

ACR Aboriginal Programs Project Program Template

Program Area:	3.0	Business Development
Sub Program:	3.3	Programs Sponsored by Government and Non-Profit Agencies
Template:	3.3.7	NRCan, Canadian Forest Service Programs
Sponsor(s):	<i>Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)</i>	

1. Objective

To assist status First Nations bands, tribal councils, organizations and any other First Nation group or company seeking to strengthen their economic conditions, business capabilities and employment skills while applying sustainable forest management practices.

2. Description

The First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP) is a joint initiative between Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC). The program builds on the Government of Canada's commitment to ensure a clean, healthy environment and to create opportunities to build strong communities through working with First Nations. NRCan delivers the program nationally, on behalf of the Government of Canada.

The forest offers a foundation for First Nation communities to develop an economic base while maintaining their traditional connections with the land. Partnerships among First Nations, the Government of Canada and industry have created opportunities for many First Nations people to improve their skills and apply sustainable forest management practices.

The purpose of the program is to improve economic conditions in status First Nation communities with full consideration of the principles of sustainable forest management.

The program's purpose includes four objectives toward which federal funding is directed. They are:

- To enhance the capacity of First Nations to sustainably manage their forest lands
- To enhance the capacity of First Nations to operate and participate in forest-based development opportunities and their benefits
- To advance the knowledge of First Nations in sustainable forest management and forest-based development, and
- To enhance the institutional capacity of First nations at the provincial and territorial level to support their participation in the forest-based economy

3. Implementation

The FNFP was developed to improve economic conditions in status First Nations communities and to assist First Nations with capacity building for sustainable forest resources management. Financial and technical assistance is provided to bands, tribal councils and other First Nations groups, enterprises, or companies involved in forestry-related activities throughout the province (both on- and off-reserve).

The Canadian Forest Service, a sector within NRCan, is responsible for implementing the program on a national and regional basis. In Alberta, the CFS regional office is located at the Northern Forestry Centre in Edmonton.

The Alberta FNFP management committee is responsible for the overall direction of the program in the province, setting policy and reviewing and approving project proposals. This committee is currently composed of eight members:

- Three First Nations representatives
- Two members representing the Canadian Forest Service
- One member for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
- One member from Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
- One member from the forest industry

Treaty 6, Treaty 7 and Treaty 8 organizations in Alberta are represented by the three First Nations members. The management committee is the final authority concerning project funding and approval and program direction within Alberta.

4. Timeframe for Results

Project duration is 12 months or less; results range from short- to long-term. The current initiative will continue on an annual basis until March, 2008.

5. Measurable Criteria/Funding Guidelines:

- A project's total cost is normally shared between the FNFP, the applicant, and other partners.
- The First Nation must contribute 20 per cent of the total project cost.
- The share from the proponent or other partner(s) may be in the form of a direct (cash) or indirect (in-kind) contribution.
- Indirect contributions must be real and measurable, having a cash equivalency based on fair market values. Examples of in-kind contributions include provision of labour, equipment, supplies, rentals, office space, office materials and resources, and management services.
- Total government funding - including requested FNFP funds and those from other federal, provincial, and municipal departments - shall not exceed 80 per cent of the total project cost.
- FNFP funds shall not be used to purchase capital items, however the First Nation may

purchase capital items as part of their contribution toward the project.

- A maximum of 15 per cent of project costs can be applied towards administration costs for implementation and delivery.

Proposals that incorporate third-party funding, particularly from the corporate sector, will generally be viewed more favorably than those that do not. All contributions must be clearly identified in the proposal, and supported with appropriate documentation.

Under normal circumstances, only one project shall be funded for each First Nation. In cases where only one proposal is submitted with multiple components or unrelated activities, one component of the proposal may be isolated and funded at the discretion of the Committee.

Any projects funded under this program will be assessed for environmental impact as per the requirements of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, and, where appropriate, harmonized with provincial/territorial environmental assessment legislation and practices prior to approval.

6. Budget

The FNFP has a budget of approximately \$400,000 annually in Alberta. This is supplemented with First Nations contributions, and other industry and government support, as noted above.

7. Partners and Sponsors

The FNFP encourages partnerships with other levels of government, industry organizations, business and communities to conduct projects either on or off-reserve

8. Experience with the Program

This innovative and highly successful program involves First Nations in program management at the national and provincial levels, and is considered a model of cooperation, creating a new relationship between First Nations, government and industry. The FNFP has been in existence since 1996, and has funded approximately 1,700 forestry-related projects across Canada.

9. General Applicability

FNFP funding is provided to status First Nation governments, organizations and businesses. From an industry perspective, FNFP support can be used to strengthen the capacity of a First Nation organization to participate in business ventures.

10. Additional Information or Support

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