

Nipissing Forest LCC Minutes of Meeting March 15, 2007

In Attendance:

Tim Toeppner	Lorie Reed	James Anderson
Dave Minden	John Matthews	Heinz Erb
Brennain Lloyd	Ric Hansel	Dave Joanisse
Randy Morrison (MNR)	John McNutt	Kathy Hansel (recorder)
Guylaine Thauvette (MNR)	Roy Summers	

Regrets: Frank Tagliamonte
Jan Vandermeer

Absent: Albert Cloet
Jeff Latimer

Andy Straughan
Dennis Larocque

Guests: Dave Fluri (MNR)
Scott Kaufman (MNR)

Melanie Alkins (MNR)

Rebecca Burns (MNR)

The chair (Tim Toeppner) called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

Introduction of Guests:

Dave Fluri, Nipissing Area Management Biologist, will be on temporary leave working for OPSEU
Rebecca Burns, A/Nipissing Area Management Biologist, filling in for Dave Fluri
Melanie Alkins, A/Planning Biologist, working on both Nipissing and Temagami FMPs
Scott Kaufman, A/Large Lake Biologist, previously worked with the Freshwater Ecology Unit

Announcements:

- Bill Steer has resigned from the LCC as the Public-at-Large representative.
- Roy Summers will now be representing Cultural Heritage.
- James Anderson is stepping down as the OFAH representative. Lloyd Anderson will take over.
- Kathy Hansel will be recording the minutes in Debra's absence.
- There is a GPS course being offered at the Ecology Centre. The cost for LCC members is \$75.00.

Additions were made to the agenda.

Review of Past Minutes:

Reviewed Brennain's additions to the January 25th meeting minutes. Dave M. motioned to approve the minutes as amended. All in favour. Carried.

Dave motioned to approve as presented the minutes of February 8th meeting. All in favour. Carried.

Stream Classification & Assessments – Dave Fluri

Handout: AOC Prescriptions for Warmwater Fish Habitat (WWF) and Coldwater Fish Habitat (CWF) from Table FMP-17

2 differences for operations around streams depending on type of fish habitat:

1. timing – avoid critical habitat periods for spawning and incubation
 - a. CWF – September 15 to May 15 – brook trout, lake trout
 - b. WWF – shorter period in the spring depending on fish species
2. how close to water's edge can we operate, varies with slope
 - a. CWF – no closer than 15 m of high water mark depending on slope
 - b. WWF – can operate right to treed edge on low slope on up to 50% of the shoreline

History: CWF prescription more restrictive, longer critical timing window, and we can't make more CWF habitat (degrades to WWF habitat), therefore MNR approach has been to default to CWF designation when we don't know which type.

Difficulties: Timing restrictions limit flexibility for operations, particularly installation of water crossings. In some cases the forest industry has not harvested to water's edge (per MNR approved prescriptions) because of operational financial considerations and factors. Forest industry and trappers would like to see operations closer to water's edge, to promote beaver habitat, mimic natural disturbances i.e. fire would burn to water's edge, for proper forest management.

Discussion on alternative crossing types, changing classification from coldwater to warmwater when information provided, and experimental stream assessment protocol – method for rapid assessment. The current accepted method of aquatic habitat inventory takes weeks for each stream. Faster method uses computer model to predict habitat type based on temperatures collected over a few weeks in the summer. North Bay MNR will continue to do related work here this summer.

This matter is not unique to the Nipissing Forest – is on the radar screen for many MNR Districts/ Forests within the region. MNR staff from across the Northeast Region will be meeting in the future to discuss this subject with the aim towards developing appropriate solution strategies.

Forest Management Planning Items:

FMP Planning Team Update – Lorie from meeting on Tuesday, March 13:

- discussed the 15 forest units that will be used in the FMP, same species groupings as in 2004
- road show training planned for early April, the desired forest brainstorming session should be after that (Guylaine will let us know the road show dates when confirmed)
- gap analysis shows some substantial gaps – want 12% of each ecosystem type in reserve, some types have only 3%
- insect called hemlock looper could be coming our way, kills hemlock (whole tree) quickly
- 10 mega-watt co-generation plant using wood waste is planned for Fryer mill in Noelville
- possible industry to start up in North Bay area using sawdust & recycled plastic to make interior car parts

Lorie also presented to the Nipissing Naturalists on March 13th re: LTMD and is ready to represent their interests in the desired forest discussions.

2007-2008 Annual Work Schedule – Ric – PowerPoint presentation

Ric provided a general overview of the AWS. The AWS identifies all forest management activities for the period April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2008. It consists of binders with texts, tables, and various map products. The draft version is submitted to MNR by NFRM and subsequent revisions are made.

Facts and figures highlights:

- Harvesting Operations: total of 26 000 ha of allocations submitted, which is approximately 2.5 years worth, won't all be harvested but allows for flexibility of operations for markets/weather conditions, etc
- roughly 1/3 of the area for each of 3 silviculture systems: clear cut, shelterwood, selection
 - clear cut - used for species which love sunlight (shade intolerants) such as poplar, jack pine and white birch
 - o harvest whole stand at one time, leaving residuals as per natural disturbance guide
 - o mimics natural disturbances such as fire, disease, allow regen to develop in full sun
 - shelterwood – for species which grow best in partial shade – white pine, hemlock, yellow birch

- series of 3 to 4 cuts
 - prepatory cut – thin out stand, promote larger crowns for seed production
 - seeding cut – remove about 50% of stand, expose soil for seed germination
 - 1st removal – when regeneration approx 30 cm to 1 m high, reduce stand to 30-35% crown closure, allow development of understory
 - final removal – regen approx 20 ft tall, harvest over-story leaving new young stand with some residuals
- selection – mainly for high quality sugar maple stands and other shade-tolerant hardwoods
 - remove approximately 1/3 of the stand every 30 years, poor quality trees first

Note: Lorie suggested this presentation could be recorded as training.

Salvage Operations: additional 11 000 ha submitted to salvage budworm damage in the Field/River Valley area and blow-down in the Mattawa area. Efforts concentrated for spring and early summer harvest before wood quality deteriorates.

Silviculture: Renewal, Tending and Protection Operations

- Pre-harvest Inspections – site inspection to confirm operational prescription and values
- Tree Marking – 5000-7000 ha per year in shelterwood and selection areas
 - employ 4 local contractors, production rate approx 5 ha/manday
 - identify wildlife values: heron rookeries, woodpecker cavities, etc

Suggestion: Andy Straughan could do a presentation on tree marking.
- Tree Planting – 1.6 million trees will be planted, variety of species, mostly in clear cut areas
 - majority of stock locally grown at Webb's Nursery in Bonfield

Suggestion: Webb's Nursery would be a good stop for a field trip.
- Mechanical Site Prep – 700 ha, approx 1/3 for planting areas, 2/3 for natural seeding
- Chemical Site Prep – approx 1000 ha, significantly more than in past years
 - approx half of this is scheduled for blow-down areas
 - to reduce competition and prepare for planting
 - applied by an air blast sprayer (ABS) mounted on a skidder, in approx 50 ft swath
- Manual Tending – 1200 ha gross area, will do approx 1/2 of this
 - in sensitive areas i.e. near streams, or where configuration does not allow machines
 - to release planted conifers, small area of red oak and some natural regen, from broadleaf competition and allow stands to reach Free-to-Grow status
- Thinning – none planned this year but have thinned red pine and yellow birch in the past
- Ground Chemical Tending – 4000 ha submitted, will do approx 2000 ha of this
 - majority done in planted areas with air blast sprayer, some back pack application
 - chemical used: glyphosate (trade name VISION) used in forestry & agriculture
- Aerial Chemical Tending – 300-400 ha planned for application by Gateway Helicopters
Larger area planned for herbicides this AWS to catch up on tending of past plantations. Many plantations are planted well, have good survival, then succumb to competition. The Independent Forest Audit identified the need for a more aggressive tending program. Manual tending costs about \$400/ha, ABS approx \$200/ha, so can cover twice as much area.
- Renewal Support – plans for cone collection and seedling requirements
 - 1.3 million seedlings will be grown for 2008 (850,000 for blow down areas)

AWS also includes a Fire Plan, road construction and maintenance details, proposed water crossing installations and removals, aggregate pits, project descriptions for research sites, etc.

Public inspection period is from March 15 to 30th at both MNR and NFRM offices. MNR has done a mail-out and placed notices in local newspapers. NFRM sends letters to stakeholders (i.e. trappers, cottagers, tourist operators, private landowners) adjacent to planned operations.

Q – (Randy) how to deal with questions from municipalities re: operations, road maintenance
 A – municipalities included in MNR mail-out, NFRM can direct them to the appropriate licensee (dealings are to be between licensee and municipality as far as road use, etc)

Independent Forest Audit – LCC Action Plan – Guylaine

Handout: The Nipissing Forest Action Plan (Draft) - recommendations 1-4

Reminder: the Audit Report and the Action Plan are not public documents until tabled in the legislature
 Comments on Draft version:

1. LCC membership – still some concerns with representations /amalgamations, this should be discussed when Dave Payne is in attendance
2. DM has committed to attending at least 2 LCC meetings/year
3. training – under Action Required, last sentence should read “of forest management training”
4. Communications Committee – **suggestion that the committee should create a ledger to document all that it has been doing**

Omission from handout: response to the “suggestion” to consider gender balance of the LCC. Action planned: gender balance will be considered in decisions on committee membership.

The Action Plan will be completed by the end of the month. The Audit Report and Action Plan will likely be tabled 1-2 years from the time the report was received (October 2006).

Environmental Bill of Rights – Postings of Interest - Brennain

Handout: summary of postings for Jan 25 to Feb 22 and Feb 22 to March 15, 2007

LCC Handbook:

Copies of Draft #2 were provided. Any comments, specific or general, can be provided by members either electronically or on hard-copy. Dave Minden and Guylaine will get together the first week of April to review. Dave will post a note with the date of meeting so any others interested may attend.

LCC Logos:

3 designs were presented. Roy offered to work at incorporating parts of 2 of the designs and come up with a few options to consider. The design should be easily reproducible.

Upcoming Workshops/Events/Training:

- Brennain provided a flyer for upcoming Northwatch workshop focusing on Areas of Concern, to be held in Sault Ste. Marie on Friday, May 4th. Still looking for a title for the workshop.
- Fur Harvesters Convention – March 30 & 31. Suggestion that the LCC could set up a booth to raise awareness of the LCC and forest management. John Matthews will look into getting a space at the convention. Guylaine will provide FMP booklets. Will need helpers at booth.
- Brennain reported follow-up from her mention at a previous LCC meeting that Northwatch’s Forest Project was looking to partner with others in presenting introductory workshops about forest management planning; 3-5 workshops are being planned, in partnership with the Lake Nipissing Stewardship Council for Sturgeon Falls, North Bay and Mattawa, and the LNSC might also help out with workshops in Port Loring and Marten River that Brennain is working on with John Matthews and Albert Cloet.

Other:

- Dave did a number of interviews following the news release for the Invitation to Participate. He found the most commonly asked question was “What is the Nipissing Forest?”
- Lorie attended the OFA conference in Alliston in February. His eyes were opened to the lack of forest cover remaining in southern Ontario, approximately 3%. In Japan, forests cover about 75% of the country and in Germany about 40%.
- Lorie also attended recent red oak conference at Canadore. Fire suppression has contributed to the decrease of red oak. College students reported on experiments in Phelps Twp.

Future Meetings:

Randy made the group aware that some MNR staff are involved with both the Nipissing and Temagami LCCs and both groups meet on the 3rd Thursday of the month. The group agreed to change meetings to the 3rd Tuesday of the month (this worked for all in attendance). **The next 3 regular LCC meetings will be held: April 17, May 15, and June 19, 2007.** Dave Minden will be chairing the next meeting.

Motion to Adjourn: 8:20 p.m.