

# Professional Practice Code of Ethics and Duties

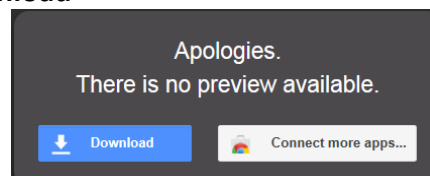
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## 2015 Spring Study Session for the CAPF Professional Exam

Topic	Learning Module	Audio (See instructions below)	Speaker
Professional Practice Code of Ethics and Duties  <a href="#">Case Study</a>	RFP	<a href="#">WMA Audio</a>  <a href="#">MP4</a>	Michael Splinter Tel: (780) 492-3035 <a href="mailto:Michael.Splinter@ualberta.ca">Michael.Splinter@ualberta.ca</a>  Doug Krystofiak Tel: (780) 432 1177 <a href="mailto:registrar@capf.ca">registrar@capf.ca</a>

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**CAPF Study Session 2014  
Professional Practice  
Code of Ethics and Duties**

- Professional Practice
- What does it mean to be a Professional?
- What is Ethics?
- Developing your personal Ethical Roadmap
- CAPF Code of Ethics
- Conflict of Interest – avoid the brush-off

**Remember without Action  
its just words.**

**Answer: True or False**

- Forestry requires specialized education
- Foresters provide highly specialized services
- Employers expect prudent judgment on their behalf
- Foresters practice in the Public's interest
- A Forester's status is Government recognized
- Your practice is regulated by a professional body

- You have specialized **education**;
- You apply your **specialized** knowledge and **judgment** to solve complex problems;
- Your practice is **governed** by legislation – protects the **public** interest;
- You are expected to provide **ethical** and **competent** service and there can be penalties for substandard practice.

- Undertake work you are qualified to do
- You are free to attempt new tasks. First,
  - Do a self assessment,
  - Assess your competence to do that task, and
  - If necessary get help and/or seek guidance.
- Mistakes **can and will** happen - what you do about them is important
  - Did you prepare beforehand and what did you do afterwards.
- **REMEMBER** you are a **professional first**, an **employee second** and are likely to be judged that way in a hearing.

**Ethics:** *Standards of conduct that guide **decisions** and **actions**, based on duties derived from core **values**.*

*"**Values** are our fundamental beliefs or principles. They define what we think is right, good, fair, and just. Ethics are **behaviors** and tell people how to **act** in ways that meet the standard our values set for us."*

Ethics Resource Centre - 2006

- Begins by practicing ethical reflection
- Identify **predictable** surprises / cultivate awareness
  - Recognize, prioritize and analyze situations
- Develop a **network** of mentors to help you test and refine your biases
- Practice using scenarios to assess impacts
- **ACT** – inaction is never an excuse
- Ethics are part of our **Professional Skill** sets

- A Code of Ethics is a **standard** striving for a higher level of ethical behavior
  - Guide professional practice
  - Establish clear expectations for work being done
  - Protect clients
  - Help guide resolution of disputes
- Codes are not intended to simply mark out what is unacceptable
- **Rarely** is there a **solid line** separating ethical and unethical action

- **Required** [see section 3(1d)]
- Helps define acceptable behaviour;
- promote **high standards** of practice;
- provides a **benchmark** for members to use for self evaluation;
- establishes a **framework** for professional behaviour and responsibilities;
- can be a vehicle for occupational identity.

(adapted from the website of Life Skills Coaches Association of BC)  
Downloaded from: <http://www.ethicsweb.ca/codes/coe2.htm>

The consequences of unethical behaviour by professionals in a position of trust, can be substantial for the public, the members, and the profession.

- o Honest professionals are discredited along with the bad;
- o Company bankruptcy;
- o Trust is compromised;
- o Discredited professions can face new government oversight.

A situation where a specific interest of yours is in conflict [actual or potential] with an interest of your employer or client, some examples are:

- o **Financial** – ownership conflicts with decision.
- o Allowing **personal interests** influence your work.
- o **Gratuities** – accepting material goods from groups with an interest in what your organization does.
- o **Revolving door** – making decisions at the same time you are offered employment by a party impacted by your decision.

## How do you deal with potential conflicts?

- Identify them early – practice ethical reflection.
- If in doubt ask for time and seek advice from your mentors.
- Disclose potential conflicts to the other party.
- Excuse yourself from the decision making process.
- Decline the assignment / project.

- First step in addressing an ethical issue is to identify and acknowledge the issue
- Failure to address an issue comes with many justifications:
  - It's only a small issue;
  - But, everybody does it;
  - This is an poorly defined area;
  - This issue is contentious so let's avoid it;
  - Nobody has ever challenged this before;
  - It's business;
  - You don't understand;



**7 statements of duty:**

**Retain** the productivity of forestlands

**Provide** competent forestry service

**Foster** public safety, health and welfare

**Show** professional and personal integrity

**Address** conflicts of interest

**Improve** the practice of forestry

**Maintain** confidentiality

The code of ethics includes **7 statements of duty**

**Remember RPFS AIM**

Each statement of duty includes several standards of practice (SP).

- o SP provides detailed guidelines describing the conduct expected from members.
- o SP appear under one duty but may apply to other duties.

## Ethic: **R**etain the productivity of forestlands

*SOP Regulated members shall:*

- o Ensure that all forest management plans that they sign comply with the law and that their recommendations constitute good stewardship of forestland, given the constraints that may be imposed by the landowners.

*Guidelines Regulated members shall strive to:*

- o Make forest management decisions that are in the best interests of the client or the public, while recognizing the intrinsic value of a healthy forest.

- o You are all Professionals;
- o Develop your own ethical roadmap;
- o Work with mentors or colleagues to build your ethical reflection skills;
- o Know, understand and use the College's Code of Ethics.
- o Each of us must develop ethics as a **Professional Skill**
- o **ACT** – inaction is never an excuse

**CAPF Code of Ethics**

- [http://www.capf.ca/pdfs/CAPF\\_Code\\_of\\_Ethics.pdf](http://www.capf.ca/pdfs/CAPF_Code_of_Ethics.pdf)

**Professional Ethics for Natural Resource and Environmental Managers: A Primer** - *Yale School of Forestry*, chapters 1, 2 & 3

- <http://environment.yale.edu/publication-series/5330/>

**Professional Ethics**; Strahlendorf, P., *Ryerson University, School of Occupational and Public Health*

- [http://www.bcsp.org/pdf/PresentationsArticles/714\\_1.pdf](http://www.bcsp.org/pdf/PresentationsArticles/714_1.pdf)

**Ethics Resource Centre**

- <http://www.ethics.org/>

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## Professional Practice – Case Study

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### A Scenario

**Joe Forester**, RPF works for a small consulting company in Alberta. His consulting firm successfully bids on a contract to do regeneration surveys for a local forestry company. Joe is given the job of carrying out the surveys, but he is swamped with other commitments and doesn't get started until late in the field season. He has completed about 80% of the surveys when a heavy snowfall makes it impossible to complete the survey in the current field season and prior to contract expiry. Joe decides to extrapolate the results of the completed surveys to the unfinished plots and submits the results to the forestry company.

**Bill Supervisor**, RPF, is the contract supervisor for the local company remembers that there was heavy snowfall around the time of some of the surveys and checks out a few cutblocks and can't find any sign that a regeneration survey was done.

Answering the following based on the scenario:

1. Identify two ethics that you think are in play in this scenario?
2. Briefly explain one ethic that you think may have been breached, by whom and why you think it may have been breached. If you don't think an ethic was breached, explain why.
3. What if anything should Joe Forester have done in these circumstances?
4. What if anything should Bill Supervisor have done in these circumstances?
5. Could a complaint be filed in this case? Who is the most likely person to file a complaint?
6. Who can file a complaint?