

**Vanderhoof Sustainable Forest Management Plan Public Advisory Group
February 4, 2010 Meeting
Village Inn, Vanderhoof**

In Attendance

Public

Dan Brooks	John DeGagne
Ginny Springer	Gerd Erasmus
John Martens	Ray Bradner

Licensee Team

Janine Gervais	Bruce Middleton
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Facilitation and Support

Dwight Scott Wolfe	Loni Spletzer
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Observers

Cathy Middleton	Bill Dobbs
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Guests

Steve Little

PAG Members Not in Attendance

Absent with Regrets

1. Documents Distributed

- Draft Agenda for Vanderhoof Sustainable Forest Management Plan (SFMP) Public Advisory Group
- Draft Minutes of Vanderhoof SFMP Public Advisory Group Meeting from December 10, 2009
- Vanderhoof Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) Background Document and Reference Information for the Access Mgmt Plan for Forest Recreation: 2008
- Vanderhoof SFMP Summary of Proposed Changes to Measures (January 22, 2010)
- Summary document for Order Establishing Landscape Biodiversity Objectives for the PG Timber Supply Area October 20, 2004
- Draft revised Free Growing Indicator (potential format of revised SFMP indicators)
- Summary document – SFM Performance Requirements
- Summary document – Riparian Sensitive Species Project
- Vanderhoof PAG Membership List (with Key Related Interests)
- PAG Recruitment Form

2. Welcome and Introduction

The meeting commenced at 4:10 pm.

Licensee, Observers and PAG Members were introduced.

3. Meeting Summary and Action Items Review

Reviewed Agenda: accepted as written.

Reviewed Minutes of the meeting from December 10, 2009: accepted as written.

Reviewed Actions: (actions will be attached on separate sheets to all future agendas, so that they are clear)

Actions from December 10, 2009

Action #12-10-09-1: LT will add “Snags and Live Trees Retained in Managed Areas to the CI Matrix: Done

Action #12-10-09-2: LT will add “The Proportion of Shrub Habitat by NDU: to the CI Matrix. Done

Action #12-10-09-3: LT will add “The Proportion of Deciduous Species by NDU” to the CI Matrix. Done

Actions from March 5, 2009

Action #03-05-09-3: LT to come back to PAG with recommendation on next step with respect to Riparian Sensitive Species study. See SFMP Proposed Changes Document on Feb 4, 2010 PAG Agenda.

Action #03-05-09-5: Consider a future agenda topic regarding: **Communication processes** on planning and different ways of communicating between licensees and tenure holders. Will consider this for March 2010 PAG Agenda

Action #03-05-09-8: Future agenda items to include: **Access Management** with respect to Development Matrix and LRMP with respect to Development Matrix. See SFMP Proposed Changes Document on Feb 4, 2010 PAG Agenda.

4. Membership Review (Resignations, Recruitment, Feedback from PAG members)

Discussed that several members have resigned and LT would like to clean up contact list

Distributed recruitment form to get ideas on recruiting new members.

Distributed PAG Membership List (with Key Related Interests) – members asked to review and edit (Steve Little to give us feedback on his interest group)

Active members: reviewed definition from the Terms of Reference: “missing more than 2 meetings without notice, membership is lapsed”

PAG members encouraged to forward any names to the Facilitator

PAG member asked why Oil and Gas reps would be recruited if we are in Sustainable Forest Management. Some answers included Oil/Gas may be involved in prospecting, roads etc and can impact biodiversity issues, etc in the DFA. Their involvement can be a communication tool. Oil/Gas Mining sector has actually opened some roads (put bridges back into deactivated areas). Has been a lot of mining exploration in the area of late.

PAG member made suggestion to contact (reconnect) past participants to encourage participation especially in light of new CSA standards.

5. Changes to the Vanderhoof Defined Forest Area – Bruce Middleton

Bruce Middleton distributed a draft new map of the Vanderhoof DFA

The operating areas of West Fraser and the Sinclair Group (majority) have been removed as well as the Agricultural Land Reserve.

This revised DFA will form the basis of the new version of the SFM Plan.

PAG member wondered why Woodlots were not part of the DFA. The LT informed the PAG that Woodlot Licenses are separate Area Based Tenures (not part of the provincial forest) and are not signatory to the Vanderhoof SFM Plan.

6. SFMP Proposed Plan Changes – Public and First Nations Measures (5 Measures)

Background

Janine Gervais explained that the discussion document “Vanderhoof SFMP Summary of Proposed Changes to Measures” has been updated to show (highlight) the changes to indicators endorsed by the PAG at the last meeting. This document will be revised to include changes endorsed at each meeting.

Many measures are redundant (from old Slocan format). An initial objective is to remove all the duplicate measure statements that currently exist within the plan.

The LT intends to republish the current SFMP in March 2010 (bring up to date only – this is not the transition to the new CSA yet, but will be a good start)

Sixteen measures were reviewed at the last meeting. Tonight’s review will include Public and First Nations measures, Biodiversity measures and Access Management measures.

Specific Changes to Measures

Measure 7-1.5 and 8-1.3: Level of Satisfaction with Forest Management

- a. Existing Measure Statement: Through an ongoing survey (at least annually), measure the level of residents, stakeholders and Aboriginal satisfaction to forest management (process and outcomes). Target: satisfaction index level > 4. Variance: -0.5.
- b. LT Recommendation: The LT proposes the following revision to this indicator: *Title: Sustainable Forest Management Public Opinion Survey “Periodically conduct and report out on a DFA wide SFM Public Opinion Survey” Target: minimum of every 5 years Variance: 0.*
- c. Discussion
 - i. LT Comments: The nature of this survey (UBC - SFM Public Opinion Survey), analysis and rollout is not consistent with a numerical satisfaction index. The LT envisions periodically undertaking this survey as a means of assisting the PAG to focus and prioritize continual improvement within the DFA. The LT last conducted this survey in conjunction with UBC in JANUARY 2009 and will report out the outcome in 2010. Periodically conducting the “SFM Public Opinion Survey” (minimum of every 5 years) not only serves to assist the PAG in assigning priorities, but it provides an opportunity to identify trends & comparisons within the DFA (significant value given the landscape condition). The LT believes this survey is best utilised to provide guidance

to the LT and the PAG, as to where continual improvement efforts should be focused in coming years – ties into CI Matrix and LT Annual Prioritization.

- ii. PAG member noted that it appears the LT commitment is only to do the survey not an outcome from the feedback out of the survey.
 - iii. PAG member asked about Level of Satisfaction versus Level of Opinion. Level of Satisfaction is very subjective. Discussion on the UBC survey methodology – findings vs. survey process
 - iv. PAG member expressed interest in seeing how outcomes are captured. Several PAG members noted that accountability is desired not just collecting information through a survey. LT noted that resource values are not captured in the current measure. The survey is best utilised to provide guidance to the LT and the PAG, as to where continual improvement efforts should be focused in coming years (broader census of public perspective on Forest Management).
 - v. PAG would like to see the intent of the survey described in the SFM Plan
 - vi. An Observer noted that a Public Opinion Survey collects valuable information provided the public is informed and knowledgeable on the subject matter.
 - vii. PAG member stated that even if the public is not always well-informed, they can be recently informed and then surveyed, but this may generate manipulated results. It would be better to survey public values, not the public's perception of how the forests are managed.
 - viii. PAG requested that the LT remove *Periodically* from the revised indicator statement
- d. PAG consensus on the revised indicator wording: *Title: Sustainable Forest Management Public Opinion Survey "Conduct and report out on a DFA wide SFM Public Opinion Survey"*
Target: minimum of every 5 years Variance: 0.

Measure 7-2.3 Increase Level of SFM Understanding

- a. Existing Measure Statement: Increase the level of understanding of SFM annually. Target: understanding index of > 4. Variance: -0.5
- b. LT Recommendation: Remove this measure from the SFMP
- c. Discussion
 - i. LT Comments: The revised Measure 7-1.5 (described above) and Measure 7-2.2 will address the Values and Objectives set out for this plan. Measure 7-2.2 : "The number of opportunities provided for SFM extension activities per year" serves to assess the LT efforts to increase SFM awareness through various activities. It directly identifies the opportunities provided by the LT to increase awareness, as opposed to a subjective assessment (which could be interpreted to mean that if > 4 no further opportunities are necessary).
 - ii. PAG member asked how school activities, websites etc are measured for effectiveness/understanding. Some discussion around objective and if it was not more important to provide opportunities (as per 7-2.2) than to assess them.

- iii. PAG member asked if a Satisfaction Survey captures the level of competency of surveyee. A better approach may be ask: “What is your understanding of the SFM Plan in Vanderhoof”?
- iv. PAG member stated that the measure as it stands now is not feasible; activities can be made and recorded, but the success/failure is hard to measure.
- v. PAG member suggested that public knowledge about forest practices should be “tested”. (i.e. “Do you know what the size of a cut block is?”)
- vi. General agreement (with 1 abstention) on LT recommendation to remove this measure from the SFMP

Measure 8-1.2: Review of PAG Terms of Reference to Recognize Treaty Rights

- a. Existing Measure Statement: The SFMP PAG Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years to recognize that aboriginal participation in the public process will not prejudice Aboriginal and treaty rights. Target: satisfaction index level > 4. Variance: -0.5.
- b. LT Recommendation: Remove this measure from the SFMP
- c. Discussion
 - i. LT Comments: This measure is a duplicate. Measure 7-1.3 reviews the PAG terms of reference and the text now includes specific wording around aboriginal participation and ensures no prejudice against Aboriginal and treaty rights.
- d. PAG consensus on LT recommendation to remove this measure from the SFMP.

Measure 8-1.4: Level of First Nations Satisfaction with Forest Management

- a. Existing Measure Statement: Annually, through a survey, measure the level of Aboriginal satisfaction related to forest management. Target: satisfaction index level > 4. Variance: -0.5.
- b. LT Recommendation: Remove this measure from the SFMP
- c. Discussion
 - i. LT Comments: As per measure 7-1.5 & 8-1.3, the nature of the UBC - SFM Public Opinion Survey is not consistent with a numerical satisfaction index and not feasible to conduct annually . In addition, First Nation participation in such surveys is met with limited success. The revised survey in measure 7-1.5 & 8-1.3 will include First Nations (see detail above). Continual improvement could focus on strategies to engage First Nations in the survey and summarizing the results, including assessing and increasing the level of participation.
- d. PAG consensus on LT recommendation to remove this measure from the SFMP.

Measure 8-2.1 Number of Socio Economic Opportunities Available to Aboriginals

- a. Existing Measure Statement: The number of socio-economic opportunities made available annually to First Nation's. Target: Annually sustain ≥ 10 . Variance: ± 2
- b. LT Recommendation: Remove this measure from the SFMP. Adjust the target of measure 4-3.1 to ≥ 12 with a variance of ± 5 .
- c. Discussion
 - i. LT Comments: This is a duplicated Measure – see Measure 4-3.1 “Annually the number of business relationships and opportunities made available and taken up with First Nations”. The target associated with measure 4-3.1 is >20 relationships or opportunities annually with a variance of ± 10 . Since Canfor and BCTS now comprise the SFMP signatories, the LT believes the targets should be reflective of this change.
 - ii. PAG perception is that the LT are juggling numbers to meet targets.
 - iii. Variance with \pm is a typo.
 - iv. PAG recommended that target be no less than 10 and set the variance to 0.
- d. PAG consensus on LT recommendation to remove this measure from the SFMP. Adjust the target of measure 4-3.1 to ≥ 10 with a variance of 0.

Break for supper at 5:33 pm

Measure 1-2.8, 1-5.2 Plant Diversity Index

- e. Existing Measure Statement: The plant diversity index for site association groups above the baseline targets on the THLB. Target: Sustain the Plant Diversity Index consistent with Values in SFMP Table 12. No Variance.
- a. LT Recommendation: Remove this measure from the SFMP and add the Plant Diversity Index (which may evolve into an Ecosystem Resilience project) to the Continuous Improvement Matrix for tracking and possible implementation at a date deemed appropriate and feasible.
- b. Discussion
 - i. LT Comments: Given the current landscape condition and evolving science associated with this measure, the LT does not believe this measure should be implemented at this time. Further research and discussion is required to assess whether: this methodology will yield the desired scientific outcome, a monitoring system is clearly defined, and a sampling regime is cost-effectively repeatable over time. As the work around this indicator has evolved, so has a greater body of literature regarding ecosystem resilience. It has been recommended that Canfor continue with the PDI program but look at modifying the indicator to tie into the newly released CSA-Z809-08 standard core indicators for either ecosystem resilience or rare plants. Until a decision has been made on how to move forward with this indicator and keep it relevant to both forest management practices and the CSA standard, Timberline has recommended that GSA monitoring be reduced to every two years to ensure that

this program remains cost effective and contributes useful data on the relative plant diversity of the Grouped Site Associations (GSA). Results of the PDI project and recommendations have been incorporated into the 2008/09 DVA SFMP Annual Report

- ii. The origins of this measure go back a few years to address PAG concerns that forest practices were reducing species diversity in regenerating cut blocks (i.e. herbicides).
 - iii. Moving forward, the LT needs to find a way to focus the information collected on Species Diversity and identify where to use it in the context of SFM planning. There is a plant resilience component coming in the new CSA standard. The initial reason for gathering this data was to learn about plant diversity. Operationally, the LT says the plan proponents are meeting their species diversity targets.
 - iv. PAG has concerns with dropping this indicator. Free to grow standards should also be flexibly to provide for animal habitat and species diversity. The PAG notes that aspen is now accepted in the free growing standards and that operational changes have been made and more are coming. LT suggested putting these details on the CI Matrix.
 - v. PAG member commented that Ecosystem Resilience direction is more appropriate and important than the Plant Diversity Index.
 - vi. PAG has concerns with the LT inferring that monitoring costs is a reason to recommend removing this indicator from the SFM Plan. Until such time as there is an alternative indicator that addresses protection of habitat to replace the current measure, this current measure should stay in the SFM Plan. PAG members would like to see LT go back to biologists and see if there is something that can be used to operationally monitor habitat. The LT noted that a former PAG member had concerns about diversity of ground plants which led to Ecosystem Representation as a measure. The LT doesn't see the current measure resulting in any significant changes to forest practices, but involves complicated measurement and analysis. Ecosystem Representation and Species at Risk strategies serve to better represent the objective.
 - vii. PAG suggested that more operational indicators be identified that look at specific practices like levels of site preparation and herbicide use.
 - viii. PAG would prefer to leave these measures in the SFM Plan until the topic has been addressed properly. The LT suggested gathering background information on the subject and having a separate meeting on the Site Level issues raised.
- c. No PAG consensus was reached on LT recommendation to remove this measure from the SFMP and add the Plant Diversity Index (which may evolve into an Ecosystem Resilience project) to the Continuous Improvement Matrix. The measure will remain in the SFM Plan and will be revisited when the SFM Plan is updated to align with the new CSA Standard next fiscal year.

Measure 1-2.10 Develop Management Strategies for Riparian Sensitive Species

- a. Existing Measure Statement: Develop "Management Strategies" for riparian sensitive species to achieve early seral deciduous conditions. Target: Management Strategies will be developed by March 31, 2010 (Agreed Nov 27, 2008) Variance: +3 Months
- b. LT Recommendation: Remove this measure from the SFMP.

c. Discussion

- i. LT Comments: The culmination of a 3-year FIA Project was presented to the PAG in March 2009. Although this project did provide some valuable information on wetland species inconclusive results were obtained as to the impact of varying degrees of retention areas adjacent to wetlands. Considerable FIA funds and time have been spent on this project but the LT have not achieved the basis for strategy development. A thorough scoping out exercise is necessary before projects of this nature are undertaken in the future.
- ii. A PAG member had grave concerns with the methodology used and the results of the final report. The PAG member originally had concerns about beaver habitat and sought operational variances to riparian management practices. PAG member in favor of looking into beaver habitat etc. and other concerns in the CI Matrix.
- iii. PAG requests that the LT revisit riparian management strategies and performance indicators at a later date.

d. PAG consensus on LT recommendation to remove this measure from the SFMP

Measure 1-3.1 Effectiveness Monitoring Plans (Wildlife)

- a. Existing Measure Statement: Effectiveness Monitoring Plans (Wildlife) are developed and implemented for selected indicator species to test management targets developed for indicators 1 and 2. Target: Develop and implement Effectiveness monitoring plans by March 31, 2010 (Agreed Nov 27, 2008). Variance: +3 Months
- b. LT Recommendation: Remove measure from the SFMP and add to Continuous Improvement Matrix.
- c. Discussion
 - i. LT Comments: The measure for Effectiveness Monitoring Plans for selected indicator species was initiated to ensure that productive populations of a selected species are present and well distributed throughout their habitat. The steps involved with developing an Effectiveness Monitoring Plan are described on pg 94 of the Vanderhoof SFMP – July 2006. (1e: Identification of representative species, development of monitoring process, establishment of credible baseline population data, monitoring long term population changes, monitoring and sample plans, etc.....) In reviewing these steps, it is apparent to the LT that we just do not yet have the information required to begin to make correlations between indicator species and forest practices. We may be years away from completing this. The LT is committed to working towards this plan, however would like to remove this from the SFMP and add this to the continuous improvement matrix. Manning, Cooper and Associates Ltd. Continue to carry out forest songbird and woodpecker monitoring in the PG Forest District for Canadian Forest Products Ltd. This project is being considered in the Vanderhoof DFA. Over the years within the Vanderhoof DFA, through FIA projects and Licensee funding, there has been a considerable amount of wildlife data collected. This data needs to be collated and potentially feed into the concept of a species accounting system. The Species at Risk program is our monitoring and management strategy around current practices and species monitoring.

- d. PAG consensus on LT recommendation to remove measure from the SFMP and add to Continuous Improvement Matrix.

Measure 1-2.7 Patch Size

Due to time constraints at this meeting, discussion of this measure is deferred to the next PAG meeting.

Measure 1-2.15, 5-1.3, 9-1.3 Conformance with Access Mgmt Plan

- a. Existing Measure Statement: The percent conformance with the Access Management Plan. Target: 100 % conformance with Access Management Plan. Variance: -10% Annually
- b. LT Recommendation: The LT believes this measure needs to be re-visited and revised, in order to clarify the objective, monitoring and reporting. The following changes to the wording of the measure are proposed: Compliance with the Access Management Implementation Principles or Communication with Resource Users prior to commencing activities within the C and D Access Management Polygons.
- c. Discussion
- i. LT Comments: The outcome of meetings between MOFR, Licensee and BCTS (Summer 2008 to Spring 2009) resulted in draft Access Management Plan Implementation Principles. The implementation strategies contained within presented an operationally feasible approach at access management. The strategies essentially focused around communication with stakeholders as Licensee & BCTS operations impact specific AMP polygons. The licensees and BCTS have focused attention on the non-motorized and functionally non- roaded polygons, as well as on access control points. It is clear that a variety of strategies will be implemented to achieve plan objectives, there are differing interpretations of the objectives and there are diverse opinions as to whether conformance is achieved.
 - ii. PAG member pointed out that it was not a public process at every point and that there are irreconcilable conflicts within the Access Management Plan
 - iii. Operationally, BCTS deals with a polarized public on this issue: there is as much concern around deactivation (keep roads open for hunting, recreation, etc) as there is for closing roads to address other values such as access management. Both parties passionate on the issue.
 - iv. PAG member noted that deactivation is only a component of Access Management
 - v. Observer noted that Access Management Plan implementation issues have been brought to the attention of the Mayor and Council for the Village of Vanderhoof from a number of different sources.
 - vi. The Access Management Plan, like the Vanderhoof LRMP, has been signed by government but it is not legally binding. The Forest Service perspective is that flexibility was a key reason not to legalize the Plan. The District Manager made a decision not to legalize the plan because of a variety of unknowns, costs, etc. The most feasible way to implement the plan is to keep it at a policy level.
 - vii. PAG is concerned that there will be implementation issues with guiding/trapping territories not all having equitable treatment. Guide/outfitters were involved in polygon

creation but not in implementation. Roads need to be de-activated to maintain wilderness setting.

viii. PAG member does not support the alternate indicator statement regarding “communication” and strongly feels that compliance is the only course of action. PAG member suggested that focus should be on road density when looking at tweaking the Access Management plan.

ix. PAG member adamant about seeing a Road Density indicator added to the SFMP. It is measureable, quantifiable and not costly.

x. LT can not commit to adding a road density measure at this time.

d. No PAG consensus was reached on LT recommendation to reword this measure. The measure will remain in the SFM Plan and will be revisited when the SFM Plan is updated to align with the new CSA Standard next fiscal year.

Measure 1-216, 5-4.4, 9-1.2 Effectiveness Monitoring Plans to Improve Access Control Points

Due to time constraints at this meeting, discussion of this measure is deferred to the next PAG meeting.

7. Example of Indicator in NEW VERSION of SFMP

Bruce Middleton provided the PAG with a handout showing how the indicator detail will be presented in the new version of the SFM Plan. This topic will be discussed further at the next PAG meeting.

8. Next Meeting March 25, 2010

1. Agenda Topics include:

- a. Review updated version of the SFMP and Development Matrix.
- b. Transition Plan to CSA Z809-08 for 2010/11

Meeting Adjourned at 8:12 pm