

**LAC SEUL FOREST 2011-2017
INDEPENDENT FOREST AUDIT
MANAGEMENT UNIT
ACTION PLAN**

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Lac Seul Forest 2011-2017 Independent Forest Audit Action Plan Approval Signature Page

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Introduction

In September 2017, an Independent Forest Audit (IFA) was conducted on the Lac Seul Forest for the period April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2017. The final audit report was received December 22, 2017 and was accepted by the Forestry Futures Trust Committee (FFTC) on December 28, 2017. This Action Plan is required to be submitted within three months of the FFTC's acceptance of the Final Report (i.e. by March 28, 2018). Currently, and at the time of the IFA, the Lac Seul Forest is being managed under an Enhance Forest Resource License (eFRL) which is forecasted to transition to an Enhanced Sustainable Forest License (eSFL) in 2018. This was an important consideration in the wording in extending the license. Any references in this document refer to both the FRL holder and SFL holder as "FRL/SFL holder" in anticipation of the eSFL signing.

The final audit report for the Lac Seul Forest includes 11 Findings and two Best Management Practices. Findings (#1, #2, #3, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10 and #11) are directed to the FRL/SFL holder (Obishikokaang Resources Corporation (ORC)) and/or the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), Sioux Lookout District. Findings #4 and #12 will be directed to Corporate MNR.

It is important to note the 2017 Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol (IFAPP) which guides the audit process, has implemented change in which audit teams develop action items based on a statement of "Findings" produced by the auditor. Beginning in 2017, the regulatory requirement (Ontario 160/04) to provide "Recommendations" is satisfied by the statement of findings, of which supporting evidence and conclusions for each finding is documented in the "Record of Findings" of the IFA report Appendices. The action items and responsibilities which follow are based upon an analysis of this information by the audit team.

Additionally, "Corporate MNR" finding will now be assessed for appropriate action as part of the management unit's individual IFA Action Plan by the audit team and not in a separate "Provincial Action Plan" as in past IFA's. Corporate MNR tasked action items will describe the action required and provide a statement that it will be considered as part of the regular corporate work planning and policy review cycle.

This action plan outlines the actions required, responsibility, timelines, and method of tracking progress of actions for the management unit findings and conclusions.

Findings

Principle 1: Commitment

Finding # 1:

Access restriction signage on the Lac Seul Forest is ineffective and/or missing.

Action(s) required:

1. Sioux Lookout District Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) will enhance/update the existing sign inventory and monitoring schedule with respect to access restriction signs on the Lac Seul Forest, to ensure that all signs are in place, are legible and maintained to be effective.
2. Sioux Lookout District MNRF will phase out the future use of and replace all existing locations that have chloroplast access restriction signs.
3. Sioux Lookout District MNRF will determine where signs can be erected at locations where decommissioning activities have occurred that may pose a public safety risk. This is in response to a deficiency that was suggested by the auditors on the Wind road where berms exist before a removed bridge and no sign was present. These signs will be added to the inventory.

Organization and position responsible:

1-3 Sioux Lookout District MNRF, Resource Management Supervisor & Integrated Resource Management (IRM) Technical Specialist

Deadline date:

1. May 30, 2018
2. Before end of 2018 field season.
3. Before end of 2018 field season.

Method of tracking progress:

1. Sioux Lookout Annual Compliance and Operations Plan.
2. Sign inventory identifying all sign replacements and new material type used.
3. Additional signs added to inventory and uniquely marked for future audits to review.

Principle 2.0: Public Consultation and Aboriginal Involvement

Finding #2:

The use of acronyms use in public forest management presentations and documents is a barrier to understanding and full participation by the public.

Action(s) required:

1. Sioux Lookout District MNRF will share a list of acronyms frequently used in presentations to the LCC and members of the public and share them with the Local Citizen Committee (LCC) members and incorporate the list into the LCC Terms of Reference.
2. Sioux Lookout District MNRF will adhere to the Ontario Public Service Content Style Guide for written and verbal communication with public with respect to abbreviations and acronyms.

Organization and position responsible:

1. Sioux Lookout District MNRF, District Manager/LCC Chair
2. Sioux Lookout District MNRF, District Manager.

Deadline date:

1. August 30, 2018.
2. April 30, 2018.

Method of tracking progress:

1. List of acronyms document in LCC terms of reference, LCC Minutes documenting list being provided to LCC members.
2. All staff email with expectations of the Ontario Public Service Content Style Guide & incorporation into local staff direction.

Finding #3:

Sioux Lookout District Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has not met a commitment to complete a review of the Crown Land Use Policy Atlas (CLUPA) policy report for the area south of the caribou line on the Lac Seul Forest.

Action(s) required:

1. Sioux Lookout District MNRF will complete a review of CLUPA policy G2515, for the area outside of the Range Management Policy in Support of Woodland Caribou Conservation and Recovery (2014). This review will primarily look at existing values or uses that are currently being addressed through other land use direction and ensure that the suite of permitted uses is consistent with the outcomes of the review.

Organization and position responsible:

1. Sioux Lookout District MNRF, District Operations Supervisor.

Deadline date:

1. August 31, 2018.

Method of tracking progress:

1. District Manager review of internal/external list of comments or recommendations.

Principle: 3.14 Annual Work Schedules

Finding #4:

Forest management planning consultation and communication efforts are ineffective and too technical for the Aboriginal community.

Action(s) required:

1. The finding will be considered as part of the regular Corporate MNRF work planning and policy review cycle.

Finding #5:

Forest Operations Prescription (FOP) changes are not certified by a Registered Professional Forester (R.P.F.) in a manner that is consistent with the Forest Management Planning Manual (FMPM).

Action(s) required:

1. ORC Silviculture Forester (Lead) and ORC Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Specialist will prepare a spreadsheet and maps of the Silviculture Ground Rules (SGR)/FOP changes and ensure the changes are certified by a registered professional forester each year.
2. ORC Silviculture Forester (Lead) and ORC Planning and Development Forester will ensure that the record of SGR/FOP changes information is maintained by completing and certifying each year. The spatial data layer of SGR/FOP changes will be submitted in the corresponding fiscal year Annual Report, as per the 2009 and 2017 Forest Management Planning Manuals, and Forest Information Manual Technical Specifications.

Organization and position responsible:

1. ORC Silviculture Forester (Lead) and ORC GIS Specialist
2. ORC Silviculture Forester (Lead) and ORC Planning and Development Forester

Deadline date:

1. December 31, 2017 and ongoing each year thereafter.
2. December 31, 2017 and ongoing each year thereafter.

Method of tracking progress:

1. Spreadsheet and maps of SGR/FOP changes
2. Annual Reports, Revised Spatial Layers

Principle 3: Forest Management Planning

Finding #6:

There were errors and omissions in the Phase II Area of Concern prescriptions for some wildlife species.

Action(s) required:

1. ORC Planning Forester (Lead) and Planning and Development Forester (Lead) will submit an amendment request to include the area of concern prescriptions as required for the FMP-10 and FMP-19 tables for bat hibernacula, active great blue heron colonies, great horned owl stick nests, barred owl stick nests, and rivers and streams with a moderate or high potential sensitivity to operations.

Organization and position responsible:

1. ORC Planning Forester (Lead), ORC Planning and Development Forester, and MNRF District Management Biologist(s).

Deadline date:

1. August 1, 2018

Method of tracking progress:

1. Amendment request available on the FI Portal submission and approval page; SFL and District Amendment records

Principle 4: Plan Assessment and Implementation

Finding #7:

The wildlife tree retention requirements specified in CRO-10 (Condition on Regular Operations) in the Phase II plan for the Lac Seul Forest have not been met on all sites.

Action(s) required:

1. Obishikokaang Resources - Operations Forester to determine which harvesting operator was responsible for CRO-10 Wildlife Tree deficient sites and further investigate why there was a deficiency in wildlife tree retention.
2. Obishikokaang Resources – Compliance Forester to conduct additional compliance inspections on contractor areas with deficient sites.
3. As a priority, MNRF will add wildlife tree retention, as per CRO-10, into the annual compliance operations plan (ACOP).

Organization and position responsible:

1. Obishikokaang Resources – Operations Forester (Lead) and Compliance Forester.
2. Obishikokaang Resources – Compliance Forester
3. District MNRF – Management Forester.

Deadline date:

1. January 30, 2018
2. January 30, 2018
3. April 1, 2018 (start of new ACOP)

Method of tracking progress:

1. Lac Seul Forest harvesting records for each block identified during IFA and IFA photos of areas.
2. Compliance Reporting, analysis of FOIP data and plot data.
3. Sioux Lookout Annual Compliance and Operations Plan.

Finding #8:

Not enough consideration is given to natural ingress on some sites.

Action(s) required:

1. ORC Planning Forester (Lead) and ORC Silviculture Forester will review and summarize the Forest Units/ Ecosites and species compositions having the highest potential for natural ingress and consider incorporating these findings into the next Ten-Year FMP (2021-31 FMP).
2. Field verification of FOPs (ie; Post Harvest Silviculture Prescription Survey) will provide more information for the consideration of natural ingress of conifer and hardwood species.
 - a. This consideration will be implemented through evaluating Pre-Harvest Forest Units/ Ecosites and species compositions, from Forest Resource Inventory (FRI), when verifying/ changing renewal treatment prescriptions.
 - b. Further consideration will include season, or month of harvest, on harvested blocks prior to Silviculture field staff verifying/ refining renewal treatment prescriptions.

Organization and position responsible:

1. ORC Planning Forester (Lead) and ORC Silviculture Forester
2. a. ORC Silviculture Forester (Lead)
b. ORC Operations Supervisor (Lead)

Deadline date:

1. December 2018 (Checkpoint 3 - Base Model Inventory for 10 Year FMP (2021-31 FMP)).
2. April 1, 2018

Method of tracking progress:

1. Status Report will identify any actions that were required and what was actually done based on company records; documented in future 10-Year FMP Base Model Inventory.
2. Year 5 and Final Year Annual Reports Trends Analysis will identify results determining if FOPs and FTG assessments, based on new 10-Year FMP SGRs, are capturing natural ingress.

Finding #9

Road grading practices on the Lac Seul Forest do not consistently meet the Environmental Guidelines for Access Roads and Water Crossings.

Action(s) required:

1. The company will communicate best management practices and environmental benefits of proper grading (including to reduce or eliminate formation of false ditches) and to minimize environmental impacts from grading. This will be done through a series of meetings which will be scheduled with all contractors and licensees.
2. Ongoing monitoring of grading practices will be concurrent with operations. Where required in the FMP/AWS FOIP reports will be submitted.

Organization and position responsible:

1. ORC Operations Forester (Lead) and EMS Coordinator.
2. ORC Compliance Forester

Deadline date:

1. April 30, 2018
2. April 30, 2018

Method of tracking progress:

1. Documented meetings and grader operator training.
2. Records of contractor training sessions, reviews with contractors; Compliance Reporting; Analysis of FOIP data.

Finding #10:

Active gravel pits do not consistently meet the requirements for forestry aggregate pits as outlined in the Forest Management Planning Manual.

Action(s) required:

1. ORC – Operations (Lead) and Compliance Forester to ensure any necessary work required to the two pits (Pit 594L and Pit 1306 L) that did not meet the FMPM requirements are corrected and FOIP inspections to be completed.
2. Compliance Forester will review the Operational Standards for Forestry Aggregate Pits as per the FMPM (appendix 21), AOC prescriptions, CRO's, and ORC Standard Procedures Document ORD-2PR_81017 with operators during the annual spring meeting where sign off block maps are exchanged with licensees and contractors.

Organization and position responsible:

1. ORC – Operations (Lead) and Compliance Forester.
2. ORC – Operations (Lead) and Compliance Forester.

Deadline date:

1. August 30, 2018
2. August 30, 2018

Method of tracking progress:

1. FOIP inspections.

2. Records of training sessions, reviews with harvesting contractors and overlapping licensees.

Principle 7: Achievement of Management Objectives and Forest Sustainability

Finding #11:

The analysis of trends and achievements in the IFA-required Trends Analysis report was cursory, and some conclusions were not supported by data.

Action(s) required:

1. ORC Planning Forester (Lead) will provide further clarification and improve the three sections that the auditors had concerns with as noted above.
2. ORC Planning and Development Forester and MNRF will undertake a review of the final (October 10, 2017 version) Year 10-Annual Report/Trends Analysis Report as part of the 2017-2018 Year-10 Annual Report which is due November 15, 2018.

Organization and position responsible:

1. ORC Planning Forester
2. ORC Planning and Development Forester and MNRF Management Forester, MNRF Management Biologist, MNRF Regional Planning Forester, and MNRF Regional Forest Management Planning Specialist.

Deadline date:

1. Completed (October 10, 2017)
2. December 15, 2018

Method of tracking progress:

1. Revisions made to the draft Year 10 Annual Report- Trends Analysis Report.
2. The November, 2018 Year 10 Annual Report Final-Trends Analysis Report and FI Portal Submissions; MNRF District and Regional Review.

Principle 8: Contractual Obligations

Finding #12:

The enhanced Sustainable Forest License has not been signed

Action(s) required:

The finding will be considered as part of the regular Corporate MNRF planning and policy review cycle.