



HIGH LEVEL FORESTS PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Tuesday, September 19th, 2017
5pm, High Level Seniors Center

PRESENT:

Kevin Lim (Lim Geomatics)	Marissa Green (Norbord)
Boyd Langford (Member of Public)	Dave Gillespie (Tolko)
Peter Chomiak (Member of Public)	Trever Lafreniere (Tolko)
John Thurston (Hungry Bend Sandhills Society)	Melanie Plantinga (Tolko)
Evan Gardner (Peace River Constituency)	Bob Grocholski (North Peace Tribal Council)
Jenna Gardner (Member of the Public)	Mike Morgan (Town of High Level)
Isaac Zacharias (Treetech Contracting)	Willie Zacharias (Exact Harvesting)
George Peters (Exact Harvesting)	Paul Hewitt (Tolko)
Barry Tolker (Watt Mountain Wanderers)	Paul Ebert (Agriculture & Forestry)

INFORMATION SENT:

Baptiste Metchooyeah (Dene Tha')	Exact Harvesting
Margaret Carrol (High Level & District Chamber of Commerce)	Tracey Laboucan (Lubicon Lake Nation)
Matt Marcone (Echo Pioneer)	Crystal McAteer (Town of High Level)
Aaron Doepel (LaCrete Sawmills)	Fred Didzena (Dene Tha)
Bernie Doerksen (LaCrete Polar Cats)	Fred Radersma (Norbord)
Carol Gabriel (Mackenzie County)	Keith Badger (Netaskinan Development)
Claude Duval (Watt Mnt Wanderers)	Fort Vermilion Heritage Center
Connie Martel (Dene Tha')	Kieran Broderick (Beaver First Nation)
Chris Mitchell (Town of Rainbow Lake)	Lindee Dumas (LRRCN)
Dan Coombs (Agriculture & Forestry)	Terry Jessiman (Agriculture & Forestry)
Harvey Sewpagaham (LRRCN)	Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement
Terry Batt (Trapper's Association)	Sugu Thuraismy (LRRF)
Mike Cardinal (Tallcree First Nation)	Tristina Macek (N'Deh Ltd. Partnership)
Christine Malhmann (Agriculture & Forestry)	Brent Holick (LaCrete Polar Cats)
Cory Ferguson (Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement)	Cheryl Ernst (High Level & District Chamber of Commerce)
Clifford Starr (Peerless Trout First Nation)	Marilee Cranna Toews (Hungry Bend Sandhills Society)

1. WELCOME – INTRODUCTIONS

2. AROUND THE TABLE

- A. There was a letter distributed by Tolko concerning the burner, could we discuss that?
- a. Questions –
 - i. The PAC was told the burner was going to be decommissioned. Now there is a letter asking for an extension on the variance permitting the operation. This is confusing.
 - 1. There is currently no hog on the site. The hog stockpile has been consumed and the burner has not been operating since September 1st. The province has stated that new variances for burner operations will not be approved. As such, Tolko is requesting an extension on the current variance.
 - ii. Will there be another extension sought in the future? This variance was supposed to be the last.
 - 1. The Tolko board has granted approval to build a permanent solution for handling the residuals generated by the facility.
 - iii. Has the variance extension request been presented to the town?
 - 1. Yes. A condition of a variance extension request is support from the town and council
 - iv. Can Tolko share it's plans with the PAC?
 - 1. One of the commitments made by Tolko is to give progress updates to the community and town on a regular basis.
 - v. More facts would help to calm the public.
 - 1. The format of the letter as a "one pager" means that there was limited space for information. Tolko will have open houses to share more information. The current plans are to have a solution which will handle all residuals on site.
 - 2. Plans are being explored for a thermal plant which will heat the kilns. There will also be a pellet plant for some waste.
 - 3. The request was made to the town to give a letter of support for Tolko to have an extension on the burner variance. The town has passed the motion to give support.
- B. John Thurston – Careers the Next Generation – There is going to be a Forestry EXPO at the High Schools in High Level and LaCrete. These are being put together with sponsorship from Norbord, Tolko, LaCrete Sawmills and other organizations. The expos will provide an opportunity for high school students to meeting trades people and forest professionals. They will be able ask them questions about their jobs. There are going to be opportunities for job shadowing in forestry and trades. The expo will take place in LaCrete on November 21st and High Level on November 23rd.

3. NEW BUSINESS

3.1 Presentation

- LiDAR Optimized Forest Assessment for Landscape Management – Dr. Kevin Lim

Making predictions about the forest composition without setting foot in the bush is a "holy grail" for foresters. They hope that this technology will help them to predict the volume of wood, size of stems, for stands that they are planning to harvest.

Trevor saw some presentations about the technology which he found compelling. To gain access to the technology he applied to FRIAA (Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta) for FRIP funds to run the project on Tolko's behalf.

LiDAR stands for light detection and ranging and is an active form of remote sensing. A laser pulse that strikes the land surface and back to the sensor is recorded. LiDAR measures the distance from the sensor to the object by determining the time between the release of laser pulse to receiving of the reflected pulse. As the laser pulse is able to penetrate through surfaces until it reaches the ground, three dimensional models can be created of the forest. Millions of recorded pulse times creates an image or map of the surface.

The project had multiple steps. First field data had to be gathered through plots on the landscape. Next the LiDAR data had to be accessed. Next the data had to be processed and interpreted by specialists and fed into algorithms. Now the product is accessible to planners to help fine tune their plans.

The data is accessible through the AFRIDS platform. A planner can draw a shape on the map and the formulas in the background will calculate information about that shape. This includes the volume of timber within the shape, the merchantable species, etc.

One of the common questions is how accurate is the data? The projections have been shown to be 4-10%.

Have there been comparisons by compartments? Comparing harvested volumes with projection. Tolko only started looking at the data today. Other companies have and seen good results.

Is AVI (Alberta Vegetation Inventory) obsolete? People don't rely on AVI in the same way. These predictions are used instead of AVI. AVI is one of the variables used in the model, another tool. Traditional AVI is a time-consuming process.

Is better accuracy possible or being pursued? Better accuracy can be gained with new LiDAR technology. Better accuracy is not always required for the business purpose.

How will Tolko apply this technology? It was faster than traditional cruise. The data is still tied to the AVI. More plots, more accuracy. PSP protocols are being made more precise to take advantage of the new technology. Comparisons between harvested blocks and predicted blocks.

- 4. NEXT EVENT – September 26th – Silviculture Field tour**
- 5. NEXT MEETING – October 24th – 2017-18 Harvest Plans**
- 6. MEETING ADJORNED – 6:37**