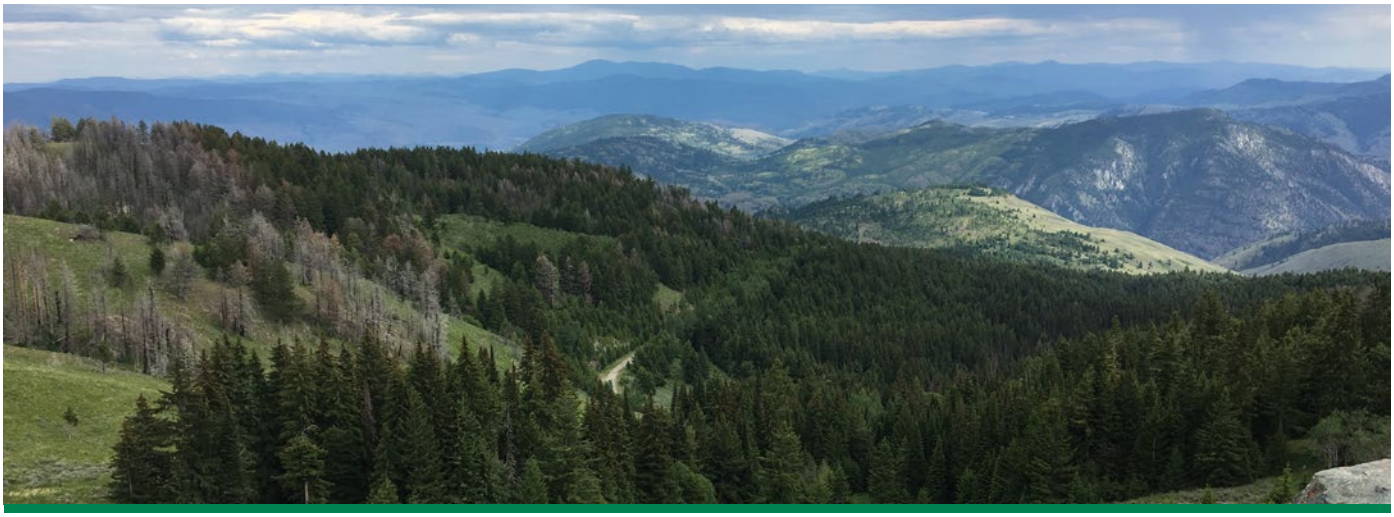
The Board's oversight work is grounded in its values: independence, integrity, excellence, fairness, respect, transparency and a commitment to reconciliation. Where the Board identifies issues or barriers to sound resource management practices, it may make recommendations to improve laws, policies, or practices.

Increasing complexity, uncertainty and opportunity will continue to shape BC's forests and rangelands. Advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Nations, the effects of climate change, global economic pressures, the need to modernize land management practices, and ongoing legislative and policy changes will all influence the sectors.

In this context, the Board's role in serving the public interest through accountable and transparent reporting is more important than ever to ensure that forest and range management systems remain robust and trusted.

These strategic priorities identify where the Board will place emphasis in its work. They are intended to guide how the Board applies its oversight role, engages with the forest and range sectors, communicates its findings, and maintains the professional expertise and capacity needed to fulfill its mandate.

The Board is committed to continuous improvement and will regularly review and adjust its priorities, where appropriate, to respond to emerging issues and changes in the forest and range sectors.



# Mission and purpose

**OUR MISSION**

**To serve the public interest as the independent watchdog for sound forest and range practices.**

**OUR PURPOSE**

Our work encourages:

**01** Sound forest and range practices that instill confidence with the public and Indigenous Peoples.

**02** Continuing improvements in forest and range stewardship.

**03** Fair and equitable application of the *Forest and Range Practices Act* and the *Wildfire Act*.

# Values and behaviours

These values and corresponding behaviours guide us in all of our work.

## Independence

- We act on behalf of the public interest, not any single group or individual.
- We work in a non-adversarial, unbiased, non-partisan and balanced manner.

## Integrity

- We are straightforward in our approach - we tell it like it is.
- We base actions and decisions on knowledge, evidence and experience.

## Excellence

- We produce high-quality work.
- We seek continuous improvement in our work and in forest and range practices.

## Fairness

- We treat all participants with fairness and sensitivity.
- We seek solutions rather than assigning blame.

## Respect

- We treat all people with courtesy and value their opinions and perspectives.
- We recognize the value of diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives.

## Transparency

- We provide clear and concise reports to the public.
- We are accessible and accountable.

## Reconciliation

- We build respectful, collaborative relationships with Indigenous Peoples, honouring their histories, rights and ongoing contributions.
- We listen, learn and seek to reflect Indigenous laws, knowledge, values and stewardship perspectives in our work.

# Independent oversight in the public interest

The Forest Practices Board plays a key role in advancing the public interest in forest and range practices in BC. As an arm's-length, independent agency, we are an important part of the province's accountability framework for forest and range activity.

Our credibility rests on high-quality work, independence and impartiality, and keeping the public interest at the forefront.



## OUR ORGANIZATION AND PEOPLE

The organization consists of a full-time Chair, part-time Board members and a multidisciplinary staff team. The Executive Director manages day-to-day operations and reports to the Chair.

Staff are employed under the *Public Service Act* and carry out the Board's audit, investigation, legal, research, communications and corporate work. The team draws on expertise in forest and range management, biology, agrology, geoscience engineering, law, communications, finance, information technology and administration. The Board may also retain specialists, consultants and auditors when additional expertise is required.

## OUR BUDGET

The Board has its own budget vote. The Chair is accountable for the budget, while the Minister of Forests represents the Board during the annual estimates process. The Board determines how its resources are allocated and operates independently of the government. Its annual operating budget is approximately $4 million.

# Meet the Board

Board members bring diverse backgrounds and perspectives to issues facing the sector and the management of public forest and range resources.

**BOARD MEMBERSHIP AS OF SEPTEMBER 2026**



**Meggin Messenger**
Chair



**Gerry Grant**
Vice Chair



**Gail Wallin**
Board Member



**Phil Burton**
Board Member



**Kerry Rouck**
Board Member

## Appointments and governance

**APPOINTMENTS**

The Chair, Vice Chair and other Board members are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council following a merit-based process. Appointments seek diverse backgrounds, experience and perspectives relevant to the Board's work.

**GOVERNANCE**

Collectively, members set strategic direction, select work, consider findings and reach conclusions. Board members must perform their duties faithfully, honestly and impartially.

# What we do

The Board's mandate is established under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* and the *Wildfire Act*.

## 01 Audits

We audit forest and range practices on public land and the appropriateness of government enforcement.

Auditors collect and evaluate evidence to determine if forestry and range activities are consistent with forest and range practices legislation and operational plans. They also evaluate whether activities are consistent with government objectives for forest resources.

## 02 Complaint investigations

We investigate public complaints about compliance with the F*orest and Range Practices Act*, the *Wildfire Act*, and the appropriateness of government enforcement of those acts.

We act in the public interest and are not an advocate for the complainant or a defender of government or licensees. We emphasize solutions over blame and encourage continuous improvements to reduce the likelihood of problems recurring in the future.

## 03 Reviews and appeals

We can appeal decisions made by government officials under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* or the *Wildfire Act*, such as determinations of non-compliance, penalties or approvals of plans for forestry or range operations.

We can make an appeal to the independent Forest Appeals Commission, or join an appeal if we believe a decision was made in error and that there is a public interest that is affected by the decision.

## 04 Special investigations and reports

We conduct special investigations to address forestry and range-related matters that are of interest to the public as a whole, or that deal with systemic issues. Special investigations focus on compliance with legislation, or appropriateness of enforcement, and may also raise policy issues.

The Board Chair can also issue a special report to comment publicly on issues with forest and range practices or policy to foster understanding and discussion and effect change in support of the public interest.

INDEPENDENCE

# What independence means

We describe ourselves as independent and ensure that we act independently. But the Board was created, and is funded, by the provincial government. So what does independence mean in practice?

## Funding and accountability

The Board has its own budget vote rather than receiving funding through a ministry. It remains subject to government financial and administrative policies, procedures and internal audits.

## Choice of work and resources

The Board decides its staffing, projects and resourcing. It determines which audits, investigations and other projects it will undertake and how they will be conducted. No ministry directs the Board's work or approves how it allocates its resources.

## Fair process

When government or another party is the subject of an audit or investigation, it has the same rights as any other participant. The Board's published procedures explain what parties can expect, including when they may provide input.

## Conclusions and publication

The Board reaches its own conclusions and decides what to report. Its reports are not reviewed or approved for release by anyone in government. Government, agreement holders and other participants are treated through the same fair and impartial processes.

IN PRACTICE

**The Board determines the work it undertakes, how it conducts that work and the conclusions it reaches. Its reports are published without government review or approval.**

# Strategic priorities 2027-2031

Four priorities focus the Board's work while preserving its ability to respond to emerging public-interest issues.

## 01 Accountability in a changing environment

Hold government and licensees accountable for ensuring forest and range practices remain effective in a changing environment.

## 02 Respectful relationships

Support credible oversight through respectful relationships across the forest and range sectors.

## 03 Clear and meaningful communication

Communicate the Board’s work to support transparency, awareness and understanding.

## 04 Professional capacity

Support a culture of professional development and expertise in a complex and evolving forest and range system.

PRIORITY 1

# 01

# Accountability in a changing environment

**Hold government and licensees accountable for ensuring forest and range practices remain effective in a changing environment.**



## WHY THIS MATTERS

As pressures on forests and rangelands increase, the public needs assurance that government regulation is responding effectively. The Board's independent oversight shows where the system is working and where it is not, driving continuous improvement and reinforcing confidence in responsible stewardship. Oversight strengthens accountability, informs decision-makers and builds public trust in forest and range practices.

## WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE BOARD'S WORK

Forests and rangelands face increasing pressures from climate change, cumulative effects, shifting public expectations and biodiversity concerns. In this context, the Board's role is to assess whether government laws, policies and practices are effective. Beyond evaluating agreement holders' compliance with rules, the Board examines whether the rules support the maintenance of healthy, resilient forests and rangelands.

## UNDER THIS PRIORITY, THE BOARD WILL

- Examine government and agreement holders' planning and decision-making, including how they integrate climate-related risks, biodiversity and cumulative effects into the way they set objectives for, regulate and implement forest and range activities on public land.
- Assess and report on whether government is effectively enforcing, and agreement holders are complying with, applicable laws.
- Strengthen reporting on its recommendations to provide the public with feedback on whether parties accept them, how they are implemented and whether they result in changes on the ground.
- Continue to identify best practices and opportunities for improvement that affect regulatory effectiveness over time.

PRIORITY 2

# 02

# Respectful relationships

**Support credible oversight through respectful relationships across the forest and range sectors.**



## WHY THIS MATTERS

Instilling public confidence in forest and range practices requires effective relationships to support balanced oversight and ensure the Board's work is conducted in the public interest.

## WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE BOARD'S WORK

The Board will focus on improving relationships with governments, Indigenous Nations, organizations and practitioners to inform its understanding of decision-making contexts, sector dynamics and operational realities in a complex and evolving forest and range system.

## UNDER THIS PRIORITY, THE BOARD WILL

- Focus on enhancing its relationships with Indigenous Nations in ways that respect their rights, values and stewardship perspectives, to inform the Board's oversight work in a manner that is consistent with the intent of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.
- Enhance intergovernmental relationships to support information-sharing and stay informed of emerging legislative, policy and regulatory changes, ensuring the Board can anticipate and respond to shifts in the forest and range framework.
- Engage with organizations and practitioners to maintain awareness of operational realities and obtain feedback on the Board's work, to ensure its recommendations are grounded and relevant.
- Use engagement to strengthen the relevance and communication of the Board's work, ensuring it is understood, accessible and meaningful to those affected by forest and range practices.

PRIORITY 3

# 03

# Clear and meaningful communication

**Communicate the Board's work to support transparency, awareness and understanding.**



### WHY THIS MATTERS

Clear and meaningful communication helps ensure the Board's oversight is understood and accessible, supports informed discussion and strengthens public confidence in the systems governing forest and range practices.

### WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE BOARD'S WORK

The Board will focus on how its audits, investigations, special reports and reviews of determinations and appeals are communicated to diverse audiences. Effective oversight depends on sound analysis and whether findings and recommendations are well-communicated and improve practices.

### UNDER THIS PRIORITY, THE BOARD WILL

- Highlight emerging and systemic issues and patterns in practices, policy and compliance, and communicate them in plain language.
- Tailor communication tools and channels to enhance engagement with diverse audiences across the province.
- Seek collaboration with Indigenous partners to strengthen the representation of Indigenous values and ways in the Board's work.
- Report on the implementation and effectiveness of government responses to findings and Board recommendations to improve practices and enhance accountability.

PRIORITY 4

# 04

# Professional capacity

**Support a culture of professional development and expertise in a complex and evolving forest and range system.**



## WHY THIS MATTERS

The quality of the Board's oversight depends on the expertise, judgment and continuity of its staff. Investing in professional capacity supports consistent, credible findings and enables the Board to fulfil its public-interest mandate.

## WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE BOARD'S WORK

Under this priority, the Board focuses on sustaining the expertise and continuity needed to support independent judgment and consistent oversight over time.

## UNDER THIS PRIORITY, THE BOARD WILL

- Support the continual development and retention of multidisciplinary expertise to address technical, legal and environmental complexity.
- Foster a professional environment that supports independent analysis, constructive challenge and sound decision-making.
- Continuously improve systems and processes that support the efficient and reliable delivery of the Board’s work.
- Support staff wellbeing to sustain performance, resilience and integrity.

Forest Practices Board

## BC'S INDEPENDENT WATCHDOG

for sound forest and range practices

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