

# **TIMISKAMING FOREST**

2009 - 2016

Management Unit Action Plan

**Status Report**

## Timiskaming Forest 2016 Independent Forest Audit Status Report Signature Page

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# **Timiskaming Forest 2016 Independent Forest Audit Action Plan Approval Signature Page**

**Approved By:**

Date:

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## **Introduction**

This action plan describes the recommendations and associated resolutions of an Independent Forest Audit (IFA) of the Timiskaming Forest conducted by a team of five independent auditors led by Craig Howard, R.P.F. for the seven-year period of April 1, 2009 through March 31, 2016.

Management of the Timiskaming Forest is carried out under Sustainable Forest Licence (SFL) No. 542247 by Timiskaming Forest Alliance Inc. (TFAI). Administration of the Forest by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) is led by the Kirkland Lake district office, with shared responsibilities from Timmins district office. Small portions of the forest also fall within the Cochrane and Sudbury Districts.

The final Audit report was accepted by the Forestry Futures Trust Committee, and provided to TFAI, MNR Kirkland Lake and Timmins District and Northeast Region on March 29, 2017. The report contained ten recommendations, including three which were directed to corporate MNR. This Action Plan addresses the seven recommendations which were directed to TFAI and/or district MNR.

Submission of this Status Report by the Kirkland Lake District Manager is due June 22, 2019.

## Recommendations

### Recommendation #1:

At an individual Aboriginal community level, the MNRF, together with the forest industry and local Aboriginal communities, must consider an approach to tracking economic involvement in the Forest over time.

#### Action Required:

1. Kirkland Lake and Timmins MNRF will continue to submit Condition 56 Reports (via SurveyMonkey) on a biannual basis, as dictated by Corporate MNRF.
2. Kirkland Lake MNRF, as the forest lead, will initiate a discussion with the sustainable forest licensee, Timmins District MNRF, as well as the local aboriginal communities (who actively engaged in the FMP planning process) to document and share economic involvement information.
3. Kirkland Lake MNRF, as the forest lead, as well as TFAI, and Timmins District MNRF will work with the interested aboriginal communities to develop each community's individual process for documenting economic benefits. The process for how this report is compiled, including (but not limited to) the confidentiality of the report, the frequency of reporting, and the report format will be discussed and agreed to with all parties involved.

#### Progress to Date:

1. Report submitted in November of 2018, next report will be submitted in 2020
2. & 3.  
Due to the confidentiality of the business to business agreements that are made between the SFL and the local Indigenous communities, TFAI shareholders concluded that this information will be tracked by each company and within the SFL only. This was confirmed to MNRF in April of 2019, therefore the engagement of the communities by the MNRF was not required.

#### Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Tracking via the completion of the online SurveyMonkey, or any other submission method as dictated by Corporate MNRF
2. & 3.  
None required.

## **Recommendation #2:**

The MNRF districts must examine their amendment and revision processing to determine ways to speed approvals and improve consistency between districts.

### **Action Required:**

1. Kirkland Lake MNRF, as the lead district, will facilitate the update of the Inter-District Protocol between Kirkland Lake and Timmins Districts, including customer service standards for amendment and revision timelines in this document.
2. Both Kirkland Lake and Timmins MNRF staff to work with TFAI to come up with process documents to assist all parties with the preparation, processing and tracking of amendments and revisions. Also, to look for streamlining opportunities, and to identify lags in the current system.

### **Progress to Date:**

1. & 2.

After the generation of the draft audit report, the MNRF and TFAI arranged a meeting to discuss amendments and revisions and how the processing time for these can be reduced (where applicable). This meeting was held on September 23, 2016, with a follow up meeting held January 25, 2017. These meetings included members of both Kirkland Lake and Timmins MNRF, as well as representatives from TFAI, including shareholder representatives.

These meetings discussed issues with the current processing of amendments and revisions by the Districts, how the SFL could assist in the review, and created processes to move forward. The outcomes from these meetings included:

1. The establishment of a biweekly call between the SFL and the MNRF to discuss the status of amendment and revisions currently in the queue for approval
2. The update of the MNRF Timiskaming Forest Inter-District Protocol
3. The creation of MNRF review time tracking ledgers, with an overall commitment to review and approve items within 45 days of receipt of a completed administrative amendment/revision package
4. The update of the AWS review procedure that was generated as part of the 2006 IFA audit. Updates included tailoring the document to the 2009 FMPM, as well as more clearly defining responsibilities and timelines
5. The creation of a “Pre-Submission Criteria Spreadsheet”, which put into more detail simple requests and timelines for approval, versus those requiring Indigenous notification.

One of the bigger discussions at the meetings was the amount of amendments required to change items that should have been caught during operational planning within the FMP. It was noted that operational road boundaries continue

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to be a struggling point with the shareholders. During the planning for the 2021 Forest Management Plan, more work should be done regarding the size and layout of these features

### **Future Tracking Requirements:**

1. & 2.

Future items to be tracked relating to the discussions had by the group identified above include:

1. Ongoing District MNRF tracking of approval times in a ledger, as reported on in the District Work Plan
2. Tracking of the number of amendments required in the 2021-2031 FMP for refinement of operational road boundaries.

**Recommendation #4:**

The Company, in cooperation with MNRF district staff, must review culvert installation procedures with operators to help the operators adapt to the wide range of conditions that could be encountered on the Timiskaming Forest prior to, during, and post installation.

**Action Required:**

1. SFL to review water crossing sizing reports to ensure operators are aware of the conditions under which each crossing was evaluated.
2. SFL, in cooperation with MNRF district staff, to facilitate a training session to provide a workshop for water crossing installations on forest access roads.
3. SFL and MNRF to communicate options to forest operators for water crossing installation procedures which relate to preventing and mitigating post installation problems (e.g. downstream scouring).

**Progress to Date:**

1. The pre-operations checklist posted on the TFAI website has been updated to include water crossing evaluations and risk rating. This is posted for Shareholders and their contractors to review for each block.
2. A Joint Inspector field session between TFAI and MNRF was held on October 11, 2018 which included bridge and culvert stops. A review of water crossings and stream permanency was carried out during a joint MNRF-TFAI field tour on June 11, 2019.
3. The IFA findings, including Recommendations #4, along with the SFO protocol were discussed at the TFAI Forest Operations Group meeting April 17, 2018. In addition, a presentation of the DFO protocol was delivered at the annual TFAI Spring Operators Meeting held on May 23, 2018.

**Future Tracking Requirements:**

1. None required.
2. None required.
3. None required.



**Recommendation #5:**

The MNRF shall increase the level of compliance monitoring on the Timmins District portion of the Forest so that it applies a consistent and appropriate level of compliance monitoring on all parts of the Timiskaming Forest.

**Action Required:**

1. Timmins ACOP will include risk-based compliance monitoring targets that will reflect an appropriate level on the Timmins District portion of the Timiskaming Forest.
2. Staffs who are identified as having forest compliance monitoring responsibilities will be assigned inspection targets through the District Compliance Team in consultation with their supervisor. This will include a regular review of ACOP targets.
3. Timmins District will endeavour to have certified inspectors available in support of Action #1.
4. Kirkland Lake and Timmins Districts to have a joint meeting to discuss compliance trends on the Timiskaming Forest annually prior to the setting of ACOP targets.

**Progress to Date:**

1. Since 2017 a risk-based approach has been used annually to assign a priority for each scheduled forest operation in Timmins District. The ACOP identifies targets, by priority for each type of operation, and each Forest. The status of operations is tracked using the “Operations Bulleting Board”. Target achievement is reported annually in the ACOP. Starting in 2019-20 progress toward targets will be reviewed quarterly and adjusted accordingly based on whether scheduled operations occur or not.
2. Emphasis has been on getting additional Resource Technicians certified as Inspectors and the resolution of Forest compliance operating issues across the District, not just on the Timiskaming Forest. Staff have participated in specific Forest Compliance Team meetings; however, a *Timmins District* Compliance Team has not been established. Forest compliance targets have not been assigned by supervisors.

During 2019-20 a Timmins District Forestry Compliance Team will be established (members to include Resources Management Supervisor, Forestry Technical Specialist, all FOIP Inspectors, Forests). Regular meetings (monthly to start with) will be held and documented using the Forestry OneNote program. The “Technician Scheduler” program, created in 2017 and used since then, for Resource Technician work assignments will be transitioned to include forest compliance duties for all certified FOIP inspectors within the District. Staff with forest compliance mentoring responsibilities will have forest compliance targets identified in their Performance Development Plans starting in 2019-20.

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3. Timmins had one person successfully complete the provincial forest operations inspection course in 2017. No course was offered in 2018. Two staff are scheduled to attend the 2019 course. As of June 2019, Timmins has six certified inspectors (2 Resource Technicians, 1 Forestry Technical Specialist, 1 IRM Technical Specialist, 1 Management Biologist, 1 Forester).
4. The Forestry Technical Specialists from Timmins and Kirkland Lake have met semi-annually since 2017-18.

### **Future Tracking Requirements:**

1. Continue to assign priorities and targets in the ACOP and use the Operations Bulleting Board to track progress.
2. Progress will be tracked through the District Compliance Team OneNote records, the “Technician Scheduler”, and individual Performance Development Plans.
3. Continue to monitor the number of certified staff within the District and identify training needs in conjunction with scheduling of certification courses.
4. None required, but meeting minutes will be kept on file.

**Recommendation #6:**

Kirkland Lake and Timmins Districts of the MNRF shall address the 18 outstanding operational compliance issues on the Timiskaming Forest as expeditiously as possible and develop a process to deal with future operational issues in a timely manner.

**Action Required:**

1. MNRF Districts must review any of the 18 outstanding operational issues in their Districts, determine their status, and action them accordingly.
2. MNRF Districts will create an internal protocol to shorten the amount of time between when an inspection is completed and when the documentation will be approved on the FOIP website. This protocol will be shared with all FOIP inspectors within the District(s) for consistent implementation.

**Progress to Date:**

1. All outstanding operational issues have been addressed by MNRF.
2. Each District has created their own process for dealing with FOIP inspections:

Kirkland Lake District MNRF has re-implemented monthly compliance meetings, during which all outstanding operational issues are addressed. The District has also created an internal review form for inspection reports to allow for group input between meetings, assisting inspectors with their decisions and expediting the inspection input process.

Timmins District has created a District Forestry Compliance Team, and has met monthly since the beginning of the 2019 operating year. This group reviews all operational issues found on the forest and establishes timeframes for completion. They are also working on creating an internal protocol.

**Future Tracking Requirements:**

1. None required.
2. All items will be tracked in the minutes from each District's monthly compliance meeting.

**Recommendation #8:**

Timiskaming Forest Alliance Inc. shall undertake an analysis to determine the factors that may be affecting its reported silvicultural success rates and develop strategies that will yield silvicultural success rates that more closely reflect its field results on a schedule that will coincide with the submission of the 2016-17 annual report.

**Action Required:**

1. TFAI will undertake an analysis to determine the factors which may be affecting the reported silvicultural success rates.
2. TFAI will provide awareness training to TFAI Operators related to the importance of confirming or updating the planned forest unit of allocated stands at the time of harvest at the next regularly scheduled Spring Operators Meeting, as this was found to be a potential source of the error in the Audit Report.
3. Updated planned forest unit information will be provided to MNR via:
  - a. The harvest depletion layer as the Depletion Forest Unit, or
  - b. The SGR update layer

**Progress to Date:**

1. All Free-to-Grow surveys conducted during the 2011 plan were carried out under the 2009 FMPM. This manual defines silvicultural success as stands which have been successfully regenerated to the projected FU (as identified in the SGR future forest unit). The results of the free-to-grow surveys (up to the last approved Annual Report) are summarized in the Table 1 below. Although most records show area regenerating to forest units other than the target unit, many of these should also be considered silvicultural successes. If a stand is regenerated to a forest unit within the suite of acceptable forest units (identified in the SGR development info section), these in reality are successes. In addition, the *Conservation Strategy for White and Red Pine Management on the Timiskaming Forest* should also be reflected in the determination of success. For example, if a stand is regenerated to a white or red pine leading forest unit, and this resulting forest unit is not listed in the suite of SGR-acceptable forest units, this should also be considered a success as it is showing movement towards the objectives in the strategy. In sum, the levels of silvicultural success can be attributed to the application of the FMPM definition, rather than the actual, field-observed results which, in many cases, fall within the SGR-acceptable suite of forest units.
2. IFA Recommendation 8 was presented to TFAI operators at the Spring Operators meeting on April 25, 2017.
3. TFAI submits updated SGR layers annually via Annual Reports. The SEPFU is reported in the AR harvest layer each year, which incorporates feedback from harvesting operators and regeneration assessment surveys.

**Future Tracking Requirements:**

1. None required.
2. None required.
3. None required.

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Table 1. Results (percentage) of area FTG surveyed from 2011-2017 by SGR.

Sum of AREA SGR	FTGFU														Grand Total	TARGETFU
	BW1	LC1	MW1	MW2	OH1	PJ1	PJ2	PG1	PWR_L	SB1	SF1	SP1				
BW1_ELITE1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	PJ1
BW1_EXT	12%	0%	3%	10%	0%	1%	0%	73%	0%	0%	1%	0%	100%	PO1	100%	PJ1
BW1_INT1	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	27%	5%	0%	12%	0%	10%	41%	100%	LC1	100%	LC1
LC1_EXT	0%	0%	16%	18%	0%	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	2%	58%	100%	LC1	100%	LC1
LC1_INT1	0%	38%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	100%	PJ1	100%	PJ1
MW1_BASIC1	0%	0%	8%	0%	0%	78%	12%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	PO1	100%	PO1
MW1_EXT	0%	0%	4%	13%	0%	1%	1%	77%	0%	0%	2%	2%	100%	PJ1	100%	PJ1
MW1_INT1	0%	0%	0%	8%	0%	58%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	100%	MW2	100%	MW2
MW2_EXT	2%	0%	2%	22%	3%	0%	0%	67%	2%	1%	0%	2%	100%	SP1	100%	SP1
MW2_INT1	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	14%	1%	2%	9%	2%	0%	0%	100%	PJ1	100%	PJ1
PJ1_BASIC1	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	92%	4%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	PJ1	100%	PJ1
PJ1_BASIC2	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	PJ1	100%	PJ1
PJ1_ELITE1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	77%	9%	0%	2%	0%	2%	9%	100%	MW1	100%	MW1
PJ1_EXT	0%	0%	35%	5%	0%	22%	19%	14%	0%	0%	1%	3%	100%	PJ1	100%	PJ1
PJ1_INT1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	89%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	PJ1	100%	PJ1
PJ2_BASIC1	0%	0%	7%	0%	0%	44%	49%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	PJ1	100%	PJ1
PJ2_ELITE1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	28%	57%	0%	0%	0%	0%	15%	100%	MW1	100%	MW1
PJ2_EXT	0%	0%	22%	0%	0%	2%	16%	53%	0%	0%	3%	7%	100%	PJ1	100%	PJ1
PJ2_INT1	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	82%	8%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	100%	PJ1	100%	PJ1
PO1_ELITE1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	86%	0%	0%	0%	100%	PO1	100%	PO1
PO1_EXT	1%	2%	4%	2%	1%	2%	1%	86%	0%	0%	0%	1%	100%	PJ1	100%	PJ1
PO1_INT1	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%	62%	13%	3%	4%	0%	2%	11%	100%	PR1	100%	PR1
PR1_INT1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	PWR_H	100%	PWR_H
PWR_H_PRE	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	29%	71%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	PWR_H	100%	PWR_H
PWR_L_INT1	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	27%	100%	SB1	100%	SB1
SB1_BASIC1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	63%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	0%	100%	SB1	100%	SB1
SB1_BASIC2	0%	81%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	19%	100%	SB1	100%	SB1
SB1_EXT	0%	27%	0%	8%	0%	0%	5%	4%	0%	20%	25%	12%	100%	SB1	100%	SB1
SB1_INT1	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%	19%	7%	0%	2%	18%	12%	29%	100%	SP1	100%	SP1
SF1_ELITE1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	31%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%	100%	SF1	100%	SF1
SF1_EXT	0%	0%	4%	6%	0%	0%	0%	2%	32%	0%	0%	22%	100%	SP1	100%	SP1
SF1_INT1	2%	0%	0%	5%	0%	6%	3%	5%	5%	6%	2%	0%	100%	SP1	100%	SP1
SP1_BASIC1	0%	2%	3%	0%	0%	47%	44%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	SP1	100%	SP1
SP1_ELITE1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%	28%	0%	0%	0%	0%	62%	100%	SP1	100%	SP1
SP1_EXT	0%	0%	25%	19%	0%	0%	4%	11%	0%	42%	0%	0%	100%	SP1	100%	SP1
SP1_INT1	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	29%	11%	0%	2%	9%	19%	23%	100%	SP1	100%	SP1
Grand Total	1%	2%	3%	3%	0%	37%	6%	28%	2%	2%	4%	11%	100%			

Success (FMP-4)  
 Acceptable based on SGR expected outcomes (FMP-4)  
 Acceptable based on PW/PR conservation strategy

**Recommendation #10:**

Timiskaming Forest Alliance Inc. shall take the necessary measures to address the remaining Class Y and Z lands it is obligated to treat and report upon these areas as stipulated under its SFL agreement prior to the next independent forest audit scheduled for the Timiskaming Forest.

**Action Required:**

1. The SFL will assess the remaining Class Y and Z Lands during the 2017 Free-to-Grow assessment program.
2. The SFL will assess any areas not declared Free-to-Grow for future treatment or future assessment.

**Progress to Date:**

1. The 329 hectares identifies in the IFA Report is all designated as Class Z land. Of the amount, 34 hectares is scheduled for a Free-to-Grow survey in 2019. The remainder of the area is planned to be surveyed in 2019 or 2020.
2. All areas which are not declared Free-to-Grow at the time of assessment are carried forward for future assessment which may include additional treatment.

**Future Tracking Requirements:**

1. Free-to-Grow surveys to be completed on all outstanding Class Z areas.
2. None required.