

PRINCIPLES OF ASSOCIATION WITH THE CIF

INTRODUCTION

The *Forestry Profession Act* was passed on 5 June 1985, culminating almost 30 years of collective effort to bring it about. The history of events leading to the Act is detailed in several background papers, listed among the references. The most notable characteristic during the pivotal closing events in 1983-85 was that of developing trust and cooperation between the A.R.P.F.A. and three important groups: the national Canadian Institute of Forestry and its Rocky Mountain Section and forest technologists. Their cooperation and support smoothed the passage of the legislation.

Trying to capture the essence of this cooperation, the Professional Foresters Review Board¹ prepared a document entitled "Principles of Association". In that statement, the PFRB tried to reflect the philosophies which had been approved by RMS/CIF and to record the commitments to RMS/CIF and forest technologists. The original 1985 document is recommended as a review of the historical background.

It is noteworthy that during the ensuing decade, the spirit of these principles has been fully maintained. However, on the tenth anniversary of the Legislation, it is appropriate to review the principles and understandings and to reconfirm those that are still applicable.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Among the many reasons for professional legislation at the onset of the A.R.P.F.A., forestry practitioners particularly identified the following:

1. To encourage raising of professional performance through setting standards, adherence to a code of ethics, programs of continuing education and support of technical programs of the Canadian Institute of Forestry.
2. To raise public awareness of professional performance standards and forest resource management in general.
3. To enable foresters to interact with colleagues in allied disciplines in Alberta such as engineering and agrology as co-equal fellow professionals.
4. To enable participation by Alberta foresters in national forestry issues at a professional level through the Canadian Federation of Professional Foresters Association.
5. To enhance the competitiveness of Alberta consulting foresters in national and international activities through establishment of recognized professional standards.
6. To enhance the interprovincial movement of Alberta foresters and University of Alberta forestry graduates.
7. To provide an alternate route for professional recognition other than through university graduation.

The authority and requirements of the Act addressed most of these points, but it is acknowledged that it will take continuing positive and cooperative action on the part of the A.R.P.F.A. members to fulfill them all.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF FORESTRY

One of the most sensitive areas of relationships was that with the Canadian Institute of Forestry in general and with the Rocky Mountain Section in particular. The Rocky Mountain Section had been active and effective since its inception in 1949. It remains a viable organization which has served to bring Alberta forestry practitioners together for educational purposes, discussion of issues, submission of briefs and social activities. Section members were supportive of the proposed legislation to establish the profession of forestry in 1985, but expressed concern over the possibility that its formation could draw membership from the CIF and reduce its viability.

The Canadian Institute of Forestry functions at a national level as the only Canada-wide voice for forestry practitioners, functioning in essence as a learned society for the exchange of professional and technical

information and publishing the "Forestry Chronicle" as an importance means of disseminating information. In 1984, the CIF affiliated with the original four provincial professional foresters associations to form the Canadian Federation of Professional Foresters Associations (CFPFA), serving a cooperative coordinating function and providing a stronger voice for addressing regional and national issues. The A.R.P.F.A. has been a full member of this group since 1985. The A.R.P.F.A. agrees and reconfirms that the CIF, both the national body and the Rocky Mountain Section, have essential and distinctive roles to play and that the objectives of the A.R.P.F.A. can best be met by recognizing this and supporting the CIF in its complimentary activities.

We reconfirm that the advancement of forestry can best be served by fulfilling our respective roles as follows:

- a) The national CIF is recognized as serving as a leader and spokesman for forestry practitioners in national and international dealings, serving as a unifying body for Canadian foresters, disseminating information through newsletters and the "Forestry Chronicle", fostering information exchange through the annual meeting, operating a certification system for Continuing Forestry Education, providing gold medals to leaders of graduating forestry school classes, presenting foresters rings to graduating foresters and presenting awards for distinctive national contributions.
- b) The Rocky Mountain Section is encouraged to continue its active technical and social programs, discussion of issues, submission of briefs, disseminating Alberta news through newsletters and participating in management of the national CIF through its Board of Directors.
- c) The A.R.P.F.A. will function primarily as a registration body for forestry practitioners, assessing, setting and maintaining standards of ethics and competence for foresters as outlined in the Act, and supporting and participating in the activities of the Rocky Mountain Section and the national CIF, including the CFPFA.

In order to achieve this, we confirm that A.R.P.F.A. members will:

1. support the respective roles of all three groups;
2. reserve a seat on the Board of Directors of the A.R.P.F.A. for a representative of the RMS/CIF;
3. encourage attendance at technical sessions of the RMS/CIF meetings as part of the Continuing Forestry Education commitment and;
4. maintain the dues structure of the A.R.P.F.A. to include the costs of membership in the national CIF:
 - individual A.R.P.F.A. members will have their membership in CIF sustained;
 - non-CIF members will be encouraged to apply for CIF membership;
 - those A.R.P.F.A. members who choose not to belong to CIF may resign that membership and;
 - the entire sum of A.R.P.F.A. dues should be income tax deductible as a professional dues payment.

RELATIONSHIP WITH NON-FORESTERS

The A.R.P.F.A. included a "grandfather clause" in the Regulations in order to give recognition to the non-foresters who had contributed so much to forestry practice in Alberta during its early development days. The grandfather clause provided a one-year window of opportunity during which time non-foresters applied for membership without further initial examination should they have ten years of professional level experience or an equivalent combination of professional and technical experience. This was honoured.

Further, assurance was given that opportunities would be provided through a syllabus program to enable other non-foresters to work toward full professional membership through stipulated course work which might be obtained through one or a combination of studies at a technical school, university, correspondence or self-study and passing of examinations. In this way, a door is open to qualify for professional membership by means other than university graduation and encouragement is given to individuals to undertake additional study to increase knowledge and understanding resulting in a general increase in levels of proficiency and practice. This route was established through the Universities Coordinating Council.

Since then, forest technologists have formed the Alberta Forest Technologists Association (AFTA) to provide them with a more effective means of representation. The A.R.P.F.A. confirms its support of the AFTA and its commitment to work with them to enhance their recognition. It is a goal of the A.R.P.F.A. to work jointly with the AFTA to accomplish the mandatory registration of all forestry practitioners in the Province of Alberta in the appropriate association. It is also the goal of the A.R.P.F.A. to have the appropriate legislation amended to identify specific forestry activities that can only be done by registered forestry practitioners. The movement of both organizations towards this goal will be guided by an ad hoc advisory group consisting of members of the A.R.P.F.A., AFTA and the Council on Professions and Occupations Bureau.

MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT OF STANDARDS OF FORESTRY PRACTICE

In order to fulfill the A.R.P.F.A. objective of maintaining and improving standards of forestry practice, the A.R.P.F.A. reconfirms that members will adhere to the following commitments to:

1. practice and encourage the application of state of the art techniques in forestry;
2. encourage and participate in programs of Continuing Forestry Education as stipulated by the Board,
and
3. adhere to the Codes of Ethics and Conduct.