

Abitibi River Forest
April 1, 2010 – March 31, 2017
Management Unit Action Plan

Abitibi River Forest 2017 Independent Forest Audit

Action Plan Submission Signature Page

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Abitibi River Forest 2017 Independent Forest Audit

Action Plan Approval Signature Page

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Introduction

An Independent Forest Audit (IFA) of the Abitibi River Forest was conducted by KBM Resources Group in the month of October 2017. The audit scope included the 7 years of operations from April 1, 2010 through March 31, 2017.

The Abitibi River Forest SFL # 551832 is managed by Abitibi River Forest Management Inc (ARFMI). Administration of the forest by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) is led by the Cochrane District Office, with shared responsibilities from Timmins and Kirkland Lake District Offices. As well, the Regional Operations Division in the Northeast Regional Office has administrative responsibilities including the administration of the Forest Management Plan and the Independent Forest Audit.

The IFA Report was accepted by the Forestry Futures Committee on March 7, 2018 and provided to ARFMI, MNRF Cochrane District and Northeast Region on March 12, 2018. The report contained 5 findings, including 1 which was directed to corporate MNRF, and 4 which were directed to either district MNRF or ARFMI. This Action Plan addresses all 5 findings.

Findings

Finding #1:

IEA decision timelines for Phase II are significantly longer than prescribed by the FMPM. These cause delays in operations, unnecessarily angsts in participants, and increase administrative costs for forest managers.

Action Required:

1. This finding was deemed the responsibility of Corporate MNRF. The action will specify that corporate or policy level findings will be considered as part of the regular corporate work planning and policy review cycle. IEA decisions are the responsibility of MECP and not the MNRF. Due to this, MNRF has little influence on timelines of decision making by another Ministry. All best efforts are made to encourage MECP to make timely decisions by senior MNRF staff when necessary.

Finding #2:

The renewal support section lacked the mandatory requirements of the FMPM for including a FMU-level strategy for the long-term use of improved seed on the forest.

Action Required:

1. ARFMI to review its current use of improved seed on the forest and create a long term FMU-level strategy and amend a draft strategy into the current FMP.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. Abitibi River Forest Management Inc. – Plan Author

Deadline Date:

1. April 1, 2019 for existing FMP amendment to include strategy text.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Approved amendment to the 2012 FMP

Finding #3:

No progress has been made in experimental testing to determine inexpensive yet effective ways to rehabilitate roads back to the natural state as soon as possible after the cessation of forest operations, as outlined in the 2012-2022 FMP (Supplemental Documentation, ARFMI Implementation Toolkit).

Action Required:

1. MNRF and ARFMI will work together to find at least one site where an experimental decommissioning approach can be tested.
2. ARFMI will create a road decommissioning plan that will include the experimental decommissioning site(s). The decommissioning plan will include all roads and crossings that will be decommissioned, during the year, as well as the specific techniques and the results expected for the experimental test area(s) to help to determine inexpensive yet effective ways of rehabilitating roads back to a natural state as soon as possible. This decommissioning plan will be incorporated or revised into the AWS.
3. Following any experimental tests, ARFMI and MNRF staff will have a joint inspection of the site(s).
4. Results will be reported in the Annual Report and through regularly required FOIP reports.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. ARFMI – Plan Author & MNRF Management Forester & Biologist
2. ARFMI – Plan Author, with MNRF Biologist input

3. ARFMI - Plan Author & operations staff and MNRF Management Forest and Biologist
4. ARFMI – Compliance Inspectors and Plan Author

Deadline Date:

1. To be included in each AWS. For the 2019 -2020 AWS the decommissioning plan must be revised into the AWS prior to September 30, 2019.
2. Inspections must take place while work is being completed or immediately after.
3. To be included in the Annual Report, on or before November 15 of every year.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Annual Work Schedule
2. FOIP Reports
3. Annual Report

Finding #4:

The total area of declared natural renewal is not being amended to account for changes to the renewal prescriptions in the Trends Analysis Report.

Action Required:

1. SFL to continue to track changes in renewal prescriptions (Forest Operations Prescription (FOP)) on areas previously declared as natural renewal via the ARFMI GIS-based silvicultural tracking system.
2. SFL will report these Silvicultural Ground Rule (SGR) changes in each Annual Report through the updated Silvicultural Ground Rule Update Layer.
3. For reporting in the Year 5 and Final Year Annual Reports (Trends Analysis), the SFL will conduct a spatial analysis of regeneration treatments to ensure that subsequent updates to previous natural regeneration prescriptions are reflected and to ensure that renewal area is not double-counted,

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. ARFMI – Plan Author
2. ARFMI – Plan Author
3. ARFMI – Plan Author

Deadline Date:

1. November 15th annually.
2. November 15th annually.
3. Year 5 and Final Year Annual Reports.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. ARFMI GIS-based silvicultural tracking system.
2. FIM SGR Update Layer
3. 2022 IFA Trends Analysis

Finding #5:

Annual Reports and the Trends Analysis Report were deficient in describing analyses, trends and implications for operations and future plans. A harvest profile that varies significantly from the planned profile requires careful consideration in developing the next plan.

Action Required:

1. 2022 FMP Planning Team will complete a review of the Annual Reports and Trend Analysis. All significant variation from the planned harvest profile, as identified in Section 1.2.5.2 of the 2017 FMPM (Risk Assessment), will be considered and documented during the development of the 2022 Long-Term Management Direction
2. As per the 2017 FMPM, Year 5 and Final Year Annual Reports will contain detailed assessment, analysis and review of the trends, including the implications for operations.
3. Annual Reports to include discussion on the progress of meeting FMP Targets and the implications to date of actual achievement levels, including any proposed adjustments.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. Planning Team for the 2022 Abitibi River FMP
2. Abitibi River Forest Management Inc. – Plan Author
3. Abitibi River Forest Management Inc. - Plan Author

Deadline Date:

1. Two months prior to the submission of the LTMD for the 2022 FMP or as determined in the approved planning schedule
2. Year 5 AR (Trends Analysis for the 2022 IFA)
3. November 15, 2019

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. 2022 Planning Team meeting minutes and Approved Analysis Package and LTMD for the 2022 FMP
2. Year 5 AR (Trends Analysis for the 2022 IFA)
3. Annual Reports – starting with the 2018-19 period.