

Nicola Thompson Fraser SFM PAG

April 12, 2012. 9:00am Nicola Inn, Merritt

Attendees: Mike Bragg, Gerry Sanford, Dave Dobi, Francis Vyse, Jan Stadey, Glenn Foss, Jenn Reid, Bert Parke, Rick Cooper, Aline Lachapelle, Christian Guay, Leona Antoine, Chris Lepsoe, Alan Burger, Corey Kuromi, Dave Tremblay, Andrea Inwards

Facilitator: Pat Salm

Minutes: Rick Cooper

Meeting started at 9:30AM. The meeting began with introductions and a review of the meeting agenda.

2011 Monitoring Report

Pat provided a history of the development of the Nicola Thompson Fraser Sustainable Forest Management (NTF SFM) Plan and how this was the first year of reporting against it. The Plan area covers a total area of around 5 million hectares. During 2011, licencees reported that timber harvesting took place on approximately 16,000 ha of forest within the Plan area. Highlights of the Monitoring report were covered. In total, 36 out of 42 targets (86%) were met.

The report provides a quick look at performance first by criteria, then in a bit more detail by Element. It was noted that some targets are used to measure multiple indicators – thus achievement or non-achievement of a target can have a cascading affect throughout the Plan. The PAG reviewed the new table showing performance in 2011 against the CSA elements. The group liked this approach and requested that it continue in subsequent Plans. Pat was also asked to include wherever possible, the previous years performance in subsequent reporting on individual targets – thus beginning to show any patterns or trends with the new Plan (i.e. leave 2011 results in when reporting 2012 performance).

Pat asked the group if there were any specific targets that they would like to review. The group was comfortable with Pat taking the lead in reviewing targets that he felt should be reviewed with the opportunity to visit any others as we went through the Monitoring Report.

Target 2 – multiple species at free growing

While overall, this target was met, it served as a good example to indicate situations where targets may have not been met at a more local scale such as at the TSA level or by a particular licencee on their defined forest area. In this case, Tolko did not meet the target (information on licencee specific performance is indicated in Appendix 3 of the Report).

Target 4- OGMA

Reviewed plan performance against target #4: no net loss to Old Growth Management Area (OGMA). This target was not met due to a number of instances in the Kamloops area where OGMA incursions took place without replacement. Overall, the net loss of 10.21 hectares out of a total OGMA area of

roughly 375,000 hectares (Pat to confirm this number for the Plan area) was not deemed to be significant by the group, although there was a concern that over time if this erosion continued that it might become an issue. When replacing OGMA's, Licensees are required to replace like areas for like areas. Licensees reviewed the government's OGMA replacement policy where in certain circumstances OGMA's do not need to be replaced if the incursion is minor. Discussion occurred around the creation and mapping process for the existing OGMA and the possibility of replacement if a stand disturbing event were to occur.

It was noted that the Old Growth Management Objectives for the Kamloops Land and Resource Management Plan Area are currently under review and there is an opportunity to provide comment. Details can be found at this website ([click here for direct link](http://ilmbwww.gov.bc.ca/slrp/legalobjectives/advertisedLUORs.html)):
<http://ilmbwww.gov.bc.ca/slrp/legalobjectives/advertisedLUORs.html>

Target 5-Wildlife Tree Retention

Very good results with respect to both the retention of trees as well as their disbursement throughout the harvest area.

Target 6- Wildlife at risk-

Discussion around how licensees utilize various sources of information to confirm if a species at risk has been identified (often the process to get data into the Conservation Data Centre is slow so licensees also rely on other sources to get up to date information).

Target16-Prompt reforestation following harvest.

This target indicates another example of how the target has been met at the Plan area level but not for the TSA (Lillooet) or for Aspen Planers on their defined forest area. Overall, 89.8% of areas were reforested within 3 years meaning the target was met when the variance was taken into consideration. Aline explained that the Lillooet situation arose due to their acquisition of other operations in the TSA and overlooking short term reforestation obligations. The question was asked if there was a need to have a target to measure ongoing success of tree planting after the initial plant (tree survival rates). While licensees do monitor plantation survival, it was felt that overall, the better measure of success was Target 17 – achievement of a free growing stand of trees.

Question arose regarding the amount of herbicide used in the plan area – while amounts are not tracked in the SFM Plan, licensees reported that a relatively minor amount is treated with herbicides. Chemical treatment is sometimes favoured over other brushing treatments and when conducted is generally applied by hand.

Post meeting note: some general information on the application of herbicides can be found in this [Government of Canada publication](http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/390198/publication.html) (located at <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/390198/publication.html>)

Target 19- Harvest level vs. AAC

The actual harvest level in the 3 Timber Supply Areas was less than that authorized. Licencees reported that overall there was a 20% undercut on volume allocated.

Target 23-CWD

The target to retain coarse woody debris (CWD) as per operational plans was not met. The target is set at 100% with no variance, actual performance was 98.4%. Question asked about who sets the target, what the legal requirements are for CWD (baseline level that all operational plans must meet or exceed), and who measures to determine achievement of the target. Target is set by the prescribing forester, relying on best available information, and local site conditions. The professional foresters must balance any need for CWD for wildlife habitat with other land objectives such as providing access ranchers desire for cattle and meeting acceptable fire hazard ratings. The minimum legal requirements for CWD in the interior are 4 logs per hectare, each being a minimum of 2 m in length and 7.5 cm in diameter at one end. Most companies use their waste surveyor to determine post harvest levels.

Target 24- Watershed ECA

The target to conduct further hydrological assessments where a watershed equivalent clearcut area (ECA) exceeds 35% was not met. 3 blocks in Merritt were logged by BCTS without an ECA being completed. BCTS decided to not complete the hydrological assessment in order to log the beetle infected stand before the next beetle flight.

Target 25-road maintenance and inspections

The target to complete inspections on all roads scheduled for inspections was not met (92% completion). Aspen Planers reported the implementation of a new road inspection tracking program, and did not have all the data in the system to be able to positively report that inspections were completed as planned. The second part of the target, completing planned road maintenance was met when the variance was taken into consideration (98.6% of identified road maintenance items completed).

Target 39-Worker Safety

The small 3 person staff at Ardeu Wood Products did not have the BC Forest Safety Council's SAFE Company certification, thus the target of 100% was not met. Ardeu reported that they are currently pursuing safety certification and this is to occur in 2012. A question was raised about if the mills are included. This target and the safety certification program does not apply to the mill environment although there are other safety programs that the mills may subscribe to.

Target 40- PAG Survey

One question had an average response of 2.9 out of 5. And as such did not meet the target. Question 13 –broad representation of PAG, was not met. Discussed past actions of PAG to attract new members. Would be nice to have members from labour, First Nation communities, or mines attend but this is a voluntary public process. Have attracted some sector groups in the past, trapping, resort owner, rancher, etc. Discussed time commitment, and how to accommodate the working public. The retired have the time. Licensees did not want to pay to have their (union) workers attend – wouldn't look good given everyone else participates voluntarily. PAG members encouraged licencees to continue with existing efforts.

Target 41- Public Awareness Program

Target was not met in Merritt or Lillooet. Agreed to keep target as it was and continue to work towards it. Public awareness efforts were seen as valuable by the entire PAG.

Appendix 3- Specific performance by the individual companies was identified but not covered in any depth. During coffee/lunch breaks public members are encouraged to talk to individual companies regarding their performance.

Coffee Break

Discussion Items-

2008 version of Z809 brought in mandatory discussion items. 33 mandatory discussion items were required to be reviewed with the PAG and this was done in the development of the SFM Plan. Subsequent to this, public members were asked if there were any of the discussion items that they would like to review in more detail – this resulted in a prioritized list of a handful of items. Two items have since been covered off since then – protected areas and climate change. The next item planned for discussion is forest fragmentation. Michael Bragg approached Karl Larsen (TRU) to do a presentation on his work related to forest seral stages, fragmentation and methods to achieve old forest values in second growth forests. Karl has indicated he would be available in the fall to do it. Also works because the fall meeting is scheduled for Kamloops, and is easier for him to attend.

SAR- Rick Cooper reviewed BC Timber Sales' procedure for dealing with species at risk. The BCTS Standard Operating Procedure and one wildlife aspect sheet handed out to PAG members to help explain the procedure. Essentially, the procedure relies on work of biologists to identify the potential habitat for Species at Risk given the sites ecological classification and other site characteristics. Aspect sheets and species measures are then utilized to develop specific cutblock strategies. Other companies have built their own database system to track known occurrences, and new occurrences.

All companies have different SAR programs, that include reviewing known sites, information for layout crews to identify SAR, a reporting process, and information for loggers to stop if they encounter SAR and report to the certified company.

The PAG felt this was a reasonable approach to proactively look for species that might occupy the area given the limited chance of actually sighting the at risk species.

External Certification Audits-

Canfor is the only company that underwent an audit since the last PAG meeting. Dave Dobi handed out their entire list of audit findings – even though many did not apply to the SFM Plan or public process and discussed those applicable. There were 5 non-conformities in the draft report, 2 applicable to the SFM Plan. The current status item is no longer valid with the 2011 monitoring report. The SFM Plan is being revised for forecasting of core indicators and targets. There were also 5 Opportunities for Improvement, again 2 of which are applicable to the Plan. Additional wording has been added to the

SFM Plan regarding how the Defined Forest Area is applied. The species at risk discussions that the advisory group discussed earlier in the meeting cover the other opportunity. The SFM Plan for 2012 has been strengthened to reflect these measures.

Gilbert Smith is having their 3rd party audit on June 5, and advisory group members are welcome to attend, contact Dave Tremblay or Glenn Foss at GSFP if you are interested.

Discussed types of forest certifications in Canada and within the Plan area. Reviewed what all companies have. There is a [map on the Certification Canada website](#) that outlines what parts of Canada are SFM certified and to what Standard. Pat will also add the map link to the NTF website.

Discussed chain of custody programs. All participating licencees have chain of custody certification except BCTS. CSA uses PEFC, SFI and FSC have their own. Audits are conducted to verify claims.

Lunch Break

2012 SFM Plan proposed updates-

Reviewed proposed updates to the 2012 SFM Plan, Pat noted that a summary of change document was also developed and that both had been posted to the website. Discussion occurred around each of the planned changes.

The PAG was in agreement to post the additional table describing employment and income for the three Timber Supply Areas. This “to do” item will now be removed from the parking lot (Appendix 5).

Reviewed the additional information pertaining to the strategy guiding the SFM Plan. The information links other high level processes that the NTF plan uses and relies upon. Indicator and target forecasting was also discussed and the PAG agreed that some indicators do not lend themselves to analytical forecasting, such as those related to communication or public involvement.

Pat also noted that SFM targets selected in the Plan were designed to be applicable at various scales – from the entire plan area to a watershed level, enabling licencees to fit the targets to their forest area being certified (Defined Forest Area). Pat reminded participants that any changes or additions to existing targets should be given this consideration.

In addition to some additional general information related to strategies and forecasts, more specific information has also occurred for each indicator. Targets now clearly state if reporting is to occur at either the entire plan or TSA level.

Modifications to target 2 (multiple species planting): discussed amending the indicator to allow two species on very hot dry ecological sites (subzones designated with “xh”). Agreed with proposed variance for these very hot dry ecological sites.

Discussed WTP placement, size, location, and variability. Discussed FSP minimums, chief forester guidance for forest professionals, and what licensees do.

Modifications to the variance for target 4 (not net loss for old growth management area): Discussed adding a variance to the OGMA indicator to allow for operational flexibility. Variance applies in situations where OGMA replacement does not occur when the incursion follows the existing OGMA implementation policies. PAG would like to see a reporting of the total amount of OGMA as well as the net loss status. NTF plan does not state the total amount of OGMA in the indicator. PAG would like to see it included there as well. Discussed recruitment of OGMA areas. PAG noticed a discrepancy in the forecasting section of the indicator showing 195,000ha of OGMA. Pat will ask licencees to verify the correct number and make any corrections.

PAG agreed to the suggested variance, but would like licensees to continue to report incursions and area replacement (continue reporting net loss/gain in OGMA area). For 2012 reporting compare 2011 performance of 9.57 ha net loss in OGMA.

Modifications to reporting on target 17 (meeting late free growing): No change to the target, clarity added on how licencees were to report on the target. Agreed.

Modifications to the variance for target 23 (coarse woody debris): Discussed including a variance to target 23 to '100% of cutblocks meeting CWD requirements'. The variance of 5% would be in cases where the operational plan commitment exceeded the legal requirement and was not met. Some concern rose that this may allow us to manage to a lower standard. Conversation also attempted to show that lack of a variance may lead to lower standards being applied. Companies operate under Best Management Practices. PAG field tours in the past have emphasized CWD and there has never been a concern that not enough has been left – although it is recognized that a push to maximize fibre for bio-energy might change this. PAG agreed to the suggested 5% variance to target 23.

2012 SFM Plan will be updated with changes as discussed above and posted to the website. Active public members of the PAG will also be sent a hard copy of the Plan.

Current DFA Issues-

Government's bio-energy news release of Jan. 24, 2012

This agenda item came at the request of Bert Parke. He was wondering what local companies thought about the announcement and if they felt their would be a benefit. Aspen Planers had agreed to speak to this at the meeting. As Aline had left the meeting by the time this item was covered, it was agreed that she or someone at Aspen would give Bert a call and discuss with him directly. The rest of the PAG was ok with not being part of the conversation.

PAF Field Trip

Discussed the possibilities for field trips – timing, location and content. Regional trips were discussed, advantages were that members wouldn't have to travel as far, could look at local issues. The group felt

that this would be a good approach for this year and that the smaller group size might be beneficial. Public members were encouraged to “invite a friend” to the field trips. Decided to host a field trip in each of Kamloops, Merritt and Lillooet areas, with one occurring prior to summer and the other two in the fall. If possible/practical hosts should try to view examples where species at risk were managed (providing sites are nearby, accessible, etc.). seeing active operations would also be desirable.

Tentative schedule:

June 6 Merritt field trip (Tolko host)

Sept 12 Kamloops field trip (BCTS host)

Sept 26 Lillooet field trip (Aspen host)

PAG Open Discussion: Frances asked how all the companies are doing? Are the mills all running? The newspapers are talking about the start of a recovery, how are licensees in the NTF area doing? Tolko still running 3 shifts, Aspen just re-opened Lillooet and Savona. Canfor just re-opened Vavenby. Overall things are getting back to normal and going well in the NTF plan area.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30pm.