

The Sudbury Forest Action Plan

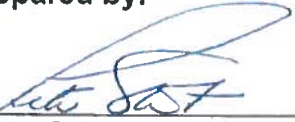
**In answer to the 2011 Sudbury Forest
Independent Forest Audit
Recommendations**

January 9, 2012

2011 INDEPENDENT FOREST AUDIT

ACTION PLAN APPROVAL for the SUDBURY FOREST

Prepared by:



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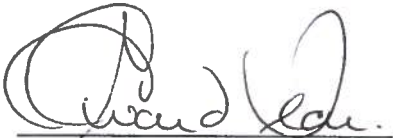
Date: Jan 9th / 2012



Tim Lehman, R.P.F.
Area Forester
MNR Sudbury District

Date: Jan 9 / 2012

Submitted by:



Ed Tear
District Manager
MNR Sudbury District

Date: January 9 / 12

Endorsed by:



Ginette Brindle
Regional Director
MNR Northeast Region

Date: January 30, 2012



Chris Walsh
Director
Forests Branch


Date: Feb. 14 / 12

Approved by:


Rosalyn Lawrence
Assistant Deputy Minister
Policy Division

Date: Feb 21/12

Approved by:


Carrie Hayward
A/Assistant Deputy Minister
Regional Operations Division

Date: Feb. 21/12

- Cc. Tracey Mill, Assistant Deputy Minister, Provincial Services Division
Bradley Fauteux, Ontario Parks Managing Director
In relation to the response to Recommendation # 1.

- Cc. Lois Deacon, Director, Enforcement Branch
In relation to the response to Recommendation # 3.

Introduction

This action plan addresses the findings of an Independent Forest Audit (IFA) of the Sudbury Forest (SFL # 542442) conducted by Arbex Forest Resource Consultants Ltd for the period of April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2011. The IFA Report for the Sudbury Forest was received on November 9, 2011. The Sustainable Forest Licence (SFL) is held by the Vermilion Forest Management Company Ltd. (VFM). VFM is a cooperative comprised of several partner companies:

- Gervais Forest Products Ltd.,
- Goulard Lumber (1971) Limited,
- G.W. Sutherland Contracting Company Ltd.,
- H&R Chartrand Lumber Limited,
- Lahaie Lumber Limited,
- EACOM Timber Corporation,
- Domtar Inc.,
- N'Swakamok Forestry Corporation,
- GP North Woods LP,

There are also several other non-shareholder companies that harvest timber on Crown land managed by VFM. These companies are allocated blocks in the traditional operating areas of shareholder companies, or operate as contractors for shareholders. As the SFL holder, VFM is responsible for forest management planning, renewal and maintenance activities, monitoring and reporting.

The Forest is situated within the administrative boundaries of the OMNR Sudbury, North Bay and Timmins Districts. The Sudbury District Office has the lead for the administration of the Forest.

Recommendation # 1: The OMNR District Manager and the Ontario Parks Zone Manager should ensure that Ontario Park's representatives fully participate on FMP planning teams..

Action Required:

- 1.1 The OMNR District Manager will contact the Ontario Parks Zone Manager to join the steering committee and together determine and appoint the most appropriate person from Ontario Parks to participate on the planning team for Phase 2 of the 2010 Forest Management Plan for the Sudbury Forest.
- 1.2 The Plan Author will add the name of the Ontario Parks representative to the Terms of Reference for preparing Phase 2 of the 2010 Forest Management

- Plan. The Ontario Zone Manager will also be identified as a member of the Steering Committee for the plan.
- 1.3 The OMNR District Manager will confirm that Ontario Parks will participate on the planning team before approving the Terms of Reference.
 - 1.4 Minutes of planning team meetings will identify attendance at the meetings and copies of the minutes will be sent to the OMNR District Manager and the Ontario Parks Zone Manager.
 - 1.5 Any issues involving the lack of attendance of the Ontario Parks representative will be brought to the attention of the Steering Committee.

Deadline Dates:

- 1.1 December 2012
- 1.2 February 2013
- 1.3 April 2013
- 1.4 Ongoing (April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2015)
- 1.5 When and if the need arises

Responsibilities:

- 1.1 OMNR District Manager (Lead), Ontario Parks Zone Manager
- 1.2 VFM's Planning Forester and Plan Author
- 1.3 OMNR District Manager
- 1.4 OMNR Area Forester (unless another person is identified in the Terms of Reference for the plan.
- 1.5 OMNR Area Forester and or Plan Author

Method of Tracking Progress:

- 1.1- 1.3 Approved Terms of Reference
- 1.4 Minutes of Planning Team Meetings
- 1.5 Minutes of Steering Committee Meetings

Recommendation # 2: *During planning of Operations for the second five year term, the OMNR District Manager should review the harvest allocation to N'Swakamok Forestry Corporation.*

Action Required:

- 2.1 The OMNR District Manager will host a meeting with N'Swakamok Forestry Corporation, its Board of Directors and Chiefs of the five associated First Nation Communities to discuss what percentage of the harvest allocation can be successfully harvested. Following the meeting N'Swakamok Forestry Corporation will submit a proposal identifying the percentage of the harvest allocation they can successfully harvest and to be allocated in phase two of the 2010-2020 FMP.

- 2.2 The OMNR District Manager will either; accept, alter or reject the proposal and set the harvest percentage that will be made available for the second five year term based upon criteria such as the CFSA, Forest Management Plan objectives, and performance.
- 2.3 The Districts Manager's decision will be used in Phase 2 planning for the FMP.

Deadline Dates:

- 2.1 May 1st, 2012 for the meeting, September 1st for the proposal
- 2.2 November 1st, 2012
- 2.3 April 1st, 2015

Responsibilities:

- 2.1 OMNR District Manager (Lead), and Manager N'Swakamok Forestry Corp.
- 2.2 OMNR District Manager
- 2.3 Plan Author

Method of Tracking Progress:

- 2.1 Minutes of the meeting and letter to the OMNR District Manager
- 2.2 Written decision of the OMNR District Manager
- 2.3 Approval of the second five year term of the FMP

Recommendation # 3: The District Manager should review the enforcement and monitoring strategies for closed and abandoned roads to ensure that the strategies implemented are meeting the intended access management objectives.

Action Required:

- 3.1 The OMNR District Manager and the local District Enforcement Supervisor will review the enforcement strategies for closed and abandoned roads.
- 3.2 A set of criteria will be developed with LCC support, to determine how to measure the success of the strategies used on the Spanish Arm Road. These criteria may also be used for other areas of the forest where access restrictions are employed.
- 3.3 Staff requirements will be identified and tasks assigned.
- 3.4 VFM Staff and Licensees will continue to monitor restricted access roads as part of their day to day work and VFM will formally report on the conditions of gates, signs, berms, etc. associated with access restrictions prior to the spring fishing season and the fall hunting season using the FOIP system.
- 3.5 Results of monitoring and access infractions will be shared with the LCC at their regular monthly meetings.

Deadline Dates:

- 3.1 Dec 2011 to March 2012

- 3.2 March 2012
- 3.3 May 2012
- 3.4 May 1st and September 15th Annually
- 3.5 Monthly LCC meetings

Responsibilities:

- 3.1 OMNR District Manager and local District Enforcement Supervisor
- 3.2 OMNR District Manager and Area Forester
- 3.3 OMNR District Manager
- 3.4 VFM General Manager
- 3.5 Area Forester

Method of Tracking Progress:

- 3.1-3.3 LCC Minutes, Staff PDPs
- 3.4 FOIP Reports
- 3.5 LCC Minutes

Recommendation # 4: During the preparation of the Year 3 AR, VFM in collaboration with the OMNR should conduct a review of the current silvicultural practises utilized for natural renewal with particular emphasis on:

- ***The effectiveness of shelterwood/seed tree harvest systems on sites with low initial stocking to pine,***
- ***The requirement for and effectiveness of mechanical site preparation treatments,***
- ***The effectiveness of the chemical tending program,***
- ***Protocols adopted for the monitoring of renewal success in stands harvested under the shelterwood harvest system.***

Action Required:

- 4.1 VFM and Sudbury District Area Forester will conduct a review of current silvicultural practices and proposed changes with an emphasis on natural renewal of white pine forest units. A report will be produced detailing the results of the review and recommendations for changes to the silvicultural program. The report will be shared with OMNR Regional Staff.
- 4.2 VFM will maintain the required level of silvicultural monitoring and Free To Grow Surveys (as identified in the FMP) during the 2012 and 2013 summer and fall seasons.
- 4.3 VFM and Sudbury District Area Forester will work with MNR Regional and Provincial Staff to determine the requirements for calling a treatment a “silvicultural success” and to determine which protocols should be adopted for the monitoring of areas harvested under the shelterwood system.

- 4.4 Results of the surveys/assessments, will be reviewed annually with the MNR Area Forester and if further information is required additional surveys will be conducted in 2013.
- 4.5 The 2013 Annual Report will report the results of the assessment work and the effectiveness of the silvicultural treatments as specified above.
- 4.6 Results will be incorporated into the planning of the second term of the current FMP.

Deadline Dates:

- 4.1 September 2012
- 4.2 November 15 each year
- 4.3 December 2012
- 4.4 January 15th each year
- 4.5 November 15th, 2013
- 4.6 April 1st 2015

Responsibilities:

- 4.1 VFM's Silvicultural Forester and MNR Area Forester
- 4.2 VFM General Manager and VFM's Silvicultural Forester
- 4.3 VFM's Silvicultural Forester and MNR Area Forester
- 4.4 VFM's Silvicultural Forester and VFM's Planning Forester
- 4.5 VFM's Silvicultural Forester and VFM's Planning Forester
- 4.6 VFM's Planning Forester

Method of Tracking Progress:

- 4.1 Report Produced
- 4.2 Annual Reports
- 4.3 & 4.4 Minutes of meetings
- 4.5 2013 Annual Report
- 4.6 Approval of the second term of the current FMP

Recommendation # 5: VFM must address the backlog in area requiring free-to-grow survey and complete the survey of XYZ category lands.

Action Required:

- 5.1 VFM to produce a map of XYZ lands not yet declared Free To Grow
- 5.2 VFM to use the new FRI inventory photos to assess if the areas are sufficiently stocked or whether further treatments are required.
- 5.3 VFM to conduct field surveys (FTG surveys) on areas insufficiently stocked and prescribe and conduct follow-up silvicultural treatments
- 5.4 VFM to produce an updated map of XYZ lands and report on progress in year 3 and 5 Annual Reports

Responsibilities:

- 5.1 VFM's Silvicultural Forester
- 5.2 VFM's Silvicultural Forester and Technician
- 5.3 VFM's Silvicultural Forester and Technician
- 5.4 VFM's Silvicultural Forester and Planning Forester

Deadline Dates:

- 5.1 March 31st, 2012
- 5.2 December 1st ,2012
- 5.3 FTG surveys summer & fall 2012 & 2013. Prescribe and conduct silvicultural work March 31st, 2015
- 5.4 November 15th 2013 and November 15th 2016

Method of Tracking Progress:

- 5.1 Production of the map
- 5.2 - 5.4 AWS submissions and Annual Reports

Recommendation # 6: The Sudbury District must ensure, on an annual basis, that sufficient financial and human resources are available to satisfactory meet Core Task Requirements and obligations for Silvicultural Effectiveness Monitoring.

Action Required:

- 6.1 On an annual basis following receipt of the Regional SEM Core Tasks, the Area Forester will prepare a plan outlining the SEM Program for the Sudbury Forest
- 6.2 The OMNR District Manager and Area Supervisor will assign priorities for SEM field work to OMNR Field Staff and will request "B" Salary funding to help support completion of core tasks.
- 6.3 Area Team Field Staff to start required survey work no later then September 1st each year.
- 6.4 Area Team Field Staff to summarize block results of field surveys for District Area Forester to compile in the District SEM Report that is submitted to Region. A copy of the portion of the report concerning the Sudbury Forest will be shared with VFM Staff.

Deadline Dates:

- 6.1 March 31st each year
- 6.2 April 31st each year
- 6.3 November 15th each year
- 6.4 Following March 31st each year

Responsibilities:

- 6.1 Area Forester
- 6.2 OMNR District Manager and Area Supervisor
- 6.3 Area Team Staff
- 6.4 Area Team Staff and Area Forester

Method of Tracking Progress:

- 6.1 Annual SEM Plan
- 6.2-6.4 Staff PDPs and Annual Field Survey Reports

Recommendation # 7: The OMNR District Manager must ensure compliance timelines are met.

Action Required:

- 7.1 OMNR District Manager and Area Supervisor to assign specific Staff to carry out the Compliance Program including – carrying out inspections, verifying operational issues, review and approving MNR and Company Inspection Reports
- 7.2 Area Supervisor to ensure FOIP Reports are reviewed and approved in accordance with the Compliance Handbook.

Deadline Dates:

- 7.1 March 15th each year with the approval of the AWS
- 7.2 Ongoing

Responsibilities:

- 7.1 OMNR District Manager and Area Supervisor
- 7.2 Area Supervisor

Method of Tracking Progress:

- All FOIP Reports and FOIP Tracking System, and MNR staff PDPs

Recommendation # 8: The District Manager should ensure that the Status Report responding to IFA Recommendations is completed within the specified timeframe.

Action Required:

- 8.1 Area Forester to report on the progress of the Status Report to the OMNR District Manager.
- 8.2 OMNR District Manager to contact Regional Director when delays occur and advise of the reasons
- 8.3 Status Report submitted and approved on time

Deadline Dates:

- 8.1 December 1st, 2013
- 8.2 December 31st 2013
- 8.3 January 2014

Responsibilities:

- 8.1 Area Forester
- 8.2 OMNR District Manager
- 8.3 OMNR District Manager

Method of Tracking Progress:

All Report Completion dates and signature dates

The response and recommendation regarding the Conclusion and Recommendation for SFL License Extension for the Sudbury Forest will be included in the Provincial Action Plan.