

Nicola Thompson Fraser SFM Plan Public Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

December 10, 2015. Merritt Civic Centre

Attendees:

Kathy Crack	Tom Wilms	Liis Jeffries	Chris Lepsoe
Lorne Wood	Larry Michaelsen	Rueben Irvine	Jamie Skinner
Bert Parke	Katharine Shewchuk	Norm Hansen	Matt Manuel
Gerry Sanford	Brent Turmel	Leona Antoine	Brent Fukumoto
David Kerridge	Craig Hewlett	Harley Wright	Stefan Borge
Alan Burger	Jennifer Reid		

Guests: Astrid van Woudenberg, Peter Seminoff, Debbie Hartland **Facilitator:** Pat Salm

Introduction, agenda review, safety:

The meeting started at 9:30AM. The meeting began with introductions, meeting room orientation and a review of the proposed meeting agenda. There were no additional items added to the agenda.

Action Items:

There were three action items from April 23, 2015 that were reviewed:

The first item was to report on a proposed target for rare ecosystems in the Merritt TSA. Astrid is at the meeting to speak to the work she has done on behalf of the licencees in this regard.

Pat advised that he has sent the request for additional monitoring report information (targets 6b and 19) to Laura-Ann Andrews, the person who compiles the monitoring report.

The 3rd item was for Brent to look into having someone from the Wildfire Branch present information pertaining to retention of debris piles (for possible use by small mammals) and managing fire risk. Presentation is scheduled for today's meeting with Peter Seminoff and Debbie Hartland.

Rare Ecosystem Target (Merritt) – presentation by Astrid van Woudenberg

Astrid provided a great overview of her work to date on developing a rare ecosystem target for the Merritt TSA. The work used the rare ecosystems identified by government (reference: the [BC Species and Ecosystems Explorer](#)) as a starting point. This list was further short-listed after looking at their biological value and local rarity/importance. Field verification of these rare sites is the next planned

step. Advisory group members felt this was a very good start to developing the target and some members offered to spend time with Astrid if she is planning to field verify the identified rare sites later this spring. Completion of the target should occur in time for the 2017 SFM Plan. In the interim, licencees will be using Astrid's short list of rare sites in current development planning to ensure none of these potentially rare sites are unnecessarily disturbed, something that was brought up by advisory group members. Astrid will be providing Pat a copy of her presentation. Pat will then post it to the members section of the website.

Managing debris piles from wildfire and waste perspectives – presentations by Peter Seminoff and Debbie Hartland

Peter and Debbie provided perspective on fire risk and retention of merchantable logs when licencees elect to leave piles of woody debris behind. Peter began by outlining that it is a legal requirement for licencees to assess and abate (where necessary) fuel hazards after harvesting. In Peter's presentation, he referred to work done by the Wildfire Branch to assess acceptable levels of debris, both scattered in the harvest area as well as in piles. This work, "A Guide to Fuel Hazard Assessment and Abatement in British Columbia" provides guidance to forest professionals in meeting their legal obligations. The need to abate hazards are to protect values at risk by fire and to lower wildfire suppression costs and losses.

Debbie explained that government's waste assessment policy supports the concept of "take or pay" when it comes to the utilization of Crown timber. Following harvest, all areas are surveyed for residual merchantable timber. Depending on the quality of the timber, licencees can then be charged stumpage for timber left behind. In some cases, the timber is also charged against their quota. Thus, licencees must be judicious in the type of timber that they wish to leave behind in debris piles.

Advisory group members appreciated all 3 presentations and the opportunity discuss relevant subject matter with them.

CSA Certification Audits – company overviews :

Aspen: External audit occurred in October 2015. Brent explained that the audit was quite detailed – 2 auditors spending four days each. There was one major non-conformance and 2 minor non-conformances given for some noted deficiencies found in the framework agreement between Aspen and the Upper Nicola Band. Brent advised these were related to Aspen's need for better communication. There was an additional non-conformance issued for having out of date documentation.

Tolko: Jamie reported that Tolko has corporate certificate and is on a sampling plan. They were part of the audit sample for 2015 (both within the Kamloops TSA and within the Merritt TSA). There was one minor non-conformance issued, that was largely administrative and related to their internal audit. The auditor also had a number of identified improvement opportunities.

BCTS: External audit Oct 2015 by KPMG. Lorne reported that there was one minor non-conformance that pertained to fuel tanks in pick-up trucks (not having the proper labelling on the tank, not having a spill kit in a truck with a tidy tank, not having fuel tanks inspected according to Transport Canada's schedule). The auditor also had a number of identified improvement opportunities – one was related to how SFM Plan target #9 is reported on. This led to quite a bit of discussion around the target. In the end, it was felt that the table that is provided in the SFM Plan could be updated annually and included in the monitoring report. Also, there will be a slight change to the SFM Plan that should reduce confusion between the government's target for wildlife habitat area and the SFM Plan target that is to provide for habitat until such time as the government completes its job.

Action: Pat to advise Laura-Ann of this request to include the table in the monitoring report.

Canfor: Stefan reported that KPMG conducted an audit in July, 2015. There were minor non-conformances related to Canfor's spill response and a second one for internal procedures related to silviculture activities. The audit also identified a few improvement opportunities.

Gilbert Smith: Craig advised that their audit occurred in September 2015. There were no non-conformances issued and a handful of improvement opportunities that Gilbert Smith is considering.

Both Rueben and Kathy reported on their experiences in attending the audits. They found them insightful and informative. Advisory group members were encouraged to attend the external audits and to let licencees know if they wished to participate in upcoming audits in 2016.

Copies of the external audit reports can be found on the NTF website (under the "documents" tab).

Review Proposed Changes to the 2015 SFM Plan.

Pat reviewed the summary of changes document that highlighted the significant changes to the 2015 SFM Plan. There were no substantive changes made to the Plan. Pat quickly went through the more housekeeping items in the Summary of Change document that was sent out with the meeting agenda. All proposed changes were agreed to. A red-line version of the draft 2016 SFM Plan was created to show the full extent of change. Both the summary page and the red-line version of the Plan are posted on the NTF website (members only section).

Action: A hard copy final version will be posted to the documents page of the NTF website in late December and PAG members can expect a hard copy of the Plan in early January.

Current DFA Issues, Summary, Wrap-Up

Timber Supply update for Merritt and Kamloops

Jamie advised that Chief Forester announcements pertaining to the Annual Allowable Cut determination for both the Merritt and Kamloops TSA's should be occurring early in 2016. The Chief Forester considers the biological factors from the timber supply review as well as social and economic factors in arriving at her decision.

Tolko mill announcement (Jamie)

Tolko's [announcement for the Merritt mill](#) was based in large part on their desire to get the right logs to the right mill in managing fibre in the BC southern interior. While pending decisions on timber supply were part of the decision making process, many other factors were considered in the decision to reduce sawmill capacity by 26 million board feet.

2016 Field Trip (Craig)

Agreed that the next field trip be held in the North Thompson (hosted by Craig Hewlett of Gilbert Smith Forest Products): field trip to during the week of **September 12-16, 2016**. Activities related to harvesting in the dry-belt fir zone will occur.

Government Action Regulation Orders – update (Jamie)

Jamie advised that additional orders might be forthcoming for fish sensitive and temperature sensitive streams in Kamloops and Merritt. Jamie can provide government contact information for each of the initiatives, if interested.

CSA Standard revision – update

Timelines for the re-revised CSA standard was provided (see second page of the meeting agenda). While the revisions will require some effort by the advisory groups, we can expect far less workload than what the previous revision required.

Spring meeting date – May 5th, 2016

Agreed to a tentative meeting date of Thursday May 5th, 2016 where licensee performance against the 2015 SFM Plan will be reviewed. Meeting to occur in Merritt (location tbd - but likely at the Civic Centre).

Jamie reminded public members to complete their mileage claims for travel to him directly.

Meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm.