

Independent Forest Audit

Algonquin Park Forest

2017 IFA

Action Plan

Algonquin Park Forest, May 2018

2018 Action Plan Submission Signature Page

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Introduction

In October 2017 an Independent Forest Audit (IFA) was conducted on the Algonquin Park Forest for the period April 1, 2012, to March 31, 2017. Integration Branch was notified of the Forestry Futures Committee's acceptance of the report as being final on February 1, 2018. A Management Unit Action Plan is due May of 2018.

The final audit report for the Algonquin Park Forest included findings and the recommendation to extend the licence are being addressed in this action plan. For each finding, the action plan outlines the actions required, responsibility, timelines, and method of tracking progress of actions.

2017 IFA Findings

Finding #1

The LCC Terms of Reference is missing some of the elements required by the FMPM.

1. Algonquin Park MNR Local Citizens Committee (LCC) Terms of Reference will be reviewed to ensure compliance with the requirements of the 2017 Forest Management Planning Manual (FMPM), Section 2.2.4. The review will include, but will not be limited to, operational procedures, roles and responsibilities.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. Algonquin Park Zone Manager.

Deadline Date:

1. April 1, 2019- Next Annual Work Schedule (AWS)

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Updated LCC Terms of Reference.

Finding #2

The actual harvest areas in the last five FMP periods have been well below planned levels which has significant implications for the AFA's ability to meet plan objectives.

Background:

The FMPM for Ontario's Crown Forests prescribes the requirements for the determination of available and planned harvest area. Current direction requires the presentation of the total available harvest area in an FMP in order to identify the

potential available volumes on the management unit. In most cases, planned volumes are aligned with available volumes in order to maximize existing and future potential economic opportunities on the management unit. This process enables the maximum social and economic benefits to local communities from Ontario's forests.

During the planning process a variety of utilization levels are examined when finalizing the proposed Long Term Management Direction (LTMD). A risk assessment is also conducted that explores the impacts of historic/lower utilization levels on objectives and target achievement, in the event that actual utilization is less than planned. The results of this assessment are documented in the FMP.

Comparison of planned vs. actual harvest levels is documented annually in management unit annual reports.

With respect to actual harvest levels, AFA will continue its efforts to market and sell wood in order to maximize social and economic opportunities from the Algonquin Park available wood supply, as per the AFA business plan.

Action Required:

1. An analysis was undertaken for this finding and it was deemed Corporate. Corporate or policy finding will be considered as part of the regular corporate MNRF planning and policy review cycle.

Finding #3

Monitoring to examine the effectiveness and risk associated with SAR AOC prescriptions is required to validate the prescriptions (same finding as previous IFA).

Action Required:

1. An analysis was undertaken for this finding and it was deemed Corporate. Corporate or policy finding will be considered as part of the regular corporate MNRF planning and policy review cycle.

Finding #4

The on-going level of values collection by MNRF in the Algonquin Forest appears to be below that in neighboring Districts and not consistent with the mandate for managing ecological integrity in the Park, as expressed in the Algonquin Park Management Plan and related MNRF commitments.

Action Required:

1. Ontario Parks and MNRF Southern Region will undertake an objective review of values collection needs in Algonquin Park in comparison to values collection efforts undertaken in districts in the Region.
2. If any shortcomings are identified, a project plan will be developed to address them.

3. Ontario Parks and MNRF Southern Region will ensure sufficient system and staffing support is in place to meet MNRFs commitment of providing relevant values information for the preparation of the upcoming FMP.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. 2. 3. Ontario Parks Algonquin Zone Manager (Lead) and MNRF Southern Region Regional Resources Planning Supervisor.

Deadline Date:

1. April; 1, 2019
2. April 1, 2020
3. April 1, 2020

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Results of review on file.
2. Project plan developed and on file.
3. Approved 2020 FMP.

Finding #5

The APMP is highly prescriptive in some places and the science, or more broadly, general conditions have changed to make some of such direction obsolete.

Background:

Algonquin Provincial Park undertook a major amendment to the Park Management Plan in 2013 which was related to the Lighten the Ecological Footprint of forest management recommendations. This amendment recognized the 30 metre reserve area on water as 'protected or unavailable' area.

The IFA audit team recognized that the Park Management Plan review process could be capitalized on when the opportunity arises to address this finding.

Action Required:

1. During the next examination of the Algonquin Park Management Plan forestry direction contained within will be considered for currency and applicability. The entire Park Management Plan will be examined at that time to determine if a revised Park Management Plan is warranted.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. Ontario Parks Zone Manager.

Deadline Date:

1. To be determined as per the PPCRA Section 10 subsection 7.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Results of Plan examination on file

Finding #6

- a) Corporate MNRF's quality control processes for the new FRI allowed many errors and discrepancies to pass through.
- b) The inventory production and quality control processes used by MNRF and its contractors did not make use of information and data provided by the AFA intended to strengthen the quality of the inventory.

Action Required:

1. An analysis was undertaken for this finding and it was deemed Corporate. Corporate or policy finding will be considered as part of the regular corporate MNRF planning and policy review cycle.

Finding #7

Non-conformances with the direction of FMPM Appendix VII (Operational Standards for Forestry Aggregate Pits) were identified during the audit at two aggregate pits.

Action Required:

1. AFA will undertake an assessment of the extent to which the aggregate pit issues viewed during the audit represent isolated or systemic problems, including forest operations inspection results over the audit term.
2. If systemic problems are identified a corrective action plan will be developed and implemented by AFA.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. AFA Operations Managers.
2. AFA Operations Managers will develop a corrective action plan if necessary.

Deadline Date:

1. Dec 20, 2018
2. April 15, 2019

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Results of assessment on file.
2. Corrective action plan on file, if needed.

Finding #8

During the audit, certain planted sites were viewed with intensive competition and resultant high levels of mortality of planted stock.

Action Required:

1. AFA will summarize survival plot data to determine the extent to which mortality issues viewed during the audit exist. This summary will include the impact of SAR restrictions on plantation survival.
2. If systemic problems are identified a corrective action plan will be developed and implemented by AFA.
3. Continue to implement best practices on competitive sites, where not restricted by species at risk (SAR) AOCs.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. AFA Area Forester – Pembroke
2. AFA Area Forester Pembroke and Chief Forester (Lead)
3. AFA Area Foresters

Deadline Date:

1. Sept 30, 2018
2. Dec 31, 2018 – if necessary.
3. Ongoing.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. AFA survival plot summary
2. Corrective action plan – if necessary
3. AFA silvicultural records.

Finding #9

Table AR-10 (Summary of Harvest and Regeneration Trends), which is part of the Trend Analysis Report, has not been completed correctly; the MNRF does not provide clear instructions for preparing this table.

Action Required:

1. An analysis was undertaken for this finding and it was deemed Corporate. Corporate or policy finding will be considered as part of the regular corporate MNRF planning and policy review cycle.

Finding #10

Corporate MNRF has not met its obligation to produce the provincial status report for the 2012 IFAs within two years of the approval of the Action Plan.

Action Required:

1. An analysis was undertaken for this finding and it was deemed Corporate. Corporate or policy finding will be considered as part of the regular corporate MNRF planning and policy review cycle.

Recommendation to Extend Licence - MNRF

The audit team concludes that management of the Algonquin Park Forest was generally in compliance with the legislation, regulations and policies that were in effect during the term covered by the audit, and the Forest was managed in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Algonquin Park Forestry Agreement (APFA) held by the Algonquin Forestry Authority. The forest is being managed consistently with the principles of sustainable forest management, as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. The audit team recommends the Minister extend the term of APFA for a further five years.

2017 APFA Licence Review

Actions:

1. An analysis was undertaken for this finding and it was deemed Corporate. Corporate or policy finding will be considered as part of the regular corporate MNRF planning and policy review cycle.