

Meeting Notes
Public Advisory Group (PAG), Prince Albert Timber Supply Area (PA TSA)
November 9, 2021
 Teams Meeting

Participants

Interest Category	Organization	Name
1_Environment & Wildlife	Canadian Parks & Wilderness Society (CPAWS)	Gord Vaadeland
1_Environment & Wildlife	Ducks Unlimited Canada	Mark Kornder
1_Environment & Wildlife	Prince Albert Model Forest	Peter Friedrichsen
2_Indigenous Interests	LLRIB Traditional Lands & Resources	Jeanine Patterson
2_Indigenous Interests	LLRIB Traditional Lands & Resources	Sam Roberts
3_Municipalities and Communities	City of Prince Albert	Don Cody
3_Municipalities and Communities	District of Lakeland No. 521	Treena McAlpine
6_Recreation & Tourism	Saskatchewan Snowmobilers Association	Leah Switzer
12_Government. Advisors & Resource People	Ministry of Environment, Forest Service Branch	Bill Thibeault
12_Government. Advisors & Resource People	Ministry of Environment, Forest Service Branch	Sarah Schmid
12_Government. Advisors & Resource People	Tolko Industries Ltd. (Sakaw Shareholder)	Michelle Young
12_Government. Advisors & Resource People	NorSask Forest Products (Sakaw Shareholder)	Robert Follett
12_Government. Advisors & Resource People	Meadow Lake Mechanical Pulp (Sakaw Shareholder)	Taneal Brucks
12_Government. Advisors & Resource People	BBNR Management Solutions, Facilitator	Carl Neggers
12_Government. Advisors & Resource People	Sakaw Askiy	Diane Roddy Michelle Thompson

Meeting Convened at 1:33 pm

Introductions: Attendance was reviewed by Carl Neggers, meeting facilitator. People introduced themselves and who they are with.

Review Key Elements of PAG Terms of Reference: Carl outlined the general responsibilities of PAG members, decision making process, logging of concerns and transparency of meeting summaries.

Review of Agenda

Previous Notes and Action Items

Meeting Notes and Meeting Brief from October 14, 2020 meeting

- Both documents are good information. The 1-page Brief is good to have.
- Key follow up was reviewed regarding concerns related to forest management planning and the

hydrology of specific locations. After the last PAG meeting there was correspondence with Forest Services to discuss. Result is that a strategy around hydrology will be considered in the upcoming review of the Forest Management Planning Standard.

Update on FMP Amendment 2: Adapt to Caribou Range Plan. (email sent to PAG on May 13, 2021)

- CPAWS sent a letter to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) expressing concerns with the FMP amendment process. Specifically, it is felt the province was more supportive of forest industry concerns than caribou habitat requirements, and this will make it difficult to achieve the caribou habitat targets.
- The map of caribou habitat areas in the PA TSA was shown, and the strategy for maintaining a mosaic of good habitat areas across the landscape and over time was described.

Updates

Announcements of new wood allocations

- New wood allocations in the PA TSA were announced for two potential new mills (Paper Excellence Prince Albert pulpmill and One Sky OSB mill) and expansions of the Dunkley and Carrier sawmills. An updated map of Timber Supply Areas in the commercial and fringe forest zones was shown.
- More specific information is sought by CPAWS about the additional impact of the new allocations in the PA TSA. Specifically, will the harvest footprint be larger? Much of the new allocations are for small wood and hardwood that is currently underused, and there should be better utilization of the trees harvested. Until the mills are actually announced and commissioned it is difficult to determine the specific harvest impacts.

Further explanation added during review of the meeting notes: *Harvest footprint will be larger, however the FMP accounted for the harvest volume. These volumes aren't additional to the calculated AAC – just allocated to different / new companies. The footprint modeled in the FMP accounted for this.*

Development of 2022/23 Operating Plan

- Radio, newspaper, online news sites, Facebook, letters and emails were used in communicating opportunities to review the draft Operating Plans for next year.
- Draft maps are available online at www.sakaw.ca

FMP 2021 Annual Report (on the 2019-2020 Operating Year)

Forest management is based on a Sustainable Management Model which includes consideration of Environmental, Social, and Economic factors in the forest area. Forest management strategies have been developed under those categories, and indicators and targets (gauges) have been set for them. Progress in meeting those targets is monitored year over year and reported on in FMP Annual Reports. Experience in compiling the Annual Report is showing that “What gets measured, gets managed”.

A range of indicators thought to be of interest to PAG members was selected, from a total 33, to be highlighted during this meeting. People were asked to bring forward any others they were interested in hearing about, now or after the meeting. Indicators discussed included:

Environmental Indicators

Harvest Event Sizes (Indicator 3)

- Harvesting strategies are aimed at approximating the patterns and structure of forest stands and landscapes created by natural disturbances. The size of harvest events is smaller than the established targets. It will take years to reach the targeted sizes, reducing fragmentation.

Cover Species Groups (CSGs) Harvested and Predicted (Indicator 6)

- Results from Free To Grow surveys at 14 years after harvest are being used to see that, over the landscape, the forest mix regenerating is the same as the mix that was harvested. High resolution aerial photos are used for surveying the new forest and where an area doesn't appear to meet target from above, it is also surveyed on the ground. This target is off track and at this point more mixedwood stands appear to be coming back than what was harvested. This may be because the table used for predicting the makeup of future forests, based on the regeneration at 14 years, is not accurate. More than two years data is also required, and Sakaw is keeping an eye on this Indicator.
- Data from areas harvested under previous companies is being used for this Indicator, because there are no areas harvested under Sakaw that are 14 years old yet.
- Concern was expressed about measuring other biodiversity within harvested areas. Specifically, how can we include the accounting of other species, not just trees, when assessing harvest areas and habitat protection? It was suggested that additional testing methods should be considered in the future towards including other biodiversity in long term forest management planning.
- It is very difficult to count everything. So a "course filter approach" to maintaining biological diversity is used, where all types and ages of forests that occur naturally are maintained to support the full range of species and ecological processes. A "fine filter approach" is also used for species at risk (such as woodland caribou).

Planted Seedlings from Wild or Improved Seed lots (Indicator 8)

- One member noted that in several softwood (pine) and mixed wood harvest areas stands that have not been planted are not producing new seedlings. Weyerhaeuser planted the pine, and tree planting employed a lot of people in the north.
- Today pine stands are usually not planted, but rather scarification is used to take advantage of the seed left on site. Scarification breaks up the branches to assist the cones in getting closer to the ground, so they open with normal environmental elements. It also exposes mineral soil for the seeds to land on and germinate. Experience shared by an industry member involved in forest renewal is that it is very rare that pine that does not come back after scarification, and that with scarification it takes a little longer to see the reforestation results.
- It was agreed that a site visit to examine these concerns would be helpful in more fully understanding what can be considered and should potentially be done.

Caribou Habitat (Indicator 7c)

Stand Replacing Natural Disturbances (Indicator 11)

- Natural disturbances have been most influential force on the landscape, and harvesting plans look to approximate the natural patterns and structure of the forest.
- It was suggested the industry needs to invest more in wildfire suppression. Wildfires are a provincial responsibility, but industry is bearing some costs anyway. Mistik paid for manpower and contractor equipment to protect communities this summer when provincial resources were tied up elsewhere.

Harvested vs. Estimated (Yield Curve) Volumes (Indicator 13)

- Harvest volumes predicted by the wood supply model were very accurate at the landscape level for the entire forest area.

Compliance Indicators

- The Forest Service is continually out in the field inspecting harvest blocks for compliance with standards. Non-compliances result in actions aimed at awareness, education and remedying the situation, or penalties are issued.
- In 2019-20 performance improved in meeting the standards for:
 - Soil Disturbance (Indicator 16)
 - Road Reclamation (Indicator 17)
 - Watercourse Crossings (Indicator 18)
 - Riparian Management Areas (Indicator 19)

Social Indicators

Stakeholder /Public Engagement (Indicator 22)

Non-Timber Resources and Forest Uses (Indicator 23)

Harvest Distribution By Planning Areas and Species Grouping (Indicator 24)

Indigenous Communities Review of Operations/Strategic Plans (Indicator 25)

Culturally Significant Indigenous Sites (Indicator 26)

- Indigenous sites are tracked and protected

Economic Indicators

Actual Harvest vs Approved Volumes (Indicator 21)

- Harvest levels increased to 66% of the allowable cut. Concern was expressed about the impact (footprint) of the wood allocations for new industry above that of the existing allocations within the PA TSA. This is related to an earlier point, and it was stressed that this needs to be addressed in future planning discussions.

Economic Contribution of the Forest Industry (Indicator 28)

- With the increase in harvest levels (to 66% of full in 2019-20) there was a corresponding increase in contributions to the provincial economy (GDP, jobs, labour income, taxes).

Meeting Summary and General Comments

Meeting Notes have been recorded including member concerns and follow up. A Meeting Brief will also be developed and shared with members.

General member comments included:

- The impact carbon pricing will have on forest management should be considered. On one hand, under government programs other industries are paying for the forest not to be harvested, to offset the carbon they produce (carbon offsets). On the other hand, the government is implementing plans to grow the forest industry.
- Gord Vaadeland indicated that he appreciates being the PAG representative but is open to being replaced if another member is interested. As a representative of both the PAG and CPAWS he has received the most comments or concerns from the Big River area, south of Candle Lake and south of La Ronge (including concern over peat expansion).
- The PAMF has also received concerns from field technicians in those areas doing caribou habitat monitoring work.
- Sakaw requested feedback on the meeting structure and information presented. Taneal Brucks noted (by email, as she couldn't be heard) the meeting was very informative and it's helpful going through the indicators. Members can also reflect and share their insights post meeting.

Next Meeting: A field visit in the spring / summer to look at the regeneration on harvested sites.

Meeting Adjourned 3:30 pm