



Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry  
Ministère des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts

March 10, 2017

Mr. Ray Riley  
Chair  
Forestry Futures Committee  
1294 Balmoral Street, Suite 203  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5Z5

Mr. Michael Keel  
RBC Investor Services Trust  
155 Wellington Street West, 2nd Floor  
Toronto, ON M5V 3L3

Dear Mr. Riley and Mr. Keel:

**SUBJECT: Funding for the Forest Genetic Resource Management Program**

On January 26, 2017, the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry specified the following as a purpose for the Forestry Futures Trust (FFT):

The funding of forest genetic resource management activities. This purpose will be referred to as the "forest genetic resource management program".

The amount of funding for this purpose is not to exceed \$675,000 per annum for five fiscal years ending March 31, 2022.

This purpose will be funded from the Forestry Futures Trust base charge.

The relevant criteria for making disbursements from the FFT for the forest genetic resource management (FGRM) program are set out below. These criteria are consistent with the purpose of the FFT and are hereby established pursuant to the powers under subsections 51 (6) of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994 that have been delegated to me by the Minister.

- Applications for funding under this purpose shall be assessed in accordance with the eligibility and evaluation criteria specified in Attachment #1 to this letter.
- Funds disbursed for this purpose shall not, in any given fiscal year, exceed \$675,000. Funds not used in a fiscal year as part of FGRM core or project based activities, including multi-year, will be available for other FFT projects that are eligible for funding from the FFT base charge.
- Disbursements for this purpose must be consistent with the terms of this letter, including Attachment #1 hereto.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to the work of the Forestry Futures Trust. I am confident that the Committee and RBC Investor Services Trust will be diligent in the allocation of the funding for this purpose in a fair and equitable manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris Walsh".

Chris Walsh, R.P.F.  
Director  
Crown Forests and Lands Policy Branch

c: Monique Rolfvondenbaumen, Director, Integration Branch

Attachment

**Attachment #1**  
**Forest Genetic Resource Management (FGRM) Program Eligibility and Evaluation**  
**Criteria**

The Forestry Futures Committee (Committee) shall apply the following criteria in determining eligibility and evaluating applications for funding under the Forest Genetic Resource Management Program.

**Eligibility**

**Eligible Applicants**

The three regional tree improvement/genetic associations (Superior Woods Tree Improvement Association, Northeast Seed Management Association and Forest Gene Conservation Association), are eligible to apply to the Committee for FGRM funding.

**Eligible Activities**

All activities, including staff expenses, must contribute to the management of provincial forest genetic resources and benefit Ontario's Crown forests in order to be eligible for funding. Eligible activities include both core and project-based activities.

**Core Activities**

Core activities are activities or functions that allow an association to continue managing existing provincial FGRM assets and participate in provincial FGRM discussions. Funding for core activities is set at a combined maximum of \$375,000 to be divided equitably between the associations. In submitting an application, regional associations may apply for up to three years of funding to a maximum of \$125,000/year per association. The level of support provided to individual associations is to be equitable in consideration of other support that MNRF may provide to one or more of the associations to fund core activities.

Core activities include:

- 1) Regional association staff expenses and applicable benefits.
  - a) Salary/benefits funding for the equivalent of a Tree Improvement or Genetic Resource Management Specialist to support the eligible activities undertaken by the applicant. Requests for staff expenses should identify the eligible activities that will be undertaken or supported by those staff.
- 2) Reasonable operating expenses including office and other administrative, maintenance, travel or infrastructure expenses to support the regional association.

**Project-based Activities**

Project-based activities are functions that enhance an association's capacity to undertake FGRM activities. Total funding for project-based activities is set at a combined maximum of \$300,000/year. Individual projects are limited to a maximum value of \$50,000 and a duration of up to three years, with a possible one-year extension if required. The regional associations are encouraged to partner with other entities, where appropriate, e.g., university, MNRF, private consultant, etc.

Project-based activities include:

- 1) Activities that contribute to achieving the goals of the Provincial Tree Improvement Master Plan, and other MNRF policies, plans or strategies related to forest genetic resource management such as those included in the Forest Operations and Silviculture Manual, Forest Management Guides, Ontario's Biodiversity or Climate Change Strategies. For example:
  - a) maintaining existing forest genetic assets, such as genetic tests and orchards.
  - b) developing a seed collection program that will provide high quality source-identified seed that is adapted for a future climate and resistant to forest pests. This is not intended to address the routine operational collection of wild seed but may include seed collected for a special purpose, e.g., a known Superior Provenance. This may include establishing new orchards or new seed collection areas, e.g., using data analysis from progeny tests to rank better performing trees, from which scions are taken for grafting to root stock for out planting in a clonal seed orchard.
  - c) advanced and new tree breeding program design.
  - d) establishment of new tree breeding programs, including elite genotype selection, archiving and progeny testing, where the program design has been approved by MNRF.
  
- 2) Information management activities to support the management of forest genetic resources. For example:
  - a) data collection and management of progeny and other genetic field trials
  - b) data analysis activities to generate key information to support tree improvement and genetic resource management decision making
  - c) developing genetic gain estimates for use in planning and data analysis for program planning and management
  - d) developing seed production forecasting models and information
  - e) developing analytical approaches to incorporate the benefit of using improved seed in forest management planning
  - f) developing, maintaining and modifying software to assist in seed deployment, and
  - g) developing, maintaining and modifying data bases to store genetic resource management program information.
  
- 3) Establishment and maintenance of genetic tests or archives. For example:
  - a) progeny trials
  - b) provenance trials
  - c) realized gain trials
  - d) assisted migration trials, and
  - e) archiving selected materials.
  
- 4) Forest gene conservation projects that contribute to the management of forest genetic resources of Ontario's Crown forest. For example:
  - a) in-situ and ex-situ conservation activities, including maintaining banks of viable seed for Ontario's tree species.
  
- 5) Forest genetic research. For example:
  - a) Research to generate data and information to support tree improvement and forest genetic resource management policy and decision making
  - b) Information synthesis to support specific resource management policy and decision making
  - c) Sponsoring tool development to support specific resource management policy and decision making

- d) Sponsoring relevant research into tree breeding program design
- e) Sponsoring relevant research into producing higher quality trees that are more adapted to a changing climate and/or that have higher pest resistance.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

The Committee will use the following criteria when evaluating applications:

- 1) Contribute to the management of provincial forest genetic resources and benefit Ontario's Crown forests
- 2) Proposed project funding and timelines comply with the eligibility criteria and are reasonable
- 3) Project has clear objectives and deliverables
- 4) Reflects sound science and technology as applicable
- 5) Proposed project effectively addresses one or more of the five broad eligibility criteria
- 6) Proposed project demonstrates how information will be shared and describes how deliverables will be reported on

### **Application Requirements**

The Committee will evaluate how well project applications address the eligibility and evaluation criteria; funding will be awarded accordingly. The Committee may consult subject matter experts when evaluating applications of a technical nature.

### **Funding Applications**

In applying for core or project based funding, applicants will provide a work plan (for one or more years, as applicable) to the Committee describing the objectives and deliverables to be achieved, the eligibility criteria that will be addressed as well as staffing/benefits operations, programs, information management, data collection, research that will be undertaken in carrying out the work.

If applicants submit more than one project in a fiscal year, they should assign a priority to each project.

There are no requirements for applicants to provide in-kind or financial contributions to projects. Applicants should demonstrate commitment to the projects through their approach to managing completion of the work and reporting of results.

### **Reporting and Auditing Requirements**

All funded FGRM activities require work reports describing the activities undertaken and results achieved, for the funds provided.

For core activities or projects that span more than one year, recipients of FGRM funding will provide an interim work report at the end of each fiscal year in which work was carried out. A final work report will be required when requesting a final payment. For core activities or projects that are only a single year in length only a final work report is required.

For core activity funding, interim and final work reports will specifically describe the FGRM work undertaken by the association and accomplishments related to the funding received.

For audit purposes, recipients of FGRM funding will maintain and provide financial and forest genetic resource management records as required under the Terms of Project Approval from the Committee.