

Algonquin Park Forest Certification Advisory Group

Z809-08 Meeting #1

Hidden Valley Hotel, Huntsville

Jan 31 / Feb 1, 2012

Revised March 9, 2012

Present: Shaun Dombroskie, Gord Cumming, Richard Zohr, Randy Malcolm, John Doering, Anne Mundy, Tom Ballantine, Joe Yaraskavitch, Barry Bridgeford, Danny Janke, Deb Cumming, Don McCormick, Bob Craftchick, Dave Commanda, Lacey Rose, Nathan Mieske, Dana Shaw, Irvin Yateman, Emmett Godin, Tom Clark.

Regrets: Doreen Davis, Clifford Bastein, Steve Deon, Matt Demille, Don Spring

Tuesday Evening

1. Introductions

Gord welcomed all of the FCAG members. Approximately 50% new faces to advisory group. AFA thanked members for their input and time commitments donated to the advisory group. CSA is the standard with the greatest requirements for public consultation. A lot of good work has been done by the committee in the past. Some of this effort has also been incorporated in the preparation of the 2010-20 FMP, the sustainable forest management plan approved by MNR. This first meeting is to step back and refresh some of the basics of the framework AFA operates under and the requirements of the CSA Standard. Values, Objectives, Indicators and Targets (VOITs) will be the focus of the discussions as we move along the path in the process.

Gord went through the information binder provided to each group member. Gord also introduced the presentation material posted in the room that provides information about forest management in Algonquin Park.

Gord introduced the facilitator Tom Clarke with CMC Forestry Consultants. An Ecologist, who understands the forestry business and forestry certification processes. Tom knows the Park having been an auditor on the last Independent Forest Audit. Gord handed it over to Tom to begin the meeting and Tom further introduced himself and his background.

The floor was opened to the advisory group to provide introductions and share their backgrounds. New members introduced themselves as follows:

Lacey Rose – Registered Professional Forester with the County of Renfrew. Past experience as assistant to the Ontario Parks Forester in Algonquin Park, and as Forest Management Plan author for the Bancroft-Minden Sustainable Forest Licence Company.

Nathan Mieske – Logging Contractor Supervisor with Bob Robinson Logging - working in Algonquin Park.

Don McCormick – member of the AFA Board of Directors.

Anne Mundy – representing the general public. Has previous experience with the certification process as she was previously with the AFA Board of Directors and an alternate on the FCAG for Terry Mullin.

Emmett Godin – appointed to the group by Chief Patrick Glassford. Has past experience as a member of several Forest Management Planning teams, including Algonquin Park.

Joe Yaraskavitch – Ontario Parks Forester – has some experience with the FCAG in the last round – will be the primary representative for Ontario Parks now, with Jay Nichols (Park Superintendent) as an alternate. Jay is also planning to attend whatever meetings he can.

Dave Commanda – appointed by Bonnie Sarazin on behalf of the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan. Has experience working in Algonquin Park as a Contractor Supervisor with Makwa Community Development Corporation.

Robert Craftchick – has some previous experience with the FCAG during the last round. Also has past experience as a member of several Forest Management Planning teams, including Algonquin Park.

Deb Cumming - representing environmental group interests. Deb is the past Chair of the Muskoka Watershed Council. Also works with the Muskoka Heritage Trust and was the Chair of the environmental committee for Lake of Bays. Deb has been involved in a number of other environmental projects including long range planning for solid waste in Muskoka.

Regrets - Clifford Bastein – member of the Mattawa/North Bay Algonquins. Also has past experience as a member of several Forest Management Planning teams, including Algonquin Park.

Regrets – Chief Doreen Davis – representing the Sharbot Mishigama Anishinabe Algonquin community.

Regrets – Matt Demille Assistant Manager of Fish and Wildlife Services/Fisheries Biologist with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. Matt has served notice that he will be replaced by another manager from OFAH at the next meeting as they are currently going through a reorganization.

Bob Craftchick pointed out that the on pg 7 of 10 of the Terms of Reference, a few corrections need to be made regarding Algonquin names/groups. **ACTION** – Bob to email Gord corrections.

2. Video: Jim Ferrell, Assistant Deputy Minister, Canadian Forest Service - played to give group a national perspective on forests, legislation, reporting and forest certification.

3. Forest Management in Ontario and Algonquin Park - the Planning Structure - Gord

Gord explained the legal framework and set the stage on how forest management is conducted within Algonquin Park by going over a schematic diagram. Discussed the 3 main pieces of legislation: the

Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, the Algonquin Forestry Authority Act and the Crown Forest Sustainability Act. Followed by discussing the variety of other legislation and legal requirements that the AFA operates under.

Deb asked if the forestry agreement contains market projections based on demand from receiving mills? Danny answered by explaining that it is only focused on the supply end and allocation to receiving mills is based on volume determined from the FMP process. Danny further added that Forestry Agreements are a topic of discussion as the Province continues to have discussions on tenure reform.

Gord continued to highlight the guiding documents provided on the display table that are followed during the preparation of a forest management plan (FMP). **Table FMP-13** was prepared with the 2010-20 FMP and has a lot of similarities to the **CSA VOIT Matrix** that is developed for the CSA certification process.

FMP is a 10 year plan with two 5 year phases and approved by MNR. Open-houses are scheduled to allow public to input on planned activities prior to implementation each phase. Annual Work Schedules are prepared yearly by AFA and reviewed and approved by MNR prior to April 1st each year.

Monitoring and measuring the implementation of forest activities on the day to day bases is completed by AFA Operations Supervisors. Compliance reports are submitted as an operating unit is completed to the provincial FOIP program and becomes public record. Spot checks are completed internally by Monitoring and Measurement Supervisor on the implementation of forest activities and results are prepared in a report presented to the EMS/SFM Implementation Team. Internal Audits and Registrar administered audits are completed each year.Numerous checks and balances are in place to ensure the FMP is implemented as planned.

Joe - clarified that it's the client mills that get wood from Algonquin Park that covers the cost of forest management and forest certification. In the end the mills are paying more (\$/m3) for the additional checks and balances and auditing efforts born from certifying wood on managed forests. Through this CSA process, we need to be mindful of the cost incurred and be as efficient as possible.

Don McCormick and John Doering - shared their frustration with the lack of attention paid by the general public on products manufactured from trees harvested from certified forests.

A group photo was taken and the meeting adjourned for the Day.



Wednesday, Feb 1

Tom and Gord began the meeting by getting started with the information binder. An acronyms page is included to help understand and follow along with terminology used in forestry.

1. Minutes of last Meeting: Past meeting minutes were reviewed - May 10, 2011 meeting. No errors or omissions were identified.

Tom B requested an update on the mills. Danny responded – 280,000 m³ harvested so far this year, total volume is going to be down this year. This is less than half of the sustainable allowable volume that is allocated in the plan. Ever since Portage closed there has not been a good alternative outlet for low grade timber (pulp). Hardwood sawlog demand is okay. Currently the markets are poor. Indicators from the US show slightly positive future trends.

Gord – explained how an allowable cut is calculated and that wood supply agreements are updated after each FMP and recalculation of the sustainable harvest level.

Don – asked for an explanation on stands that have species like poplar are treated when demand for poplar is low. Danny – some species are not in demand but we do not “cherry pick” trees. Forest prescriptions are followed and we harvest area based on what is marked by certified tree markers implementing the forest prescription. We have a section in the FMP that identifies utilization strategies

when market conditions are poor. We are currently implementing some of these strategies – for example – avoiding areas with high concentrations of unmarketable material.

Gord – good example is in Kiosk where we temporally delay harvest of hemlock by ribboning and bypassing concentrated areas of undesirable species at this current time. We will go back and carry out silviculture at a future date in these areas when markets improve.

With SAR habitat restrictions and timing restrictions there is a strong need to have all the available harvest allocated to provide the flexibility to move to areas and supply the wood to mills. This year, two mills (Carson Lake & Commonwealth) ran out of pine logs and had to wait until an October 15th timing restriction was off to access pine needed to meet volume commitments. We never cut the full allocated volume but we need all of the area allocated to be flexible.

2. 2010-11 Annual Report

Gord reviewed the 2010-11 annual report. Refer to the report for details.

INDICATORS – Discussion Items:

1.2.1.1.2: Tom C.- asked why during in 2005-2006 there were more incursions in SAR habitat when, for example, species like wood turtle were not a **Species at Risk**?

Gord – there were more species on the list (i.e. red-shouldered hawk) that have since been removed from the list. Advancements made by AFA with (ARMS) in recent years to immediately report new values upon discovery at tree marking time and communicate the location to Operations field staff prior to harvest or access activities. This has helped reduce the number of non-compliances associated with incursions into habitat within timing restrictions.

1.2.1.2.1: Joe – explained the pending non-compliance associated with landing within a brook trout AOC. Joe explained that when we think about calculating this VOIT it would be better show it relative to the number of reports completed. Currently showing a % is misleading due the significance of some of these non-compliances. High-low significant non compliances are grouped together as part of the calculation. The current measure may be too strict?

Don- suggested it could be better to base the measure as a ratio instead of a %?

Barry – asked about species creep due to **climate change**? Lacey – there are two camps in the science community - for progressively adapting tree species - and to wait until the climate change occurs to plant different tree species. Change is not dramatic enough yet for different tree species to thrive. Joe – new module will be given out to planning teams for upcoming plans. Our strategy is to ensure we maintain a healthy diverse forest. A healthy forest can better adapt to any changes to the climate. Not a lot can be done in Algonquin Park because of the reliance on predominantly natural regeneration.

Lacey- why is there a 5% variance for some of these VOITs and 10% on others? Gord – it is a function of the advisory group’s decisions. This variance in variances will be reconsidered with the re-assessments of VOITS.

3.2.1.1.3: Joe- what do you define as a spill? Danny – anything over 1 litre is tracked within our EMS.

3.2.1.2.1: Gord – test wells have been installed, however monitoring these test wells requires a licenced hydro geologist and long term data to account for many variables. Joe – aggregate pit test well is an inverted culvert at pit site. The MNR southern region hydro geologist assessed our current practices and provided input. New direction has been incorporated into the 2010 FMP and new mapping technology will be used to determine hydrologically sensitive portions of the brook trout AOC as required.

5.1.1.2.1: Danny – wood supply commitments are going to change this VOIT in the future and changes resulting from tenure reform.

5.1.2.1.1: Gord – reviewed **public comments** received - explained the one public complaint at Scorch Lake was as a result of a breakdown in communication with the passing of the gate attendant. Letter was sent to the complainant and camping fees reimbursed and camper was very satisfied with AFA’s empathetic response.

5.3.1.1.1: Barry – does the crown expect a certain amount? Joe – no, a portion of crown stumpage ends up in the provinces general revenues account. Danny – crown sets the rate on residual value - if the value goes up then the mills pay more. Proposed market based system through tenure reform will be an alternative to the current system.

5.3.2.1.2: Joe – Gord can you explain the reasons why we did not meet target for Algonquin Aboriginal tree marking? Gord – André Carle (largest contractor at the time) stopped marking in the park and is the main result why numbers dropped. Also, we are marking less overall area with the suppressed market conditions. Danny – tree marking is quite complex and not a lot of capacity in the certified tree marker pool. There is a real opportunity for aboriginals here.

Richard – we need to become more aware.

Robert- prefer to work outside of the park due to economics. When we worked in the park it seemed we were paid \$10/ha less than when we were paid outside the park. Most communities do not have the capacity to do it. It would be different if we had the capacity and did not get the opportunity. This indicator is negative and should be revised.

Richard – I look at this as an opportunity and if we did not have the target we would not know we had the problem.

Danny – notice was given through request for proposals on the BID OPPORTUNITIES section on the AFA website.

3. Video 2: Forest Certification in Canada - Peggy Smith

Tom – asked for the groups thoughts on the recent CBC Marketplace segment on forest certification.

Group- felt it had a negative tone and didn't tell the whole story. Too much time spent in the grocery store with the toilet paper and not enough time clarifying the issues they were raising. Not enough time in a ½ hour show to do it justice.

4. Forest Certification and CSA System – Tom

PowerPoint presentation delivered by Tom - notes pages provided in binder.

Deb – can auditors move from one certification standard to another? Tom – yes

Gord – CSA certification helps AFA demonstrate to the public that the forest is managed sustainably.....etc., market benefits are slow in coming. McRae Lumber is the currently the only client mill that has the additional Chain of Custody certification - to help them maintain market share with some of their client pulp mills.

Tom- FSC seems to be the best known certification body and spent time early on the marketing, whereas, CSA focussed more on standards development, not marketing.

Gord – provided a quick overview of how the registrar conducts the audit and accesses records. Verification is made in the field and follow-up on items and records is made back in the office. Audit reports are prepared and responses to any non-conformance findings are made with 60 days.

5. Advisory Group Public Consultation Plan and Terms of Reference - Tom

Consultation Plan:

Dana – questioned why CPAWS was singled out on the expanded stakeholder list? Lacey – suggest either we list all the environmental groups and not just single out one (CPAWS). Gord – will revisit these lists – they are a bit dated because they were originally constructed in 2006

ACTION – Gord asked the group to please review the values identified in tables 2 and 3, along with the VOIT matrix and let us know if we are missing anything.

Algonquin EcoWatch – Gord - AFA has an open door policy when it comes to talking to people about how we manage the Algonquin Forest. Algonquin is a special place - it is owned by the people of Ontario. We have the duty to listen to and consider everyone's concerns. We are happy to do that. AFA's is including AEW in the CSA process through our broader consultation which will lead to a meeting with them, if requested. We are happy to spend time with them ourselves - not sure if it would be productive as a group. The issues that AEW has raised with us about SFM in Algonquin Park will be discussed with FCAG as part of the VOIT analysis. The AEW issues were also raised (and addressed) through the FMP process. These issues, and subsequent decisions, and the reasons for them, are fully documented (copies in your binders - issue resolution and individual environmental assessment letters).

If you have questions about these letters, or about the issues, we will be happy to address them at the appropriate time in the process, as each issue fits into the CCFM criteria. Please let us know if you have any comments or concerns.

Joe – Algonquin Eco-Watch will continue to be involved in other consultation processes for Algonquin Park e.g. Local Citizens Committee.

Anne – when was the letter dated? January 2012

Danny – has sent a response letter.

Don – sounds like they have higher level concerns and need to spend time at the political level.

Gord – As a plan author I need to follow provincial direction.

Barry – is there opportunity to evaluate the landscape guide (LG) based on this process?

Gord- no – the LG was not available during the preparation of the long term management direction for the Algonquin Park 2010 FMP. The LG was phased in starting with 2011 FMPs in the southern region.

Joe – we did incorporate as much of the LG direction as possible in the FMP. **Post Meeting Note** – Joe is correct. As stated in the District Manager’s Issue Resolution response letter – *“The planning team has used the Strategic Forest Management Model (SFMM) in the development of the FMP. SFMM is a model that has been approved by the Director of Forest Management Branch for use in forest management planning. The planning team has diligently incorporated the science presented in the draft Landscape Guide relative to natural disturbance cycles, natural succession as well as old growth onset age and duration into the model”*. The FMP has also incorporated the “Landscape Class” classification system for assessing biological diversity (from the LG). Landscape classes have been introduced as a new measure for assessing forest structure, composition and abundance.

Lacey – LG actually offers more flexibility with long term targets than what was done in the Algonquin FMP. It is a similar approach with modeling within levels of natural variation, however the Algonquin FMP followed this natural trend more closely over time. The LG has targets set for each management unit set by the Province.

The Terms of Reference was reviewed with the group.

Tom – Please contact first if there are questions with anything along the process. I can be reached by phone 705-645-2580 or email Tom@tomclark.ca. **ACTION** - Please identify any alternates by the start of next meeting. If necessary, technical experts can be invited to help the advisory group make informed decisions.

Robert – expressed some concern about decision making for observers. Gord suggested that in the example Robert was using, this would be more of a technical advisor which would be more of a group decision if this would be of value

6. Video 3: PEFC - The World's Largest Environmental Movement

7. An Introduction to VOITs – Tom – PowerPoint presentation

Gord- added that the defined forest area includes wilderness zones and natural zones which contribute to many of the landscape scale ecological indicators (e.g. wildlife habitat and old growth). This is way of assessing credit for these large “protected areas” in many of our CCFM criteria 1 VOITs.

Bob – pointed out that the map displayed out in the Park Management Plan is not up to date. Road in the pan handle is incorrect. Joe concurred.

Gord- the scoping analysis in the FMP will satisfy the requirements in the standard for evaluating strategies for many of the landscape level VOITs.

Gord- emphasized the importance of keeping the VOITs to a manageable number. Careful consideration and meaningful measures must be used.

Tom- used the existing VOIT matrix to look at a few examples.

Gord – provided insight on the use of SFMM - a planning tool used to model timber, habitat and forest condition overtime and is the tool used to evaluate forest management against the natural bounds of variation. It is also a tool used to measure many of these strategic planning indicators.

Lacey- pointed out that the landscape guide has changed in a direction to model cover types overtime – more of a coarse filter approach. If we provide for a variety of habitat types across the landscape, this will satisfy the broad requirements of most wildlife species. Fine filter habitat direction is also provided through AOC planning. Provincial planning direction has moved away from a featured species approach.

Gord- in the past, some of the members felt that AFA was telling the advisory group what the values were; not vice versa. We stepped back during the last certification process to address this issue. We now have an existing VOIT matrix that was built with advisory group consensus. This is a good template to move forward from. Together as a group we need to determine if there are any gaps.

Tom – discussion around measuring structural retention to meet a new mandatory indicator and ideas were given to use existing monitoring systems that capture this requirement. The tree marking audit report is a good measure to indicate whether or not we are meeting this new VOIT.

8. Expectations of the Process

Danny – provided a brief history on AFA’s registration to ISO 14001 and CSA Z809, and why AFA chose to the CSA standard. Clients recognize it is needed to demonstrate to the public that the forests of Algonquin Park are being sustainably managed. After another analysis AFA decided to continue with CSA because of the requirement for incorporating public involvement and the inclusion of a management system to achieve continual improvement.

Gord – added that the ISO and CSA share the same system requirements and going with CSA provided a good fit and value for money spent. The CSA standard has a lot of technical rigour behind it and CSA being a Canadian standard provides the national recognition. It’s not good enough anymore to just do good forest management, we need to prove it!

9. Other Items

Please review the values identified in tables 2 and 3 of the Public Consultation Plan and in the VOIT matrix and let us know if we are missing any values.

Next Meeting is on the 01 March 2012.