

Big Pic Forest Management Unit

2014 Independent Forest Audit

Management Unit Action Plan

Status Report

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Introduction

In 2014, an Independent Forest Audit (IFA) of the Big Pic Forest (BPF) was conducted by Arbex Forest Resource Consultants Ltd. for the period of April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2014. The Audit Action Plan was approved by the Regional Director on April 9, 2015, and documented planned actions to resolve 14 recommendations which were made in the Audit Report.

Submission of this Status Report by the Wawa District Manager is due April 9, 2017.

Recommendations

Recommendation #2:

The Wawa District MNRF must immediately undertake actions to meet FMPM Section 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 requirements to fulfill the purposes of a Local Citizens Committee (or LCC). Actions must include meaningful involvement of the remaining PRPCC members in discussions including an assessment of the barriers to participation in the LCC, the LCC Terms of Reference vis a vis stakeholder perceptions of the LCC role in the forest management planning process and FMPM/CFSA requirements, and the costs and benefits of single versus multiple LCCs.

Action Required:

1. The District Manager will arrange and meet with the LCC to discuss the barriers to participation in the LCC and seek to identify solutions to the identified barriers.
2. The solutions identified from the above meeting will be reflected in the revision and completion of the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the LCC.
3. The solutions identified from the above meeting, where appropriate, will be included in the Annual Work Plans and Annual Performance Plans.
4. Training will be provided to LCC members regarding the role of the LCC in the forest management planning process as described in the FMPM Part A (Sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2) and CFSA.
5. An assessment of the costs and benefits of a single versus a multiple LCC's model will be completed for the forests identified in the TOR for the PRPCC.
6. Results from the above assessment will be reflected in the completion of the TOR.

Progress to Date:

1. The District Manager (DM) discussed barriers with the LCC chair immediately after the IFA and while the draft IFA report was under review. LCC meeting were immediately relocated to Manitowadge from Marathon at the request of the LCC Chair. The DM met with the LCC on January 7, 2015 to discuss membership. Six new members have been added, in consultation with the Chair; two in January 2015, three in April 2015 and one in March 2017.
2. The LCC Terms of Reference (TOR) were revised with suggested changes made by both the LCC and MNRF as a result of the IFA. Wawa District considered a more consistent approach between the four LCC's it manages and their individual terms of reference in 2016. The attributes of the Big Pic and Pic River Forest justified a unique TOR which was approved August 18, 2016. Other forest management units in Wawa District indeed had more similarities and their TOR were revised in consultation with each LCC and approved (White River and Nagagami Forest).
3. The Wawa management team has performance plan targets in place for IFA's on the five forest management units it is responsible for. Supervisors assign IFA targets to their staff. A MNRF management forester has been assigned to the LCC since 2015. Wawa District developed an IFA Management Strategy in December 2016 to track and ensure completion of 58 recommendations and 138 action items it has direct responsibility over (recommendations and actions for

the Algoma Forest which are led by Sault Ste. Marie District and supported by Wawa are not included). The Management Strategy identifies individual staff in support and leadership roles as well as completion dates for each action item. The Management Strategy is included as part of the annual work plan and is referenced in all staffs performance plans starting in fiscal year 2017/18.

4. In the event of an absence of a regional hosted training session, Wawa District committed to have training brought to the LCC in advance of Phase 1 Pic Forest 2019-2019 FMP.
5. The key concern of the LCC was addressed through the provision for the formation of subgroups as outlined in the approved Terms of Reference. As directed by the MNR District Manager, the individual community subgroups can be assigned specific areas within the Forest Management Unit. Therefore a costs and benefits analysis was not required.
6. The Terms of Reference was signed by the LCC chair and The MNR District Manager in August 2016

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. MNR in consultation with the LCC will continue to seek new members for the committee
2. None
3. None
4. Training regarding Forest Management Planning, including the LCCs' role, will be given to the committee throughout the production of the 2019-2029 Pic Forest FMP. Meeting minutes will track training delivered. LCC training regarding FMP development is April 19, 2017.
5. None.
6. None

Recommendation #3:

The MNR District Manager must make every effort to ensure that FMP Planning Team Members (MNR staff and appointed volunteers) actively participate on the planning team and provide advice and support to the forest management process in a manner consistent with their level of experience and expertise.

Action Required:

1. MNR staff and appointed volunteers, with the appropriate level of experience and knowledge in forest management planning, will be appointed to the FMP Planning Team and identified in the Terms of Reference for the 2017 FMP.
2. The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the 2017 FMP will identify the roles and responsibilities of planning team members and appointed volunteers.
3. One of the Planning Team chairperson's responsibilities, to be included in the TOR, will be to advise the District Manager of planning team members who are not actively attending and participating in planning team meetings.
4. The Annual Performance Plans for MNR staff that have been appointed to the FMP Planning Team will include the responsibility to actively participate on the planning team and provide advice and support to the forest management process as identified in the TOR for the 2017 FMP.
5. The Planning Team meeting minutes will record the attendance and participation of planning team members and appointed volunteers.

Progress to Date: (note – the progress to date is based on the production of a 2017 Contingency Plan as opposed to a 2017 FMP)

1. MNR staff and appointed volunteers, with the appropriate level of experience and knowledge in forest management planning, were appointed to the Planning Team and identified in the Project Plan (PP) for the 2017-2019 Contingency Plan. The CP Terms of Reference (TOR) was approved April 18, 2016.
2. The PP identified the roles and responsibilities of planning team members.
3. The PP Co-Chair responsibilities included advising the District Manager of planning team members who are not actively attending and participating in planning team meetings.
4. The Annual Performance Plans for MNR staff that have been appointed to the Planning Team included the responsibility to actively participate on the planning team and provide advice and support to the forest management process as identified in the TOR for the 2017 Contingency Plan.
5. The Planning Team meeting minutes recorded the attendance and participation of planning team members and appointed volunteers. Six meetings have taken place with attendance and minutes documented.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Complete
2. Complete
3. Complete
4. Complete
5. Complete

The above Actions will be followed for the production of the 2019-2019 Pic Forest FMP (future amalgamated Pic River and Big Pic Forests).

Recommendation #4:

NFMC must ensure that all harvested areas are assessed for debris and slash management in accordance with the direction of the 2007 FMP.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will review the FMP and assess if procedures are adequate to address the recommendation.
2. If adequate, NFMC will implement procedures set forth in FMP, including reporting.
3. If procedures in the FMP are not adequate, the NFMC will prepare a draft procedure to assess and treat harvested areas for debris and slash management.
4. NFMC will implement draft procedure and track costs and results.
5. NFMC will assess the effectiveness of the procedure and, if required, amend the FMP to reflect the new procedure.
6. NFMC will implement procedure.

Progress to Date:

1. NFMC has reviewed the FMP and assessed procedures required to meet the recommendation and found them to be sufficient.
2. NFMC implemented, tracked (costs and effectiveness), and reported debris management programs.
3. Not required.
4. Not required.
5. Not required.
6. Not required.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. None.
2. Management Unit Annual Reports will track future progress.
3. None
4. Management Unit Annual Reports track costs and results.
5. Management Unit Annual Reports will be used to track effectiveness.
6. None

Recommendation #5:

NFMC must ensure that tree planting contractors are adequately supervised and conduct quality assessments of tree planting operations (as necessary) to ensure that quality standards/requirements are met.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will hire a full time Silviculturalist who is responsible for tree plant contractor supervision.
2. NFMC will ensure strict quality standards are incorporated into tree plant contracts.
3. NFMC will hire summer silviculture staff.
4. Summer staff will conduct supplementary quality assessments.
5. NFMC will supervise tree plant contractors.

Progress to Date:

1. NFMC reviewed past operations, identified solutions and actions required to meet the recommendation. NFMC hired a full-time Silviculturalist in January 2015.
2. NFMC has incorporated quality standards into tree plant contracts beginning in 2015.
3. NFMC hired 2 summer staff in 2015, 4 summer staff in 2016, and 2 staff in 2017 to assist with the delivery of all silviculture programs on the Big Pic.
4. The Silviculturalist and summer staff complete quality assessments and establish Plantation Survival Plots (PSP's) used to monitor the survival of planted trees and as an indication of site competition.
5. NFMC supervises and manages tree plan contractors

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. None.
2. None.
3. None.
4. None.
5. None

Recommendation #6:

NFMC must deliver an effective vegetation management program to ensure the renewal of conifer forest units. The tending program must consider a suite of treatment options (i.e. chemical site preparation, manual tending, ground based herbicide treatments, alternative silviculture approaches).

Action Required:

1. NFMC will create a procedure and protocol to assess competition on CLAAG and planted sites.
2. NFMC will enact procedure.
3. NFMC will record results, these results will form baseline planning for a spray and tending program.
4. NFMC will review alternatives to aerial chemical spraying.
5. NFMC will deliver an effective vegetation management program ensuring renewal of conifer forest units.

Progress to Date:

1. NFMC reviewed past operations, identified solutions and implemented survey procedures to assess competition on CLAAG and planted sites.
2. NFMC completed 3,849 ha and 1,839ha of aerial chemical tending in 2015 and 2016, respectively. NFMC has included quality standards in vegetation management contracts beginning in 2015.
3. Starting in 2015, the Silviculturalist and summer staff conduct vegetation competition assessments to determine the need (if any) for chemical intervention.
4. NFMC reviews the suite of treatment options available to control competing vegetation on an annual basis. To date, aerial herbicide application and mechanical site preparation continue to provide the most utility.
5. NFMC, through timely implementation of the silviculture program is increasing the survival rate of trees planted (85% Spruce, 90-95% Pine) that will improve the overall silviculture success rate back to conifer forest units (success rate was 28% as of the 2014 IFA).

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. None.
2. Future vegetation management programs will track progress.
3. Future vegetation management program contracts will track progress.
4. None.
5. Future free-to-grow assessments will track progress.

Recommendation #7:

The MNRF District Manager and NFMC must ensure that contracted services providers have the capacity to deliver timely, accurate and high quality information results and that the information received is reviewed for accuracy and completeness.

Action Required:

1. The NFMC General Manager (or designate) will assign staff to directly supervise and manage service providers.
2. Designated staff will supervise and manage service providers.
3. The NFMC will provide clear direction in contracts including strict timelines for deliverables and penalties for insufficient or late work.
4. The NFMC will review contractor work regularly (as per contract timelines) for accuracy and completeness.
5. For contracted service providers required by the MNRF, the bid requirements will include a description of the service providers staffing resources. The service contract(s) will include a description of the specific services to be provided and associated timelines for completion.
6. For contracted service providers required by the MNRF, the specified services submitted by the service provider will be reviewed by the MNRF for accuracy and completeness.
7. For contracted service providers required by the MNRF, the review of specified services will be assigned through appropriate annual performance plans.

Progress to Date:

1. NFMC General Manager has assigned appropriate staff to supervise and manage service providers.
2. The General Manager, and senior staff are responsible for and carry out supervision and management of service providers.
3. NFMC incorporated quality standards into all silviculture contracts, including nursery stock contracts, beginning in 2014. The Silviculturalist and summer staff supervise and complete quality assessments on all silvicultural contract obligations. Additionally, NFMC establishes Permanent Sample Plot's (or PSPs) on all planted areas to monitor survival of the trees.
4. NFMC maintains regular communication with all silvicultural service providers as needed. NFMC supervises all work carried out by all silviculture service providers on a daily/weekly basis (depending on the type of service) and verifies all paperwork (i.e. invoices) from all silvicultural service providers for completeness and correctness.
5. Since the IFA, MNRF has not had to procure service providers. Should contracted services be required, the action item 5 will be followed.
6. Since the IFA, MNRF has not had to procure service providers. Should contracted services be required, the action item 6 will be followed.
7. Since the IFA, MNRF has not had to procure service providers. Should contracted services be required, the action item 7 will be followed.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. None.
2. None.
3. Future service contracts and PSP plot data will track progress.
4. None.
5. Future service contracts.
6. Future service contracts.
7. Future service contracts.

Recommendation #8:

NFMC must conduct a review of its forest management records to 1) identify information/record gaps 2) implementing a process with MNRF, the previous SFL holder and service providers to retrieve missing data/records/information and 3) verify the records for accuracy and completeness.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will review its forest management records for the Big Pic Forest to determine information/record gaps.
2. NFMC will contact all organizations involved in recent forest management of the Big Pic Forest, to inquire regarding acquisition of records.
3. Develop a process in conjunction with previous managers to obtain all pertinent recent and historical records for the Big Pic.
4. NFMC will obtain any and all relevant recent and historical records for the Big Pic Forest.
5. NFMC will contact all recent foresters and forest technicians who have worked on the Big Pic to obtain any other pertinent information that will assist in understanding the forest.
6. NFMC will verify the records for accuracy and completeness.
7. NFMC will create an index of information and records received, thereby identifying where gaps still exist.

Progress to Date:

1. NFMC has reviewed its forest management records for the Big Pic Forest to determine information/record gaps.
2. Beginning in 2014, NFMC contacted all organizations involved in recent forest management of the Big Pic Forest, to request all current and historical records.
3. NFMC worked with previous managers to obtain all pertinent, recent and historical records for the Big Pic.
4. NFMC has received all relevant recent and historical records for the Big Pic Forest.
5. NFMC contacted all recent foresters and forest technicians who have worked on the Big Pic to obtain any other pertinent information.
6. NFMC will continue to verify records for accuracy and completeness.
7. NFMC completed an index of information and records received, thereby identifying where gaps still exist by the end of August 2016.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. None.

2. None.
3. None
4. None.
5. None.
6. Ongoing, NFMC silviculture program monitoring data will continue to verify accuracy of records.
7. None.

Recommendation #9:

a) NFMC must move quickly to acquire the capacity and infrastructure necessary to complete its start-up phase and undertake its full management obligations and responsibilities.

b) NFMC must finalize a business plan for approval by the MNRF which articulates and operationalizes its business model.

Action Required:

a)

1. NFMC will create an organizational structure consistent with business plan.
2. NFMC will hire staff to fill vacancies in that organizational structure.
3. NFMC will review its management obligations as specified in the FRL.
4. NFMC will fulfill its responsibilities as specified in the FRL.

b)

1. The NFMC and MNRF will work jointly to finalize its business plan.
2. The NFMC will operationalize its business plan.

Progress to Date:

a)

1. NFMC has created an organizational structure consistent with business plan.
2. NFMC hired the following staff following the IFA to fill vacancies in the organizational structure:

- a. Operations Manager
- b. Silviculturalist
- c. GIS specialists
- d. Forest Compliance Technical Specialist
- e. Summer staff

As of May 2017, NFMC has a full complement of staff, no vacancies remain.

3. NFMC reviewed its management obligations as specified in the FRL.
4. As of May 2017, NFMC will have a full complement of staff to fulfill its responsibilities. The hiring process is recently completed. Despite efforts, NFMC struggled to find suitable/qualified employees within the original timeline. Service providers were utilized to bridge the gap while NFMC hired staff.

b)

1. The NFMC and MNRF worked jointly to finalize its business plan. The Business Plan was preliminarily accepted by MNRF September 11, 2015.
2. The NFMC continues to operationalize its business plan. The NFMC has signed a Forest Management Agreement with the MNRF in order to continue to undertake its management obligations and responsibility on the Big Pic Forest.

Next steps include the issuance of a Sustainable Forest License through Forest Industry Division.

Future Tracking Requirements:

a)

1. None.
2. None.
3. None.
4. None

b)

1. None.
2. Issuance of SFL

Recommendation #10:

NFMC must address the backlog in area requiring regeneration assessment and maintain an annual regeneration assessment program approximating the annual allowable harvest area.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will review the backlog of areas requiring assessment.
2. NFMC will create an operational plan to address the backlog.
3. NFMC will initiate the operational plan
4. NFMC will continue to operationalize the plan until all backlog FTG assessments are completed and to thereafter maintain an annual regeneration assessment program approximating the allowable harvest area.

Progress to Date:

1. NFMC undertook an independent review of the backlog of areas requiring assessment.
2. NFMC has created an operational plan to address the backlog as follows:
 - Beginning in 2014, NFMC partnered with the District, Regional and Corporate MNR Silviculture Guides and Monitoring Section on a new pilot SEM survey program.
 - Development of the Establishment survey methodology, and an App. to collect the data as well as training on the App. and survey methodology began in 2015.
3. In 2016 NFMC initiated the operational plan and completed 18,892ha of assessments and shared all data with the District and science community involved in the pilot project.
4. NFMC continues to be involved in the next phase of SEM pilot. Part 2 of the pilot program, "performance surveys" are planned to be complete summer 2017. Total hectares to be surveyed is being finalized. NFMC will integrate data into the planning inventory for the upcoming 2019-2029 FMP. Based on the outcome of the pilot and App. NFMC will develop an annual regeneration assessment program, by the end of 2017, approximating annual harvest levels.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. None.
2. Management Unit Annual Reports will report FTG survey results.
3. None.
4. Annual Reports.

Recommendation #11:

NFMC must design and implement a sampling program to verify the accuracy of FTG information acquired during the audit term.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will review all FTG information acquired during the audit period.
2. NFMC will create an operational plan to verify the accuracy of the FTG records.
3. NFMC will initiate the operational plan.
4. NFMC will continue to operationalize the plan until all FTG information acquired during the audit term has been verified for accuracy.
5. NFMC will report any corrections to the FTG data.

Progress to Date:

1. Beginning in 2014 NFMC has been reviewing all FTG information acquired during the audit term with a completion date of the end of 2017. Review of the FTG information was partially completed in tandem with the FTG pilot program, thus, some review/validation is planned to finish summer 2017.
2. In 2016 NFMC developed an operational plan to verify the accuracy of the FTG. This was in response to the following:
 - a. Beginning in 2014, NFMC partnered with the District, Regional and Corporate MNRFS Silviculture Guides and Monitoring Section on a new pilot SEM survey program.
 - b. Development of the Establishment survey methodology, and an App to collect the data as well as training on the App and survey methodology began in 2015.
3. NFMC has entered into a contract with Haveman Brothers Forestry Services to perform ground surveys, which involves the ground validation of FTG information acquired throughout the audit term. The complete validation will be done using a combination of 2016 survey data, 2007 FRI, 2009 FRI, MNRFS 2013 Silviculture Liability maps and associated data, ground verification, 2007 photography, professional expertise and actual survey records from the audit period.
4. NFMC will complete the validation of all FTG information acquired during the audit period by the end of 2017.
5. NFMC will report any corrections to the FTG data in the 2017 AR.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Annual reports will track future progress.
2. None.
3. None.
4. Management unit annual reports and FTG assessment records will track progress.
5. The 2017 AR will track any corrections to the FTG data.

Recommendation #12:

NFMC must verify the status of the 2007 FTG work and secure the records for the input in the forest resources inventory.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will secure the 2007 FTG program files.
2. NFMC will review the 2007 FTG program files.
3. NFMC will report the 2007 survey results.
4. NFMC will incorporate FTG information into the most current forest resources inventory.

Progress to Date:

1. NFMC has acquired all the 2007 FTG program files.
2. In 2016 NFMC developed an operational plan to verify the accuracy of the 2007 FTG work, described in Recommendation #11 (3)
3. NFMC will report any corrections to the FTG data in the 2017 Annual Report.
4. NFMC will incorporate where possible those corrections into the 2009 FRI to be used for the 2019 planning inventory.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. None.
2. None.
3. 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 t Annual Reports will track progress.
4. The planning inventory for the 2019 FMP will track FTG updates.

Recommendation #13:

NFMC and District MNRF must be more diligent in the review of ARs to ensure that the reports and associated products meet all FIM and FMPM requirements.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will create Annual Reports “in-house”.
2. NFMC will review FMPM and FIM.
3. Prior to finalizing submission of Annual Reports to the MNRF, NFMC will consult with industry, planning, silviculture, and GIS staff resulting in a superior product from the SFL Company.
4. The MNRF will review annual reports as required by the 2009 FMPM to ensure the requirements of the 2009 FMPM (Part E) and 2009 FIM (Annual Report Technical Specifications) are met.
5. The MNRF review will be completed within the timelines established in the 2009 FMPM (Part E, Section 5.0).
6. The review requirement will be assigned through appropriate annual performance plans.

Progress to Date:

1. Since 2014, all Annual Reports were completed by NFMC forestry staff.
2. NFMC reviewed the FMPM and FIM requirements in 2014.
3. Starting in 2014 and prior to finalizing submission of Annual Reports to the MNRF, NFMC reviews all activities that took place on the Big Pic during the

reporting year with industry, planning, silviculture, and GIS staff to ensure a complete and correct report submission.

4. The MNRFB reviewed the 2014-15 and 2015-16 annual reports as required by the 2009 FMPM to ensure the requirements of the 2009 FMPM (Part E) and 2009 FIM (Annual Report Technical Specifications) are met.
5. The MNRFB review was completed within the timelines established in the 2009 FMPM (Part E, Section 5.0).
6. AR review has been identified in annual performance plans.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. None.
2. None.
3. None.
4. None.
5. None.
6. None.

Recommendation #14a:

The MNRFB District Manager must ensure that the Action Plan is prepared in accordance with the schedule specified in the IFAPP.

Action Required:

1. Upon receipt of the Final IFA Report, the District Manager and NFMC will be notified and provided with standardized templates for the Action Plan.
2. A meeting will be arranged with District staff and NFMC representatives to discuss the IFAPP protocol for preparing the Action Plan, to identify leads responsible for its preparation, and to set timelines for its completion.
3. A draft Action Plan will be prepared by the District and NFMC leads for review prior to formal submission.
4. Regional and Forest Branch representatives will review the draft Action Plan and provide comments to the District and NFMC leads.
5. The Action Plan will be revised as required.
6. The Action Plan will be submitted to the Regional Director on or within two months of receiving the final audit report.

Progress to Date:

1. The District Manager was notified and provided with standardized templates for the Action Plan on January 29, 2015.
2. A meeting was completed February 9, 2015 with District staff and NFMC representatives to discuss the IFAPP protocol for preparing the Action Plan, identify leads responsible for its preparation and set timelines for completion.
3. A draft Action Plan was completed by MNRFB and NFMC leads for review prior to formal submission.
4. Regional representatives reviewed the draft Action Plan and provided comments to the District and NFMC leads.

5. The draft Action Plan was revised based on comments received and submitted by the District Manager for approval on March 27, 2015.
6. The Action Plan was approved by the Regional Director on April 9, 2015.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. None.
2. None.
3. None.
4. None.
5. None.
6. None.

Recommendation #14b:

The MNRF District Manager must ensure that all Action Plan items are adequately and effectively addressed.

Action Required:

1. The responsibility to prepare the Status Report will be assigned through the Annual Performance Plan.
2. The draft Status Report will be prepared as described in the IFAPP.
3. The Status Report will reviewed and submitted as described in the IFAPP.
4. For recommendations assigned to the MNRF and to the MNRF and NFMC, the MNRF actions identified in the Action Plan will be included in the appropriate Annual Work Plan, and Annual Performance Plan(s) of staff assigned responsibility.
5. A year-end review of the actions assigned in the Annual Work Plan and Annual Performance Plan(s) will be undertaken.
6. For recommendations assigned to the NFMC, the District Manager will annually invite the NFMC manager to meet and review the status of all outstanding and ongoing Action Plan items.

Progress to Date:

1. The responsibility to prepare the Status Report was tasked by the District Manager to the Management Forester at the Wawa District office by e-mail in March, 2017.
2. The draft Status Report was prepared as described in the IFAPP.
3. The Status Report has been reviewed and submitted as described in the IFAPP.
4. For recommendations assigned to the MNRF and to the MNRF and NFMC, the MNRF actions identified in the Action Plan are documented in the Wawa District IFA Management Strategy which forms part of the Annual Work Plan, and Annual Performance Plan(s) of staff assigned responsibility.
5. A year-end review of the Wawa District IFA Management Strategy which forms part of the Annual Work Plan, and Annual Performance Plan(s) of staff assigned responsibility will be undertaken annually starting in 2017.

6. The District Manager developed a progress report on the status of compliance with the IFA action items in June 2016 after engaging the NFMC Manager, Forester and Wawa District staff. Thereafter he has facilitated more regular face-to-face meetings with the NFMC manager to address operational issues and to continue to track IFA action items. Additionally, the development of the Wawa District IFA Management Strategy in January of 2017 will assist Wawa District in continuing to meet annually with the NFMC to review mutual progress in addressing the action items included in this audit.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Complete.
2. Complete.
3. Complete.
4. Wawa District IFA Management Strategy.
5. Updated Wawa District IFA Management Strategy.
6. Updated Wawa District IFA Management Strategy.

Recommendation #15:

The MNR District Manager must ensure that sufficient work priority and related resources are assigned to meet the Crown's forest management responsibilities and obligations.

Action Required:

1. MNR Crown forest management responsibilities will be identified and included in the appropriate Annual Work Plan, and Annual Performance Plan(s) of staff assigned responsibility.

Progress to Date:

1. The development of the Wawa District IFA Management Strategy in January of 2017 was designed to support annual district work planning and staff performance plan development. It ensures that IFA action items are appropriately matched with staffing and resource capacity so that IFA obligations are met going forward.

The Wawa District Leadership Team meets on alternating Monday afternoons to discuss and plan for district resourcing needs. As a standing agenda item, vacant staff positions are identified, reviewed and a solution to fill a vacancy is identified and submitted to regional office for approval within 30 days. Contract staff opportunities to support district staff and project requirements are also addressed for action.

Wawa District continues to support Regional Office and other parts of MNR in ongoing efforts that include forest tenure modernization and management unit amalgamations. These ongoing efforts, if and when approved will reduce the commitment required to support five forest management units within the district.

As an interim measure, Wawa District with the support of the Timmins Regional Office has used virtually every means at its disposal to attempt to secure the staffing

resources required to meet its CFSA obligations. These efforts include where possible the recruitment of retired and skilled contract staff, interns, students assistant management foresters (2A) and delegating as much non RPF work to other staff as possible. Meeting CFSA obligations remains the greatest challenge faced by the district.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Continued use of the Wawa District IFA Management Strategy.