

Aboriginal Forestry

Learning and Earning from the Forest



A Unique Relationship

First Nations in Canada have always had a respectful relationship with the land, drawing on its power and beauty for social, spiritual and cultural enrichment.

This is especially true for First Nations communities located in forest areas, which represent 80% of all First Nations.



First Nations Opportunities

Forests can also provide economic and development opportunities for those who live in and around them.

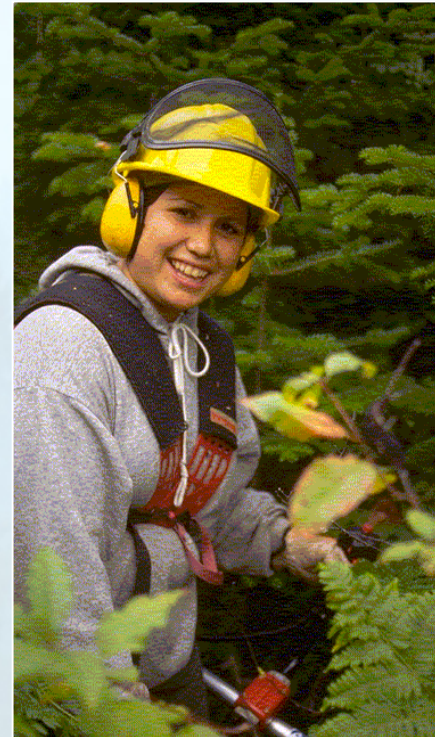
Possibilities for First Nation participation within Canada's forestry sector have been on the rise, and will continue to increase as partnerships between First Nations, government and industry are developed.



First Nations Forestry Program

To facilitate these opportunities, the Government of Canada created the First Nations Forestry Program (FNFP).

Established in 1996, the purpose of the FNFP is to improve the economic conditions for First Nations communities, with full consideration of the principles of sustainable forest management.



FNFP Funding

- Funding for the FNFP is provided jointly by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and Natural Resources Canada (NRCan).
- In 2003, based on the tremendous success of the program, the FNFP was renewed for an additional five years.
- Funding increased by \$10 million to \$32.5 million over this five-year period.



FNFP Objectives

- Enhance capacity for sustainable forest management
- Support forest-based development opportunities
- Advance knowledge in sustainable forest management and business development
- Enhance the institutional capacity of First Nations to operate at the provincial/territorial level in support of their participation in the forest-based economy

Benefits to the Community

The FNFP is part of the Government of Canada's commitment to create and share opportunities with First Nations to build a better future, healthier environment and stronger communities.

Specifically, it provides First Nations with the opportunity for socio-economic growth through:

- Specialized training
- Experience managing forests and forestry workers
- Development of First Nations leadership in forestry



Benefits to the Community

- The incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge with forest science and western management practices
- Support for traditional businesses
- Increased opportunities for employment for First Nation foresters
- The ability to apply First Nations' knowledge and skills within the forest sector



Making a Difference

To date, the FNFP has funded over 1,325 projects in 370 communities, providing First Nations with financial and technical assistance to support projects in forestry and forest related development opportunities.

The FNFP has also created opportunities for over 5,700 First Nations people across Canada to enhance their skills and knowledge in forestry and other related areas.

Training in Manitoba

FNFP success stories are widespread, and include all regions of Canada. For example, the Ahtahkakoop First Nation of Manitoba has used FNFP funding to offer forestry worker training to several of its members.

Courses and experience in tree planting and fire fighting have helped First Nation workers find seasonal and permanent employment in various activities in the forest sector and elsewhere.



Business Development in BC

Members of the Little Shuswap Indian Band in Chase, British Columbia are in a jam and proud of it! Using FNFP funding, the Band set up a non-timber forest products business selling jam with wild berries from forests on reserve.

The successful venture created jobs for Band members and provided revenues to cover start-up costs for next season.

Eco-tourism in New Brunswick



Eco-tourism is a hot commodity in the travel business these days and the Pabineau First Nation in New Brunswick has jumped onboard.

The community has been working with several partners to restore the historic Mi'kmaq hiking trail – a 130-kilometer trek that follows the seasonal movement and hunting trails used by First Nation peoples for hundreds of years. Work to complete the trail is ongoing but tourists are already showing up to make this eco-friendly trek.

Contact Information

To learn more about the First Nations Forestry Program please contact:

Jack Smyth
Canadian Forest Service
580 Booth St., 7th Floor
Ottawa, ON. K1A 0E4
Tel: (613) 947-7380
Fax: (613) 947-7399
E-mail: info@fnfp.gc.ca

Web site: www.fnfp.gc.ca