

Okanagan SFM Plan

Public Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2012. Tolko Office, Vernon

Attendees: Bob Annand, Pete Wise, Ron Lancour, Dave Gill, Keith Boulter, Scott Smith, Paul Ross Mike Watkins, Rob Kennett, Grant Thompson, Lorne Bradley, Renee Clark, Randy Hardy, Patti Hansen

Facilitator: Pat Salm

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

Action Items from previous meeting:

The list of items requiring attention from the November 10, 2011 meeting were reviewed and discussed.

1. Amend target 14 to indicate the long-term expected, cumulative impact of permanent Roads and Landings on the land-base to be in the range of 3 to 6%

Action: work completed, 2012/13 SFM Plan reflects this desired change.

2. Licencees will advise PAG members of up-coming courses/seminars as they arise.

Action: agreed that Pat, with input from licencees will let PAG members know of any potential local courses/workshops related to sustainable forest management that might be of interest. Public members also encouraged to notify Pat of any events that they feel might have value.

3. Scott will contact the Meadowlark Festival organizers regarding a booth or similar set-up to promote the SFM and PAG Committee

Action: Scott contacted the Festival and learned that while they do not have any events where a booth could be set up, there could be an opportunity to raise awareness by sponsoring a field trip. The festival provides a wide range of field trips that are advertised in their annual program (see [website](#) for last years program). Agreed that this could be reviewed again at the fall meeting – that our field trip for next year would be timed to coincide with the Festival (mid- May) and held in the southern portion of the SFM Plan area. Dave Gill (BCTS) will take the lead on this and possibly with Scott's help will prepare an outline of the proposed tour (link the tour to sustainability, forest certification and the engagement of the public) for submission to the festival.

4. Licencees and PAG members will discuss the possibility of evening meetings with potential new PAG members, and the degree to which evening meetings are critical to their participation.

Action: Discussed at the meeting. Licencees remain open to timing of meetings. Generally for the number of meetings held and the discussion needed at the meetings most of the group felt daytime meetings were best suited.

5. Add a field review of Visual Quality Objectives to the Spring PAG Field Trip. Gorman is hosting the next one in 2012.

Action: The visual impact of harvesting was part of the planned June 6th Big White tour. Tour was postponed due to rain but the thinking is the same tour will happen again, likely in September. Visuals will remain as part of the tour.

6. Add some text to the Monitoring Report to elaborate on the differing methodologies and help with interpreting the results.

Action: did not occur – slipped through the cracks with change in facilitators. Added to Pat's tasks for 2012/13 report.

7. Circulate information to PAG members describing the development of targets for Community watersheds. (e.g. What does "moderate" mean).

Action: Rob Kennett provided information on moderate peak flow and what is considered in making assessments of peak flow hazard (see info below from Harold Waters, Tolko planning forester):

Rob, info on Peak Flows from the old watershed assessment guidebook.

The Peak Flow hazard takes into account an estimate of the Equivalent Clearcut Area (ECA) of the watershed and is a way of describing the potential for risk for channel change. It also takes into account the following watershed information to arrive at a Peak Flow hazard rating:

- Historical flood frequency and the timing of significant major flood events;
- Natural disturbance regime implications on peak flows (including the effects of Mountain Pine Beetle and other forest health factors causing tree mortality);
- Where the disturbance or harvesting occurs in the watershed with respect to the snow sensitive portion of the watershed, and
- Evidence in the stream channel about the influence of peak flows on channel form and process and the implications of further harvesting or road development on peak flows

So a peak flow hazard rating of moderate is the point where studies indicate that you might begin to see changes in the timing or magnitude of peak flows as a result of the above rating considerations.

There was some concern expressed that ECA and peak flow ratings may not be indicative of water quality and timing issues in some watersheds. In certain watersheds the moderate rating is felt to underestimate watershed sensitivity. There was discussion on whether ECA should also be a stand-

alone target, but in the end it was felt that the current reporting (indicating ECA and peak flow for the watershed) should remain.

8. Amend Target #6 to read "...80% of harvested areas..." as different from the current "...80% of cut-blocks". Licencees will continue to report the number of Cut-blocks as well.

Action: work completed, 2012/13 SFM Plan reflects desired change.

External Audit Discussion

BCTS

Dave reviewed in some detail the struggles they have been having with the items their auditor KPMG had raised during the 2011 external audit. Dave reviewed the history of the audit, the issues raised by the auditors initially and how these changed over time, how auditors categorize the issues (into minor and major non-conformance), and what those ratings mean to the BCTS certification.

Dave explained most of the new KPMG concerns were related to the content in the SFM Plan, specifically the forecasting of indicators related to Criteria 1 (Biodiversity). Dave explained the work done by BCTS and the PAG to make changes to the SFM Plan in 2012 to address these concerns. However in the end, KPMG has advised that these additions are not adequate and more is needed. While there seems to be some agreement between BCTS and KPMG that forecasting has occurred for some of these indicators as evidenced in the Timber Supply Review process for the Okanagan, KPMG is looking for specific evidence in the SFM Plan on where this has occurred.

PAG members appreciated that auditors go to this level of detail but expressed concern that something like this would have the potential to affect certification given all that is being done to implement the targets in the SFM Plan. There was the feeling that the auditor's emphasis should be spent on evaluating the management regime to achieve sustainable forest management. PAG members are willing to make the changes necessary to strengthen the SFM Plan. If content can be added to better inform auditors and the broader public of the Plan and how it ties to other processes such as Timber Supply Review, that is seen as a good thing.

Dave will continue to work with KPMG to resolve the issue. Assuming this comes to a satisfactory conclusion, Dave will send BCTS's desired changes to the SFM Plan to Pat. Pat will circulate proposed changes to PAG members (in advance of next meeting).

Other Licencees

In Grant's absence, Pat advised that Westbank First Nation will be looking to have their readiness for CSA certification tested with an internal audit – planned for this summer. They have no immediate plans to certify with a third party auditor.

Rob advised that Tolko will not be getting an external audit this year, but if any PAG members wanted to attend their internal audit that will be held, the opportunity is there.

Randy advised that Gorman's external audit is planned for the week of September 10th -14th.

Agreed that Pat will circulate audit dates for the Tolko and Gorman audits – PAG members welcome to participate.

SFM Monitoring Report

Pat provided a history of the development of the Okanagan Sustainable Forest Management (OK SFM) Plan and how this was the second year of reporting against it. The Plan contains indicators and targets that help to assess sustainability against the Criteria and Elements set out in the CSA certification standard. The Monitoring report is a roll-up of the participating licencees performance against the targets in the SFM Plan. Highlights of the Monitoring report were covered. In total, 36 out of 43 targets (84%) were met, an improvement from last year where 33 targets were met (77%).

The report provides a quick look at how the indicators and targets tie back to the SFM Criteria and Elements in the CSA certification standard (Table 1). Each of the targets and the performance against these is then shown in the second table. 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.

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.

The suggestion was made that the Monitoring Report could contain a bit of perspective information such as overall plan area and having those statistics tied to what occurred in the reporting period such as area harvested, trees planted and hectares surveyed. Agreed that this would be beneficial and the summary information should be place in the front of future reports.

Target 2 – Old Growth Management Area

Reviewed plan performance against target #2: no net loss to Old Growth Management Area (OGMA). The target was exceeded due to instances where OGMA incursions were more than offset with additional replacement area added to the OGMA. Overall, the net gain was 2 hectares out of a total OGMA area of roughly 94,000. When replacing OGMA's, Licensees are required to replace like areas for like areas.

Pat advised that these has been some [recent work on the evaluation old growth retention](#) for the area of the province as a whole by the Forest Practices Board.

Target 3- Rare Ecosystems Within Old Growth Management Areas

The target to maintain the retention of forested mature “rare” ecosystems within old growth management areas was reported as not being met. This was largely a result of the harvest of what was mapped as a rare ecosystem within an OGMA. Randy indicated that the map linework was reviewed in the field and was not correct. Gorman’s did not harvest in a rare ecosystem (the adjacent spruce forest was what was rare, the pine beetle infested area where harvesting took place was not). In future the PAG felt that these situations are nice to know, but should not count as a net reduction of OGMA.

Target 4- Tree Species Diversity

The reporting for this target also includes information on what percent the leading species occupies the site where there are 3 or more species present. Licencees reported that the leading species occupied approximately one half (51.9 %) of sites, meaning the other species also accounted for nearly one half of the trees on the site. This information indicates that most sites are reforested with multiple species and there is a good distribution in the species mix for those cutblocks.

Target 10- Reforestation With Species Appropriate to the Site

The target to have 100% of trees planted in conformance to the species requirements within approved stocking standards was marginally not achieved (99.94% vs target of 100%). Aside from a broad question on why is 99.94 % not viewed as 100% - and the target then deemed to be met, there was no further discussion on the target .

Target12- Reforestation - Regeneration Delay

The prompt planting target was met for both planted trees as well as areas left for natural regeneration. This is an improvement from last year where the natural regen target (100%, no variance) was not met.

Target 13- Reforestation – Free-Growing Success

The target to have all cutblocks reach free growing requirements on or before the latest date was not met. With Grant not available at this point in the meeting, there was no further discussion.

Target 17-Landslides

With the occurrence of 2 slides, the target of zero slides induced from forest management activities was not met. Rob advised that both slides were roadside slumps and were immediately attended to by Tolko.

Target 22- Permanent Road Inspections

A noted well done by the companies on a target that was not met the previous year. The 50% increase in roads needing inspection were felt to be a combination of both the addition of road inventory as well as getting a better handle on the road system data and companies ability to more accurately report out.

Target 23- Temporary Road Inspections

The target to inspect all temporary status roads at least once per year until rehabilitated was not met. There were two instances covering 1.4 km of road where a documented inspection was not completed. No further discussion.

Target 31- Environmental and Safety Training

While the target to have at least 90% of DFA forest contractors with environmental and safety training was attained, the target to have 90% of woodlands employees trained in accordance with training plans was not attained. In this case, there was a number of BCTS staff that required ergonomic workstation training – a web-based training program done by individual staff members – was not completed by a number of staff.

Target 34- PAG Survey

Target (and Appendix 1 detail) was reviewed. No further discussion.

Target 35- Participation in Higher Level Planning

Participation target was attained. It was noted that there was a 700% increase in meetings attended by the licencees than occurred in the previous year.

Target 38- Forestry Contractor Safety and SAFE Certification

The target to have 100% of the contractors that conduct on the ground work SAFE Company registered and/or certified or carrying an equivalent safety program was not achieved. There was no further discussion beyond what was written in the comments section of the report.

Appendix II- Specific performance by the individual companies against the targets was noted. PAG members were asked to direct any specific questions/comments to they have with this section to the company representatives.

SFM Plan Parking Lot

Reviewed the parking lot items in the current SFM Plan (found in Appendix 2). After some discussion, there appears to be an opportunity to remove some parking lot items. Additionally, there might now be some parking lot items that could be looked at for developing into a potential target. If this was to occur it was agreed that this would likely involve additional work by a sub-committee of PAG members working outside of the regular PAG meeting process and bringing this work to the table. PAG agreed to have Pat make suggested adjustments to the Parking Lot list as a first step and to bring this to the next meeting for discussion.

Current DFA Issues, Summary, Wrap-Up

PAG 2012 Field Trip

Postponed tour in the Big White area (June 6th meeting rained out) suggested to be held in late September. Randy to take tentative dates of Sept 20 and 27th back to tour organizers. Pat to advise PAG of decision.

PAG 2013 Field Trip

Agreed to have tour occur during the timing of the Meadowlark Festival (mid-May, 2013) and work to getting it into the Festival's event calendar. BCTS will take the lead in organizing the tour.

Fall Meeting

Agreed to a tentative meeting date of November 22, 2012. Meeting to occur in Kelowna – Pat will contact the Benvoulin Heritage Church as a possible location.

PAG Open Discussion: In a number discussions throughout the meeting the subject of roads came up – both understanding legal requirements with respect to maintaining roads (what is currently required of forest licences) as well as possible changes in road maintenance responsibilities as a result of the Road Resources Act (not yet implemented). Paul explained some of the issues companies face when dealing with old roads that might not be planned for use but still have the potential to impact natural drainage in areas where harvesting is planned. It was thought by the group that the new Road Resources Act would not do much to change the issue of pro-active road maintenance on non-status roads. PAG members generally felt that the lack of attention to this network of roads was going to result in environmental issues.

Rob reminded public members to submit their mileage claims for travel to the meeting to him directly (robert.kennett@tolko.com).

Meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.