

# Prince George SFMP PAG Meeting

5:00 – 9:00 PM, October 18, 2011

Civic Centre, Prince George, BC

## MEETING Summary

In Attendance:

<u><i>Public &amp; First Nations:</i></u> Betty Abbs – Local Government Chris Andreschewski – Private Landowners Doug Beckett – Public Interest Shannon Carson - Public Interest (alternate) Ray Hourie – Métis Melanie Karjala – Research & Education Virginia Karr – Natural Conservation Dave Kim – Forest workers & Contractors Sandra Kinsley - Naturalists Anne Migvar - Ranching & Farming (alternate) Jerry Noakes – Recreation, commercial, motorized Esther Perry – Ranching & Farming Ken Pickering - Commercial wildlife interests (guides, trappers, outfitters) (alternate) Lee Sexsmith – Recreation, non-commercial, motorized Don Wilkins - Commercial wildlife interests (guides, trappers, outfitters)	<u><i>Steering Committee:</i></u> Chair: Sara Cotter - Canfor
	<u><i>Advisors:</i></u> Jim McCormack – SFMP Coordinator, Canfor
	<u><i>Observers/Guests:</i></u> Tim Sproule - BCTS
	<u><i>Facilitator &amp; Scribe:</i></u> Dwight Scott Wolfe (Tesera Systems Inc.) Loni Spletzer

### 1. Welcome & Introductions – Sara Cotter

- a. Introduction of members and guests:
  - Tim Sproule filling in for Lee Evans
  - Ken Pickering (alternate)
- b. Housekeeping Items:
  - Security Issues: Staff and security guards are available to escort PAG members to their vehicles after the meeting.
- c. PAG members invited to attend a Healthy Forests-Healthy Communities Dialogue Session at UNBC on Wednesday, November 2, 2011.

### 2. Reviewed Agenda

- a. Agenda as written.

### 3. Reviewed Minutes of Sept 27, 2011 PAG Meeting

- a. Wording revisions for Page 4 items 3, 4, 5 and Page 5 item 7.

- b. Minutes accepted as revised.

#### 4. Reviewed Meeting Evaluation Results

- a. Meeting Evaluation results from the Sept 27, 2011 PG PAG meeting were posted. Comments were reviewed.
- b. All items met the target.

#### 5. Indicator Revision (Criterion 6: Society's Responsibility, Element 6.5. Information for Decision Making. Core Indicator 6.5.2. Availability of summary information on issues of concern to the public).

- a. Reviewed Handouts
  - Powerpoint presentation on Criterion 6: Society's Responsibility.
    - a) The presentation provided background information on Core Indicator 6.5.2 – Availability of summary information on issues of concern to the public.
- b. Core Indicator 6.5.2 Availability of summary information on issues of concern to the public.
  - LSC Recommendation: Add new indicator to the PG SFM Plan.
    - a) This is a new indicator in the SFM Plan and will require PAG endorsement of a new Indicator and Target. Existing Value and Objective Statements for 6.5.2 will remain unchanged:
      - Value Statement: Informed, fair and inclusive decision-making.
      - Objective Statement: Provide relevant information and educational opportunities to support involvement in public participation processes.
  - Proposed new indicator statement for 6.5.2 (a): *SFM monitoring report made available to the public*. Target: SFM monitoring report available to public annually via Web, Variance: None.
- c. Discussion:
  - a) PAG member likes that there is information available, but some people are still computer-illiterate. Would like to see alternate methods for stakeholders to access information.
  - b) PAG member suggested that the LSC could prepare and post summaries of reports and plans.
  - c) PAG member also noted that other planning documents require public input (Access management plans, Forest Stewardship Plan) and wonders how will the public know to go to a website unless it is advertised.
  - d) PAG member says on-line information is not accessible for all public members. LSC said they can send out hard copies and use events such as Open Houses to share information.

- e) PAG member says that computer skills are problematic and that you must have high-speed internet to properly access government websites. This can be very expensive in rural areas.
- f) PAG member suggested changing the indicator to allow the public to provide feedback on the Annual Report and other planning documents as currently, the indicator is set up to just report information. LSC responded that Core Indicator 6.5.1 (The number of people who attended the educational opportunities provided) addresses the types of educational opportunities and tracks the number of people who attended these events.
- g) PAG members would like to be able to access the Annual Report through other means than on-line. LSC suggested that the Public Library may be a good place to keep the Annual Report. PAG members agreed.
- h) PAG member noted that the proposed indicator does not give an actual date of release. LSC noted that PAG members will always be given the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Annual Report before it is made available to the general public. PAG suggested that the proposed Indicator statement include a target date of December 31st. This way, the LSC can explain any delays if data is not available on time.
- i) PAG member requested that the public be notified when the Annual Report is available for review. Many organizations and interested parties have mailing addresses and email addresses and they could be notified that the annual report is available. PAG member would like to revisit this indicator in the future (continuous improvement) to determine its effectiveness.
- j) PAG member wondered if there is provision for a public comment form on the website. LSC stated that most websites have an email link to the webmaster (in this case, the facilitator). BCTS has a feedback form on their website.
- k) PAG member was concerned about using long web addresses. LSC clarified that the SFM Plan website <http://sfmpgtsa.com> provides information for the PAG members.
- l) PAG member appreciates the accessibility to information and would like to see enhancement of the features on the website (phone contact info, public comment boxes, mailing list opportunity).
- m) PAG member asked if there is an announcement in the paper or on radio when the Annual Report is available for review. LSC responded that it is currently not advertised, but could be added to the advertisement for the Open House.

- n) PAG member suggested that social media (e.g. Facebook) can be used as a way of engaging interested parties (especially youth).
  - o) PAG member emphasized the need for alternate methods of advertising availability of Annual Report besides the websites. Feels strongly that a stakeholder database should be used to directly contact interested parties.
- d. General Agreement with 1 dissention on adding new Indicator and Target statements to the PG SFM Plan:
- Proposed Core Indicator 6.5.2 (a): *SFM monitoring report made available to the public*. Target: SFM monitoring report available to public annually via Web, Variance: None.
  - Reason for dissention: Public feedback options are not easily accessed on the website.

## **6. Canfor Biodiversity Strategy Update (Jim McCormack)**

- a. Powerpoint presentation on Canfor Biodiversity Strategy
- Highlights:
    - a) Canfor's Vision for their Biodiversity Strategy is Ensuring a Consistent Supply of Fibre to our Highly Valued Customers through Cost Effective, Scientifically Credible Sustainable Forest Practices.
    - b) BCTS (Prince George Business Area) is also committed to the Biodiversity Strategy.
    - c) The Biodiversity Strategy has three (3) goals:
      - 1) Ecosystem Diversity - Conserve ecosystem diversity at the stand and landscape level by maintaining the variety of communities and ecosystems that naturally occur in the DFA.
      - 2) Genetic Diversity - Conserve genetic diversity by maintaining the variation of genes within species and ensuring that reforestation programs are free of genetically modified organisms.
      - 3) Species Diversity - Conserve species diversity by ensuring that habitats for the native species found in the DFA are maintained through time, including habitats for known occurrences of species at risk.
    - d) Jim McCormack described a variety of biodiversity strategies that go from coarse filter (landscape) scale to fine filter (stand) scale:
      - 1) Ecosystem Representation
      - 2) Conservation of Protected Areas and Sites of Special Biological and Cultural Significance

- 3) Landscape Structure
- 4) Stand Structural Habitat Elements
- 5) Species Accounting
- e) Jim McCormack elaborated on the Species Accounting System (Generalist, Dependent, etc.) and the monitoring requirements.
- f) Intent of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
  - 1) Maintain productive, well distributed populations of species in a defined management area.
  - 2) This will maintain the variation among individuals and species so that species will be able to persist in changing environments.
  - 3) The major strategies and indicators interact and encompass the complexity of the broad goal.

b. Discussion:

- PAG member asked if LSC can expand Habitat assessment in the Timber Harvesting Land Base (THLB) to include the entire forested area. Presenter said that this change would involve revising a number of indicators.
- PAG member noted that species diversity should also include cattle. PAG member expressed frustration with the level of herbicide spraying by licensees and noted that cattle ranchers are required to conserve 50% of the grass on their range tenures.
- PAG member asked the presenter to elaborate on the reference to periodic monitoring. Presenter explained that rate of change on an annual basis is often too small to track, so some monitoring occurs at 5 year intervals – depending on animal species. PAG member would like to see a quantitative interval of monitoring. LSC noted that this is currently being discussed as to what would be appropriate.
- PAG member asked about approaches to managing for seral stages and feels that this has not been done in the past and the focus is more about getting to free growing. PAG member also noted that the effects of recent pine mortality due to Mountain Pine Beetle will have to be addressed when the PAG starts discussing seral stage. LSC noted that the monitoring program needs to pick a starting point and go forward.
- PAG member noted that the sample lists of representative species was very broad and listed some species not found in the DFA, or missing other species. Presenter noted that these lists will be updated for the Prince George DFA. PAG member asked how the information will be obtained to tweak this list. Presenter said the work will be contracted out to a biologist and will be based on research, not field sampling.
- PAG member asked how unique forest types such as the Ancient Forest, caribou areas and grasslands will be managed? LSC noted that some of

these areas would be picked up as distinct ecosystems and be modified accordingly. Presenter said this is a work in progress, but will work toward prioritizing and continual improvement.

- PAG member asked about the practice of broadcast spraying of pesticides and will it be phased out somewhere in the SFM Plan. LSC noted that a separate plan - the Integrated Pest Management Plan – is used to describe the integrated vegetation management process for silviculture obligations.
- PAG member remembers issues with spraying practices in the past and acknowledges that spraying practices have come a long way, but still need to go further.
- PAG member asked for clarification on Ecosystem diversity and feels that species that are not protected still need to be managed.
- PAG member feels that some current forest practices are counter-productive to a Biodiversity Strategy. Examples include: Herbicide spraying that kills grass. Cattle needs grass. Alder removal and replanting with commercial trees removes nesting habitat for many bird species.
- PAG member asked if Canfor was paid through government funding to initiate this project. LSC noted that the Forest Investment Account (FIA) funds were used initially but now Canfor is directly funding the completion of the project.
- PAG member feels that delivery of this project should be at an arm's length from Canfor. LSC noted that the research was undertaken by Dr. Fred Bunnell and staff at UBC. Dr. Bunnell's research is third party and well respected. LSC also noted that KPMG is also auditing the SFM Plan and this provides another example of third-party oversight.
- PAG member feels a key piece to this strategy would be to see a transparent effectiveness monitoring strategy.
- PAG member has concerns that the genetic diversity indicator targets are only set to provincial standards. LSC stated that the strategies can be discussed in more detail when the specific indicators are reviewed.
- PAG member expressed concern over current harvesting practices and feels that harvesting targets the easy ground. PAG member feels that biodiversity has been trashed since the remaining forest is limited to rocky areas and steep slopes. PAG member feels this impacts the species that live in these areas. PAG member hopes this is not a "one size fits all" approach.
- PAG member feels that this is a good introduction of the Biodiversity criterion and notes that this is not an area-based strategy. PAG member recalled that there has been a lot of history of Biodiversity discussions by the Public Advisory Group in the past.
- PAG member noted that this year on the golf course he owns there were many salamanders and big snakes and lots of deer having twins. He

noted that a golf course uses lots of chemicals but still contains great biodiversity.

**7. Indicator Revision: (Criterion 1: Biological Diversity, Element 1.1 Ecosystem Diversity. Core Indicator 1.1.2 (a) Forest area by type or species composition).**

a. Reviewed Handouts

- Powerpoint presentation on Criterion 1: Biological Diversity.
  - a) The presentation provided background information on Core Indicator 1.1.2 (a) Forest area by type or species composition.

b. Core Indicator 1.1.2 (a) Forest area by type or species composition

- LSC Recommendation: Add new indicator to the PG SFM Plan.
  - a) This is a new indicator in the SFM Plan and will require PAG endorsement of a new Indicator and Target. Existing Value and Objective Statements for 1.1.2 will remain unchanged:
    - 1) Value Statement: Well balanced and functioning ecosystems that support natural processes.
    - 2) Objective Statement: Maintain landscapes that support the natural diversity, variety, and pattern of ecosystems.
- Proposed new indicator for 1.1.2.(a) : Percent distribution of forest type (treed, conifer, treed broadleaf, treed mixed) > 20 years old across the DFA. Target: Maintain the baseline ranges and distribution into the future. Variance: None

c. Discussion:

- LSC Reviewed the definitions of conifer, broad leaf and mixed:
  - a) Broadleaf => 75% broadleaf trees in a stand (a.k.a. deciduous). Trees that lose their leaves annually (aspen, cottonwood, birch willow, etc.).
  - b) Coniferous =>75% coniferous in a stand. Cone bearing tree. (spruce, pine, balsam, etc.).
  - c) Mixed = Stands that are not dominated by either broadleaf or coniferous (e.g. 50% aspen, 25% spruce 25% pine).
- LSC noted that the reporting interval is periodic (in the year following completion of Timber Supply Reviews and determination of Annual Allowable Cut).
- LSC noted the percent distribution of forest types > 20 years of age across the DFA is 85% treed conifer, 5% treed broadleaf and 10% treed mix (2011 baseline data). This baseline information will be used to set the targets for this indicator.

- LSC noted the minimum age for reporting (20 years) is necessary to remove some of the short-term variation for the purposes of this indicator; therefore reporting is focused on forest types > 20 years old.
- PAG member asked when plantations reach free growing. LSC stated it is around 20 years. PAG member would like an explanation for using 20 years as the minimum reporting age. LSC stated that it has to do with succession stages in the forest and that the indicator should not reflect deciduous brush species. PAG member suggests the minimum age should be less than 20 years since a plantation can be declared free-growing before age 20.
- PAG member would like information on the baseline species composition. LSC noted that species composition came out of data from the last Vegetation Resource Inventory (VRI), used to determine timber supply.
- PAG member feels that the target species composition implies that there will be more herbicide spraying. LSC noted that this indicator will apply to the DFA as a whole at the landscape level, and it is not a stand level indicator.
- PAG member asked how small the area is before it is delineated as a stand in the inventory. LSC noted that a stand has to be a minimum 4 hectares.
- PAG member feels that the proposed target of 5% for treed broadleaf will be hard to meet as it is a specific target rather than a range.
- PAG member asked if the target ranges are considering climate change and taking into account the rate of climate change, adaptation of species, etc. LSC stated that the effects of climate change on this indicator would have to be part of continuous improvement.
- PAG member is fine with minimum 20 years for the reporting and feels that the stand needs to be stabilized.
- PAG member noted that the forest land base has been hugely impacted in the last 100 years.
- PAG member agrees with species composition stabilizing when a stand reaches 20 years old. PAG member wonders why the current status numbers are different for BCTS and Canfor if they are operating in the same DFA? LSC noted that there are different management practices and stand types between Canfor and BCTS even though the DFA is the same.
- PAG member noted that the timing of the harvest (summer or winter) may have an impact on the species composition of the regenerating forest, particularly when there is a deciduous component.
- PAG member feels that species composition ranges should be based on the natural degree of variability of the mature forest 40 years ago. PAG member wonders if there is redundancy between this indicator and Core Indicator 1.1.3 (Forest area by seral stage or age class). Can the LSC look at combining one indicator statement for both? LSC noted that the

proposed Core Indicator 1.1.2 includes stands greater than 20 years of age, whereas proposed Core Indicator 1.1.3 will focus on old seral (greater than 120 years of age or greater than 140 years of age depending on the Biogeoclimatic Ecosystem Classification) as biodiversity values tend to increase in old forests.

- PAG member feels that the baseline targets should reflect an increase in deciduous species on the land base. PAG member feels a science based baseline should be used as the target. PAG member would like to see the target baseline question cleared up before endorsing this indicator.
- PAG discussed the need to do a retrospective analysis on the species composition within the DFA prior to industrial development – and use this as the baseline.
  - a) PAG member stated that the inventory data used today has far better resolution than the information gathered 40 years ago – even 20 years ago. PAG member recommends staying with the current VRI data.
  - b) Another PAG member stated that forest practices over the last 40 years have had a large impact on the species composition and cautioned not to go too far back in time for a retrospective analysis.
- LSC agreed to defer discussion of this indicator until the next meeting.

**Action Item #1:** LSC to work on methodology for range of targets for Core Indicator 1.1.2 and present methodology to PAG. Due: Next meeting.

**8.** Due to time constraints, the following Core Indicators will be reviewed at the next meeting:

- a. Core Indicator 1.1.2 – Forest area by type or species composition
  - Proposed Indicator: Percent distribution of forest type ( treed conifer, treed broadleaf, treed mixed)> 20 years old across the DFA
- b. Core Indicator 1.1.3 – Forest area by seral stage or age class and Core Indicator 4.1.1 – Net carbon uptake
  - Proposed Indicator: Percent late seral distribution by ecological unit across the DFA.
- c. Core Indicator 1.1.4 – Degree of within-stand structural retention
  - Proposed Indicator 1.1.4(a): Percent of stand structure retained across the DFA in harvested areas
  - Proposed Indicator 1.1.4(b): Percent of blocks meeting dispersed retention levels as prescribed in the site plan/logging plan
  - Proposed Indicator 1.1.4(c): Number of non-conformances where forest operations are not consistent with riparian management requirements as identified in operation plans.

## **9. Evaluation forms requested and collected**

**10. Next PG PAG Meeting:**

- a. Thursday, November 10, 2011
- b. Prince George Civic Center 5:00 – 9:00 pm

**11. Actions- update**

<b>PRINCE GEORGE PAG</b>				
<b>ID#</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>DEADLINE</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Nov 2 - 03	Provide updates on attempts to recruit representation for Non- Renewable Resource Extraction.	Steering Committee	Dec 2006	In progress: positive responses received from Enbridge, PMG, and BC Hydro.
Feb 24 - 01	Add "tenure/private land" to the reporting table for Indicator 5.1.1.b	Steering Committee	Next Annual Report	
Mar 17 - 01	Add Donations indicator into the SFM Plan and provide details at a future meeting.	Steering Committee	Future meeting.	
Mar 17 - 02	Work with experts to see if there might be ways to making the Investment Indicator more meaningful and effective. Possibly have the experts provide various indicator options for the PAG to select from. Presentation of some background as to what the options measure and some discussion of advantages and disadvantages of the various options should be included.	Steering Committee	March 2013	
April 5 - 01	Determine if there is information to track the root causes of "unsuccessful" relationships	Steering Committee	Next meeting.	
May 17 - 01	Consider PAG suggestion for a second indicator for Core Indicator 6.4.2 and report back to PAG.	Steering Committee	Future meeting	
May 17 - 02	Revise objective statement for Core Indicator 6.5.1 and revisit with the PAG.	Steering Committee	Future meeting	
Sept 27 - 01	Report Canfor Internal Audit details related to OFI #8 "Site Plans may benefit from ID of resource feature and applicable strategies"	Steering Committee	Next meeting	Completed
Oct 18 - 01	Work on methodology for range of targets for Core Indicator 1.1.2 and present methodology to PAG.	Steering Committee	Next meeting	