

Province of Alberta



Population: 4,252,900 ¹

Area: 66.1 million ha

Forests²: 35.2 million ha

Ownership/allocation of forested lands:

Public: 35.2 million ha

Public forest land subject to forest management agreements (FMAs): 23.4 million ha

Public forest land outside of FMAs with timber dispositions: 4.0 million ha

Parks and protected areas (including forests, prairie and alpine areas):

Provincial protected areas: 2,766,641 ha

National Parks: 6,377,500 ha

1. Description:

Alberta is a diverse province spanning several Ecoregions including Grasslands, Aspen Parklands, Boreal Mixedwood and Subalpine Forests. Boreal-mixed forests make up 77% of Alberta's forested land, and include several different species, such as white and black spruce, aspen, balsam poplar, lodgepole pine, jack pine, balsam fir and larch.

In 2012, the main export markets for Alberta's forest products were the United States (57%), China (20%), Japan (9%), South Korea (6%) and the European Union (2.5%). Alberta's total forest product exports were valued at \$2.1 billion. Key Alberta forest products include plywood, pulp and lumber.³

2. Forest governance:

PUBLIC LANDS:

Alberta's Commitment to Forest Management and Stewardship

Alberta has demonstrated commitment to the principles of [sustainable forest management](#) and responsible stewardship through the development of rigorous legislation and policies for the protection, conservation and sustainable management of forests. Alberta works with forest industry representatives to develop long-term plans that ensure forest values are maintained for future generations.

Alberta is continually reviewing standards, monitoring operational and research results, and seeking improvements. As well, new practices and technology allow Alberta's forest product companies to operate more efficiently and generate fewer emissions.

¹ [Statistics Canada, 2016](#)

² Source of all forest area information: *Sustainable Forest Management, Current Facts and Statistics*. Fall 2014. ISBN No 978-1-4601-1945-7 ISSN No 2368-4852 Environment and Sustainable Resource Development

³ Statistics Canada 2012. Trade data accessed via the World Trade Atlas, March 2013. Includes Harmonized System codes 44, 47 and 48.

International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Certification

In 2009, Alberta became the first province in Canada to receive the International Organization for Standardization ([ISO 9001](#)) certification for its Forest Operations Monitoring Program (FOMP); FOMP is Alberta's approach to monitoring harvest and reforestation operations for compliance to legislation and policy.

ISO, a non-government organization, is a federation of the national standards bodies of 157 countries. ISO defines itself as the world's leading developer of international standards and has a portfolio of 17,000 standards covering business, industry and technology.

Forest Tenure Systems

Alberta owns all timber located on provincial public lands. Under Alberta's [Forests Act](#), the right to harvest Crown (public) timber is allocated to companies and individuals through forest tenures. Alberta's forests are managed by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development.

In Alberta, timber is [allocated](#) by one of three mechanisms as defined by legislation:

- Forest management agreements
- Timber quota
- Timber permit

Forest Management Plans

The details of where, when and how trees on Crown land in Alberta are harvested and managed for sustainability are contained in Forest Management Plans approved by the Government of Alberta, with input from the public and other stakeholders. Forest Management Plans are prepared by industry and are a requirement of [Forest Management Agreements](#) (FMAs) negotiated between the Government of Alberta and forest companies. Forest Management Agreements provide companies with rights to harvest and reforest trees on Crown land and ensure activities are carried out in a sustainable manner.

- Developing Forest Management Plans is a dynamic process, incorporating knowledge from research, new policy and legislative changes, ongoing review of performance and input from the public, interested parties and Indigenous peoples (through Alberta's policy on [First Nation Consultation](#))

The Forest Management Plan is a technical document describing forest management objectives, strategies and commitments. It identifies intended methods of cutting, reforestation, and managing timber resources within the defined area of responsibility and includes:

- The extent and size of the forest management area they cover,
- Specific stands identified for harvest in next ten years,
- Intended reforestation treatments to be implemented.

The forest management planning time frame considered is 200 years; this generally represents two full life cycles, or "rotations", for trees in the Forest Management Agreement.

Involvement of indigenous peoples and the public is a key part of the review process for Forest Management Plans. Along with preparing the plan itself, plan developers must develop consultation programs to inform and invite public involvement in developing the Forest Management Plan as well as operational plans. Engagement with indigenous peoples

is guided by the Government of Alberta's [Policy on Consultation with First Nations on Land and Natural Resource Management](#).

Parks and protected areas

The [current park system](#) consists of several classes of parks: Provincial Parks, Wildland Provincial Parks, Provincial Recreation Areas, Wilderness Areas, Ecological Reserves, Natural Areas, Heritage Rangelands and Wilmore Wilderness Park. More information about Alberta's parks, including the [Acts and regulations governing parks and protected areas](#), can be found on the [AlbertaParks.ca](#) website. Alberta's parks are managed by the Ministry of Environment and Parks.

PRIVATE LANDS:

No Acts or regulations specific to forest management on privately-owned lands exist, however, sustainable forest management of private timber lands is encouraged through the [Agroforestry and Woodlot Extension Society \(AWES\)](#) of Alberta.

AWES exists to increase awareness of the economic, social and environmental values of woodlots and agroforestry in the agricultural landscape. AWES promotes responsible woodlot and agroforestry management by providing support and extension services to landowners, land stewards and others who influence land use practices in Alberta.

3. Forest management legislation and regulations:

PUBLIC LANDS:

To achieve sustainable forest management, the province establishes Acts, regulations, standards, policy directives and procedures. Alberta government policies support sustainable forest management to provide ecological, economic, social and cultural opportunities for the benefit of present and future generations.

The key Acts governing activities in Alberta's public forests are the [Forests Act](#), the [Public Lands Act](#), the [Alberta Land Stewardship Act](#) and the [Regulated Forestry Profession Act](#). The *Forests Act* is the enabling forest management legislation in Alberta, setting forth the fundamental powers and legal authorization. The *Forests Act* defines timber allocation and the associated management responsibilities around allocation in terms of crown and proponent roles including what constitutes an offence under the Act and penalties that can be levied for activities in contravention of the Act. There are several regulations associated with the *Forests Act*, including the [Timber Management Regulation](#) addresses key aspects of forest management and provides a framework for all timber regulated activities. The *Public Lands Act* is broader, and governs overall use, disposition and administration of Crown lands. Regional plans created under the authority of the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act*, provide strategic direction on the management of Alberta's forests by setting environmental, economic and social objectives that enable sustainable development and take account of the cumulative effects of human activity. The *Regulated Forestry Profession Act* provides details on the right to title and regulations surrounding the practice of forestry in Alberta, including professional conduct and a complaint process.

Forest Management Manuals & Guidelines

The Alberta Forest Management Planning Standard (the standard) and its annexes, interpretive bulletins and updates comprise the standard for preparing and implementing Forest Management Plans in Alberta.

- [Planning Standard](#)
- [Planning Standard Supplement: Partial Harvest Guidelines](#)

Reforestation Standard of Alberta

The requirement for reforestation exists in the Forests Act, Timber Management Regulation and forest management agreements. It is a requirement to conduct reforestation activities within 2 years of harvest. The Reforestation Standard of Alberta (RSA) is the standard to which reforestation assessments are to be conducted on public land in Alberta for the purpose of fulfilling obligations under legislation.

- [Reforestation Standard of Alberta](#)

Regulated Forestry Professionals

Alberta relies on the competence and professionalism of Regulated Forestry Professionals (RFP) to apply sound forestry principles and practices.

[Regulated Forestry Professionals](#) must follow specific standards and a Code of Ethics to practice forestry on public lands in Alberta. They are accountable to the public and their peers. Registered Professional Foresters (RPFs) and Registered Professional Forest Technicians (RPFTs) work for both government and the forest industry.

Compliance & Enforcement

Essential to sustainable forest management is ensuring forestry-related regulations and [policy directives](#) are followed. The Government of Alberta monitors compliance by conducting planned and random audits of forest operations and timber production and by conducting field inspections. There is also self-reporting by forest companies and individuals. Good management of Crown land by all forest users depends on these activities.

If a company or individual is found to be non-compliant, the Government of Alberta will take [compliance and enforcement](#) action. This may include:

- Assessing penalties
- Follow-up action plans and corrective actions
- Seizing timber
- Suspending or cancelling timber harvest rights or dispositions

Timber theft from both public and private land can also be dealt with through the court system.

4. Timber processing legislation and regulations:

Harvested timber is marked in cut blocks. Appropriate haul forms are then required to be carried in trucks. Periodic truck checks are carried out to ensure documentation is correct and that the timber being hauled is from an authorized area. The copies of the haul forms are provided to the mill at its weigh scale.

Timber Dues & Crown Fees

[Timber Dues and Crown Charges](#) (Stumpage Fees) and other fees associated with timber dispositions are collected by the province. The charges, collected under the authority of the *Forests Act*, ensure that Albertans receive fair compensation for the use of publicly owned forest resources.

The timber dues rates that are applied are based on the current market prices of forest products. The tables used to determine the general rate of timber dues are adjusted periodically to reflect changes to current market conditions, and in the case of deciduous timber used to make pulp, indexed annually to account for inflation. The tables are located in Schedules 3-7 of the [Timber Management Regulation](#).

Alberta Timber Scaling Manual

The [Alberta Timber Scaling Manual](#) provides the standards of measurement used to determine the quantity and quality of timber harvested in Alberta.

In addition, the manual provides information about compiling and reporting harvest data and describes non-standard scale methods used to estimate volumes of decked and stacked timber.

This manual is authorized under Section 99 of the [Timber Management Regulation](#), pursuant to Section 5 of the *Forests Act*.

5. Forest certification:

The [Forest Management Planning Standard](#) (FMPS) outlines the forest management planning process in Alberta. In addition to being based on the requirements of Canada's [National Sustainable Forest Management Standard](#) (CSA Z809-2002), the FMPS provides additional interpretation and details necessary to meet the needs of Alberta. All forest management plans prepared by industry in Alberta must follow the process described in this standard.

Although Alberta's standard is based on CSA Z809-2002, neither this nor any other certification method is specifically endorsed by Alberta. All credible certification methods necessitate that operations meet the legal requirements set out in the standard. Forest management plans prepared according to the standard will be in a good position to receive certification under any scheme; however, certification is not required for forest management plan approval by Alberta.

The certification schemes active in Alberta include CSA, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) Inc. In total, the area managed under third-party certification schemes is 20.2 million ha. There are 2.5 million ha certified under the CSA certification scheme, 5.9 million ha certified under the FSC, and 11.7 million ha under the SFI certification scheme.⁴

6. Public engagement in forest management:

FMA holders are responsible for forest management planning in accordance with the Government of Alberta standards. Specific planning obligations, including public involvement and Aboriginal consultation are included in the Alberta Forest Management Planning Standard.

- [Planning Standard](#)
- [Indigenous Consultation](#)

⁴ Alberta - SFM Certification Status Report - Year-end 2016 <http://certificationcanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/2016-Yearend-SFM-Certification-Detailed-AB-Final.pdf>