

OGOKI FOREST
2010-2017 INDEPENDENT FOREST
AUDIT
MANAGEMENT UNIT ACTION PLAN

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Ogoki Forest 2017 Independent Forest Audit

Action Plan Submission Page

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Introduction

In October 2017, an Independent Forest Audit (IFA) was conducted on the Ogoki Forest for the period April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2017. The final audit report was received December 22, 2017 and accepted by the Forestry Futures Trust Committee (FFTC) on December 22, 2017.

This action plan is required to be submitted within three months of the FFT's acceptance of the Final Report (i.e. by March 22, 2018).

At the time of the IFA, the Ogoki Forest remains managed as a Crown Forest by the Nipigon District Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

The final audit report for the Ogoki Forest includes 11 Findings which have been directed to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) as the manager of the Forest since 2013.

It is important to note that the implementation of 2017 Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol (IFAPP) introduced changes in how regulatory requirement Ontario 160/04 to provide "Recommendations" is satisfied. Under the 2017 IFAPP, this regulation is now satisfied through a 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 MNRF" findings will now be assessed for appropriate action as part of the management unit's (MU) individual IFA Action Plan rather than in a separate "Provincial Action Plan" as was done for past IFA's. Corporate MNRF-tasks 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 resulting from the IFA findings and conclusions.

Findings

Principle 1: Commitment

Finding #1:

The MNRF organization was not fully committed to meeting its legal requirements in place for sustainable management of the Ogoki Forest over the audited period.

Action Required:

1. Review and summarize legal forest management obligations which have been identified in the audit as not being met. Produce a list of missing information and reports not completed.

2. Review present district staff commitments, identify available resources, versus available budget to determine capacity requirements.
3. Identify issues in the District data/information management system and summarize. Revise as appropriate to meet legal requirements.
4. Negotiate a forest management agreement with prospective Ogoki Forest licensee(s) and summarize opportunities for the licensee to help in meeting legal requirements.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. MNRF Nipigon District Management Forester, Forestry Technical Specialist
2. MNRF Nipigon District Manager, Resources Management Supervisors, Resources Operations Supervisor
3. MNRF Nipigon District Integrated Resources Management (IRM) Technical Specialist, GIS Data Technician, Management Forester
4. MNRF Nipigon District Manager, Management Forester

Deadline Date:

1. October 1, 2018
2. October 1, 2018
3. October 1, 2018
4. April 30, 2018

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Summary of missing data and report information including Annual Reports (AR), completed monitoring; FOP's; forest operations compliance reports; roads/water crossings monitoring and decommissioning inventories; Geographic Information System (GIS) shape files as well as layers.
2. Annual District budget documentation, annual staff work commitments (e.g. FMP's, AWS, AR, training, other commitments etc.)
3. Updated data management system and GIS layers/shapefiles as well as records of completed reports related to monitoring; AR; FOP's; forest operations compliance reports; roads/water crossings monitoring and decommissioning inventories; up to date spatial data for areas eligible for Free-to-Grow assessment, surveys and reports.
4. Approved forestry agreement with prospective Ogoki Licensee(s) that identifies the legal requirements for which the licensee is responsible.

Principle 4: Plan Assessment and Implementation

Finding #2:

MNRF has not developed FOP prescriptions for silviculture undertaken in the Ogoki Forest as required by the FMPM.

Action Required:

1. Review present district staff commitments, identify available resources, versus available budget to determine capacity requirements.

2. Negotiate a forest management agreement with prospective Ogoki Forest licensee(s) that includes provisions for the licensee to meet obligations similar to that of a Sustainable Forest License (SFL) holder including the preparation of Annual Work Schedules and associated forest operations prescriptions.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. MNRF Nipigon District Manager, Resources Management Supervisors, Resources Operations Supervisor
2. MNRF Nipigon District Manager, Management Forester

Deadline Date:

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

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Annual district budget and work planning documentation
2. Signed forestry agreement with prospective Ogoki Licensee(s) that identifies the legal requirements for which the licensee is responsible.

Finding #3:

Conifer renewal is not being monitored for tending as required by the FMP and the 2010 IFA recommendation.

Action Required:

1. Review Actions #3 and #4 pertaining to Recommendation #2 of the 2010 IFA Action Plan and Status report. Determine and summarize the amount of outstanding area renewed to conifer which did not receive an assessment for tending during the 2010-2017 audit term and develop a strategy to address any backlog of conifer renewal assessments.
2. Review present district staff commitments, identify available resources, versus available budget to determine capacity requirements.
3. Negotiate a forest management agreement with prospective Ogoki Forest licensee(s) that includes provisions for the licensee to carry out silviculture work including monitoring of conifer renewal areas.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. MNRF District Management Forester, prospective Ogoki licensee, MNRF District GIS Data Technician, Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist, Resources Management Technician
2. MNRF Nipigon District Manager, Resources Management Supervisors, Resources Operations Supervisor
3. MNRF Nipigon District Manager, Management Forester

Deadline Date:

1. The later of January 1, 2019 and the date of draft submission of the 2019-2020 Annual Work Schedule for the Ogoki Forest.
2. October 1, 2018

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Inclusion of any conifer renewal areas eligible for assessment in the 2019-2020 Annual Work Schedule and/or future AWSs.
2. Survey information, data and reports, FOP and SGR changes as applicable, ARs, AWSs
3. Annual staff work scheduling and District budget preparation
4. Signed forestry agreement with prospective Ogoki Licensee(s) that includes the licensee's responsibilities to carry out eligible silviculture work.

Finding #4:

The roads and water crossings monitoring program that is outlined in Table FMP-18 of the Phase II FMP has not been followed.

Action Required:

1. Review of the roads and water crossing monitoring program of the Phase II FMP text (i.e. Section 8.7.4); tables (i.e. FMP-18); and Supplementary Documentation (i.e. Section 8.5) of the Phase II 2013-2018 FMP.
2. Review of past work completed and strategy developed, namely; Recommendation #3 and the strategy developed from the 2010 IFA Action Plan and Status Report, along with any available information from the previous service provider regarding the Forest Access Monitoring and Tracking program.
3. Compile all available MNRF District reports (including FOIP reports) and MNRF Northwest Regional Engineering reports for past inspections and monitoring of roads and water crossings. All available spatial data for roads and water crossings will be compiled into a shapefile or geodatabase to facilitate the submission of required FMP, AWS and AR information products pertaining to roads and water crossings.
4. Review present district staff capacity and commitments against available financial resources and budget staff time in the annual District work plan to monitor MNRF-responsible roads and water crossings as per FMP-18.
5. Using the information obtained from the actions above, develop a formal Roads Monitoring and Tracking program that meets requirements outlined in the Phase II FMP and facilitates the production of the required applicable FMP, AWS and AR spatial information products.
6. Negotiate a forest management agreement with prospective Ogoki Forest licensee(s) that includes provisions for the licensee to meet obligations similar to that of a Sustainable Forest License holder including monitoring and reporting of roads and water crossings.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. MNRF District Management Forester, Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist, Resource Management Supervisor, prospective Ogoki licensee
2. MNRF District Management Forester, Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist, Resource Management Supervisor, prospective Ogoki licensee

3. Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist, GIS Data Technician,
4. MNRF Nipigon District Manager, Resources Management Supervisors, Resources Operations Supervisor
5. MNRF District Resources Management Supervisor, Integrated Resources Management Technical Specialist, Management Forester
6. MNRF District Manager, Management Forester

Deadline Date:

1. October 1, 2018
2. October 1, 2018
3. October 1, 2018
4. October 1, 2018
5. October 1, 2018
6. April 30, 2018

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Inclusion of roads and water crossings scheduled for monitoring in the 2018-2019 AWS and subsequent AWSs and reported in ARs
2. Documentation of formal Roads Monitoring and Tracking program in the 2019-2020 AWS, and subsequent AWSs subject to the 2020-2030 Ogoki FMP currently under development.
3. Up-to-date files and geodatabase saved to Nipigon District File Plan (server)
4. Annual staff work scheduling and District budget preparation
5. Documentation of formal Roads Monitoring and Tracking program in the 2019-2020 AWS, and subsequent AWS's as applicable, and reporting of program results in ARs.
6. Signed forestry agreement with prospective Ogoki Licensee(s) that includes the licensee's responsibilities to carry out roads and water crossings monitoring.

Principle 5: System Support

Finding #5:

There are gaps in capacity and information management systems to support sustainable forest management of the Ogoki Forest.

Action Required:

1. Review current District staff capacity, commitments and available financial resources against a list of forest management functions for which the MNRF is responsible in the absence of a SFL holder, and identify gaps in capacity.
2. Negotiate a forest management agreement with prospective Ogoki Forest licensee(s) that includes provisions for the licensee to meet obligations similar to that of a Sustainable Forest License holder including production of the required annual products (AR, AWS), carrying out eligible silviculture work and forest operations compliance inspections and reporting.

Organization and position responsible:

1. MNRF Nipigon District Manager, Resources Management Supervisors, Resources Operations Supervisor, Management Forester
2. MNRF District Manager, Management Forester

Deadline Date:

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

Method of Tracking progress:

1. Annual staff work scheduling and District budget preparation; list of forest management functions for which MNRF is responsible in the absence of a SFL holder.
2. Signed forestry agreement with prospective Ogoki Licensee(s) that includes the licensee's responsibilities including production of the required annual products (AR, AWS), carrying out eligible silviculture work and forest operations compliance inspections and reporting.

Principle 6: Monitoring

Finding #6:

Compliance monitoring was not completed for all activities in the forest.

Action Required:

1. Review and summarize backlog and current areas of operations that have not received compliance inspections as well as any FOIP reports that may not be closed off.
2. Review the 2008-2018 Ogoki FMP Ten-Year Strategic Compliance Plan that was updated for Phase II planned operations (FMP text section 8.7.1) and develop an Annual District Compliance plan for the 2018-2019 AWS and subsequent AWSs.
3. Review and produce a list of current District staff compliance capacity and commitments against available financial resources. Arrange for compliance inspector training for staff where capacity exists.
4. Negotiate a forest management agreement with prospective Ogoki Forest licensee(s) that includes provisions for the licensee to meet obligations similar to that of a Sustainable Forest License holder including forest operations compliance monitoring and reporting.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. MNRF District Integrated Resources Management Technical Specialist, Management Forester
2. MNRF District Management Forester, Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist
3. MNRF Nipigon District Manager, Resources Management Supervisors, Resources Operations Supervisor
4. MNRF District Manager, Management Forester

Deadline Date:

1. October 1, 2018
2. By January 1 (every year)
3. October 1, 2018
4. April 30, 2018

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Summary of any compliance backlog, current areas of operations that require compliance inspections, and any FOIP reports yet to be closed off.
2. Annual Compliance Plans in Annual Work Schedules.
3. Annual District budget preparation and work scheduling; summary of FOIP compliance inspector training records of staff
4. Signed forestry agreement with prospective Ogoki Licensee(s) that includes the licensee's responsibilities including forest operations compliance inspections and reporting.

Finding #7:

Annual Reports were not submitted and approved in a timely manner and contained technical errors.

Action Required:

1. Review 2017-2018 and future AR submission cover pages for accuracy and agreement prior to acceptance or approval by District Manager, Regional Director and submission to the Forest Information Portal (FIPortal).
2. Review 2017-2018 and future AR tables and figures against submission text for accuracy and agreement before acceptance or approval by District Manager, Regional Director and submission to the FIPortal.
3. Review 2017-2018 and future AR GIS Layers against AR tables for accuracy and agreement before accepting or approving in the FIPortal.
4. Review 2014-2015 AR for approval and submission to the FIPortal and posting on eFMP site.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. District MNRF Management Forester, Regional Planning Forester (as required for enhanced ARs)
2. District MNRF Management Forester, Regional Planning Forester (as required for enhanced ARs)
3. District MNRF GIS Data Technician, Management Forester, Forester, MNRF Regional Planning Forester and Regional Forest Management Specialist.
4. MNRF District Management Forester, MNRF Regional Planning Forester and Regional Forest Management Specialist

Deadline Date:

1. November 15, 2018 and annually thereafter
2. November 15, 2018 and annually thereafter
3. November 15, 2018 and annually thereafter
4. November 15, 2018 and annually thereafter

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Approved annual reports and submission to FIPortal for posting to eFMP site
2. Approved annual reports and submission to FIPortal for posting to eFMP site
3. Approved annual reports and submission to FIPortal for posting to eFMP site
4. Completed 2014-2015 Annual Report and submission to FIPortal submission for posting to eFMP site.

Finding #8:

Nipigon District has not met the requirements of the Phase II Planned Operations silvicultural monitoring program for the Ogoki Forest.

Action Required:

1. Consolidate all District SEM records and reports for the Ogoki Forest onto the district shared drive and share with MNR Regional Forest Operations Specialist.
2. Review the silvicultural monitoring program in the approved FMP and identify missing FTG, SEM survey information including reports and analyses. Produce a summary of missing information to determine the extent of any backlog of Natural Regeneration, Post Establishment Regeneration, and Free-to-Grow/Successful Regeneration Assessments.
3. Review audit finding evidence and produce a summary of outstanding work to be completed for FTG and SEM survey areas. Develop a plan to complete required surveying on areas eligible for the assessments described in the FMP and in (2) above. It is understood that much of the area that may have previously been eligible for Natural Regeneration and Post Establishment Regeneration Assessments is now past the appropriate timing (i.e. years since establishment) for such surveys, and may have reached the minimum age for FTG assessments and instead be planned for these surveys.
4. Review present district staff commitments, identify available resources, versus available budget to determine capacity requirements.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. MNR District Management Forester, Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist, Resource Management Technician, Regional Forest Operations Specialist, Regional Forest Ecosystem Science Specialist.
2. MNR District Management Forester, Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist, Resource Management Technician, GIS Data Technician
3. MNR District Management Forester, Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist, GIS Data Technician, Resources Management Supervisor
4. MNR Nipigon District Manager, Resources Management Supervisors, Resources Operations Supervisor

Deadline Date:

1. October 1, 2018
2. October 1, 2018
3. April 15, 2019
4. October 1, 2018

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Updated District and Regional Files

2. Summary of missing information saved to District SEM folder on shared drive.
3. Proposal for a plan to address any backlog of SEM, FTG, Natural Regeneration and Post Establishment Regeneration Assessments
4. Annual MNRF District budget preparation and work planning documentation

Finding #9:

There is a large backlog of regenerated area in the Ogoki Forest that has not been assessed for Free-to-Grow status.

Action Required

1. Review the FTG silvicultural monitoring program in the approved FMP. Identify areas that require FTG survey work. Produce a summary of areas to be surveyed and incorporate these into the 2018-2019 AWS and subsequent AWSs.
2. Review current district staff capacity and commitments against available financial resources and incorporate District workload into the annual work plan.
3. Negotiate a forest management agreement with prospective Ogoki Forest licensee(s) that includes provisions for the licensee to meet obligations similar to that of a Sustainable Forest License holder including eligible silviculture work and associated monitoring and reporting.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. MNRF District Management Forester, GIS Data Technician, Resource Management Technician
2. MNRF Nipigon District Manager, Resources Management Supervisors, Resources Operations Supervisor
3. MNRF District Manager, Management Forester

Deadline Date:

1. June 1, 2018 and every June 1 thereafter for subsequent AWSs
2. October 1, 2018
3. April 30, 2018

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Summary of areas to be surveyed will be incorporated into the Scheduled Establishment Assessment (SEA) layer of the AWS by June 1 each year, consistent with the 2017 FIM AWS Technical Specifications. FTG survey data will be reported in the 2018-2019 Annual Report and future ARs (as applicable).
2. Annual MNRF District budget preparation and work planning documentation.
3. Signed forestry agreement with prospective Ogoki Licensee(s) that includes the licensee's responsibilities including eligible silviculture work and associated monitoring and reporting.

Finding #10

A slash management program was not implemented in the Ogoki Forest over the audited period as required by the FMP.

Actions Required:

1. Review section 8.2.2.2 of the FMP and licence conditions pertaining to slash management with licensee(s) at Annual Work Schedule Start-up meetings.
2. Ensure plans are underway for the licensee to address required slash treatment operations and identify planned treatment areas and inspections for these in the 2019-2020 AWS.
3. Negotiate a forest management agreement with prospective Ogoki Forest licensee(s) that includes provisions for the licensee to carry out slash management as required under the FMP.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. MNRF District Management Forester, Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist, Resource Management Technician, prospective Ogoki Forest licensee(s)
2. MNRF District Management Forester, Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist, Resource Management Technician, prospective Ogoki Forest licensee(s)
3. MNRF District Manager, Management Forester

Deadline Date:

1. May 30, 2018
2. The later of January 1, 2019 and the date of draft submission of the 2019-2020 Annual Work Schedule for the Ogoki Forest.
3. April 30, 2018

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Minutes from 2018-2019 Annual Work Schedule Start-up meeting.
2. 2019-2020 Annual Work Schedule, subsequent Annual Reports
3. Signed forestry agreement with prospective Ogoki Licensee(s) that includes provisions for the licensee to carry out slash management as required under the FMP.

Finding # 11:

The renewal rate analysis conducted for the Ogoki Forest, during the audit period, did not consider the full cost of the silvicultural liability

Action Required:

There is no new action required as a result of this Finding.