



Fort St. James  
Sustainable Forest  
Management

Public Advisory Group

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**APPROVED**  
**December 4, 2004**

**Amended**  
**January 25, 2010**

## 1 Background

### 1.1 Purpose of Sustainable Forest Management

The objective of sustainable forest management (SFM) is to concurrently balance the sustainability of forestry-related ecological, social and economic values for a defined area over a defined timeframe. SFM is about being economically sustainable on public land, respecting the social needs of the public, and sustaining viable ecosystems.

The SFM Plan will be developed for participating licensees in the Fort St. James Forest District and will incorporate the principles of SFM. The goals of the Fort St. James SFM Plan are:

1. To provide members of the Licensee Team the opportunity to obtain Canadian Standards Association (CSA) certification, and
2. Offer an opportunity for public and other stakeholders to participate in an open public forum.

### 1.2 Participating Licensee Team

The Licensee Team for the Fort St. James SFM Plan consists of representatives from Canadian Forest Products Ltd. (Canfor – Houston and Prince George), BC Timber Sales (BCTS) – Stuart Nechako Business Area, and Carrier Lumber Ltd. These licensees and BCTS have forest tenures subject to change over time in size, location and ownership. Participating Licensees may change over time.

### 1.3 Defined Forest Area (DFA)

The PAG provides input for values, objectives, indicators and targets specific to the DFA for the SFM plan.

The DFA for the SFM Plan is within the Fort St. James Forest District. The operating area of participating licensees and BCTS will set the geographic extent of the DFA.

### 1.4 Public Advisory Group

The PAG for the Fort St. James SFM Plan is comprised of a range of individuals representing the interests listed in section 3.1.1. The role of the PAG is to provide local representatives an effective forum to provide input into and receive feedback from the process of developing and monitoring the SFM plan.

## 2 Defined Goals

The goal of the PAG is to demonstrate commitment to SFM principles for the Defined Forest Area in the Fort St. James Forest District. The development, implementation, and maintenance of the SFM Plan will be the responsibility of the Licensee Team, guided by the PAG. Additionally; the Licensee Team will attempt to resolve all strategic level issues (including those recognized and

agreed to by the PAG) relative to the SFM; and identify appropriate processes and contacts for any specific operational issue that may arise from time to time.

### **3 Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **3.1 Public Advisory Group**

##### **3.1.1 Membership Structure**

The Public Advisory Group is designed to reflect a range of interests in the DFA, including DFA-related workers, which may include but not limited to the following:

1. Research and education
2. Community stability
3. Healthy, viable environment
4. BC Wildlife Federation
5. Recreation
6. Trapping
7. Hunting
8. Fishing
9. Sawmill owner
10. Wildlife
11. Viewing (scenic values)
12. Meaningful levels of sustainability for all forest resources
13. Prospecting
14. Mineral resources
15. Ecology
16. Woodlots
17. Town council
18. Protection of water quality
19. Protection of endangered or at risk species
20. Regional district
21. Forest worker
22. Chamber of commerce
23. General Public
24. Hospitality industry,
25. Local business owner
26. Agriculture community

and such other interests that may be decided upon by PAG when a new member joins the group. It is recognized that an individual may represent more than one interest identified under this section.

### **3.1.2 Selection of PAG Members**

The Licensee Team will recruit potential members from various interests and First Nations through invitations to individuals. As well, they will hold a public open house and advertise in local newspapers to generate interest in the PAG.

Based on the above:

- a. Members of the public and the Licensee Team will review the potential membership at the initial PAG meeting. Once the PAG is established, members of the PAG and the Licensee Team can recommend changes in PAG structure and potential members.
- b. The PAG and the Licensee Team will jointly confirm appointments and replacement of PAG members.
- c. Local residents who feel that their values are not represented by the PAG can submit a written request to the Licensee Team to add a member for that purpose, outlining the perceived need for an additional member. The Licensee Team, and the PAG, will consider each request for membership on its merits and provide a timely response in writing.
- d. To provide continuity, it is hoped that PAG members will serve for a minimum of two years. They may be replaced if their term is complete or if they are not meeting the Terms of Reference.

### **3.1.3 Role of PAG Members**

The PAG will work according to requirements and guidance as outlined in CSA standard Z809-02 for SFM.

PAG members will:

- a. Attend meetings regularly
- b. Have the opportunity to assign an alternate member to attend meetings if they cannot attend scheduled meetings. It is the responsibility of the members to keep alternate representatives informed of the group's progress and deliberations.
- c. Inform her/his alternate and the facilitator if unable to attend a PAG meeting. If a PAG member misses more than two consecutive meetings without a valid reason and without notifying his/her alternate and the facilitator, the Licensee Team may, based on agreement with the PAG, replace or remove that member.
- d. Strive to reach consensus or general agreement on recommendations to the Licensee Team.
- e. Approve a Terms of Reference.

Work with Licensees' to:

- f. Review the six criteria and associated 17 elements identified in the SFM Framework.
- g. Identify any other elements of relevance to the DFA.
- h. Identify at least one value for each element.
- i. Identify one or more objectives for each value.
- j. Identify and justify one or more quantifiable indicator(s) for each objective.
- k. Identify one target for each indicator, which includes acceptable levels of variance.
- l. Develop alternative strategies to be assessed.

- m. Assess alternative strategies and select the preferred one.
- n. Review the SFM plan.
- o. Design monitoring programs, evaluate results, and recommend improvements.
- p. Discuss and resolve any issues relevant to SFM on the DFA.

**3.1.4 Role of Alternates**

- a) When an alternate attends on behalf of the member, the alternate agrees to work according to the Terms of Reference.
- b) When the alternate is attending on behalf of the member, the alternate is to come informed, up-to-date and prepared for discussions based on briefing by member.
- c) The alternate and member may both attend the same PAG meeting but only one person will participate in decision making.

**3.1.5 Conflict of Interest**

The PAG recognizes that a conflict of interest could occur if there is a potential for a member to personally and directly benefit from specific recommendations from the PAG. Therefore, if a member has a perceived or real conflict of interest that could result in a potential exclusive personal economic benefit in relation to his or her input to the Defined Goals, that member, other PAG members or a member of the Licensee Team must state the potential conflict and abstain from decisions related to the conflicting issue.

**3.2 Role of Licensee Team**

The role of the Licensee Team is to:

- a. Provide information to the PAG as related to SFM planning and DFA.
- b. Review and consider the recommendations of the PAG with the goal of incorporating recommendations in to the SFMP.
- c. Make decisions regarding SFM and certification.
- d. Demonstrate that all input is considered and responses are provided where PAG recommendations are not incorporated.
- e. Provide the necessary human, physical, financial, information and technological resources, as reasonable.
- f. Not take part in reaching consensus or decision-making by the PAG.

**3.3 Role of Advisors**

Advisors will be invited, as required, to provide technical information and advice to the PAG. These advisors could be from government agencies, professional organizations, educational institutions, consulting firms, or other sources.

The role of advisors is to:

- a. Provide and/or clarify technical or legal information and participate in discussions as requested.
- b. Not take part in reaching consensus or decision-making by the PAG.

### 3.4 Role of Observers

The public is welcome to observe PAG meetings but:

- a. May not participate in discussions unless agreed to by the PAG, facilitator and Licensee Team.
- b. May not take part in reaching consensus or decision-making by the PAG.

### 3.5 Role of the Facilitator

The role of the PAG facilitator is to:

- a. Ensure that PAG meetings address the agreed-upon agenda topics.
- b. Manage and implement the Terms of Reference, including the appropriate participation of all members of the PAG and Licensee Team, in addition to advisors and observers.
- c. Ensure the circulation of draft and final meeting summaries and agendas.
- d. Start and end all meetings at the times stated in the agenda.
- e. Enable equitable opportunity by all PAG members to participate in the meetings.
- f. Work to clarify interests and issues and help the PAG build recommendations.
- g. Act as a contact for PAG members.
- h. Provide scribe services at meetings.
- i. Not take part in reaching consensus or decision-making by the PAG.

### 3.6 First Nations

The Licensees will recognize First Nations and treaty rights and agree that First Nations participation in the public participation process will not prejudice those rights. First Nations are welcome to participate in the PAG process.

## 4 Timelines

Following the completion of the SFMP, it is estimated that the PAG meeting schedule would include at least two meetings per year beginning in 2006 and potentially include:

- a. Review of the SFMP annual report.
- b. Complete revised input on the SFMP.
- c. Include field tours where appropriate.

## 5 PAG Operating Rules

### 5.1 Ground Rules

All participants in this process agree to work under the following ground rules:

- a. To be on time for PAG meetings.
- b. To be respectful of other participants.
- c. To avoid interrupting a speaker or making personal attacks.
- d. To speak to the topic.
- e. To try to understand each other's point of view.

Participants will direct questions and comments to the facilitator, who will recognize the speaking order as participants raise their hand to speak. Everyone will be able to speak to a topic once before participants are offered a second opportunity.

## 5.2 Meetings

The meeting location and schedule may change if agreed to by the PAG and Licensee Team and input on upcoming meeting agendas will be obtained during each PAG meeting. The facilitator, working with the Licensee Team will finalize and ensure the distribution of meeting agendas, meeting summaries and pre-meeting material to PAG members, advisors and observers. The agenda will include proposed objectives for the meeting.

Meeting dates will be confirmed jointly between the Licensee Team and the PAG.

## 6 Communication

### 6.1 Internal to the PAG

- a. The facilitator will ensure the meeting agenda and minutes from the previous meeting are distributed to PAG members within one week of the meeting.
- b. The facilitator will provide the opportunity for PAG members to discuss issues between meetings through the use of a PAG E-mail list or other means of communication.

### 6.2 External to the PAG

- a. The Licensee Team will provide an annual report to the PAG and make it available to interested parties.
- b. Only a Person appointed by the PAG may communicate the official position of the PAG to the media and external parties about the PAG process.
- c. The appointed spokesperson can speak to the media based on consensus of the PAG
- d. The PAG may draft and approve a media release on its activities and/or may invite the media to attend meetings as observers.

### 6.3 Internal to the Licensee Team

- a. Input from the PAG will be reported at meetings of the Licensee Team.

## 7 Meeting Expenses

- a. Mileage to and from PAG meetings for those members traveling more than 32 kilometers each way to the meeting site will be reimbursed at \$0.45 per kilometer. PAG members

traveling from outside the Fort St. James Forest District must obtain approval for travel expenses from the facilitator before the meeting.

- b. Overnight accommodation for those traveling to PAG meetings will be reimbursed if pre-approved by the facilitator. As a general principle, accommodation should be economical.
- c. Expense forms with copies of receipts for the above must be submitted to the facilitator within two weeks of the PAG meeting.
- d. PAG requests for funding will follow the current PAG funding policy.

## **8 Decision Making and Methodology**

The PAG agrees to work by consensus, defined as “no member having substantial disagreement on an issue and is willing to proceed to the next step”, or, by general agreement.

- a. Every effort shall be made to achieve consensus, but if this is not possible, decisions will be carried by general agreement. General agreement is defined as 80% of the PAG members present provided there is a quorum. Members in a 20% or less minority position on a given decision may request one opportunity to restate their case for consideration by the majority and to have a decision reconsidered by the membership. Such a request will not cause a decision to be delayed to a subsequent meeting. Where agreement is reached by general agreement, the minority view(s) will be recorded along with the decision. A PAG member abstaining from voting on an issue is deemed not to be in substantial disagreement and to indicate a willingness to proceed to the next step.
- b. A quorum for any meeting of the PAG shall be greater than 50% of the average number of PAG members attending the past five (5) meetings.
- c. PAG members will respect decisions made by the PAG.

## **9 Dispute Resolution Mechanism**

### **9.1 Process Issues**

The facilitator will resolve process issues.

### **9.2 Technical Issues**

- a. The PAG members will work to identify the underlying issues and work towards a solution in a positive, friendly environment.
- b. The members will seek compromise, alternatives and clarification of information needed.
- c. The members will commit to arriving at the best solution possible.
- d. If no consensus or general agreement solution can be reached, then the outstanding issues will be summarized by the PAG and forwarded to the Licensee Team for its consideration.

## **10 Review and Revisions**

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually after adoption, or earlier, based on consensus or general agreement of the PAG and the Licensee Team. The facilitator will coordinate comments and draft text revisions.

**Approved:**

Public Advisory Group

Date: December 4, 2004

Licensee Team

Date: December 4, 2004

**Amended:**

Public Advisory Group

Date: February 19, 2005

Licensee Team

Date: February 19, 2005

Public Advisory Group

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Date: March 5, 2007

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Licensee Team

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