

Southwest Island Public Advisory Group (SIPAG) Meeting Minutes

1. Call to order

Chris Harvey, Environmental Programs Advisor, welcomed members of the Southwest Island Public Advisory Group at the Shaker Mill Restaurant in Lake Cowichan on the 24th of February at 4:30.

2. Members

Present:

- Kirstin Campbell, Terra Tree Forestry
- Pat Weaver, CL Community Forest Co-op
- Tom Jones, Pacheedaht First Nations
- Jayne Ingram, Lake Cowichan Town Council
- Dennis Martel, Wilderness Watch Committee
- Sandy Peters, Valley Fish & Game Club
- Vince Callander, Local Business
- Jim Humphrey, Chamber of Commerce

Support:

- Mark Carter, TJG Operations Planner
- Chris Harvey, Environmental Programs Advisor

Regrets:

- Rob Brouwer, DFO
- Jack Smith, Lake Cowichan First Nation
- George Williams, Ditidaht Band
- Tim McGonigle, TFL 46 Worker
- Larry George, Cowichan Tribe

3. Documents Distributed to Members:

1. Southwest Island Meeting #24 Agenda
2. Draft Meeting Minutes for November 18th, 2009 (#23) meeting
3. Handouts for power point presentation (slides and indicators)
4. Discussion Items for Ecosystem Condition & Productivity and Sustainable Forest Management (homework booklet)
5. SFMP core indicators -overview

Documents available:

6. SFM Plan
7. CSA Sustainable Forest Management Standard Z809-08
8. Appendix 2C (draft)
9. Terms of Reference
10. Surveillance Audit November 2009 Reports (SFM and CoC)
11. Corporate Tracker

4. Introductions/ Review Membership

Chris confirmed if all members knew each other well enough to skip the introductions? Jayne and Tom introduced themselves. Chris noted that Willi from DFO may be able attend this meeting and if she arrives we can do introductions at that time.

Chris also noted that at the last meeting Jim suggested the area director or Chamber President from Port Hunt Band management, however neither she nor Mark had heard of them? No other members had heard of them. Chris will follow up with Jim.

5. Previous Meeting Minutes

Chris referred to the draft meeting minutes for the November 18th, 2009 meeting. The overall purpose and discussion of the meeting (Biodiversity) was reviewed. Chris reviewed each of the action items and the status. The Corporate Tracking System for SIPAG Tasks, including a list of the outstanding and completed action items was also available. Chris asked the group to put forward any revisions to the meeting minutes? No changes were put forward.

Action Item #24-1: finalize meeting minutes, post on the internet

Environmental Department June 30th, 2010 (or next meeting)

6. Current Events/ Management Issues

External Audit (November 24-27 2009)

Pat summarized her field trip with the QMI auditors in November:

- It was very rainy
- Auditor honed in on environmental issues,
- Despite high rainfall she noted many improvements to roads and bridges (culverts)

Chris reviewed the External Audit Report, highlighting those interviews and findings that are applicable to SIPAG and the SFMP:

- the audit was a 12 month "Surveillance Audit". Audits rotate from Honeymoon Bay Operation to Fraser each year. The Audit targeted Teal's Honeymoon Bay forest operation this year. Teal passed the audit with 1 non-conformance identified. Also 5 "Areas of Concern" and 7 "Recommendations" were noted.
- Teal's certification has four parts: Public Participation, Performance of SFMP, Systems (i.e. Corporate Management System), and Chain of Custody (i.e., tracking certified forest products).
- Letters were sent out on behalf of the Auditor to each First Nation associated with the Defined Forest Area (DFA), including First Nations participating in the Fraser PAG. A number of First Nations were interviewed.
- Two members of South Island Public Advisory Group (SIPAG) were interviewed. Three Members of the Fraser PAG wished to be interviewed but were unable. The 3 FPAG Members send their comments to the Auditor in a letter regarding their concerns about the change in interview times.
- The Auditors interviewed the Ministry of Forests' Compliance and Enforcement regarding Teal. Positive aspects identified by the Auditor include: excellent road maintenance, a good relationship with the Pacheedaht FN and a very good Compliance Record, the meeting minutes note documents distributed at each meeting, and SIPAG had a meeting in the Pacheedaht FN community.

- The Non-conformance was attributed to the Sustainable Forest Management Plan (SFMP) regarding the “Alternative Strategies” for Indicators have not been adequately documented (in the past alternative strategies were only recorded in the meeting minutes). The Auditor wants to see them in the SFMP. Teal had 30 days to address the Non-Conformance before the Registrar would determine if Teal’s Registration would ‘continue’. Teal addressed the Non-Conformance within the time-frame and the next edition of the SFMP will have an Appendix 4 that will summarize the Alternatives discussed during Indicator development at the PAG meetings.
- There were 5 Areas of Concern, one of which is related to the SFMP. The Auditor was concerned that some of the Targets in the SFMP that said “The Target is the forecast”. Tom asked for clarification of the forecast? Chris gave some examples from the SFMP
- A summary of the 2009 Surveillance Audit will be put on the web.

7. Core Indicator Overview

Chris highlighted the “Core Indicator” document. This is a list of CSA’s Core Indicators gives a general outline of the subjects we will be discussing over upcoming meetings. We will discuss Criterion 3 Soil and Water at the next meeting this spring and then skip ahead to Criterion 6 Society’s Responsibilities in the fall of 2010.

8. Presentation Ecosystem

Chris pointed out the PowerPoint slide notes in the meeting handouts for Ecosystem Condition & Productivity (Criterion 2) and projected it on the screen (she noted that homework (“Ecosystem Discussion Items”) on these topics was sent to Members in early February). The slide presentation addressed the Ecosystem discussion topics including:

- Element 2.1 Forest Ecosystem Resilience
- Allowable Annual Cut (AAC)
- Timber Supply Review process
- Climate Change trends (temperatures, potential impacts, species shifts, fire risk, adaptations)
- Forest management & climate change mitigation
- Potential effects of a warmer climate
- Element 2.2 Forest Ecosystem Productivity
- Potential ways to influence carbon storage
- Trends in Natural & Human Disturbance
- Emergency Planning
- Biomass utilization/ Forest Salvage Harvesting
- Proportion of naturally disturbed area that is not salvage harvested

The following is a summary of some of the discussions:

- Jayne noted that she has seen a lot of blowdown along streams, why don’t they make the leave strips bigger? Sandy noted the same on roadside strips. Vince responded that even if the leave strips are larger there are always going to be edges which are vulnerable to windthrow. Sandy asked could they do pruning? Mark noted that they do helipruning to reduce windthrow hazard. He also noted that not all windthrow is bad (for example they just added debris to the Harris for habitat improvement). Tom noted the Pacheedaht First Nations have concerns with leaving trees along the edge of slopes as they are very vulnerable to windthrow and can create excess sediment inputs into the waterbodies.

- Mark noted that the Timber Supply Review (TSR 3) is planned to be completed by the end of the year. He just received a preliminary report. He does not expect any significant changes to the allowable annual cut. Vince asked how the cut control regulations work now, is there more flexibility, are you allowed to carry over? Mark noted that you can now undercut up to 10% without penalty, however you cannot carry over the uncut portion to the next cut control period. In theory they could award that portion of uncut volume to someone else. Mark explained the cut control regulations in more detail.
- Tom asked if there is any flexibility in stocking standards to allow for some 'insurance' by planting species that are more adapted to warmer climates? Chris noted that Teal had not considered that strategy in their stocking standards and she had not yet heard of anyone who had amended their stocking standards for that reason. Kirstin noted that the provincial government is currently developing standards for seed transfer to address potential climate change. Tom noted it is a cheap insurance policy.
- Dennis asked if anyone knew the maximum summer temperature the mountain pine beetle could withstand? Nobody knew the answer.
- Jayne asked if after a forest fire is there a time limit for reforestation? Mark said it depends who caused the fire and where it burned. For example, in an escape fire through a plantation the original regeneration requirements would apply. Tom noted that in wildfire through matures forests there are no stocking standards. Chris also noted that reforestation of those types of sites can be real challenges due to safety (i.e., dead standing snags are common). Salvage opportunities are explored. Also biodiversity considerations – may make good habitat.

New Core Indicators

Chris pointed out the Indicators reviewed from this presentation are drafts for those core Indicators required by the new CSA Standard. They are developed by Teal for discussion purposes. She reminded the group that CSA provides the Indicator statements (e.g. 3 Core Indicators for Criterion 2) and the PAGs develop the Value, Objective, and Target. Since the Core Indicators are new, there are no existing examples to review. Wherever possible existing indicators were used (reworded and will be reviewed with the group). Chris also noted that Fraser PAG has approved the following three core indicators. The following is a summary of some of the discussion regarding core indicators

C2.1.1 Reforestation Success

- This indicator was developed by combining two existing indicators: H2-1 Successful Regeneration (originally developed by SIPAG); and F2-3 Successful Regeneration (originally developed by FPAG). The wording is almost exact to the original indicator
- Kirstin confirmed – you can't reword the indicator? Chris said no that is the only thing we cannot change, we must be consistent with the CSA core indicators provided in the standard. Kirstin asked at what age regeneration was assessed and noted her concerns that the forest was not established at that point. Chris noted this was a very good point – regeneration is established generally within 3 years of harvesting commencement, potentially it could be assessed the day after planting. She pointed out that indicator H2-2 Stand Establishment addressed those concerns (Free Growing assessment is generally at 12-15years). Tom confirmed that once that stand is established at that age, nothing is going to stop them.
- Jayne noted that this indicator only addresses disturbance from harvesting, not natural disturbances. Tom noted that within the TFL (the Honeymoon Bay portion of the DFA) it was to Teal's best advantage to retain as much growing sites as possible as they are the ones who's annual cut would be reduced if there was no reforestation of natural disturbances. He noted that in the Fraser Forest Licence the motivation is not the same as the annual cut is distributed amongst

licencees. The group discussed road disturbances and rehabilitation. Tom wondered if the same disturbance in the TFL would be treated differently in the FL for those reasons mentioned. Mark noted that Teal must be careful what they commit to with respect to natural disturbances as they generally are considered on an individual basis. Chris flagged this topic for further discussion and noted that there is another proposed indicator with respect to Natural versus human caused disturbances that will be presented later in the meeting.

- All PAG members present approved the following Value, Objective, Indicator, Target and Variance that will be added to the SFM plan:

Value	Objective	Indicator	Target	Acceptable Variance
Regeneration of harvested areas	Successful regeneration of harvested areas	Reforestation Success	Full compliance with regeneration delay requirements in approved stocking standards	Zero

C2.2.1 Additions and Deletions to the Forest Area

- This indicator was developed by combining two existing indicators: H4-3 Conversion of Forest Lands (originally developed by SIPAG); and F4-7 Conversion of Forest Lands (originally developed by FPAG). The wording is most similar to the original indicator developed by SIPAG with the target and indicator wording adjusted to fit the core indicator model.
- Chris noted that Teal is normally given a chance to review proposals, however they do not have the 'responsibility' to approve or reject. It is however in their best interests to maintain the current forest area. She also gave the CSA definition of afforestation and noted that it does not apply as it is not a common practice in this area of the world (for example Ireland is currently doing a lot of afforestation of mountain meadows.)
- Tom asked when does Teal normally find out about these proposals? Mark noted that the government is in charge of stakeholder consultation. In some cases whenever they want. Tom asked Mark if he was aware of the SUP (mining mineral claim) above the Harris Creek (some group out of Port Renfrew). Pacheedaht First Nation was told that Teal had agreed to the proposal. Mark noted that they had not received the proposal and did not provide input.
- All PAG members present approved the following Value, Objective, Indicator, Target and Variance that will be added to the SFM plan:

Value	Objective	Indicator	Target	Acceptable Variance
Minimize loss productive area	Minimize conversion of forests to non-forest uses	Additions and deletions to the forest area	Evaluate and respond to 100% of all formal proposals for conversion of forested lands to non-forest uses	Zero

C2.2.2 Proportion of the calculated long-term sustainable harvest level that is actually harvested

- This indicator was developed by rewording the existing indicator: H5-1 Annual Harvest Levels (originally developed by SIPAG). The wording of the variance was simplified in order to be current with the legislation. Fraser PAG did not have any similar indicators but they decided to sign onto this indicator going forward.
- Chris reminded the group of the discussion earlier with regards to the Forest Act Cut Control Regulations. Tom asked if Teal would ever deliberately undercut? Mark replied yes, if they are

loosing their shirt logging. In fact if the current economic conditions continue it would be possible to have an undercut. Tom asked if Teal has a projection? Mark noted that they are currently in their 3rd year of the cut therefore they have plenty of time to make up in the next few years. Pat noted that the Lake Cowichan Forest Co-op is in their 5th year so they have to cut. Mark disagreed and explained the cut control regulations again: the Co-op's cut would not be reduced if they undercut their allowable, however they would not be able to carry forward any uncut portion of the allowable cut from the previous cut control period.

- Tom suggested that we add 'subject to finances'. Chris noted that the forecast would be an appropriate place to add that comment. Tom said he thought the government doesn't allow for financial reasons in rational to carry cuts forward, only things like stikes. Mark noted that was true but that is only if you are requesting to carry the cut forward, it is still up to the company to undercut.
- All PAG members present approved the following Value, Objective, Indicator, Target and Variance that will be added to the SFM plan:

Value	Objective	Indicator	Target	Acceptable Variance
Timber	Sustainable harvest levels	Proportion of the calculated long-term sustainable harvest level that is actually harvested	100% compliance with Allowable Annual Cut over Cut Control Period	As allowed under the Forest Act cut control rules

Chris noted that we would like to avoid too much back and forth between the PAGs for specific wording of the indicators, however there are two indicators that were approved at the SIPAG meeting in November and discussed at the Fraser PAG meeting earlier in February where the wording was changed slightly. The wording differences are not significant enough to make two separate indicators so she will present the new wording to SIPAG to see if it is compatible.

C1.1.3 Forest Area by Seral Stage or Age Class

- The changes to wording are in the target: instead of stating we would meet the targets of the draft Landscape Unit Plans it is changed to read meet the Non-Spatial Old Growth Order. Chris pointed out that this was a concern brought forward by Sandy in the original discussion, however in the TFL there is only one draft Landscape Unit Plan and it is well established. In the Fraser portion of the DFA there are several drafts in various states and Fraser PAG's concern was that once a draft changes, we are automatically out of compliance. The requirements of the Non-Spatial Old Growth Order is equivalent to the area in the draft Cowichan Landscape.
- All PAG members present approved the following Value, Objective, Indicator, Target and Variance that will be added to the SFM plan:

Value	Objective	Indicator	Target	Acceptable Variance
Ecosystem Biodiversity	Conserve Ecosystem diversity at the stand and landscape levels by maintaining a variety of communities and ecosystems that naturally occur in the DFA	Forest Area by seral stage or age class	Meet Old Growth Management Area representation by Landscape Unit (LU) as defined in legally established Landscape Unit Plans or the Non-Spatial Old Growth Order	Zero

C1.4.2 Protection of Identified Sacred and Culturally Important Sites

- The changes to wording are in the target: commits to spatially track all sites and implement management strategies appropriate to their long term maintenance. Mark noted that the wording in the Forest and Range Practices Act is ‘damage or render ineffective’ Tom asked what is a rare or unique site? Isn’t that leaving Teal a little exposed to media attention? Chris noted that it may be appropriate to define the process of determination of special sites.
- All PAG members present approved the following Value, Objective, Indicator, Target and Variance that will be added to the SFM plan:

Value	Objective	Indicator	Target	Acceptable Variance
Identified Sites	Manage rare or unique sites of ecological, geological, historical or cultural importance in a manner that recognizes their special qualities	Proportion of Identified Sites with Implemented Management Strategies	100% of identified sites within the DFA have implemented management strategies as per the approved Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP)	Zero

D2-1 Environmental Disturbance Events

Chris noted that there are currently 11 indicators under Criterion 2 within the SFMP that relate to ‘emergencies’ such as fire, wind, landslides and spills which relate to natural and human caused disturbances. Teal proposes to combine the 11 indicators into one indicator that may cover “Emergencies”. The reporting would continue to include all of the same information, however the number of indicators would be streamlined. The following is a draft indicator that was discussed:

Value	Objective	Indicator	Target	Acceptable Variance
<i>Healthy Forests</i>	<i>Minimize stress associated with harvesting</i>	<i>Number of Accidental industrial caused fires, catastrophic windthrow events, reportable spills and landslides in recently build roads or harvested areas</i>	<i>Zero</i>	<i>Two</i>

Ten of the eleven existing Indicators have a Target of zero and a variance of 2. For example, the Indicator for accidental fires (H2-3 Landslides) has a Target of zero and a Variance of 2 per year.

- Mark noted that in November 2006 there were quite a few landslides. Jayne asked if that was due to weather anomalies? Yes it was an extremely high precipitation year.
- The group agreed that there should be differentiation between natural and human caused events.
- Tom asked why the wording ‘accidental’ fire. Chris noted that commonly fires are started intentionally for pile burning and potentially fire could be used for site preparation.
- Jayne asked why the variance is 2? Is that consistent with the history? Mark noted that it was a reasonable number based upon local knowledge. Chris noted that we did not meet the target every year and in some cases the variance was exceeded as well. She suggested that it may be more appropriate to consider an average over 5 years; the group agreed.
- Kirstin asked if there was anyway we could look at the history to come up with reasonable targets? Chris noted that she could present a draft to members via email prior to the next PAG meeting.

Action Item 24-2: revise indicator D2-1 and send draft 2 to SIPAG for consideration prior to the next PAG meeting.

Environmental Department June 30th, 2010 (or next meeting)

9. Review Existing Indicators

Chris noted that there are a few existing indicators under Criterion 2 that should be reviewed and compared with similar indicators developed by Fraser PAG. However these must wait until the next meeting as it is 6:30.

10. Coarse Woody Debris Program

Chris presented the Coarse Woody Debris program and noted that the indicator developed last year called for an annual review of the program. She reviewed the action items and referred to those responsible and timelines.

Tom commented that he noticed one of the licencees was hoe chucking the debris piles 1 length away from the road. He presumed for economic reasons, however he saw it as a potential deterrent to lighting of the fires by vandals. He noted that Teal might consider this where terrain permits.

Jayne asked if Teal is interested in fibre supply to pellet plants. Mark said yes, however he cautioned it would be easier to make an economic case closer to town. Jayne noted that council has had several discussions about potential use of biomass; potential job creation.

11. Next Scheduled meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled in late May or early June depending on budget approvals, however members will be contacted to confirm. Discussion topics will be the third Criterion3 Soil and Water, homework packages will be distributed prior to the meeting. .

The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 p.m. Minutes recorded by Chris Harvey