

Nicola Thompson Fraser SFM Plan Public Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

November 29, 2018. Brambles bakery, Merritt

Attendees:

Larry Michaelsen	Crystal Wallace	Harley Wright	Ted Tom
Deanne Eustache	Dan Arcand	Chris Lepsoe	Reuben Irvine
Bert Parke	Matt Manuel	Shawn Larson	Craig Hewlett

Speaker: Richard Chavez

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. Canfor's certification decision was added to the agenda.

Action Items:

Two items from the previous meeting were included with the agenda and will be further discussed during the meeting.

Canfor Certification Decision:

Dan advised the group that Canfor has made a corporate decision to certify all of their woodlands operations to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI). For Canadian operations, this will generally mean a move away from CSA certification. Dan advised that they have already had their initial SFI audit. As such Canfor (Vavenby) will not be participating in the Nicola Thompson Fraser SFM public advisory group process once SFI certification has been attained (expected to be early in 2019). Dan noted that Canfor will still be involved with the public and First Nation communities in their regular business activities.

Ted wondered why forest operations in Canada (most occurring on public lands) even had the option of being certified to SFI where expectations regarding public participation are lower. Matt and Bert also voiced concern over the move to SFI. Bert does not support the SFI standard's lack of ongoing public discussion requirements. Matt felt that the existing advisory group process provides another tool for First Nations to have dialogue and help shape sustainability indicators and targets. He finds it concerning that there is an alternative forest certification standard that does not have similar public participation requirements. Matt also wondered what involvement First Nations had in the development and revisions to the SFI standard. Overall, the advisory group understood Canfor's decision but were disappointed in it.

CSA External Certification Audits:

Pat has posted the detailed audit reports to our NTF website. The companies quickly reviewed their audits and discussed any action items pertinent to the advisory group.

Aspen Planers: The audit occurred on October 24-25, 2018. Shawn indicated that the audit identified potential shortfalls in last year's reporting for targets 14, 19 and 24. Aspen has made adjustments on how data will be collected. A further issue was identified in how management commitments (related to Cultural Heritage Resources) were executed and documented. Opportunities for improvement were also discussed resulting in changes to the SFM Plan for targets 3 and 13.

Canfor: The audit occurred in January, 2018. Canfor Vavenby participates in a corporate multisite certification audit. Dan indicated there was a concern related to target 25 (road inspections and maintenance) whereby inspections not completed as planned were being lost with reporting of additional inspections on roads not planned for inspections. Auditors also noted that more could be done to assist operators in the identification of resource features.

Gilbert Smith: The audit occurred on September 4-5, 2018. Craig indicated that the audit identified a situation where a request for communication was not followed up on. The audit also noted that documentation of inspections were not occurring on the forms specified in the company's management system.

Exotic Species Presentation – Richard Chavez

The use/risk of exotic tree species is one of the CSA Z809-16 discussion items that the advisory group wanted further information on.

Richard is the silviculture forester for Aspen Planers. Richard went through some of the risks associated with the use of exotic tree species (foreign pests and diseases, invasiveness) as well as the potential benefits (quicker access to fibre).

Richard went on to explain how current forest legislation and tree seed procurement ensure that there is very little risk to the introduction of exotic species. The movement of native trees within the province is also highly regulated with rules around seed transfer (movement within ecological zones and elevation). Forest companies are required to have a supply of suitable tree seed for all areas they harvest. All tree seeds must be registered with the MFLNRO's Tree Improvement Branch. Richard explained how foresters use software programs to assist with their requirements to reforest harvest areas with seedlings that are suitable for the site (SFM Plan target 10).

A copy of the Richard's presentation will be posted to the members section of the NTF SFM website. The advisory group thanked Richard for his presentation.

Review Proposed Changes to the 2019 SFM Plan.

Pat reviewed the summary of changes document sent out to everyone in advance of the meeting and went through all of the substantive revisions using a red-line version of the draft 2019 SFM Plan.

Most of the proposed changes pertained to Canfor's planned exit from this SFM process. In order to meet Canfor's timelines, it was agreed that the initial 2019 SFM Plan will be prepared with all of the Canfor references (and their contributing area data) left intact. Dan will advise when their transition to SFI is complete, and following that the SFM Plan will be re-written to reflect this departure. Pat will then advise the group of the newly revised Plan and its posting to the website. Some of the advisory group members commented that they appreciated having a paper copy of the Plan so Pat will have some copies printed and made available at our spring 2019 meeting.

It was agreed that other planned changes should go ahead as presented. Section 2 of the Plan will receive some updates to reflect changes in the inventory information from the latest Timber Supply reviews for Kamloops and Merritt. Target 3 (age class distribution over time) will include an additional table to reflect the current status (based on the most recent Timber Supply Review - TSR). The TSR reference number as well as the date of the data package used to support the review will be provided. Target 41 will reflect Canfor's imminent departure and will now include a range of 5-10 meetings or presentations. All the proposed changes and timelines were agreed to.

Both the summary page and the red-line version of the Plan are posted on the NTF website (members only section).

Future SFM Plan work (beyond 2019):

1. Craig advised that with the recent Government Action Regulation (GAR) order for fisheries sensitive watersheds, that Appendix 8 in the SFMP might need updating. Appendix 8 contains the list of risk based watersheds for the Kamloops TSA that SFM Plan Target 8 applies to.

Action: GSFP will look into the current risk ratings along with those identified in the GAR order and provide recommendations back to the group.

Current DFA Issues, Summary, Wrap-Up

Local Issues, initiatives

Work is being done by licensees in both the Kamloops and Merritt TSA's to develop a GIS inventory tool that can provide up to date information at varying scales such as a landscape unit or watershed. This provides accurate information for estimating conditions such as clear-cut equivalency, winter range area and patch size area and distribution.

PAG 2019 Field Trip

Agreed that we should schedule a field trip – to occur this fall. With Aspen Planers hosting last years field trip, it was felt GSPF or possibly Canfor should host the 2019 trip somewhere in the North Thompson. Dan agreed to host a field trip sometime in the window between September 16th and September 27th, 2019. If available, members felt that field trip could include Canfor's work with Simpcw to develop a practical guide to the identification of archeological and cultural sites. PAG members are to contact Dan if there is 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 selected by Canfor.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.