

Lake Nipigon Forest
Management Unit 815

2016 Independent Forest Audit

Management Unit Action Plan
Status Report

Lake Nipigon Forest 2016 Independent Forest Audit

Status Report Signature Page

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Lake Nipigon Forest 2016 Independent Forest Audit

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Introduction

The final 2016 Lake Nipigon Forest Independent Forest Audit (IFA) Report was accepted by the Forestry Futures Committee on March 1st, 2017 for an IFA conducted by Merin Forest Management for the period April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2016

The 2016 Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol (IFAPP) requires a Management Unit Status Report be prepared within two years of the approved Action Plan which was approved April 27th,2017.

This Status report is therefore prepared for submission and approval on or before April 27 ,2019

A total of nine recommendations were directed to Lake Nipigon Forest Management (LNFMI), as well as the MNRF Thunder Bay and MNRF Nipigon District. For each recommendation, responses were developed in the 2017 Action Plan. This status report provides a progress update on those actions developed, the organization and position responsible, timelines, as well as the method of tracking progress for each action.

A total of 3 recommendations were directed to the MNRF's Forest Industry Division (Rec. #10) and to Corporate MNRF (Rec.'s 11 and 12) and were addressed in the Provincial action plan.

Recommendations

Principle 1: Commitment

Recommendation #1:

Thunder Bay District MNRF must immediately improve their management and oversight of the Armstrong portion of the Lake Nipigon Forest by addressing recommendations from the previous IFA, addressing outstanding compliance issues, and addressing the LCC's concerns about their engagement in the FMP process and implementation.

Action(s) Required:

1. Address previous IFA Recommendations.
 - a. Look at previous AP and outline what actions still require work
 - b. Outline work required to complete each action.
2. Address outstanding compliance issues.
 - a. Produce a list of outstanding issues
 - b. Produce a list of actions to resolve each issue with due dates.
3. Address LCC concerns.
 - a. Updating the Terms of Reference (TOR)
 - b. Hold more meetings and ensure meeting agendas address LCC concerns and provide meaningful engagement. Management Forester and Partnership Specialist to attend meetings.

Progress to Date:

1. a) **Completed.** A review of the previous 2011 IFA Recommendations and Action items for the Armstrong Forest portion of the Lake Nipigon SFL as well as the current status of each since the 2014 Status report was recently conducted in 2019 by MNRF Thunder Bay District staff.
b) **Completed.** Documentation of the work remaining for each of the past action items since the 2011 IFA Armstrong Forest status report submitted in 2014 has been completed in 2019 by MNRF Thunder Bay district staff and remains on record at the district office.
2. a) **Completed.** A listing of outstanding compliance issues has been developed and issues which could be addressed with immediate action were actioned.
b) **Completed.** Due dates for resolution of remaining issues related to the utilization of hardwood has been scheduled.
3. a&b) **Completed.** LCC Terms of Reference has been updated and the membership reviewed. Based on this review, new members have been added to the committee.

To ensure committee members are more engaged, MNRF Thunder Bay District has begun to hold more frequent meetings. In 2019, meetings were held in February and April. In 2018, meetings were held in February, June and November. Prior to the June (2019) meeting, members of the committee were invited to join MNRF and industry representatives for a field tour to view forest operations in the Collins block with one member attending. In 2017, meetings were held in February and November.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. (a) No further tracking required.
(b) 2021-2031 Lake Nipigon Forest Management Plan, Annual Work, Schedules and Annual Reports.
2. a) Submitted FOIP reports and compliance inspections, subsequent AWS's, AR's; future IFA reports. Facility start-up media, internal notification, announcements and correspondence. Funding agency announcements, and partnership agreements.
(b) As described in 2(a) above including completion of Armstrong pellet manufacturing facility.
3. No further tracking required.

Principle 4: Plan Assessment and Implementation

Recommendation #2:

Thunder Bay District MNRF will immediately implement renewal, where appropriate, on all areas harvested, where silviculture has not yet been initiated, on the Armstrong portion of the Lake Nipigon Forest.

Action(s) Required:

1. Develop a list of outstanding silvicultural activities and associated Silvicultural Plan to address each outstanding activity.

2. Implement the Silvicultural Plan as developed under Action item #1 above.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** A list of outstanding silviculture actives was prepared in the 2016-2017 fiscal with Forest Operations Prescriptions being updated in the 2017-2018 fiscal. The list of outstanding silviculture activities includes the following:
 - a. 10,000ha of FTG surveys
 - b. 723.2ha of area requiring renewal activities
 - c. 216ha requiring site preparation
 - d. Tending area to be determined post renewal activities.
2. **Ongoing.** As a result of point 1 above,
 - a. FTG surveys will be finalized in 2019 for a 2020 contract award to complete.
 - b. 560,000 seedlings were ordered for a 2019 tree plant. This tree plant is set to commence on June 17, 2019.
 - c. A site preparation contract was tendered with no bids received. Therefore, no site preparation was completed.
 - d. Competition assessments will take place in 2020. Areas requiring tending will be scheduled accordingly.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. (Items a thru d)- No further tracking required.
2. a) AR's, AWS's, request for bid records, correspondence, FTG survey contracts, Forest Renewal Trust Fund (FRTF) records.
b) AR's, AWS's, nursery records, correspondence records, request for bid records, tree plant contracts, Forest Renewal Trust Fund (FRTF) records.
c) AR's, AWS's, request for bid records, correspondence, site preparation contracts correspondence, Forest Renewal Trust Fund (FRTF) records.
d) AR's, AWS's, request for bid records, correspondence, assessment survey contracts, correspondence, Forest Renewal Trust Fund (FRTF) records.

Recommendation #3:

Thunder Bay District with the assistance of Regional Operations Division MNRF will increase their efforts to inform LCCs and Aboriginal communities about herbicide as a tool in forest management.

Action Required:

1. Thunder Bay District and Regional Operations Division to develop an agreed upon approach to educate LCCs and Aboriginal communities on the use of herbicides as a tool in forest management.
2. Present education and training material to LCCs and Aboriginal communities.

Progress to Date:

1. **Ongoing:** MNRF Thunder Bay District has discussed and developed options for educating Aboriginal communities and LCC members on the use of herbicides. To facilitate this the MNRF Thunder Bay District had made arrangements for presentations to be made by guest speakers who are experts in this field to open dialogue with Aboriginal communities and LCC members.
2. **Ongoing:** Thunder Bay District MNRF staff arranged a two-day field trip in September, 2017 (Sept. 11th & 12th) with local Aboriginal community members to

of the Black Spruce Forest accompanied by a guest speaker (MNRF Provincial Vegetation Management Specialist). This included a presentation on the second day to Aboriginal community representatives followed by a field tour to view different sites on the Armstrong portion of the Lake Nipigon Forest with the MNRF Provincial Vegetation Management Specialist.

To facilitate continued dialogue on the use of herbicides, a subsequent follow-up meeting was hosted by MNRF Thunder Bay District staff to provide an opportunity for Aboriginal community representatives to hear the responses from MNRF's Provincial Vegetation Management Specialist as well as a Forest Ecosystem Ecology Research Scientist with Natural Resources Canada regarding their concerns related to the chemical ingredients in herbicides.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Information/educational sessions, materials and tours, correspondence, meeting agendas/invitations, attendance records and minutes
2. Information/Education sessions, materials and tours, correspondence records, Meeting agendas/invitations, attendance records, and minutes; approved tending program of the 2023-2033 FMP.

Recommendation #4:

Thunder Bay District MNRF will work with Aboriginal communities to develop a tending protocol on the Armstrong portion of the Lake Nipigon Forest that will address FMP objectives.

Action Required:

1. Building off of Recommendation #3, develop a protocol with Aboriginal communities regarding the use of herbicides and how MNRF and/or SFL holder, will work with each individual community in selecting appropriate stands to receive herbicides with the goal of protecting aboriginal community values.

Progress to Date:

1. **Ongoing.** More work is required under recommendation #3 before development of a tending protocol with Aboriginal communities regarding the use of herbicides on the Armstrong portion of the Lake Nipigon Forest can be completed.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Information/Education sessions, materials and tours, correspondence records, Meeting agendas/invitations, attendance records, and minutes; approved tending program of the 2023-2033 FMP. Future agendas and meeting minutes with applicable stakeholders, Tending Protocol

Recommendation #5:

Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc. must follow the direction laid out in the FMP as identified through conditions on regular operations, particularly on shallow sites, and ensure the Forest Operations Prescription is appropriate for the ground conditions before operations commence.

Action Required:

1. Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc. (LNFMI) will perform ground based post-harvest prescriptions on all harvested stands to ensure Forest Operation Prescriptions (FOP) are appropriate prior to the commencement of operations. Revision of planned Silvicultural Ground Rules (SGR's) will occur as appropriate.

Progress to Date:

1. Ongoing: FOP's developed for 2017 and 2018 AWS and reported on in the 2017 and 2018 AR's.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Subsequent/Future Annual Work Schedules and Annual Reports annually submitted.

Recommendation #6:

Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc. will develop and apply procedures as part of the Forest Operations Prescription for the judicious use of herbicides on the Nipigon east portion of the Lake Nipigon Forest consistent with the Tending Toolbox.

Action Required:

Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc will produce a procedure for the judicious use of herbicides on the Nipigon Forest which will be implemented in all future Forest Operations Prescriptions for herbicide use

Progress to Date:

1. Completed: Procedures developed and approved by the LNFMI Board of Directors on March 14, 2017 and approved version forwarded via email to MNRF for record to file.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. No further future tracking required.

Recommendation #7:

Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc. must ensure that all aggregate pits are tracked, reported and in compliance with the requirements as identified in the Forest Management Plan.

Action Required:

1. Production of a Forest Aggregate Pit Database which tracks pit details including but not limited to: pit identification number, pit opening date, area requiring rehab, area rehabbed and volumes removed from the pit. Information will be obtained through LNFMI surveys, compliance inspections and Overlapping Licensee information.
2. Active Forest Aggregate Pits being accurately reported in Annual Reports

Progress to Date:

1. Completed: Accurate Forest Pit Database Created.
2. Completed and Ongoing: Pits accurately reported in 2016-17 and 2017-18 Annual Reports and annually thereafter.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Forestry Aggregate Pit Database
2. Subsequent Annual Reports submitted annually thereafter.

Principle 6: Monitoring**Recommendation #8:**

Additional effort is required by the Thunder Bay and Nipigon District MNR and Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc. when preparing 10 Year and Annual Compliance Plans.

Action Required:

1. For the Armstrong portion of the Lake Nipigon Forest, Thunder Bay District MNR will ensure that the 10-year compliance plan will conform to all relevant legislation, policies and guidelines; including a discussion of the previous plan's most common operational issues and mechanisms to minimize and prevent further occurrences.
2. For the Armstrong portion of the Lake Nipigon Forest, Thunder Bay District MNR will closely examine the previous fiscal's compliance plan to assist in completing the next fiscal's compliance plan. Annual compliance plans will be updated to reflect changes and/or if deficiencies are recognized.
3. For the Nipigon East portion of the Lake Nipigon Forest, Nipigon District MNR and Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc. will ensure that the 10-year compliance plan will conform to all relevant legislation, policies and guidelines; including a discussion of the previous plan's most common operational issues and mechanisms to minimize and prevent further occurrences.
4. For the Nipigon East portion of the Lake Nipigon Forest, Nipigon District MNR and Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc. will closely examine the previous fiscal's compliance plan to assist in completing the next fiscal's compliance plan. Annual compliance plans will be updated to reflect changes and/or if deficiencies are recognized.

Progress to Date:

1. Ongoing- section currently under development for 2021-2031 FMP
2. Completed:2017-2018 AWS compliance section has been updated
3. Ongoing: section currently under development for 2021-2031 FMP 2021-2031 FMP
4. Completed:2017-2018 AWS compliance section has been updated

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Compliance and monitoring section in the 2021-2031 FMP.
2. Future AWS's submitted annually thereafter.
3. Compliance and Monitoring section in the 2021-31 FMP.
4. Future AWS's submitted annually thereafter.

Principle 8: Contractual Obligations**Recommendation #9:**

Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc. must complete a Memorandum of Agreement with AV Terrace Bay Inc. to meet their "Wood Supply Commitments" in Appendix "E" of their SFL.

Action Required:

1. Completion of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with AV Terrace Bay Inc. (AVTB).

Progress to Date:

1. Completed: MOA signed and is available upon request from MNRF

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. No further future tracking required