

CROSSROUTE FOREST

2012- 2017 INDEPENDENT FOREST AUDIT

MANAGEMENT UNIT ACTION PLAN

Status Report

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Introduction

In 2017, an Independent Forest Audit (IFA) was conducted on the Crossroute Forest by Arbex Forest Resource Consultants Ltd. for the period April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2017. The final audit report was accepted by Forestry Futures Committee on November 30, 2017 and the action plan was approved January 25, 2018.

This status report is required to be submitted by January 25, 2020. The status report includes the original approved actions for findings from the Management Unit Action Plan. The progress to date is listed below the actions required. Future tracking is shown for any actions not yet completed.

Findings

Finding #1:

Recommendation # 2 of the 2012 IFA that required that *“MNR shall work with the LCC to offer the Company a larger role on the LCC”* has not been fully addressed.

Action Required:

1. The MNR District Manager to send a Natural Resources Advisory Committee (NRAC) Membership confirmation letter to Resolute FP Canada Inc. confirming role and membership on committee.
2. Resolute FP Canada Inc. to confirm receipt of letter.

Progress to Date:

1. Complete. District Manager membership confirmation letter sent to Resolute December 5, 2017.
2. Complete. Acceptance response sent December 11, 2017.

Finding #2:

The delivery of FRI products is late and out of synchrony with the forest management planning cycle. The quality of the product has resulted in operational and planning challenges and additional costs for RFP.

Action Required:

1. MNRF Regional Planning Unit Supervisor will continue to advocate for the Forest Resource Inventory to be delivered on time and within technical specifications.

Progress to Date:

1. Complete. MNRF Regional Planning Unit Supervisor continues to support planning teams in advocating for the forest resource inventory to be delivered on time and within technical specifications. The Crossroute Forest was one of the first Forest Management Units to be delivered the new FRI in the province. Since then, delivery of forest inventory products that meet FIM technical specifications on other management units have improved since the Crossroute FRI delivery schedule.

Finding #3:

Amendments to address 2017 Contingency Plan “*required alterations*” (#’s 68122, 68123, 68130, and 68280) have not been drafted and approved.

Action Required:

1. Draft and submit amendment to update section 9.9.1 Forest Operations Inspection of the 2017-2020 Contingency Plan, to address required alterations.
2. Review and approve amendment.
3. Roll out of new Compliance Plan to the Forest Operations Inspectors on the forest.

Progress to Date:

1. Complete. Administrative Amendment No. 2017014 (2017-2020 Contingency Plan) submitted on April 5, 2018.
2. Complete. Administrative Amendment No. 2017014 approved by the Fort Frances MNRF District Manager on July 26, 2018. Amendment available on eFMP website.
3. Ongoing. Full implementation planned in the 2020-2030 FMP.

Future Tracking Requirements:

3. Approved 2020-2030 FMP on file.

Finding #4:

The efficacy of the herbicide tending program was uneven across ecosites and operating years. The inability to effectively control site competition has resulted in increased hardwood densities and conifer mortality on some artificially renewed conifer sites.

Action Required:

1. Weedmaster is a new/alternate herbicide product used by Resolute in conduct of the 2017-2018 spray program as one measure in attempting to achieve a more effective herbicide program. Review the effectiveness of 2017-2018 herbicide program Weedmaster branded herbicide in 2018-2019.
2. If control was effective continue with use of Weedmaster (or similar formulation). In the event control is found to be ineffective Resolute will consult with the herbicide applicator contractor and/or others to find options/alternatives to increase effectiveness.
3. Areas where ineffective control was noted and silviculture objectives could still be achieved are included in the 2018-2019 herbicide spray program and will be reported in the 2018-2019 annual report.

Progress to Date:

1. Complete. Competition control on areas treated with Weedmaster in 2017-2018 was found to be uniform and effective. Note – it cannot be assumed that this is directly related to the specific herbicide used. It could be a result of any number of factors.
2. Complete. Competition control on areas treated with Weedmaster in 2017-2018 was found to be uniform and effective. Note – it cannot be assumed that this is directly related to the specific herbicide used. It could be a result of any number of factors.
3. Complete. One hundred and ninety-one hectares were identified with ineffective control where silviculture objectives could still be achieved. This area was included in the 2018-2019 program and reported in the 2018-2019 annual report.

Finding #5:

FMP operational standards for forestry aggregate pits were not consistently met.

Action Required:

1. Both MNRF and Resolute Forest Product to increase Forest operation inspections as a part of their compliance program
2. Resolute FP Canada Inc. will review aggregate pit requirements with contractors.

Progress to Date:

1. Complete. MNRF has been increasing Forest Operations Inspections and has included Forestry Aggregate Pits (FAP) as a compliance item in their ACOP. Resolute maintains FAP inspections as a compliance priority in the AWS.
2. Complete. FAP requirements were reviewed at annual spring meeting June 7-8, 2019.

Finding #6:

A wood utilization compliance issue that persisted for two years was not reported by MNRF or Resolute. MNRF and Resolute failed to identify and report on operational issues that had the potential to result in non-complaint operations. Management staff in MNRF and Resolute failed to provide an appropriate level of oversight of the staff and programs under their jurisdiction.

Action Required:

1. MNRF and Resolute FP Canada Inc. will ensure that the requirements for inspecting and reporting are followed, as required by the Forest Management Plan.
2. MNRF Fort Frances district to discuss Forest Compliance coordination.
3. Regular monthly meetings between MNRF and Industry (SFL/FRL) Compliance Inspectors, with a focus on any operational issues.
4. Resolute FP Canada Inc. will conduct a joint information session with all MNRF and Resolute FP Canada Inc. FOIP inspectors for the forest, to review reporting requirements.

Progress to Date:

1. Ongoing. Current inspection and reporting procedures are being adhered to as per the current FMP. Compliance monitoring and inspection priorities will be adjusted with the approval of the 2020-2030 FMP.
2. Ongoing. MNRFF updated their District Compliance strategies and maintains an Annual Compliance Operations Plan (ACOP).
3. Complete. Monthly meetings between MNRFF and Industry have occurred on a monthly basis. Notes on file.
4. Ongoing. Reporting requirements are reviewed at the monthly compliance meetings (refer to progress to date No. 3).

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Approved 2020-2030 FMP section 4.7.1. FOIP reports on file.
2. MNRFF ACOP
4. Updated operational status notifications, FOIP reports on file.

Finding #7:

There is no evidence of broader MNRFF District priority setting and risk assessment for the allocation of available resources in the Annual District Compliance Plan.

Action Required:

1. MNRFF District will revise and update the District Compliance Plan and maintain an Annual Compliance Operations Plan (ACOP) in order to meet objectives within the Compliance strategy.
2. MNRFF Annual Compliance targets will be assigned to each Forest Compliance Inspector within their Personal Development Plan (PDP)
3. MNRFF Resource Management Supervisors will ensure new staff will receive compliance inspector mentoring to enable them to complete the forest compliance inspector certification course.
4. Hold regular meetings between MNRFF Compliance Inspectors to discuss new/ongoing compliance issues.

Progress to Date:

1. Complete. ACOP on file and District Compliance Committee has been created.
2. Complete. Personal Development Plan on file.
3. Ongoing. District MNRFF will continue to mentor potential candidates when possible.

4. Ongoing. District is working on holding periodic District Forest Compliance Meetings between Forest Compliance Inspectors and Management to discuss new and ongoing compliance items.

Future Tracking Requirements:

3. Staff attendance at provincial compliance certification session, MNRF training records on file.
4. Meeting invites, Forest compliance tracking worksheet, and FOIP.

Finding #8:

The schedule for the completion of the clean-up of 2014-2016 harvest blocks has proven to be unrealistic and unattainable.

Action Required:

1. MNRF and Resolute FP Canada Inc. to agree on new schedule for clean-up of the 2014-2016 harvest blocks.
2. MNRF and Resolute FP Canada Inc. to provide regular updates every 4-6 months.

Progress to Date:

1. Complete. February 2020.
2. Ongoing. Last update provided October 15, 2019.

Future Tracking Requirements:

2. Updated tracking list.

Finding #9:

A backlog in area requiring FTG survey exists.

Action Required:

1. Conduct queries and mapping of any backlog survey needs and assess the scope of any backlog.
2. Schedule and conduct surveys to address any backlog and report in annual reports. Depending on the size of the program this may take two years to accomplish.

Progress to Date:

1. Complete. Resolute conducted an exercise to identify and schedule areas requiring FTG assessment. This resulted in two years of enhanced FTG survey programs above a normal average of approximately 7,500 hectares.
2. Complete. For 2018-2019 Resolute surveyed and reported on 28,362 hectares of free growing surveys. In 2019-2020 Resolute surveyed 21,851 hectares. Following the 2019-2020 program all backlog FTG will have been addressed.

Finding #10:

The Action Plan Status Report was submitted three months late.

Action Required:

1. The MNRF District Manager and Resolute Forest Products must ensure that the 2017 Crossroute IFA Action Plan Status Report is submitted and implemented in accordance with the schedule specified in the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol Document.
2. The MNRF Regional Forest Operations Specialist, in consultation with MNRF district staff, will provide regional coordination with the development and approval of the Crossroute Action Plan Status Report.

Progress to Date:

1. Complete. Fort Frances District Manager endorsed Status Report submitted to Regional Director for approval within Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol Document timelines (January 25, 2020).
2. Complete. Regional Forest Operations Specialist initiated the coordination, development and review of the status report on December 17, 2019.

Finding #11:

The term of Sustainable Forest Licence # 542245 has not been extended.

Action Required:

1. The MNRF Regional Director and Resolute FP Canada Inc. - Forestry Manager Ontario will continue to support the review process (if required or necessary) associated with SFL license extension as per Subsection 26 (4) of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act.

Progress to Date:

1. Complete. Sustainable Forest Licence # 542245 extended February 27, 2018.