

# Nicola/Thompson/Fraser PAG Meeting

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**June 2, 2010. 3:00 pm Best Western Inn, Merritt**

Facilitator: Pat Salm

Attending: Elizabeth Solomon de Friedberg, Gerry Sanford, Simon Warhurst, Graham Everett, Frank Etchart, Leona Antoine, Chris Lespoe, Jim Baker, Jan Stadey, Corey Kurumi, Aline Lachapelle, Wendy McKinney, Bert Parke, Rick Cooper, and Mike Bragg.

Group will continue to work through the values, objectives, and indicators. Will hopefully get through criteria 3 and 4.

Reviewed agenda.

No additions or changes made to the agenda.

Reviewed meeting minutes and action items from last meeting.

**Action Item:** Simon to be added as an attendee at May 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Action Item:** Rick to bring hanging map to next PAG meeting.

Indicator 1.2.3- Action item for Aline to present possible indicator for stand conversion. Item not completed, Aline to bring to next meeting.

**Action Item:** Aline to discuss possible indicator with licencees and present at the next meeting.

Reviewed action item for geological sites on GIS layer. Neither Aline or Wendy could find layer that housed significant geological sites. Aline reviewed karst features GIS layer that is available. It was noted that it was not very specific and thus limited for forest companies. BCTS has looked internal to government as well, and will continue to look for applicable layer(s). Pat explained the different ways to manage through the SFM plan. Could attempt to make into a target, could put text into the body of the Plan (explaining the process of identifying geological features in the planning stage and what happens if something is found in the operational stage). Forest companies can only manage for surface features. Concerns is that creating access to features may alter a feature, not necessarily through road building, but even through allowing access to a sensitive site for the public to access. Features may be missed

through planning stage, may be missed in layout phase, and may be found in construction phase. Companies need process to ensure operators are aware of the potential for these sites. Who and how are sites determined to be significant? Some things have cultural values attached so are significant. Others are determined to be significant from government may be made known. Group agreed it is best at this point not to have a specific target for geological features.

**Action Item:** Ardeew will write up their process and submit to licensees and PAG at next meeting. Process will be discussed with the idea of including as text within the Plan.

Indicator 1.2.4 Discussed non-core indicator 1.2.4- timing of grass seeding, is there a definition of 'suitable sites' for grass seeding. Suitable may exclude pure rock, or in-block roads. Words also need to be defensible to our auditor. Merritt target used included the term 'planned' seeding. This helped out in situations where seeding was not intended (such as roads through bedrock).

Who controls seed quality? Agriculture Canada (Canada Seed Act) grades seed, and certified means less noxious weed, less impurities and better germination. Certified seed used by forest companies also known as Common #1.

**Agreement:** revise the target "All planned cut and fill slope seeding application carried out using certified seed and within 12 months of completed road construction on suitable sites. "

Criteria 2- discussion items. This was a very quick conversation last meeting. Any deficiencies, comments, or thought from these papers? Climate change and adaptation, trends in natural and human disturbance, and percentage of naturally disturbed area that is not harvested were the papers that were presented. Additional conversation occurred on the first two discussion items. The conversation did not result in any further actions or information requests although the PAG members wanted the opportunity to re-visit the discussion items.

**Agreement:** at end of the re-write process, PAG can come back to ask any questions about discussion items that are still outstanding. PAG may have questions, but realized the questions may be answered in other conversations, and does not want to waste time, if the conversation will occur.

Indicator 2.1.1 Discussed 2.1.1- PAG asked to amend target and include extra word to increase readability.

**Agreement:** Change 2.1.1 target to "Report area of cutblocks that outperformed late free growing requirements and average time by which requirements WERE exceeded."

Element 2.2 Objective – Stated objective is for timber and non-timber values. But targets do not mention non-timber values at all. Was this something that we wanted to add (additional non-timber indicators). Decided this made sense, but wanted to wait until after we determined targets for Indicator 5.1.1.

**Agreement:** After 5.1.1- timber/non timber benefits, if we find any target that works we will include under Element 2.2.

Discussion on focal species. Q. How were focal species identified at the last meeting? Discussion was about species at risk, PAG identified focal species at last meeting, decided our focal were red and blue, mountain caribou, and northern spotted owl. And also important were section 7 notices given to industry, which were identified by government. Should we remove the word SELECTED focal species. Licensees may not be managing for all focal species as science may not exist for all focal species. We may not know of all possible focal species. Licensees can only manage for those that are known and science exists. Licensees would like to leave SELECTED focal species in the target. Are these indicator species or focal species. Plan uses focal to match up with standard. Indicator is more broad. For a lot of species, there is not a lot of information out there. Based on information available, we are managing for these species. This plan has always turned the critical species and changed the target to be ‘manage the habitat’. We only manage the habitat. There are a lot of other things going on that we cannot control. It was noted that focal species has a definition in the CSA Standard – they are those felt to warrant special attention. There was some discussion of the PAG needed to further define focal species or add the definition from the standard into the SFM Plan.

**Agreement:** Include the CSA Standard definition for focal species into the Glossary section of the SFM Plan.

### Appendix 3 matrix

1.4.1- Lillooet target was mis-written in the appendix 3 handout, need to include the word NOT.

**Action Item:** change Appendix 3 matrix for Lillooet target to “Harvesting NOT to exceed greater than 50%...”

Footer for the matrix still using Cascades Kamloops wording.

**Action Item:** Need to amend the footer from ‘Cascades/Kamloops SFMP’ to “Nicola/Thompson/Fraser SFMP”.

## NEW ITEMS:

### Criteria 3: Soil and water

Discussion items- homework item to read discussion items on criteria 3. Seasons of operations topic was discussed. In the paper "Management practices and requirement to protect water quality and quantity", it was noted that it referenced soil load bearing capacity.

Q. Do we test for soil load bearing capability? No licensee do not. We dig soil pits to determine the type of soil (texture, amount of coarse fragments, depth) where that soil is located (considering factors such as slope, slope position, and rainfall) and put measures in place to protect the soil. Some soils are more sensitive to compaction than others.

Adding snow to a road to get the road to freeze. Licensees sometimes do this, particularly for temporary winter roads.

Soil disturbance. Formal process, done when required. Not just breaking the duff. 5% and 10% in legislation and becomes part of the site plan.

**Action Item:** Rick to see if site possible to field visit to look at soil disturbance.

Government objectives for water contained within forest legislation- "unduly affecting timber supply". What is the definition of unduly? And what is a material adverse impact?

Operations and water treatment can have an adverse impact on human health. If something happens to a persons drinking water supply as a result of operations are companies liable? They may be held liable if they did not follow the commitments in their approved Plan and their other legislative requirements. By following their plans, forest companies can use this to help demonstrate they were duly diligent in any potential action taken against them. As a recent example of how water quality legislation under FRPA can be evaluated, the Forest Practices Board released their findings of an [investigation near Castlegar](#) where a person complained that their water was degraded as a result of road building activities. If FSP is too vague, government may not accept the FSP and approve. Government may require more information. PAG concerned that public may have to pay for remediation even if licensees follow their plan and something happens.

### Value for Element 3.1- Soil Quality and Quantity

The group reviewed all 3 values from 3 TSA's. Maybe include productivity in Lillooet Value. Productivity could be included in the objectives.

**Agreement:** The value for soil quality and quantity is "Conservation of soil quality and quantity"

### Objective for Element 3.1- Soil Quality and Quantity

PAG reviewed all 3 TSA objectives. Collectively, the group felt the Kamloops objective was most appropriate.

**Agreement:** The objective for soil quality and quantity is “Maintain productive capacity of forest soils. (sub bullet) Minimize compaction and detrimental disturbance.”

#### Indicator 3.1.1 - level of soil disturbance

Reviewed the content within all TSA plans. A target related to amount of area converted to permanent access structures ( for indicator 2.2.1) was already agreed to at last meeting. 6% (7% Lillooet) in permanent roads and landings. Reviewed soil conservation targets from Kamloops and Merritt. Discussed differences between the two. Agreed to using the Kamloops target with the addition of the word operational (to describe the type of plans being referenced). The term operational is defined in the Merritt SFM but will be needed to be updated in light of the changed forest legislation.

**Agreement:** Utilize target from indicator 2.2.1 “Less than 6%, (7% within the Lillooet TSA), on average, of harvested areas will be in permanent roads and landings.”

**Agreement:** Include the soil conservation target “100% conformance to soil conservation measures contained with operational plans.”

Had a lengthy discussion related to the value of including a third indicator pertaining to landslides as a result of operations – similar to that contained within the existing Merritt SFM Plan (Indicator 14). Merritt 14- slides, limited value to indicator as presently worded. Currently limited to those without Terrain Stability Field Assessments or not following recommendations. Landslides are a source of soil disturbance. PAG wants to have a landslide indicator? Do we focus on the landslide or on the management of the landslide? Can method of initiation be determined? Sometimes yes sometimes no. Sometimes easy to identify. In the end, the group wanted to see a target related to landslides. In order to capture the context of the total number of landslides that might be occurring as a result of operations, the forest companies agreed to report that number as well. There was further discussion on the need to define a slide. Agreed it should be something based on size or volume of materials. An area measure of 0.1 ha (25x40 metres or 10x100 metres) was discussed as something to consider. Michael Bragg offered to propose wording to define the term slide at the next meeting.

**Agreement:** Add target “no operationally caused slides resulting from a failure to perform a terrain stability field assessment or to follow the recommendations within a completed assessment”.

**Agreement:** Add reporting requirement “Report the total number of operationally caused slides that occurred (or that were first discovered) in the reporting period”.

**Action Item:** Michael to propose a definition for ‘slide’ for PAG consideration at the next meeting.

Indicator 3.1.2- level of downed woody debris.

Only Kamloops has a specific target. How does an auditor determine 20m3? Licensees would prefer to manage the site, not manage to a hard number. Licensees would prefer if their foresters determine the potential CWD of a site, not the legal minimum. Is CWD part of site plan or FSP? FSP has legal minimum of 4 sticks per hectare. Legal SP does not track CWD, but ancillary document does contain target for CWD. Concern is that CWD will be left in piles, and may be abused. Licensees are balancing CWD with wildfire regulations and stumpage considerations. Leave too much and licensees may be fined by government or forced to abate the fire hazard caused by leaving too much combustible material behind. Leave too little and may not meet CWD objectives. Potential alternate indicator seemed reasonable to the group.

**Agreement:** The target for the indicator is “percent of cutblocks where management of coarse woody debris (CWD) is consistent with operational plans”

**Action item:** Pat to define operational plan in the SFM Plan (site level plan with detailed instructions that enable operators to deliver on the Licensees stand and landscape level commitments).

Value for Element 3.2. - Water quality and quantity

Reviewed 3 TSA current values.

In Element 3.1 it was noted that the group agreed to conservation of soil quality and quantity. Some felt very strongly that clean drinking water was a value that should be kept in the Plan. Healthy watersheds do not necessarily mean healthy water. Whatever the value, we need to measure. Can we achieve the value of clean drinking water even if we remove all industrial activity? Regardless of activity clean drinking water is a value of some PAG members. A value is what you want to see? Regardless of what you have control over?

How we measure the value is with indicators and targets. If we have a water intake we are assuming it is good clean water. Clean water is also important for recreation.

**Agreement:** The value for water quality and quantity is “Conservation of water quality and quantity. (sub bullet) clean water.”

Objective for Element 3.2. - Water quality and quantity

Objectives: reviewed 3 TSA objectives. The current Lillooet objective has concern with temperature for salmon bearing creeks. Merritt second one is very good “water quality and quantity that maintains existing uses and support communities and aquatic life” are aquatic life not a community? Merritt second one allows licensees to maintain existing uses, does not force licensees to clean up. All that was required under code was to leave the water and keep as clean as before.

**Agreement:** The objective for water quality and quantity is ““water quality and quantity that maintains existing uses and support communities (human and ecological) and aquatic life”

It was noted that the grass seeding indicator/target (used already see indicator 1.2.4) fits within this element and can be used again here. Additionally, the riparian conformance indicator/target used for indicator 2.2.3 is also a good fit for this element of water quality and quantity. The PAG agreed that both of these non-core indicators and targets should be included again here.

**Agreement:** Include the non-core indicators and targets 1.2.4 and 2.2.3 in this element as a means of assessing water quality and quantity.

Indicator 3.2.1 – proportion of watershed or water management areas with stand replacing disturbance

ECA, in Kamloops and Merritt plans currently. Kamloops has scoped it down to high risk rated watersheds. Alternate suggestion is for community watersheds only. Reviewed Okanagan CSA plan (potential alternate indicator that looks more specifically at components of ECA – namely peak flow hazard) and how it works. Kamloops had undergone an extensive risk rating process that Merritt may not want to go through, it is very expensive. What is a watershed, i.e., Nicola watershed or creek? General consensus is that a watershed is a sub-basin (sub-basins are defined by MoE). Ground water and surface water are connected and not sure where 35% ECA threshold came from? The 35% level was viewed by expert hydrologists as a conservative number for almost all watersheds. Having a conservative base level sets a good safety net. Agreed to use the existing Merritt target for both Merritt and Lillooet – where the target applies to all watersheds (sub basin level). Agreed that for Kamloops, where the risk-assessment has been completed, that they retain their current target.

**Agreement:** The target for the indicator is (Kamloops TSA) “Equivalent clear cut area (ECA) not to exceed 35% without doing further hydrological assessments prior to harvesting. Target applies to the highest risk rated watersheds (post MPB) as identified in SFM Plan Appendix). (Merritt and Lillooet TSA’s) “Equivalent clear cut area (ECA) not to exceed 35% (at the sub-basin level) without doing further hydrological assessments prior to harvesting”.

Targets for Indicator 1.3 is next on the agenda, but Pat would like to move to criteria 4, won’t do discussion items because we haven’t reviewed yet.

**Action Item:** Pat will prepare a summary of potential targets for Indicator 1.3 based on the mutually agreed upon targets for the remaining indicators in Criterion 1-3 at the next meeting.

#### Value for Element 4.1 – Carbon Uptake and Storage

Reviewed the existing values for all three TSA's. Discussion began that we could possibly combine the Merritt and Kamloops values. In the end decided we could take the same value used for Element 1.1 and use again.

**Agreement:** The value for carbon uptake and storage is “Healthy, functioning ecosystems that support natural processes”.

#### Objective for Element 4.1 – Carbon Uptake and Storage

Objectives, Merritt and Lillooet are fairly similar. Kamloops contains a bit more detail. Group agreed to retain the Merritt value, and include the two bulleted points found under values in Kamloops as the objective.

**Agreement:** The objective for carbon uptake and storage is “Conduct forest activities to maintain ecological processes that facilitate carbon uptake and storage. (2 sub bullets) “actively growing, healthy forests”, and “maintain natural sources of nutrient cycling”.

Original idea was to finish June 16 and finish in fall. Any interest in PAG to finish before summer?

**Agreement:** June 24<sup>th</sup> 3-8PM in Merritt as next PAG meeting to finish any outstanding indicators.

Next Meeting: Ashcroft River Inn 9:30AM-3:30PM.

**Homework** is to read discussion items for Criteria 4. There are no discussion items that need to be covered off for Criterion 5 and 6 (although the PAG members are welcome to advance any questions they might have in this regard).