

Forest Resources Act Review Summary

What is the *Forest Resources Act*?

The *Forest Resources Act* and *Forest Resources Regulation* is the legislation that guides the sustainable management of forest resources in the Yukon.

The Act has provisions that consider all forest users, ensuring that environmental, economic, social and cultural interests are considered when we manage Yukon's forests for current and future generations.

The Act and Regulation came into force in 2011, providing the Yukon with the first comprehensive natural resources legislation.

Why now?

There is a legal requirement to conduct this review. Section 95 of the Act states "within five years after this Act comes into force, the Minister shall establish a process for the review of this Act."

The Government of Yukon established a working group to review the Act, based on discussions with First Nations.

Working group members are from Teslin Tlingit Council, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Kluane First Nation, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Acho Dene Koe First Nation and the Government of Yukon.

The working group met between November 2019 and December 2020 to review the Act and Regulation. During that time they also engaged with First Nations and stakeholders including the Yukon Wood Products Association and industry.

Discussions were collaborative and all changes are recommended based on the consensus of working group members.



What has been reviewed?

Some of the proposed changes to the *Forest Resources Act* and Regulation are listed below. The complete list of draft Recommended Changes to the *Forest Resources Act* and Regulation is available at Yukon.ca/forest-resources-act. The proposed changes include the following.

- 1) Streamlining and modernizing the licensing and permitting process
 - a) Allowing harvest licence notifications to be shared with First Nations and the public earlier in the planning process (before an application is received). Harvest licence notifications currently occur when an application is received.
 - b) Changing from two to one licence type for commercial timber harvesting and streamlining the tenures regime. This provides a clearer process for administrators and businesses.
 - c) Expanding the collection of reforestation fees to green wood and dead wood (currently collected on green wood only).
 - d) Introducing application fees for commercial morel mushroom permits.
- 2) Improving administrative and planning processes
 - a) Allowing the Director to amend timber harvest plans; currently, the reasons a timber harvest plan can be amended are too narrow and lead to unnecessary duplication or overlap of plans.
 - b) Enabling the development of community forest timber harvest plans to foster community stewardship of local forests.
 - c) Building more flexibility into the forest resources permit to allow for longer terms, and a wider scope of eligible activities and end-uses for harvested timber.
- 3) Miscellaneous updates/corrections to the Act
 - a) Correcting typos and unclear language.
 - b) Changing from calendar year to fiscal year.



- c) Administrative updates (such as updating maps and lists of completed plans).

Where are we at in the review process?

We are in the consultation and engagement phase of the review process. Following this period, the working group will reconvene to review what was heard, and make their final recommendations to the Government of Yukon.

The working group's final recommendations are subject to change based on the results of feedback gathered through the consultation and engagement process. The Government of Yukon will review what was heard during the consultation and engagement process and the working group's final recommendations.

What will these changes achieve?

The proposed changes to the Act and Regulation include legislative amendments to streamline the licensing, permitting and planning processes and provide enforcement clarity.

Some structural changes will improve the functionality of the Act and Regulation for operational branches, industry, First Nations and the public. They will provide increased economic opportunity, enhanced environmental stewardship and improved efficiency. Generally, the proposed amendments can be considered a collection of improvements that will help the *Forest Resources Act* and Regulation to function better in response to lessons learned throughout the implementation of the Act over the past decade.

How to participate

We are seeking your written input on the proposed changes to the *Forest Resources Act* and Regulation.

Please provide your feedback to forestry@yukon.ca by April 13, 2023.

