

# Nicola Thompson Fraser SFM Plan Public Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

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**May 5, 2016. Merritt Civic Centre**

## **Attendees:**

Liis Jeffries	Chris Lepsoe	Harley Wright	Leona Antoine
Lorne Wood	Jamie Skinner	Brian Dack	Reuben Irvine
Bert Parke	Matt Manuel	Larry Michaelson	
Gerry Sanford	Stefan Borge	Leeanne Chow (guest)	
David Kerridge	Craig Hewlett	Jim Baker	

**Facilitator:** Pat Salm

## **Introduction, agenda review, safety:**

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

## **Action Items:**

There was one action item from the December 10, 2015 meeting – the item was to ensure the table that is provided in the SFM Plan for target #9 is included in the monitoring report (with annual updates to area).

This action was completed – see target 9 in the 2015 SFM monitoring report.

## **Review the 2015 SFM Monitoring Report:**

Reviewed the Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) process, the tie that the Monitoring Report has to the SFM Plan and how these are aligned with CSA SFM Criteria and Elements of sustainability. The indicators and targets of the Report are aligned with these Criteria and overall performance can then be evaluated. The Monitoring Report provides performance against the targets in the SFM Plan. Reporting is a roll-up of all licencees performance, individual company reports can be found in the Appendix. The targets in the plan were reviewed; advisory group members were asked to stop at any of the targets where they had a specific question or request.

## **Report sections 1-5:**

**Licencee reporting:** Interfor (Adams Lake) no longer reporting into the plan, this might influence trends for specific targets.

**Highlights:** additional information provided in the highlights section – offering overall plan perspective. Targets were achieved on 40/41 targets, a well done. Discussion followed on how the targets are

reported on and what facts are relied on to generate these results – could they be incorrect? It was noted that licensee procedures on how/what they report for each target are assessed by their 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification auditor. Advisory group members were encouraged to attend these audits to get an understanding of what occurs. Advisory group members who attended recent audits confirmed that the audits do get into the detail. Pat requested that licensees provide their upcoming 3<sup>rd</sup> party audit schedule so that these could be included in the meeting minutes and give advisory group members advanced warning of proposed dates – in case they wanted to attend.

2016 3<sup>rd</sup> party CSA audits (contact company representatives for more info):

Aspen Planers:	Oct 26, 27
BCTS:	October (specific dates to be confirmed)
Canfor:	May 26, 27
Gilbert Smith:	Sept 20-22
Tolko:	Part of corporate audit schedule, no audit visit for Nicola Thompson

**Section 5.1 Summary data:** The advisory group agreed that they wanted to continue to see this section in the report. General feeling was that it provided good perspective.

### **Report appendix 1: Detailed Reporting of SFM Targets**

**Target 2:** This was the only target not met in the SFM Monitoring Report for 2016. Specifically, the target was not met for the non-ESSF ecological zones within the Merritt Timber Supply Area (TSA). The remaining 7 targets in the 3 TSA's and Tree Farm Licence 18 were attained.

There was discussion around how the reporting may continue to show results below the target as reporting occurs at the time of free growing and reforestation decisions that occurred 10-15 years earlier. It is also anticipated in the short term that results will reflect the harvest of pine forests as a result of the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic.

Options for changing the target were discussed including a target that relies on the forest inventory to track changes to leading forest species over time and a target to reforest the species that were harvested. In the end it was felt that the Lillooet and Merritt TSA data in the non-EESF ecological zones needed a more critical look to tease out what the specific challenges were in existing target.

Action: Licensees to look at their Target 2 submissions for the non-ESSF zones in the Merritt and Lillooet TSA's. Need to understand if data is consistent throughout the TSA or only in certain ecological zones. Was it certain forest types where harvesting occurred that lead to the reporting results? Licensees to compile data and have it available for review in advance of the fall advisory group meeting (when discussions on changes to the next years SFM Plan is to occur).

**Target 5:** Discussed the target for stand level retention of trees and stubs. Brian felt that the existing WTP's that he is seeing in the field are not large enough. His concern with smaller patches is that they lose the ability to provide interior forest conditions. Other members agreed there was value in having larger Wildlife Tree Patches (WTP's) as opposed to a number of smaller ones inside a harvest area for

certain wildlife species. Licencees discussed the challenges and effort needed to manage designated WTP's over the long term with volume based tenures and multiple operators in the DFA. Bert wondered if adjacent Old Growth Management Areas or other protected areas could be used to meet WTP requirements. Later in the meeting, Jamie confirmed that these two measures are separate. WTP's are used to meet stand level biodiversity requirements and OGMA's and parks are used to meet landscape level biodiversity objectives.

**Target 6:** Had a good discussion about the use of acronyms in the report and to use these only after the full meaning of the term is written in the specific target. While most of the acronyms are in the appendix, there were a few noted that were not (such as NTU). There was also good discussion on the term "machine free zone". Public members felt this was a bit deceiving if machine free was viewed (by the forest industry) as no tracks in the area, but not necessarily no activity (such as a machine reaching in and extracting a tree). More clarity is needed in these situations so that there is no perception of misrepresenting the facts.

The assessment result for target 6b speaks of non-critical periods. Advisory group members felt it would have been better to be more specific by reporting on the actual critical periods. Also had a discussion related to the target for 6b and what documented, mapped and field verified critical habitat looked like. This is quite different than ad-hoc work done by a biologist that does make it's way into the government's data warehouse and the Conservation Data Centre (CDC) where known information is stored and accessed by all resource users. In the example of critical fisher habitat in an area outside of the Nicola Thompson Fraser Plan area, this information did not appear to have made it's way to the CDC and thus was not "known" information.

Action: Pat to remind Laura Ann on the use of acronyms and use of terms such as "machine free".

The target for 6d - operations in areas designated as Ungulate Winter Range (UWR) - did not report on whether the management strategies followed were those contained in the LRMP or those that were part of the Government Action Regulation order. In future, advisory group requested this so they could see the trend of activities in UWR and how they were then being managed.

Action: Pat to remind Laura Ann of this for next years reporting.

**Target 40:** The advisory group survey had good results overall, the comment regarding the lack of participation by government was reviewed by the group. Members at the meeting agreed with the comment – also feeling that active involvement should be occurring. Pat reported that Alan Card, stewardship forester for the Thompson Rivers District has agreed to participate (although he earlier advised he would not be at the meeting today).

**Target 28 and Target 41:** Pat reviewed the background information and specifics of each target (previously provided in the meeting agenda). The question was then, if these two targets were distinct enough and whether some of the reporting done for target 28 could also be counted in reporting for target 41. Following considerable discussion, it was felt that yes there were situations when conversations with stakeholders might well have an educational component and where this occurs could in fact be reported twice. Advisory group members did not feel that the targets could or should be merged – they both serve a purpose that is generally quite different.

**Licencee monitoring summaries:** BCTS, Canfor, Gilbert Smith and Tolko reviewed their summary report information. Gilbert Smith noted the typo on it's reporting of local business relationships (should have been 39 not 3). Tolko reported a bit differently this year, the public members felt this was ok given that all targets were met.

## Other Business

1. **Merritt TSA rare ecosystem target.** In Brent's absence, Pat provided a brief update. The work done thus far by Astrid van Woudenberg (the biologist that gave us a presentation on this subject at the last advisory group meeting) is continuing. The pace of the work has been slowed by new Predictive Ecosystem Mapping that she has now accessed. She is currently reviewing this data in light of earlier work to better define truly rare ecosystems. Astrid is completing this extra review with the Ministries' Mike Ryan. A further update on progress will be provided at the next meeting.

Action: Pat to include in next meeting agenda.

2. **CSA standard revision update.** The standard is revised every 5 years. The current revision process is complete and CSA Z809-16 has now been published. The link to the English version (French version still being developed) can be accessed by [clicking on this link](#). Pat to talk to Bert directly about his comments during the standard revision process. Our work to incorporate the Standard changes into the SFM Plan and advisory group process likely to start at our next meeting.

3. **Migratory Bird Convention Act (MCBA).** The Act requires protection for bodies, nests, egg, shelter of migratory birds and allows for incidental take. During the meeting, the group visited the Environment Canada website where guidance on incidental take of migratory birds has been provided by Environment Canada. The warning appears to position government regulators from being accountable to the guidance they have provided. Expectations around the Act and Regulation were discussed. Brian pointed out that other industries appear to be more diligent in meeting these requirements than he has observed by the forest industry – generally conducting surveys by qualified individuals within 7 days of operational activities during the nesting period. Avoidance would be the other strategy to fully comply with the legislation. Jamie advised that a working group of folks from the BC Interior including industry, wildlife biologists and government have been meeting to develop a risk based approach to habitat – with species specific migratory bird population expectations and possible nesting densities. With this work planned for completion later this fall, an update will be provided by Jamie at the fall meeting. It was also mentioned that we always have the option to formulate a local indicator and target for any value that advisory group members feel is important. Some specific questions regarding Aspen's operations near Gunn Lake and the MCBA were asked, some thought Aspen was forced to shut down operations by regulators. *Note: Pat followed up with Jerry Canuel who offered to provide additional information to the advisory group – Pat to send out when complete.*

Action: Pat to include in next meeting agenda.

## Current DFA Issues, Summary, Wrap-Up

### MoFLNRO updates

While Alan Card was unavailable, it was pointed out at the meeting that the Kamloops Timber Supply Review announcement was made earlier in the day. The new allowable cut for Kamloops will be 2.3 million cubic metres, a decrease from the elevated rate of 4 million cubic metres set in 2008 to address forest damaged by the Mountain Pine Beetle. Over the last few years the announcement noted the actual harvest rate was about 2.8 million cubic metres. The [announcement can be found here](#).

### CSA meeting in Kamloops

Pat reminded members of the opportunity to participate in the meeting hosted by CSA. It will occur in Kamloops at the FLNRO district office at 1:00pm on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. It appears there might be 3-4 people interested in attending. Please contact Pat or Lorne for more information.

### PAG 2016 Field Trip

Reminder that the next field trip is being planned for the week of September 12-16 and will be held in the North Thompson River area. GSFP (Craig) will be hosting the trip, please contact Craig directly if you have anything you specifically want to review in the field that day. Pat to send out an email reminder and itinerary a few weeks prior to the date.

### Fall Meeting

Agreed to a tentative meeting date of Thursday November 3, 2016 where discussions regarding the 2017 SFM Plan will occur. Meeting to occur in Merritt, again at the Civic Centre.

Jamie requested public members submit their mileage claims for travel to the meeting to him directly. Contact Jamie if you need more information (Jamie.skinner@tolko.com).

Meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm.