

**NAFA**



National  
Aboriginal  
Forestry  
Association

Association  
Nationale de  
Foresterie  
Autochtone

September 6, 2005

TO: All interested parties

RE: Update on Implementation of the National Forest Strategy, Theme 3

This letter is to update you on the progress in the National Aboriginal Forestry Association's (NAFA's) work to implement the 2003-2008 National Forest Strategy (NFS) Theme 3, "Rights and Participation of Aboriginal Peoples". Please circulate this letter to anyone that may be potentially interested.

As the designated Champion of Theme 3, throughout the summer 2005 NAFA has moved forward on building a team and a cooperative workplan to make concrete progress in advancing the action items of the Theme. The complete National Forest Strategy document, including action items for Theme 3, is available at the NAFA website – [www.nafaforestry.org](http://www.nafaforestry.org).

On June 28-29, NAFA hosted a first meeting of Team 3, including representatives of Aboriginal communities, federal government, provincial government, industry, and environmental groups. Team members discussed the NFS framework and its significance for Aboriginal peoples, developed a Terms of Reference, identified key challenges in implementing the Theme 3 action items, and reviewed proposed performance indicators. In addition, the process of developing a cooperative workplan was begun. The meeting summary is available on request from NAFA or at our website, [www.nafaforestry.org](http://www.nafaforestry.org).

Progress over July and August slowed down due to the challenge of scheduling around vacations and field work. NAFA continued to facilitate discussions with Team 3 members about the workplan, as well as developing documentation of the various initiatives across the country that are relevant to Theme 3. Currently we have developed a shortlist of task areas that the Team may begin to move forward on. We now need to reach out to communities and regional organizations in order to validate the relevance of the task areas and to identify additional potential partnerships. In September, NAFA will host conference calls to develop action plans around each of the task areas. All parties that wish to learn more about this process or to participate in it should contact the Team 3 Coordinator, Mark Kepkay, at (613) 233-5563 or [mdkepkay@nafaforestry.org](mailto:mdkepkay@nafaforestry.org).

NAFA and Team 3 have also been involved in the development of indicators to measure progress on the Theme 3 action items. These indicators are expected to be finalized in the early fall, and they will form the basis for Canada as a nation to report on progress in Aboriginal forestry. Where gaps in progress are identified through the reporting process, accountable parties are expected to act to address those gaps. Reporting and accountability are a cornerstone of the NFS.

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We will need extensive participation by Aboriginal communities and organizations to ensure that reporting is credible and reflects the Aboriginal perspective. Contact Mark to learn more about this activity as well.

There is much to do! Finding funding for the Team 3 Coordinator in May was a great help in increasing our capacity to move forward, but we are continually seeking new resources to ensure that progress will continue. We are also continually reaching out to potential partners for implementation. The strength of the NFS is its cooperative framework, and I hope that each of you will find a way to participate in this work.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Wesley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping tail.

for Lorraine Rekmans  
Executive Director