

Guide to Making Private Managed Forest Land Forest Practices Inquiries & Complaints

Overview

The Private Managed Forest Land Council (council) is an independent provincial agency established under the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* to administer the managed forest program and protect key public environmental values on private managed forest land.

Key public environmental values are:

- fish habitat
- water quality
- critical wildlife habitat
- soil conservation
- reforestation

The council functions are stated on the council website Council Overview page. Selected council functions are:

1. Set and Monitor Forest Practice Standards
 - Set or amend forest practice standards in accordance with the objectives set out in the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* and associated regulations
2. Enforce Standards and Perform Audits
 - Respond to complaints, and conduct associated investigations
 - Enforce the established forest practice standards in accordance with regulations and the principles of natural justice
 - In case of landowner noncompliance, use appropriate enforcement tools

Inquiries and complaints regarding private managed forest land may be submitted by managed forest landowners or other interested parties, including the public.

The council can only deal with inquiries and complaints specific to private managed forest land.

The council encourages the involved parties to resolve any issues themselves to avoid a formal investigation.

The following process is intended to assist inquirers/ complainants in providing the information required to resolve concerns regarding forest management practices on private managed forest land.

STEP 1

Try to discuss the matter as you would with your neighbours and resolve the issue directly with the owner or the owner's representative.

STEP 2

If the concern is not successfully resolved, you may contact the council's executive director, and consider initiating a formal inquiry/complaint.

Guide to Making Private Managed Forest Land Forest Practices Inquiries & Complaints

STEP 3

Submit a completed Inquiry/Complaint form to the council. Try to be as specific as possible in describing the issue. This form must be filled out as completely as possible to avoid delays in obtaining the information required to process the inquiry/complaint.

STEP 4

The executive director reviews the inquiry/complaint and determines subsequent action:

1. Directs the landowner to address the inquiry/complaint and report back.

OR

2. Launches an onsite investigation that may include the executive director, and/or council staff, and may include representatives from the Ministry of Environment and/or the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

STEP 5

Council prepares an investigation report resulting in the following:

1. If it is found that practices are in compliance with the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* and/or Regulations, the investigation and inquiry/complaint process is ended.
2. If a noncompliance with the *Private Managed Forest Land Act* and/or Regulations is found, the executive director may refer the investigation report to the council prior to enforcement action, or may proceed directly to enforcement action.

POTENTIAL ENFORCEMENT ACTION

- Stop-work order
- Remediation order
- Consent agreement (may include financial penalty)
- Regulatory determination (may include financial penalty)

Following the investigation and decision including a determination of enforcement action, a Directly Affected Party and/or the landowner may appeal the decision to the Forest Appeals Commission.