



Fort St. James  
Sustainable Forest  
Management

Public Advisory Group

# PAG Meeting

October 17, 2011 [5:00 PM – 9:00 PM]

Forest District Office, Fort St. James

## Meeting Summary

Attendance:

<i>Public Advisory Group:</i> Beulah Broen                      Peter Rooke Henner Grimm                      Ron Timothy Bryan Muloin                      Joanne Vinnedge		<i>Steering Committee &amp; Advisors:</i> Greg Yeomans – Canfor PG Sara Lazaruk – BCTS Jim McCormack- SFMP Coordinator - Canfor Jeremy Greenfield – BCTS
<i>Facilitator &amp; Scribe:</i> Dwight Scott Wolfe (Tesera Systems Inc.) – Facilitator Loni Spletzer - Scribe		<i>Observers:</i> Chief Ralph Pierre - Tl'azt'en Nation Chief Partner Schielke - Yekooche First Nation

Quorum based on past five meetings: 4

### 1) Welcome & Introduction

- a) Members signed in
- b) Welcome by the Chair of the Licensee Team (Greg Yeomans)
- c) Introduction of PAG members:
  - i) This is Sara Lazaruk's last meeting as she is going on maternity leave. Jeremy Greenfield will return as the BCTS representative.
  - ii) Chief Ralph Pierre - Tl'azt'en Nation – attending part of meeting as an observer.
  - iii) Chief Partner Schielke - Yekooche First Nation – attending part of meeting as an observer.

### 2) Reviewed Agenda

- a) Agenda accepted as written

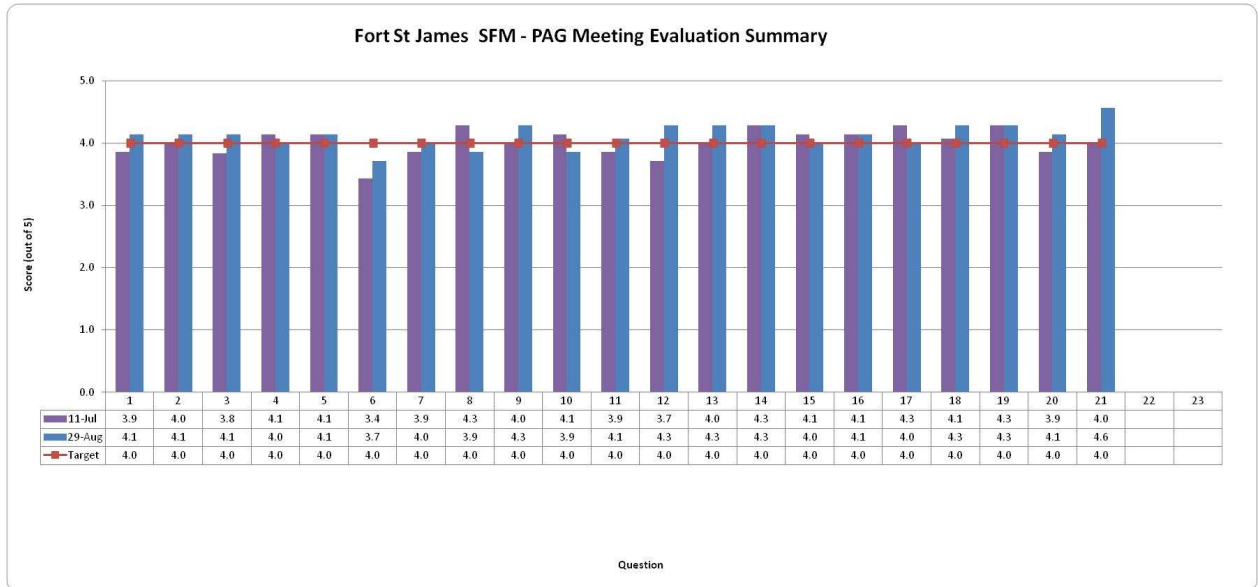
### 3) Reviewed Minutes of the August 29, 2011 Ft. St. James PAG meeting

- a) Accepted as written.

### 4) Reviewed Evaluation Results of August 29, 2011 PAG meeting

- a) On or above the targets (min 4.0) for all evaluation points except the following:
  - i) Meeting and PAG Process A6 3.7
  - ii) Meeting and PAG Process A8 3.9
  - iii) Meeting and PAG Process A10 3.9
    - It was noted that these items have improved from the previous meeting.

- Comments from the evaluation forms included:
  - Meals have improved
  - Soliciting comments from PAG members on content and process of Meetings
  - Re: CWD, comment about moving toward practices which leave as much CWD as possible



- A. Meeting and PAG Process:**
1. I have a good understanding of the purpose of the PAG and my role as part of that group.
  2. Information provided in advance of meetings allows me to effectively contribute at meeting.
  3. The meeting agenda is reviewed prior to the meeting and followed
  4. The meeting minutes capture important aspects of the meeting including actions, progress updates, and any decisions.
  5. Communication with PAG members between meetings is adequate.
  6. Licensees' share new information with PAG members regarding impacts to the environment, sustainability, forestry, etc.
  7. The PAG Terms of reference are followed.
  8. Were most PAG members involved in meeting?
  9. Was there a positive atmosphere for the meeting?
  10. Was information presented clearly at the meeting?
  11. What is your overall satisfaction with the PAG process?
  12. Ex-officio, licensee, or technical team members were organized and prepared for meeting.
- B. PAG Meeting Facilitation:**
13. PAG meeting facilitator was organized and prepared.
  14. PAG meeting facilitator strived for consensus decision making.
  15. Facilitator actively listened to concerns and viewpoints expressed during the meeting.
  16. PAG meeting facilitator addressed process issues.
  17. PAG meeting facilitator remained neutral on content issues.
  18. PAG meeting facilitator kept the meeting focused and moving.
- C. Meeting Logistics:**
19. Was the meeting location convenient?
  20. Was the timing of the meeting convenient?
  21. Was the meal provided for the meeting good?

**5) Review Previous Actions:**

- a) Mar 28-03: Request more information from Sandra Sulyma on social outreach.
  - i) The LSC had a brief meeting with Sandra and more meetings planned. Status: Ongoing.

- b) Aug 29-01: Address Recreation values under Criterion 5.1.1 Economic and Social Benefits during plan write up.
  - i) This Action Item will be addressed at a future meeting. Status: Ongoing.
- c) Aug 29-02: Add comment section for future topics to evaluation form.
  - i) The Evaluation Form has been updated. Status: Complete.
- d) Aug 29-03: Review the Performance Matrix and forward any information requests to the Facilitator.
  - i) No information requests were received. Status: Complete.

#### **6) Criterion 3 Soil and Water: Indicator Comparison and Discussion**

- a) Core Indicator 3.1.2: Coarse Woody Debris
  - i) The value and objective are from the existing plan:
    - Value Statement: Soil Distribution and productivity.
    - Objective Statement: Maintain a natural balance (distribution), dynamic cycles, and productivity.
  - ii) LSC recommends replacing Current Indicator #23: Percent of audited cutblocks harvested where post-harvest CWD levels are within the acceptable natural range of variability (as seen in m<sup>3</sup>/ha) Target: 100 Variance: -10%
  - iii) Proposed Core Indicator Statement: Percent of audited cutblocks where post harvest CWD levels are within the targets contained in Plans, Target: 100 % of blocks harvested annually will meet targets, Variance 10%
  - iv) Discussion:
    - This is a continuation of the review of this proposed Core Indicator from the PAG meeting on August 29, 2011. LSC emphasized the change to the proposed indicator focuses on best practices and results rather than a number. The problem with the natural range of variability is that the ranges are very broad (3-296cubic meters/hectare is the range for majority of BCTS operating area) and it is hard for logging equipment operators to achieve a number. The focus now is on practices that achieve the appropriate results.
    - LSC presented the following material to the PAG:
      - (a) Chief Forester's Guidance on Coarse Woody Debris Management (Review of document distributed with meeting notice)
        - (i) Ecological Considerations, Operational and Economic Considerations
        - (b) CWD Best Management Practices and Examples
        - (c) Latest version of CWD detail sheet
        - (d) Joanne Vinnedge's Thought Paper on CWD and Watershed Management.

- PAG member asked what equipment is used for making CWD “critter piles”? LSC responded that it is the feller-buncher operator that is directed to prepare critter piles by leaving more debris behind on the block. LSC stated that smaller on-block critter piles are preferred over large piles on the landing that are burned. PAG member stated that he has not seen good examples of this. LSC responded that this procedure will be put into site plans. BCTS also gave an example of when equipment has been sent back on the block to make sure the critter piles are there.
- PAG member asked if there is a prescribed density for the critter piles on the block? LSC said that there is a measurable density every few metres but operators must also abide by fire hazard abatement practices and keep the piles a prescribed distance from standing timber
- PAG member asked how the CWD volumes are quantified? LSC stated that ocular estimates (eye-balling) is used for determining CWD volumes based on existing site conditions (thus mimicking the natural range of variability). LSC noted that Waste and residue surveys are getting less frequent and are being phased out. PAG member remembers that there used to be very specific sampling procedures for estimating CWD volumes. LSC said that these practices have changed.
- PAG member asked “what is the guarantee that the CWD is going to be there post harvest?” Also “Are there critter piles left on every block?” LSC said that CWD prescriptions may not apply to blocks less than 15 hectares. PAG member emphasized that there should be CWD on small blocks.
- PAG member wanted explanation of how blocks are assessed for the creation of critter piles. LSC responded that there must be material available on the block to lend itself to leaving debris behind. This is site-specific as some forest types contain more CWD than others.
- PAG member wants to see CWD that is representative of the pre-harvest site (i.e. dry sites versus wet sites). LSC responded that this is why the proposed indicator is being updated to be more qualitative rather than quantitative.
- PAG member expressed concern that there is much discussion about why CWD management can’t or is not done on certain blocks despite the known documentation of its importance. PAG member not happy with LSC efforts.
- PAG member feels that even the smallest blocks should have CWD left – perhaps there should be less merchantable timber removed in favour of leaving even small amounts of CWD in every block. An example would be to create a berm of tops and small pieces. LSC stated that the Chief Forester acknowledges issues with CWD management, which is what prompted a recent document on Guidance on Coarse Woody Debris Management. The new proposed indicator attempts to illustrate better CWD management practices. The Chief Forester’s document notes that merchantable timber should not be left to increase CWD.

- PAG member asked about site plans – do they include the Chief Forester’s guidelines? LSC feels that the Chief Forester’s Guidelines are addressed in BMP’s which will go in to site plans. LSC said there is merit to going to the new indicator because the stand is assessed pre-logging and then post-harvest by harvest technicians. LSC suggested that this would be an excellent subject for a field tour. LSC said their management practices are also subject to 3rd party internal and external audits.
- PAG member wanted to know if Best Management Practices are only applied to high biodiversity emphasis areas (as stated in the indicator detail sheet). LSC will remove note of high biodiversity emphasis areas from text in the Detail Sheet to clarify that that where special conditions exist, to do more than best management, but otherwise apply the practices universally.
- PAG member would like to know how LSC plans to protect source populations especially for trappers. How does LSC specifically apply Best Management Practices when considering Species at Risk. LSC stated that these strategies will be discussed in *Core Indicator 1.2.1 - Degree of habitat protection for selected focal species, including species at risk.*

**Action Item 1:** LSC will review CWD Indicator Detail Sheet and cross reference to Core Indicator 1.2.1. Due: Completion of SFM Plan Update.

- PAG member asked about the impact of danger tree assessment on reducing snag trees. As noted in Joanne’s thought paper, it was suggested that we reduce snag falling. Wildlife Trees can be designated No Work Zones. LSC noted that in the silviculture process, this could become a safety issue.
  - PAG member concerned about other mills coming into the district to access very small diameter wood. PAG member pointed out that today’s non-merchantable may be tomorrow’s merchantable”. LSC stated that practices and utilization levels will change over time as part of continual improvement but CWD requirements will still exist.
  - PAG member would also like to see more detail in the SFM Plan on the spatial distribution of CWD on a block. LSC agreed that more text can be added to describe the management of CWD.
  - PAG member has noted a lot of smoke around the Fort St. James area and feels that many brush piles are being burned. PAG member feels that the LSC is currently being reactive, not proactive with CWD management practices. LSC agreed that the approach was not perfect, but there has been improvement from even a year ago.
  - PAG member concerned that the Indicator Detail Sheet doesn’t speak to the need to retain large piece sizes.
- v) General agreement with 2 dissensions to replace Indicator 23 with proposed new Indicator and Target statement: *Percent of audited cutblocks where post harvest CWD*

*levels are within the targets contained in Plans, Target: 100 % of blocks harvested annually will meet targets, Variance 10%*

- Reasons for dissention
  - (a) Wording in the Indicator Detail Sheet is not ideal.
  - (b) Prefers quantification of data by biogeoclimatic zones rather than qualitative evaluations and assessment.
- b) Core Indicator 3.2.1 Proportion of watershed or water management areas with recent stand-replacing disturbance
  - i) The value statement is from the existing plan and the objective statement is a roll up from two objectives in the original plan:
    - Value Statement: Water quality and quantity.
    - Objective Statement: Maintain water quality and water quantity in the Defined Forest Area (DFA).
  - ii) LSC recommends replacing Current Indicators #35 and #36:
    - Indicator 35: The percent of watersheds achieving baseline targets for the peak flow index Target: Annually, 85% of the watersheds will be below the baseline target Variance: +/- 15%
    - Indicator 36: Percent of watershed reviews completed where the baseline target is exceeded, and new harvesting is planned Target: 100% Variance: 0%
  - iii) Proposed Core Indicator Statement: Sensitive watersheds that are above Peak Flow Index targets will have further assessment if further harvesting is planned. Target: 100%, Variance: 10%
  - iv) Discussion:
    - LSC reviewed the following definitions:
      - (a) Equivalent Clear-cut Area (ECA): the area of a cutblock weighted to estimate an equivalent effect on snow hydrology as the area of a clear-cut unregenerated block.
      - (b) Peak Flow: Affects sedimentation and stream channel morphology
      - (c) Peak Flow Index: Similar to ECA, but areas above the highest elevation (top 60% or H60) are multiplied by 1.5. (e.g. a 10 hectare ECA would be 15 hectares above H60).
    - LSC reviewed types of Assessments: drainage structure assessments – part 2, Inventory (ex. stand heights), Sediment source, Channel stability, Landscape level (ex. sensitivity)
    - LSC described the following criteria to determine the Sensitivity of a watershed (Low, Medium, High):
      - (a) High fisheries values: #'s, bull trout

- (b) Hydrological factors – terrain, channel patterns and stability
- (c) High social value – community watershed
  - LSC noted that the impact of the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic is factored in to the ECA calculation using the following parameters:
    - (a) Using a 50% recovery rate for stands over 70% pine.
    - (b) Using a 80% recovery rate for stands with 30-70% pine.
  - Observer noted that Sowchea Creek was problematic this year and had increased sediment this year and changed stream channels. Observer asked if the location of the riparian zones impacted the watershed. LSC said that Riparian Zones are important for buffering. LSC stated that if sediment is flowing into a watercourse, the first place to look is older roads and crossings as a potential source of sediment
  - PAG member has noticed more beaver dams being breached this year and feels that it is directly related to harvesting not “old roads and crossings”. LSC stated that harvest rates in sensitive watersheds are now being monitored more closely, and “further assessment” done prior to submitting a harvest block for approval.
  - PAG member asked about the practice of culvert removal and notes that many old metal culverts are still left in the bush. LSC stated that it is current practice to removed the old culvert and bring it out of the bush. This was not done in the past as many metal culverts were damaged when removed and could not be re-used. Also, the old culverts had a zinc coating and couldn’t be recycled. Today, culverts are made of plastic and can be reused and recycled.
  - PAG member asked about water volume (hydrology) in beetle attacked stands. LSC presented a bar graph comparing snowpack levels under different types of canopies: clearcut to grey-attack to healthy mixed stands.
  - PAG member asked about non-productive types like large boulders and boulder fields and their effect on snow retention. LSC stated that natural land masses are part of the natural environment and their hydrology is not factored into ECA or Peak Flow calculations. LSC stated that these types are proportionately not a large factor compared to slope and other forest characteristics.
  - LSC clarified that every watershed in the DFA is assessed for sensitivity (low, moderate, high) by a professional hydrologist and this indicator will be applied to high sensitivity watersheds only.
  - PAG member asked what happens when watershed risk assessment seems to be failing (using Sowchea Creek as an example) and noted that flooding may be the result of harvesting or heavy snow pack or both.
  - PAG member stated that a low elevation watershed such as Sowchea Creek may need to be reassessed. Peak Flows coming from other rivers and tributaries around the area are measured and so some projections should be made.

- LSC acknowledged that Sowchea Creek was missed in the watershed assessments due to BCTS acquiring the Marie Lake Operating area a couple of years ago through Bill 28 and so the Sowchea watershed was previously unallocated in the DFA. Currently BCTS did not think they would have the time/data to run the analysis prior to the annual report to see where things were at in terms of the Sowchea Creek Watershed. If that was the case, BCTS would be reporting this as a non-conformance in the Annual Report.
  - LSC noted the PAG's concerns about the current list of sensitive watersheds and acknowledged that the assessment criteria does not include the impact on communities downstream from the watershed (i.e. flooding).
- v) Due to time constraints, the discussion of this indicator will be continued at the next PAG meeting. It was generally acknowledged by the group that this indicator would probably be accepted, we just needed more discussion time.
- c) 3.2.1 Part B Mitigation on structures in sensitive waters
- i) Discussion of this Core indicator is deferred to the next PAG meeting.

#### 7) Criteria 1 Biological Diversity

- a) Due to time constraints, the discussion of the following proposed Core Indicators will be deferred to the next PAG meeting:
- i) 1.1.4a Percent of stand structure retained
  - ii) 1.1.4b Forest operations consistent with riparian plans
  - iii) 1.2.3 Native species in regeneration
  - iv) 1.3 Genetic diversity – seed use

#### 8) Next meeting:

- a) **November 28, 2011 5:00 – 9:00 pm at the Fort St. James Forest District Office**

#### Action Items: (update)

	ACTION	WHO	DEADLINE	STATUS
Mar 28-03	Request more information from Sandra Sulyma on social outreach.	LSC	Ongoing	
Aug 29-01	Address Recreation values under Criterion 5.1.1 Economic and Social Benefits during plan write up.	LSC	Future Meeting	
Aug 29-02	Add comment section for future topics to evaluation form.	LSC	Next Meeting	Complete
Aug 29-03	Review the Performance Matrix and forward any information requests to the Facilitator.	PAG	Next Meeting	Complete

	ACTION	WHO	DEADLINE	STATUS
Oct 17-01	Review CWD Indicator Detail Sheet and cross reference to Core Indicator 1.2.1.	LSC	Completion of SFM Plan Update	