



HIGH LEVEL FORESTS PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 06, 2005
5:00 p.m. @ NAIT College

Minutes

ATTENDANCE:

John Thurston, Chair
Mary Klassen
Susan McNeil
Chris Cottell
Aaron Doepel
Dwayne Wiltshire
Monty Moore

Marcel Lecoure
Mike Alsterlund
Peter Nicholson
Trent Larson
Henry Friesen
Marilee Toews
Robert Popowich

1. CALL TO ORDER

John Thurston, Chair of the High Level Forests PAC called the meeting to order at 5:25 pm.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

MOTION

Moved By Susan McNeil

That the agenda be accepted as presented

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES – July 05, 2005

MOTION

Moved By Mike Alsterlund

That the High Level Forests PAC meeting minutes of June 07, 2005 be accepted with the typing corrections made to item 8, it should read the Great Blue Herron

CARRIED

4. ISSUES AND CONCERNS

During a conversation with some concerned public members John Thurston was informed of some issues.

- There seems to be a lot of unprofessional use of the radios in trucks traveling the west road, some of it not even in English. The company responded by saying that there are rules for radio use and English only is one of them.
- Who decides when the roads are too bad for trucks to go out? The truck drivers are hesitating to be the first one to park their truck due to bad roads. Answer was that each driver can make the decision to stay in or it was suggested that if the driver does not want to make the call he could contact his foremen to make the call. Tolko/Footner does not make that call; it is up to each contractor to make that decision as there are the ones that are more aware of the road conditions.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Status of Forest Management in Alberta – CPAWS

Marcel reported that the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) released a status report on forest management planning in Alberta. The report, of which copies were distributed to the members of the committee, provided an overview of the major companies in Alberta and summarized their management activities.

5.2 EMS Internal Audits Results

During the week of August 22-25, both Footner Forest Products Ltd. And Tolko Industries Ltd. (HLLD) participated in an internal audit of their respective EMS (audit on the system portion of the CSA requirements only, not the performance aspect (ex. Wildlife, structure retention etc.). The audit was completed by an independent third-party auditor which is consistent with the requirements of the ISO 14001 standard.

- Previous internal and external (i.e. registration) audits have been evaluated to the 1996 version of the ISO standard.
- The objective of the audit was to determine implementation, maintenance, and continual improvement of the EMS and its conformity to ISO 14001:2004.

Since the Environmental Policies of both companies outline a commitment to communicate our environmental performance to both the public and stakeholders, the companies would like to share with you some of the findings.

Audit Summaries

- A number of improvements have been made to our respective systems including contractor manuals/booklets, as well as the implementation of more “user-friendly” forms for staff and foreman to communicate environmental-related issues or expectations.
- Staff and contractors are using current documents (maps, emergency numbers, manuals, etc.) and in the case of Footner, the woodlands staff have systematically planned and monitored their summer operations to avoid and/or reduce environmental impacts.

- There were a couple of non-conformances (not non-compliances!) identified which will be addressed in the immediate future.

5.3 Regional Open House

From September 6-16, a number of Open Houses will be held throughout the region to review some of our operational plans and long-term strategies and/or forecasts for managing the forest in the area. Newspaper ads as well as a newsletter posted in a recent edition of both The Echo & The Pioneer should hopefully increase attendance.

In the past it has always been a struggle to get people to show up for the open houses. Marcel passed around a copy of the brochure that was put in all the local newspapers in hope it would encourage people to attend.

It was suggested that perhaps the companies should look into having the events in two locations and coincide with some event that would be related to forestry in some way. Another suggestion was making some random phone calls. A full report on the community open house will be given at the October meeting.

5.4 Alberta Trappers Association

A letter was sent to Tolko from the Alberta Trappers Association with regards to the level of participation by trappers in our Public Advisory Committee. Since we have no participation on the current group Mary and John will put a letter together letting them know that we are indeed very interested in having a representative from the trapper community on our committee.

5.5. Public Advisory Group Correspondence

A letter was sent from the Weyerhaeuser Forest Advisory Committee to the CSA certification board expressing their non confidence in the whole CSA process. The committee felt that they were not equipped to decide on indicators and targets.

The PAC members involved in the Tolko/Footner CSA certification process felt that they had enough guidance from the different speakers that came in to clarify some issues for the group but recognized that there was room for improvement.

5.6 FFP GPS Truck Monitoring Program

A detailed presentation was given by Trent Larson explaining how the Truck Base monitoring system works. He fully explained how FFP and the contactors use the system to follow up on complaints, accident investigations, monitoring the cycle time and to continually improve trucking efficiencies and haul routes. He showed the group how the online system looks like and what type of information can be gathered by viewing the different maps and spread sheets. He stressed that if a truck driven has been found violating any of the rules and regulations a written warning is usually sufficient.

6 OLD BUSINESS

6.1 Question of the Month

The question of the month has been handed over to the High Level Forest Education Society.

6.2 Clipping Service (handouts)

Marcel handed out copies of newspaper clippings

6.3 Alberta Forest Service Salvage

A representative from Husky stated that while they do have an agreement with the mills to bring their salvage in he can't say that 100% of the woods gets there. If anyone should see decks of wood sitting out there he would appreciate a phone call and he will do what he can to get it in. He also stressed that there is a Canada wide shortage of trucks and they can not always find a truck that is available to bring the wood in. A representative from Winter Petro agreed that it is extremely difficult to find trucks to get their wood out and in some cases impossible. A self-loading truck is in high demand during the logging season. Both mills stated that the amount of wood that's does not make it in is minimal compared to what does get brought in. Tolko estimated that they took in about 25,000 cubic meters and Footner took in about 30 000.

After a brief discussion it was reiterated that it is in all three parties (Alberta Forests Service, the Oil and Gas Industry and the mills) best interest to get all the salvage brought in and the barrier to accomplishing this is the lack of and high demand of self-loading log trucks. An Alberta Forest Service representative stressed that all the wood, whether brought in or not is being paid for by the mills.

6.4 Flight Over Steen River

The purpose of this flight was to observe unburned piles, logging in the riparian areas and the regeneration and scarification process.

With regards to the riparian zone management, Mike reported that he was very impressed with the logging in the zone. This area was logged due to disease and was done so right to the edge of the Hay River leaving understory as well overstory Aspen while they removed the infected trees. Scarification was good and the trees looked healthy

With regards to the scarification; most of the trees were planted along the edge of the till which looked to be very effective. There did not seem to be any ill effects of the overstory of young poplar.

With regards to the unburned debris piles, it appears that some piles never did burn for whatever reason. Marcel said that they will try burning piles again and give the PAC an update later in the year. Ideally they do want the pile to burn 100% but if 50% of it is burned it is considered a success.

6.5 Salvage

Nothing left to Discuss

7. CORRESPONDANCE

7.1 Northern Lights Forest Education Society

John reported that the society has put together a workshop for teachers to be held on September 23rd that includes a ½ day field trip and a tour of the Tolko mill. They usually have about 12 teachers attend and so far the response has always been positive.

7.2 General Development Plan

Peter Nicholson will give a presentation on the General Development Plan, which has now been approved by ASRD at the next PAC meeting.

7.3 News Articles

Marilee passed around some articles on disease found in the deer and an article on the bird counts in Alberta

8 AROUND THE TABLE

John– Would like to thank the companies for trying to put together a field trip
- Commented that a lot of people did not get a chance to see the video (Alberta - A Centennial Forest History) and suggested that we show it at the next PAC meeting.

Marcel – Had a meeting with Helene Walsh of CPAWS and wanted the PAC to know that she has commented on what a dedicated group it is, and that the companies are doing a good job of identifying issues and dealing with them.

Marilee – Just commented that her mail box is full of flyers and magazines with all kinds of environmental issues it seems that forestry is a hot topic everywhere.

Mike- Would like to see everyone out on the Rocky Lane ski trails for the Terry Fox run on the 18th at 1:00 pm

- Also asked Peter for an update on the Summer Work program

NEXT MEETING – October 04, 2005 @ 5:00 pm at the Fairview College

9 ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned @ 7:26 pm