

Okanagan SFM Plan

Public Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

June 5, 2014. Tolko Industries Office, Vernon

Attendees: Rob Kennett, Dave Gill, Mike Watkins, Paul Ross, Scott Smith, Ted McRea, Don Guild, Patti Hansen, Darcie Annesley, Tony Zanatto, Don Dobson, Renee Clark, Chris Bradford, Pete Wise, Pat Salm

Guest Speaker: Suzan Lapp

Meeting started at 9:30AM. The meeting began with a safety/orientation briefing of the meeting room, introductions and a review of the meeting agenda. There were no additional items for the agenda.

Action Items from previous meeting:

None.

Forest Practices Board report on Community Watersheds

At Patti Meger's request prior to the meeting, licencees were asked to provide their feedback on the Board's [April, 2014 Report](#) and recommendations. The province-wide report was briefly reviewed – among the findings:

- The requirements to protect drinking water are not clear or well understood.
- Commitments made in forestry plans to protect drinking water are not always enforceable.
- Greater emphasis needs to be placed on erosion and sediment control on forestry roads. In many community watersheds, forestry activities from decades ago, and other land uses like mining, recreation and power projects, are affecting water quality. However, the legacy issues and other activities are not subject to the same requirements as current forestry activities.
- Government does not monitor current forest practices to see if drinking water objectives are achieved in community watersheds.

Paul Ross explained the process used by Tolko when it comes to their planned development in Community Watersheds. Paul felt there is still more opportunity to manage erosion and sediment on forest roads. Don Dobson advised the group that he was asked to review a draft of the Board's report prior to it being published. Don felt that provincially, there is no current guidance/direction on what a watershed assessment should look like and that lack of standardization was impacting results. Don is part of a joint practice board of professional foresters and professional engineers and geoscientists and this joint board is looking to become involved in developing this guidance. Don to report at next meeting on any progress. Renee Clark expressed concern over the specific legal requirements in forest legislation – whereby the water quality objective was that forest practices not have a material adverse impact on human health that cannot be addressed by water treatment. Renee pointed out that almost all water is treatable, but at what cost?

Action: Don to report back on progress by the Joint Practices Board on developing guidance related to watershed assessments.

Upcoming Field Trip

Chris and Paul provided the group with the tentative plan for next week's tour (June 10th). After confirming attendance from those at the meeting, it was felt there was opportunity to invite a few members of the Okanagan Water Board to the field tour as well. RSVP to Pat by June 9th, if planning to attend.

Presentation by Suzan Lapp, Urban Systems

Suzan Lapp, Ph. D. is a water resources specialist at Urban Systems. Suzan spoke to the group on the cumulative effects of man-caused activities and natural events and how they influence environmental values.

Using the example of a water moving through a river from its headwaters to where it terminates into a lake, Suzan identified the types of activities and events that will influence the quality, quantity and timing of that water as it travels downriver.

Suzan then narrowed her focus more to forests and the sustainability of forest values. Assessments of the cumulative effect of activities need to understand and predict their inter-relationships and outcomes. Having a clear vision of what we want from our forests will help determine acceptable thresholds and limits to activities. To determine what tradeoffs are needed to best attain the desired future forest state, baseline data is needed. It is critical that all organizations work collaboratively on land use decisions and not individually.

Suzan explained a potential model that is capable of simulating cumulative effects at the landscape level – ALCES. It has most prominently used in Alberta but appears to have the potential to be used at regional scales in any jurisdiction.

Suzan has graciously agreed to provide a copy of her presentation – to be posted on our Okanagan SFM website.

The advisory group members appreciated the opportunity to hear from and ask questions of Suzan and thanked her for the presentation and conversation.

Review of the 2013/14 SFM Monitoring Report

Pat provided a brief history of the development of the Okanagan Sustainable Forest Management (OK SFM) Plan and how this was the fourth year of reporting against the current requirements of the CSA forest certification standard. 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 fully met, slightly lower than the 38/43 targets met in in previous reporting period.

The Monitoring Report contains a bit of perspective information (Section 5) with tables/charts indicating plan area statistics and relating them to what occurred in the reporting period. The report also provided

a quick look at how the indicators and targets tie back to the SFM Criteria and Elements in the CSA certification standard (Table 6.1). 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.

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 (54 %) 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 6- Wildlife Tree and Stub Retention

The target to have 100% of harvested cutblocks requiring wildlife tree retention to occur in accordance with their site plan was not met (99.3% achievement). There were 3 blocks out of a total of 434 where the legal requirements for tree retention were met, but the site plan called for additional retention and the additional level was not attained.

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. There was a 14 ha area that was not declared free growing prior to the late free growing date (out of a total of 6,453.2 ha declared free growing). BCTS explained that some of the 14 ha has likely met the late free growing requirement but they could not confirm this in their tracking system and thus opted to identify it as not being met.

The graph indicating use of herbicides was discussed. The PAG requested that in addition to showing the number of litres applied, that the actual products used also be reported in subsequent reports.

Target 20- Harvest in Community Watersheds

There was discussion over the ECA numbers – and concern over increasing ECA numbers in some watersheds. There was some surprise with watersheds having an ECA over 50% and peak flow hazard remaining at moderate (and not high).

The question was asked as to whether ECA was based on harvest only and not natural disturbances such as fire and MPB mortality. Rob advised that fire was included and was 90% sure that MPB was factored into the calculation as well. It was suggested that the reporting include a bit of explanation on how ECA was calculated (Foresite has completed this work annually in the past). Rob was asked to confirm that MPB was factored into ECA figures.

It was suggested that where peak flow hazard is high and reporting is that recommendations are consistent with watershed assessments that the actual recommendations be specified. It was also felt

important to identify how both how high the ECA was planning to go in high peak flow hazard situations as well as the estimated length of time that a watershed was going to remain at a high peak flow hazard before dropping back down to moderate. The relationship between peak flow hazard and ECA was also discussed – and while the goal is to keep the peak flow hazard at moderate or less, the target does provide for hazards above moderate (harvest must be consistent with recommendations).

In the end, it was felt that this might be a target that is reviewed by the PAG for next years plan. Scott, Chris, Don D. Patti and Pat agreed to form a sub-committee that could suggest possible changes to the target. Work to be completed prior to the fall meeting so that the entire group could discuss.

Action:

1. Pat to pull together context of the CSA standard requirement and guidance as it pertains to the core indicator: Proportion of watershed or water management areas with recent stand replacing disturbance. Pat to share this with the subcommittee.
2. Rob to confirm if ECA factored in MPB mortality. Pat to share this in meeting minutes.

Update: Rob Kennet has confirmed that MPB mortality has been incorporated into the ECA calculations. The Foresite ECA calculations included historic fires to the end of 2013 (e.g, Notch Hill). Mountain Pine Beetle mortality factors were revised to apply stands >60 years old with greater than 40% mortality (as calculated by dead volume per ha/total volume per ha from the Vegetation Resources Inventory):

≥70% mortality – 70% ECA

40-70% mortality – 50% ECA

<40% mortality – 0% ECA

Target 21 – Stream Crossings in Community Watersheds

Eighty-one percent (13/16) permanent road stream crossings incorporated a water quality effectiveness evaluation into their design, construction and maintenance. Tolko and WFN indicated that evaluations on the remaining 3 crossings are scheduled to occur this field season.

Target 22- Permanent Road Inspections

Road inspections were not completed as planned, thus not meeting the target. Dave Gill spent some time explaining WFN's situation with respect to risk ranking of roads and to their inspection program. Dave believes next years report will reflect the work they are doing this year to look at all roads where they have responsibility and based on those inspections, determine an appropriate risk rating for those roads.

Target 23- Temporary Road Inspections

Nearly all temporary roads were inspected (99.1%) but there was 0.9 km of temp road not inspected. Rob pointed out that performance against this target has improved substantially from earlier monitoring reports. There was discussion on whether the target needs modification. The example of a temp road on flat ground and away from any watercourse was used – is there a need for an annual inspection on this road?

Action: licencees to review this target and bring back suggested improvements to it at our fall PAG meeting.

Target 24- Revegetation of Roads and Landings

Tolko explained how target was not met. Most agreed with the rationale of not seeding roads inside cut blocks where the ditch line was going to be re-disturbed that same growing season or the next growing season during harvest operations (roadside harvesting).

Action: licencees to review this target and bring back suggested improvements to it at our fall PAG meeting.

Target 31- Environment and Safety Training

The target to have 100% of the contractors with safety and environment training was not met. There was no further discussion beyond what was written in the comments section of the report.

Current DFA Issues, Summary, Wrap-Up

CSA Standard Revision

Pat explained that the CSA Standard is revised every 5 years. Process has started again (May) and will likely take close to two years. The group earlier received the CSA User Group briefing note on changes suggested by industry. Pat mentioned that both he and Dave Gill were part of the CSA Technical Committee (TC) that will oversee changes to the Standard and advised that public members could channel any thoughts or ideas through either of them.

Fall Meeting

Agreed to a tentative meeting date of Thursday, November 6, 2014. Meeting to occur in Kelowna – location to be determined (possibly the Benvoulin Church or the ECCO Centre. Pat to contact Doug Wahl (involved in the FPB report on Community Watersheds) to see if he might be available as a speaker at our next meeting.

Upcoming Certification Audits

Both Tolko and BCTS will be receiving 3rd party audits on their operations this year. The BCTS audit is to occur in July, the Tolko audit to occur in mid-September. If you are interested in participating in either of these audits, please contact either Tony Zanatto - BCTS (<mailto:Tony.Zanatto@gov.bc.ca>) or Chris Bradford – Tolko (<mailto:Christopher.Bradford@tolko.com>).

Rob reminded public members to submit their mileage claims for travel to the meeting to Chris Bradford directly (Christopher.Bradford@tolko.com).

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.