



HIGH LEVEL FORESTS PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, November 02, 2004
Fairview College

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

John Thurston, Chair
Jorden Johnston
George Friesen
Marilee Toews
Bradley Asmussen
Will Horbal

Susan McNeil
Mike Alsterlund
Colin Hanusz
Chantal Fremit
Henry Friesen
Chris Valaire

Laurie Jenkin
Aaron Doepel
Lorraine Donovan
Joy B. Friesen
Stephanie Grocholski
James Ahnassay

1. CALL TO ORDER

John Thurston, Chair of the High Level Forests PAC called the meeting to order at 5:15pm.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOTION

Moved By Susan McNeil

That the agenda be accepted with a few additions.
Item 5.0 Presentation by James Ahnassay
Item 5.6 40 below (Mike)
Item 5.7 Operational Updates
Item 6.7 Salvage / Dene Trappers

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES – October 05, 2004

MOTION

Moved By Colin Hanusz

That the High Level Forests PAC meeting minutes of October 05, 2004 be accepted as amended.

Amendment to Item 3 to include a list of the amendments made to the September 07, 2004 minutes.

CARRIED

4. ISSUES AND CONCERNS

New Issue

A member of the public, driving south of High Level approximately one week ago, was concerned about a logging truck's speed. The individual used their cell phone to call the hotline to report it and there was no answer to the call. Will indicated that Tolko was aware of the problem which has now been fixed and that after hour calls go to voice mail to be handled the next business day. John will follow up with more detail at the next meeting.

4.1 Over Mature Forest Concept (Simplified)

Mike commented that although many of the answers to his questions are contained in the minutes, he did not remember the discussion.

A report was handed out titled Public Advisory Committee Meeting November 2004 Old Forest.

4.2 Salvage Report (Laurie)

Mike commented that he has not seen any improvements, in fact the problem seems to be getting worse, and he has not yet seen a report.

Brad stated that the report requested earlier with regards to salvage is not going to be provided by the companies as most of the salvage program is out of their control and the companies do not know how much salvage exists in the region.

Chris indicated that it is a province wide issue. The Oil & Gas companies pay and therefore own the timber. They have responsibility for it but after 60 days it reverts back to the Crown. The problem is being reviewed at higher levels of the Alberta Government and as yet there is no timeline for its resolution.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.0 Presentation by James Ahnassay

James had several points to bring to PAC's attention.

- The trapline issue – For trappers who do not follow set trails, large cut areas where scarification takes place make it difficult to maneuver around. One possible solution is if a criss cross pattern could be used leaving a path approximately the width of a ski-doo.
- Large tracks of land are being consumed in the area. Even with regrowth the effects on trappers are immediate, the more open area, the less trapping can be done. Ways to compensate trappers need to be addressed.
- Dene attendance on committees – There is a tendency by company officials to rely on committee representatives, and the preference for the Dene is for company officials to meet with elders directly.
- Salvage – There needs to be other ways to access the salvaged material, other than to leave it and waste the resources. This issue needs to be addressed.

- Heron Nesting Area – James described a Heron nesting area where his father Johnny traps, south of Chateh toward Rainbow Lake in a heavy timber area. Are areas like these respected?

Question asked by Mike: Any recommendation on scarification issue? How much distance is needed between one access and the other?

Response by James: Wide enough for a snowmobile access.

Question asked by Mike: Would two trails be enough?

Response by James: Yes, two criss cross trails.

Question asked: Do you have a forestry officer?

Response by James: No, I don't think so.

Response by Chris: No, not at this time but they are looking at it.

Possible solution to scarification issue proposed by Brad: Planners could plan out and then meet with trappers to map out possible solutions for each area.

Will commented that Tolko recognizes that there has been a communication gap, and they now intend to get out and meet one on one with trappers to bridge the gap.

Question asked by John: How do trappers inform the industry regarding species at risk or Herons in this case?

Response by Bradley: More face to face meetings in the planning phase.

Question asked by John: Is there any network to be able to have the public at large inform the industry?

Response by Bradley: It is very difficult at this time to get the message out.

Comment by John: Can the message get out through the newspaper and promote the species at risk.

Comment by Chris: There are processes in place. Does there need to be a hotline?

Comment by Marilee: Heron's are not protected but have very sensitive nesting sites.

Question by John: Could an article be written in the paper?

Response by Susan: Yes, cannot print any phone numbers but can write an article.

Handout by Colin: Species at Risk laminated Field Identification Card.

Comment by Will: On the compensation issue, there is a Trappers Association that any trapper can contact. Trappers have first right of refusal for burning brush piles. Liability insurance is needed.

Question by James: Can someone be on payroll to do it?

Response by Will: No, the company won't do that due to Workers Compensation issues.

Comment by Brad: Before a contract will be given the contractor has to prove they are insured. As to the long term loss of income for trappers, the Alberta Trappers Compensation Board is the preferred method.

Question by Mike: Can the company doing the burns be encouraged to hire trappers?

Response by Will: Yes, we can work on that, it is possible to talk to Hasselfield re: sub-contracting.

Comment by Chris: Trappers are working with the insurance companies to find a solution.

Comment by Will: It may simply be a lack of understanding on the insurance companies' part regarding the industry.

5.1 Issues and Concerns Tracking Sheet (John Thurston)

Unresolved issue of salvage report. Chris commented that it is a province wide issue. The Oil & Gas companies pay and therefore own the timber. They have responsibility for it but after 60 days it reverts back to the Crown. The problem is being reviewed at higher levels of the Alberta Government and as yet there is no timeline for its resolution.

5.2 Update on Meeting w/ Helene Walsh (Marcel)

Report provided by Colin on behalf of Marcel. Marcel met with Helene Walsh and discussed changes she wanted to see done regarding species at risk. There was discussion about identifying high conservation value sites, and a portion of the meeting was spent discussing the Forest Stewardship Certificate which she would like the companies to attend. There is a great deal of controversy between the ISO and CSA versions of Forest Stewardship.

Question by Mike: What is the difference?

Response by Chris: One is international and the other is Canadian

As an aside, environmental groups are taking the CSA to court because they feel their Forest Stewardship Certificate is not science based enough. There is also a group of activists, among them Sierra Club & Boreal Initiative, who are auditing companies who have been CSA approved. The article regarding the above will be forwarded to John Thurston by Laurie Jenkin.

To be noted, Footner Forest Products will be ISO audited next week.

5.3 Annual Performance Report

A copy of the presentation was provided to all attendees. The final report will be brought for the next meeting. Part II of the presentation is scheduled for November 16th.

5.4 Alberta Pacific

Tabled until next meeting, when the people from Alberta Pacific plan on attending our December 7th meeting. They are in the process of completing their audit to the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standard for forest certification and will discuss the results and challenges I associated with that process.

5.5 Horse Logging Site Tour (Colin)

Randy will be supervising the tour. The horse loggers are just getting started west of town. They can do a tour as early as early to mid-December. Consensus was that January would be more workable. The date selection was tabled until next meeting.

5.6 40 below (Mike)

It was brought to Mike's attention that at 40 below steel loses its ability to hold weight. Between 43 and 50 below the oil patch shuts down. The concern is with

logging trucks that are fully loaded at 40 below. Is there a risk of that the steel could fail and cause a severe accident?

Will commented that normally at those temperatures everything shuts down.

Someone suggested that it would be a good question to ask the engineer coming to give a presentation to their trucking fleet. He could then bring back the information to the next meeting.

George commented that there are problems when it is cold, many different things can go wrong, but he never shuts down. Mike's primary concern is trucks rolling on the Highway. Jordan has never in 50 years seen structural breakdown from the cold. Primarily impacts will cause problems. Tolko & FFP have a 3rd party mechanic to do safety inspections on the log truck fleet.

5.7 Operational Updates (Will)

Will updated everyone that Tolko's scales are now open 24 hours, and all contractors have started.

Question by John: Lack of frost hasn't slowed them down?

Response by Will: They have laid down gravel.

6 OLD BUSINESS

6.1 Question of the Month

There were no responses from the question of the month. There were also a couple of problems with the question itself identified by Marilee. (1 – Ursus actos-canadensis should be replaced with Ursus americanus; 2 – Cirus Cyaneus should be replaced with Circus Cyaneus). There was also a discussion as to how to make the contest more attractive, and Mike suggested posting the prize with the question of the month. A decision was made to run both last month's adult question of the month, as well as the new question of the month, and advertise the prize of a \$25 gift certificate at a business of their choice.

The new question of the Month is a challenge for the children 10-15 years old.

The information to help you answer the following questions can be accessed at the web site www.highlevelwoodlands.com

In the High Level woodland management area, what are the names of the management plots which begin with a "W"?

What is the meaning of (SFM) Plan?

All winning answers will be put in a jar for the winning draw.

6.2 Clipping Service (handouts)

Colin handed out copies of newspaper clippings

6.3 Highway Signage

No further update was available regarding the HWY Information Sign, describing some of the historical harvesting along the roadsides in the area.

Will commented that he now has the universal standards from Alberta Transportation regarding mileage signs.

6.4 Woodlot Management

Brad had the following points to make:

- Footner Forest Products currently does not have a woodlot plan
- They are targeting to have it operational within 3 or 4 years
- Forest 20/20 program could be looked at as a woodlot program
- Woodlot Extension program website
[www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/apa3312?opendocument](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/apa3312?opendocument)

6.5 Private Sales (Brad)

Short discussion took place and the item was tabled until next meeting so that Walter can address questions.

6.6 Update on Mixed Wood Management (Mike)

Colin to bring statement at the next meeting. Brad talked about a research project in and around Mixed Wood Harvesting.

6.7 Salvage / Dene Trappers (Mike)

Brad started out the discussion by stating that salvage is an Alberta Government program with guidelines. Footner Forest Products has first right of refusal. No report on the entire salvage within the area is possible, as they can only provide how much they've done. They are also more than willing to talk about how they fit into the bigger picture. For the whole picture, PAC should be talking to the Government of Alberta. FFP only has control as to whether they accept or decline salvage.

Chris added that there are people in his department at higher levels working on the issue. It is tricky because the Oil & Gas companies own the timber initially. Their goal is to ensure that the timber has somewhere to go and the Oil & Gas companies now have to have an agreement in place prior to the work being done. Chris cannot speak to timelines of any changes in the way this is managed as that is taking place as a province wide initiative. The only data that they might have relates to the Access Operating Agreements which are volume estimates only.

PAC will be informed of any changes made to the salvage program by the Alberta government as they occur. Chris reiterated that the Alberta Government does recognize that the resources need to be captured not wasted.

Will reported that Tolko would be able to report Deliveries on the salvage Tolko has done. Lorraine commented that it was not the mills causing the salvage problem and perhaps it would be worth pushing in a different place like Alberta Resources or the Government MLA. Susan asked if there were any fines for companies who abandon their salvage. Chris stated that one of the solutions currently in place is that prior to approvals being granted the companies must have an agreement in place to deal with the salvage.

Mike stated that he hopes the companies and government have improved their salvage reports. He continues to be dissatisfied with the whole issue.

Colin commented that Alberta Resources has taken steps to improve getting the timber out. Will described that Tolko pays less because they are steady business whereas Oil & Gas companies pay more because of their immediate need to have it done. Chris added that the Oil & Gas companies have operational constraints on the time of year, which forces their hand more and more. He also stated that the Oil & Gas, Forestry industry and Mills need better communication.

7. CORRESPONDANCE

7.1 Northern Lights Forest Education Society

The Society is preparing an activities and accomplishments handout for the public and companies. The Society has a bursary, for which they had one applicant who did not meet the requirements. If anyone is aware of a potential applicant, please let them know. Upcoming Events include logging tours, National Forestry Week, Northern Lights article in the paper for the society's activities. Their next meeting is November 17th.

8 AROUND THE TABLE

Susan – Reiterated her comment that it would be nice to have some Oil and Gas representatives attend our meetings. John responded that Monty Moore of Husky was supposed to come to the meeting; he would follow up for next time.

Marilee – Brought to everyone's attention a new book called Rendezvous with the Wild, The Boreal Forest, with FSC & CPAWS stamps and printed on special paper.

Colin – Passed around Canadian Standards Association cards.

Stephanie – Brought to everyone's attention that the CSA website is not accessible, to which Colin added it is now contained under www.highlevelwoodlands.com

Will – Please call us regarding any salvage that is seen out there.

Chris – Reiterating that salvage is recognized as a huge issue.

NEXT MEETING – December 07, 2004 @ 5:00 pm at the Fairview College

9 ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned @ 7:50 pm