

Forest Certification Advisory Group
Z809-08 Meeting #6
Hidden Valley Resort, Huntsville
Thursday September 27, 2012
8:30 am - 3:00 pm

Minutes

Present: Gord Cumming, Irvin Yateman, Shari Sokay, Dana Shaw, Tom Ballantine, Tom Clark, Barry Bridgeford, Terry Mullin, Danny Janke, Shaun Dombroskie (minute taker), Emmett Godin, Lacey Rose, Joe Yaraskavitch, Anne Mundy, Deb Cumming, Steve D'eon, Nathan Mieske, William (Bill) Warren (ABR Observer), Dan Kohoko, Bob McRae

Regrets: Clifford Bastein, Doreen Davis, Ethan Huner, Richard Zohr, Bob Craftchick, Randy Malcolm, Larry McDermott

Approval of June Minutes

Tom C.– advised the group to insert their handout in the binder. The handout includes the SFM draft plan and the minutes from the June meeting.

Barry B. – introduced Bill Warren (ABR alternate) that will be attending the meeting today.

Tom C.– went through the minutes and solicited the group for any errors and omissions. Reviewed action items and provided commentary from the discussion in June to refresh memories. Reviewed actions items that were mainly directed to Gord to include when editing the draft plan. Advised the group that there will be an opportunity to see how the edits affected the VOIT Matrix throughout the day.

Tom – Reviewed the VOIT matrix in unison with the minutes to verify if actions made in minutes have been addressed by Gord during the preparation of the draft SFM Plan. Advised the group that each individual will have opportunity later to provide general comments and agreement/disagreement with the SFM Plan.

Gord – went through and showed the Advisory Group where edits were made to address actions, as follows:

Salted Sand

Gord - Action for Advisory Group to review outcome of FP Innovation Roads Review study related to salted sand. We have a target to reduce the use of salted sand by timeframes committed to in the FMP. FP Innovation provided comments that there is a big difference between the use of road salt vs. salted sand. Danny – elaborated on the comment in report, that AFA use is less than 1% salt in winter road sand. FP made suggestions to address storage of sand and management of sand piles which AFA agrees with. Lacey- why was this in the FMP? Gord – an individual stakeholder concern was raised when the

FMP was being prepared. To alleviate the concern commitments were agreed upon and incorporated in the FMP. AFA will honour these commitments and put them in this SFM Plan also. Emmett - can AFA manage based on this constraint? Danny – Yes - by encouraging operators to work on sides of pit where there is more rock (less loam). Some change is needed to find better ways to store and use sand. Steve- suggested a text edit insert “salted sand” in the target to replace “salt” in Matrix.

Direct and Indirect Employee Numbers

Gord – we initially had only direct employment numbers in the target but wanted to show indirect as well. Used a multiplier of 3 (indirect jobs) to 1 (direct job) from an Ontario Forest Industry Association publication. Bob M. – there is a basic economic misconception on the real benefit of the manufacturing industry to society. Tom C. – it gets complicated when you try to incorporate seasonal employees (counted for 12 months of work). Lacey – it’s definitely not an overestimate 30 wood producers provide 700 direct jobs just in the Renfrew County alone! Terry M.– some might have difficulty to accept the number, because some mills only take 10% wood from AP. Joe Y.– but if they did not get that 10% they could shut down. Deb- references people not jobs that are partially or fully employed. Tom C.– people is a much more coarse statistic and close to real as we can get. Gord – suggested that he will make it clear in SFM plan text that this includes seasonal workers. Emmett – even though some may work seasonally it is their main source of income for the year and it keeps them in the area. Bob M. – at sawmills money is spent on bearings and parts. These suppliers are indirectly employed as well. Steve- that is intended to be captured in the indirect multiplier of 3.

Forested Ecosystems

At the last meeting Dan K- brought up that the old natural benchmark wording in the VOIT matrix on page 1 was a confusing target/variance . Gord – adjusted the wording to clear up the confusion. Removed variance and reworded the target for ecosite 15. Clarified that the variance is now built into the Target.

Algonquin’s of Ontario Reference

Gord – referred to pg 15 of the plan. Explained that the CSA standard uses the term Aboriginal and explained that a reference has been made in the text that the term Aboriginal generally refers to Algonquin’s of Ontario. Danny – suggested we need clarification that does not exclude other traditional Aboriginal interests in Algonquin Provincial Park. Joe – There is a portion of the Park that is not within the land claim area. Danny – need to cover off that there may be others that have an interest in the DFA? Irvin – could this be interpreted as inviting others to the Algonquin territory? Gord – no, just need an additional statement to clarify, a non-exclusion statement.

Action: Gord to present the wording to the Algonquin advisory group reps prior to finalizing the SFM Plan text.

Level of participation of Algonquin’s/forest economy

Gord – reminded the Group that this VOIT has been broadened to 3 categories: volume , silviculture and direct program cost are tracked and reported on. Joe – suggested to omit the word “Aboriginal” from the expansion text because already stated in the description. Deb- asked if this is referring to a line item that is direct program cost found on a balance sheet? Gord- yes. Deb- suggested the word “spent” be changed to “allocated to”? Danny – suggested the phrase “paid to” could also work.

Procurement website address

Tom – read out action item on pg 5 of minutes. Gord – showed on pg 104 of the SFM plan text where

the AFA procurement website address was inserted. As an added feature the address is hyperlinked right to the AFA website.

Level of Maintenance of Forest Access Roads

Old indicator (user days) was not a good indicator. A new target was drafted to replace old one. Danny – on east side of the Park there is an agreement between Ontario Parks and AFA to maintain public roads for park visitors. Road maintenance is kept up until Thanksgiving weekend. Joe – remove “annual” because agreement can vary from one to five years.

Danny – did the wording on the interior park user logging complaint form get changed? Joe- no, the wording did not change. Joe – refreshed the discussion on the topic covered off at an earlier meeting. Ontario Parks (OP) does not want to be going through the database every year and maintaining the stats. Those complaints directly related to logging are forwarded to AFA through other means. Gord – explained the intent and the system in place to handle complaints. Suggestions from the Advisory Group to change the OP’s form and tracking system are directed to OP, not AFA. Concerns still exist over the title of the form “Forest Management-Recreational Experience Comment Form”.

Nathan – allowing one complaint is very low given the level of recreational use in Algonquin Park and could be setting up AFA for failure? Bob M- sometimes the complaints are related to road maintenance. The roads are too dusty, too rough. Joe – suggested that the variance of 1 is too strict. Should be realistic and set number to 10? Danny agreed. Steve – let’s look at setting variance for substantial complaints with logging activities. Tom C.– does the Group want to change the word “complaint”? Lacey – leave it the way it is? Steve – suggested to change the word “documented” to “substantiated”. Deb – agree with Lacey to leave the wording. Barry – define the word substantial? - prefer to leave wording as is. Steve – agree to leave documented. Joe – better to have a number than percentage? Barry – sought clarification about the target and variance of public complaints, and suggested that the variance be 5 but not 10. Gord- agreed with 5.

Group agreed to change the variance from one to five logging complaints/year.

Evidence to Diversify Local Forest Based Economy

Tom C.- Pg. 11 of VOIT Matrix. Gord – clarified and explained the intent of the wording, and how it will be tracked. Anne – suggested adding the word “of” to the target.

Level of Involvement and Positive Working Relationship with Algonquins

Gord – added to target: “Continue working towards a positive working relationship to help resolve Algonquin community/AFA issues”. Gord – showed pictures of the harvest of birch bark to build a canoe from last summer.

Advisory Group Satisfaction Summary

Tom C. – Action on Pg. 7 of last meetings minutes - Group was asked to provide feedback through a satisfaction survey. Gord –Element 6.4 was reviewed and the results from the survey were visited with the group and the overall satisfaction score was 9 out of 10.

Logging museum visitor numbers were added to VOIT 6.5.1.1.1 – 42,000 visitors attend the museum/year, 950 on loggers day. Terry – the level of attendance all depends on weather.

AFA Website

Danny – discussed how AFA is going to move forward with changes. Comments made by the Advisory Group were shared with AFA staff. Agree we need to improve. We have also sent an invitation to our staff for input. Currently going through the process of deciding what we are going to change and what we want to show. AFA's Information Supervisor has investigated software that can be used to improve. We need to decide on level of website maintenance we are prepared to dedicate resources. Lacey – thanks for considering.

Marketing

Gord – contacted QMI and received the marketing guidelines. We are using what we can on our SFM Plan, website etc. If we want to broaden the use there are charges/fees associated. We are going to look into it from a cost/benefit perspective.

Bob M. – McRae Lumber put the Ontario Wood symbol on chip trucks. Bud – what is certification to the public? They don't know or do not have a clue? Tom C. – I agree we are not good salespeople at selling certification, you are right to some degree the public may not have a clue, but corporations like Home Depot do. Dana- it is assumed now that all wood is certified. Bud – the lowest price wins over the customer, not the certification. Terry- if people are committed to sustainability people will buy accordingly.

Lacey – if you use the slogans like “local” or “sustainable managed forest” it is more relatable to the local consumer than “certified”. Bob M. – the Lacey Act being focused on more closely in the States requires the sale of legal wood. Tom C.– Chain of Custody audits challenges claims made by companies by tracing the origin of wood back to the stump. Challenge those that you suspect are making false claims and reputable companies will provide the proof and trace back products to the forest. Bud – I see it is very appropriate for Algonquin Park forest. Gord – I agree we need it for social license.

Broad Public Consultation

Tom C.– presented the Broad Public Consultation survey results which is now included as an appendix of the SFM Plan. Only 11 respondents, this number is down compared to survey conducted in 2007. It is a small sample and difficult to extrapolate or draw meaningful conclusions. Tom C. – it can be hard to solicit feedback from surveys.

Barry – maybe the survey was too daunting? Maybe people found that the survey terminology too difficult? Maybe suggest marketing it more aggressively? Gord – during one of the first meetings the survey template was shared with the Advisory Group for input prior to making it available and comments were addressed. Lacey – society may be over consulted? Deb – if there were more respondents, it would be interesting to compare results between those that are residents and those that are non-residents? Deb – maybe next time consider an incentive, draw for a weekend in Algonquin Park for example?

Tom C. – good point in conclusion that people did think certification is useful and important. Shaun – concluded that nothing new was learned from the broad public consultation to change or add to the VOIT Matrix. Barry- expressed his general opinion on the disconnect between rural and urban residents. Gord- we have tried our best to solicit public input.

The SFM Plan

Gord – reviewed sections of the Plan text with the Advisory Group; consultation requirements, performance requirements, and system requirements. Explained that the system requirements section

of the text was easily prepared with the help of having an Environmental Management System already in place. Many elements of the system AFA operates on a day to day basis and system requirements did not change much from the last standard. Gord has included more figures within the plan. There are many references to the 2010-2020 FMP within the SFM Plan - the FMP can be accessed online.

Appendices

Gord - There are a lot of appendices, a total of 274 pages. Gord reviewed the appendix of the plan with the Group in detail.

Lunch

Bob M. – may be a need for one pager on the importance of forestry in Algonquin Park. For example, the benefits of removing diseased trees, carbon storage, to trumpet and be proud of our success as a preamble to the Plan? After reading Ron Tozer’s book on birds, some species populations go up some go down but forest management is quite beneficial to bird populations. There is still need for an economical wood supply. The forest sector is going through hard times. Not enough attention is paid to the manufacturing sector in this Province. People like Frank McDougall used to come out and visit our businesses. Those in senior positions in government don’t seem to know what they are doing. The United States are going to use trade action and subsidies to do whatever they can to help their own economy? What are we doing? Dana – Bob’s son Jamie gave a great presentation on the importance of logging in Algonquin Park and how proud he is of the AFA forest certificate at the TEDx event. Deb – the biodiversity piece is important for society to understand - the connection between biodiversity and forest management. Tom C. – it could create added visibility and enhance the Plan to the reader and society. Gord will draft a preamble for the SFM Plan to capture this.

Round Table Discussion - Acceptance of the SFM Plan by the Advisory Group/General Agreement/Disagreement

Deb Cumming: Notes from meeting 2 say that the SFM needed to address the pre-sapling issue - suggested to make a stronger point for strategies in Plan text. Pre-sapling is an issue but not clear on how we are we going to make it better. Gord – pre-sapling condition is underrepresented in the SFMM model. There are some modeling issues here. Gord – can add more text to strategies explored to address the model. We are dealing with it operationally. Deb- the point that turtle habitat restrictions are compromising the growth of pine forest could be more strongly stated. In VOIT 2.2 forest ecosystem productivity - climate change and its effect on forest could be expanded upon. Try to make it clear that AFA does not control demand - better verb is “make available”. Deb – agrees with the plan.

Terry Mullin – need to ensure we have realistic targets and not ones that are beyond our control - I agree with the plan.

Tom Ballantine – VOIT 1.4.2.1.1 - there is a disconnect between the plan and the matrix variance level.
Tom B.- agreed to retain the -5% variance now that I understand the methodology. Agrees with the plan.

Bud – this forest certification process is applicable for Algonquin Park and I support it.

Barry Bridgeford – few changes to text were proposed with respect to backcountry recreation VOIT. After the text upload harvest map, would like to add “annual” and “seasonal updates when possible”?

Gord – I can add wording to accommodate. Barry- agrees with the plan.

Irvin Yateman - what you are going to write down to reference other communities? Danny- will explain that we're not excluding other communities. Deb- suggested one good sentence to acknowledge that Algonquin's of Ontario have prime interest and 2nd sentence indicating that we are not excluding others.

Emmett Godin – does anyone know the mileage marker on Hwy 60 where the land claim boundary is located? Dan K. – near Tea Lake. Irv – thought it was water shed boundary, wherever that is.

Shari Sokay - is concerned over the low level of pre-sapling stage on the land base - concurred with Deb on this. Agrees with the plan.

Dana Shaw - impressed when I look around the table at all the stakeholders and how everyone has worked together. We have demonstrated the level of work that is done to protect values. Clients value the Park also, and are interested in economical wood products. Protecting values means restrictions. Loggers respect restrictions. Some people do not have an interest in logging in the Park. Every 5 years more restrictions are added until wood supply becomes uneconomical – recently LTF, then SAR..... Protection should be based on science. Seasonal restrictions are difficult to manage - construction and usage during times when you only have a narrow window of stands we can go to. Wood gets expensive and specialty product volume is reduced. Government is not showing they are here to help.

Lacey Rose – our advice was taken and incorporated in the Plan. The FMP process covers most of the performance requirements. Same concerns as Dana – the park is overprotected - but we are here and the Algonquin Park wood basket is important. We can't change items that are really affecting the economics. Try to market your hard work here though some of the suggestions brought fourth. Emmett- will there be a press release of the AFA award? Gord – we are just waiting for the photo.

Joe Yaraskavitch – good work overall. This is a bit of a duplicate process after going through and preparing the FMP. Good linkages to the FMP. Happy to be part of a good committee and agrees with the plan.

Anne Mundy - nothing else really to add. Very impressed with the document and agrees with the plan.

Steve D'eon - speaking from science group - silviculture is based on science. Some of the wildlife stuff is not science based to the level needed. Salted sand is another example of decisions with no science. Big picture VOITs (i.e. the biodiversity VOITS) are good. Should add some detail on exotic forest pests - beech bark disease is looming. Study needed to know level of mast production as composition of beech is reduced. Reemphasized to the Group that **All** of us are responsible to actively promote the Sustainable Forest Management Status of Algonquin Park and the associated benefits. Agrees with the plan.

Nathan Mieske- I agree with the plan.

Dan Kohoko- we are not opposed to the SFM Plan. We are looking for some significant economic opportunity. We will provide input and some suggested wording for the SFM Plan related to carbon credits. Agrees and supports the plan.

Bill Warren (ABR Alternate)– impressed on how far you have come through these meetings.

Tom C. – summarized by suggesting we have achieved consensus amongst members to move forward with the SFM Plan - with edits brought forward. Gord- need to finalize the SFM plan by the 19th in time for the Internal Audit. Tom C.– changes made will be sent to all as a Final Plan.

Update of Roads Report - Joe

Joe provided an update on the FP Innovations independent roads review. Two interested parties had concerns about roads during the FMP process which resulted in a commitment to conduct this review. The draft report has been completed and presented to the Algonquin's and LCC. General comments back from the consultants indicate that road management/aggregate standards and practices in Algonquin Park are good but there will be some recommendations. Bob M- recognize that we have to go around values - but using old roads makes sense and uses less aggregate. Continue to use old roads. Industry cannot bear more costs to continually move/re-align roads. Gord – FP Innovations is a reputable organization and agree it is a good news story. Danny- it will be a public document once finalized.

Lighten the Footprint - Joe

We are in stage two consultation of the Park Management Plan amendment wording regarding the proposed new mapping and zoning. 82 public submissions have been received to date. Comments were polarized – for and against the proposal. Comments will be analyzed and summarized and sent to Ministers office. Figure 1 in appendix C of the Joint Board Report– shows the area currently available for forestry = 55%. This LTF proposal will drop it to 51%. Steve – with so few complaints about logging, why do we need bigger reserves? Dana – a socio-economic study is needed to complement the document – analyzed at the product level (not just total volume). Danny- the AFA Board has three issues with the proposed amendment: 1) LTF was implemented before SAR legislation was implemented, 2) some of the wording in the amendment proposal is not consistent with the Joint Board Report that was accepted by the Minister and, 3) The potential impacts on the FMP strategic direction and CSA SFM Plan. Ontario Parks is aware and the Minister is aware of AFA's concerns.

Canadian Forest Management Group Achievement Award - Gord

Gord – shared highlights of the CIF Awards banquet. This award, presented to AFA by the Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF) at the 2012 National Awards Banquet in Quebec City on September 19th, recognizes groups or teams who have made significant, unique, and outstanding contributions to forest management in Canada. It appreciates the interdisciplinary nature of forest ecosystem management by recognizing the many groups that are required to come together in the process. The award has the objective of encouraging excellence in leadership in group contributions to Canadian forest management.

When receiving this award Danny commented: “Conducting forest management in Algonquin Provincial Park is a unique and challenging environment, and would not be possible without the dedicated and skilled team of woodworkers, AFA staff, public advisory groups and Board members that have contributed so much over the years”.



Proposed Plantation Thinning in Development Zones - Joe

Joe advised that four areas of red pine along Hwy 60 and one near Basin are in need of a light thinning – in development zone – Class Environmental Assessment for Parks is required – there will be public consultation process – work would be done in the winter – not sure if it will happen this year or next. The thinning is primarily needed for the promotion of natural regeneration in the understory. We are going to present this work to the public and not leave buffers so public can see. It was suggested that this is a good opportunity to put up some signs and educated the public – especially adjacent to the logging museum.

2011-12 Annual Report

Meet back in February to review.

Adjourn

Danny- thank you to everyone in the room, to all the time devoted to this important initiative. Thanked Tom C. for keeping these meetings on track and Gord for all the work and commitment to prepare the new SFM Plan and Reports.