

Algoma Forest

2016-2021

Management Unit Action Plan

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Algoma Forest 2021 Independent Forest Audit

Action Plan Submission Signature Page

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Introduction

This Action Plan presents the findings of the 2021 Independent Forest Audit of the Algoma Forest conducted by Arbex Forest Resource Consultants Ltd. The final audit report was received in November 2021 and the audit scope covers the period from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2021. Audit procedures and criteria are specified in the 2021 Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol.

In December 2021, the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry (NDMNRF) reviewed the final audit report and NDMNRF is satisfied that the report is complete and hereby gave notice that the report is accepted by the ministry.

Upon review of the audit report, it has been determined that an action plan is needed to address its findings. The action plan is due by March 1, 2022. The ministry will be initiating the development of the action plan and will require Clergue Forest Management Inc. to participate in its preparation.

Finding #1:

The operational standards for forestry aggregate pits identified in the Forest Management Planning Manual and the 2020-2030 Forest Management Plan were not consistently met.

Action Required:

1. Forestry aggregate pits consistently meet operational standards identified in the FMPM and the FMP through training of each FRL holder on the appropriate operational standards for forestry aggregate pits.
2. A joint meeting in the field will be scheduled for forestry compliance inspectors (both NDMNRF and SFL) to review the challenges faced and to revisit the operational standards required for forestry aggregate pits.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. SFL planning forester.
2. NDMNRF Resources Management Supervisor.

Deadline Date:

1. April 1, 2023.
2. April 1, 2023.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Forest compliance inspections, 2022-23 AWS Compliance Plan, signed 2022 AWS Start-up Meeting Minutes
2. Annual reports.

Finding # 2:

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry, Sault Ste Marie District Office did not process proposals to decommission roads for transfer to the Crown in a timely manner.

Action Required:

1. SFL to provide NDMNRF one 'road transfer' FMP amendment annually in the spring to allow NDMNRF field staff one snow free season to inspect roads proposed for transfer.
2. A review and/or inspection by NDMNRF will determine the complexity of the road transfer. NDMNRF to promptly process amendment following field staff inspections.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. SFL Planning Forester and NDMNRF Resources Management Supervisor.
2. NDMNRF Resources Management Supervisor.

Deadline Date:

1. Annually, ideally before April 1st of each year the SFL will provide roads transfer amendment. April 2023.
2. NDMNRF will inspect necessary roads proposed for transfer by end of fall and will report back to the SFL for transfer requirements in the fall (e.g. removing a water crossing). NDMNRF will process road transfer amendment by December 1st annually. December 2023.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Operational road transfers will carry on as normal as they are automatically transferred and are tracked in Annual Reports. The Algoma Forest Management Plan and corresponding amendments will track all other road transfers.
2. District FMP Amendment Tracker.

Finding # 3

Conditions on operations within the Voyageur Trail Association Area of Concern were not fully adhered to despite training efforts by the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resource and Forestry District Office and Clergue Forest Management Inc. to address the issue with the implicated Forest Resource Licensee.

Action Required:

1. Revisit specific AOC requirements with FRL holder, ensure FRL holder understands requirements.
2. Prioritise the respective FRL holder and VTA AOCs during annual compliance planning.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. SFL Planning Forester & NDMNRF Resources Management Supervisor
2. SFL Forestry Supervisor & NDMNRF Resources Management Supervisor

Deadline Date:

1. July 1, 2022
2. April 1, 2023

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Signed minutes of AWS Start-up Meeting, and any in-year start up meetings.
2. Algoma Forest AWS Compliance Plan, NDMNRF District compliance Plan.

Finding # 4:

Annual Reports did not fully meet the requirements of the 2017 Forest Management Planning Manual.

Action Required:

1. Revisit the requirements for Annual Reports identified in appropriate Forest Management Planning Manual and corresponding Forest Information Manual Annual Report Technical Specifications.
2. The Annual Report submissions need to be reviewed to ensure that they contain all the required information.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. Clergue Forest Management Inc. Planning Forester
2. NDMNRF Resources Management Supervisor

Deadline Date:

1. 2022 Annual Report Review period
2. 2022 Annual Report Review period

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Algoma Forest Annual Reports
2. Algoma Forest Annual Reports

Finding #5:

The Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry, Sault Ste Marie District Office did not fully meet the Silviculture Effectiveness Monitoring Program direction.

Action Required:

1. NDMNRF Sault Ste. Marie District planned a SEM program for the 2020-21 field season, however, due to the pandemic the field program was cancelled. While Sault Ste. Marie District received SEM direction from the Northeast Region Regional Operations Division each year, it is currently under the authority of the District Manager to prioritize SEM and allocate the necessary resources (i.e. staff) to complete the program. Going forward, annual Silviculture Effectiveness Monitoring (SEM) programs will be developed and implemented in accordance with the Silviculture Monitoring program direction (e.g. Regeneration Assessment Program (RAP) Field Manual, currently applied throughout the Northeast Region).
2. NDMNRF Sault District and Clergue Forest Management Inc. staff will meet to discuss SEM/RAP results at a mutually agreed time.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. NDMNRF Resources Management Supervisor
2. NDMNRF Resources Management Supervisor and SFL Forestry Supervisor.

Deadline Date:

1. April 1, 2022, annually
2. April 1, 2022, annually

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. District SEM/RAP Report.
2. District SEM/RAP Report.

Finding #6:

The Forest Renewal Trust minimum balance was not maintained during the audit period.

Action Required:

1. SFL holder will review anticipated harvest volumes and propose Renewal rates that will ensure minimum balance is achieved within one year.
2. NDMNRF will meet with SFL holder mid-year to make an assessment on projected minimum balance achievement, if deemed necessary Regional Director may increase renewal rate mid year to achieve minimum balance by end of fiscal year.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. SFL Forestry Supervisor
2. SFL Forestry Supervisor, Regional Operations Forester, District Manager, Regional Director

Deadline Date:

1. Mid March 2022
2. November 1, 2022

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. The Forest Renewal Trust (FRT). And FRT Ledger kept updated monthly by SFL.
2. FRT monthly statements.

Finding #7:

Tree marking audits are not being completed by the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry District Office, despite the significance of tree marking on forest sustainability, forest health, forest renewal and the considerable expenditure of public funds on the activity.

Action Required:

1. NDMNRF Sault Ste. Marie District will retain a third party (e.g., tree marking consultant) to conduct audits on behalf of the District. The District Manager will look into other alternate options such as including the potential for existing District staff to receive level two tree marking in the long-term.
2. NDMNRF Northeast Region will conduct an analysis to determine the cost benefit to hiring a third party versus training District staff to receive Level 2 tree marking certification required to audit tree marking

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. NDMNRF Sault Ste. Marie District District Manager and Resources Management Supervisor
2. NDMNRF Northeast Region, Regional Manager
3. NDMNRF Northeast Region, Director

Deadline Date:1. April 1, 2023

2. April 1, 2023

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. NDMNRF District Compliance Plan
2. NDMNRF Northeast Region Forestry Budget