

Mazinaw-Lanark Forest

2016 IFA

Status Report

Mazinaw-Lanark Forest 2016 Independent Forest Audit

Status Report Signature Page

Prepared By:

Original signed: August 6, 2019

Matt Mertins R.P.F.
General Manager
Mazinaw-Lanark Forest Inc.

Original signed: August 14, 2019

Hassan Mohamed R.P.F.
Regional Operations Forester
MNRF Regional Resources Section

Original signed: August 12, 2019

Joel Martineau R.P.F.
Management Forester
MNRF Bancroft District

Submitted By:

Original signed: August 12, 2019

Suzy Shalla
A/District Manager
Bancroft District

Approved By:

Original signed: August 15, 2019

Sharon Rew
Regional Director
MNRF Southern Region

The original signed version of this page is retained at the MNRF Bancroft district office in Bancroft.

Introduction

In July 2016 an Independent Forest Audit (IFA) was conducted on the Mazinaw-Lanark Forest for the period April 1, 2009, to March 31, 2016. Integration Branch was notified of the Forestry Futures Committee's acceptance of the report as being final on February 6, 2017. A Management Unit Action Plan was submitted by the Bancroft District Manager on April 24, 2017 and approved by the Regional Director on August 9, 2017.

This Status Report describes the status of the actions detailed in the 2016 Mazinaw-Lanark Forest IFA Action Plan. The status report includes the original approved actions for recommendations 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. In keeping with the 2016 Action Plan, this status report addresses the status of the 16 management unit recommendations only. The other 4 recommendations are addressed in a separate Provincial status report. The Status Report is due August 09, 2019.

Recommendations

Recommendation #1:

Bancroft District MNRF shall strengthen its administrative support of the LCC and review the frequency, times and ways in which meetings are held.

Action Required:

1. Bancroft District MNRF Local Citizens Committee (LCC) Terms of Reference will be reviewed to ensure compliance with the requirements of the 2009 Forest Management Planning Manual (FMPM), Section 3.2.4. The review will include, but will not be limited to, operational procedures, roles and responsibilities.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed** - Bancroft District MNRF Local Citizens Committee (LCC) Terms of Reference were reviewed and updated to comply with the 2017 FMPM requirements (FMPM Part A 2.2.4), November 2018. Records of the LCC meeting minutes and Terms of Reference are on file at the MNRF District office.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. **No future tracking required.**

Recommendation #2:

Corporate and District MNRF shall ensure that the test provided in the FMPM is used to determine which Aboriginal communities are eligible to receive an offer of customized consultation under Section A Part 4.

Action Required:

Note: The status listed below should be considered in concert with the 2017 Provincial IFA Status Report response to this recommendation.

1. The MNRF District will utilize the FMPM and other pertinent corporate direction to determine which Aboriginal communities are eligible to receive an offer of customized consultation.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed** – Aboriginal Communities within and adjacent to the forest management unit have been considered for the purposes of consultation on forest management planning and corporate direction was used to determine communities to receive an offer of customized consultation. Section A Part 3 of the 2017 FMPM was used to initiate consultation for Stage One – Invitation to Participate, December 2017. Records of invitation letters for customized consultation are on file both at the Regional and District MNRF offices.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. **No future tracking required.**

Recommendation #3:

The Planning Team for the next FMP (expected in 2021) shall consider all aspects of natural disturbance when setting disturbance cycles for the MLF.

Action Required:

1. The Simulated Range of Natural Variation (SRNV) from the Ontario Landscape Tool (OLT) will be utilized for the estimated natural condition of the forest to ensure it better reflects actual conditions.
2. Deviations from the relevant science packages will be considered by the planning team and rationale will be provided in the Forest Management Plan (FMP).

Progress to Date:

1 and 2 Partially Complete. The Planning Team have received endorsement of Checkpoint #2 (Forest Classification and Current Forest Condition) is progressing towards achieving Checkpoint #3 (Base Model Inventory and Base Model). OLT will be utilized for the 2021 Mazinaw Lanark Forest FMP. Any deviation will be documented in the analysis package for the 2021 FMP.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1 and 2: The actions required will occur for the 2021-2031 FMP. Deadline: by March 31, 2021 with FMP approval March 31, 2021. Organization and position responsible: Mazinaw Lanark Forest Inc. (MLFI) Plan Author (lead) with support of the Planning Team and Plan Advisors. Method of tracking progress: Completion of the Support for Base Model Inventory and Base Model Checkpoint in the development of the next Mazinaw Lanark Forest 2021-2031 FMP.

Recommendation #4:

The Planning Team for the next FMP (expected in 2021) shall fully consider the risk that a continuation of the historic underharvest will compromise the achievement of that plan's objectives.

Action Required:

1. Planning team will follow anticipated revisions in the 2017 FMPM requiring a risk assessment of planned harvest before the LTMD is finalized for the next FMP.
2. Planning team will integrate Wood Utilization Reviews into the forest management planning process to provide greater information on wood utilization to better inform the risk assessment process in the upcoming FMP).

Progress to Date:

1. **Partially Completed.** The Planning Team is progressing towards achieving Section 1.2.5.1 of the FMPM 2017. The FMP has received endorsement of Checkpoints 1 and 2 and is in the process of developing the base model (Checkpoint 3).
2. **Partially Completed.** The Wood Utilization Review is currently on hold until the Provincial Forestry Strategy is finalized. The planning team will align to the extent reasonably possible the actions from this strategy into the FMP.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1 and 2: The actions required will occur for the 2021-2031 FMP. Deadline: by March 31, 2021 with FMP approval by March 31, 2021. Organization and position responsible: Mazinaw Lanark Forest Inc. (MLFI) Plan Author (lead) with support of the Planning Team and Plan Advisors. Method of tracking progress: Completion of the Support for the Proposed LTMD Checkpoint in the development of the next Mazinaw Lanark Forest 2021-2031 FMP.

Recommendation #5:

Bancroft District MNRF shall maintain its commitment to ensuring completion of ESA listed Species at Risk surveys for blocks that are likely to be included in upcoming AWS's. The delivery mechanism for the values surveys should be reviewed and the use of alternate service providers such as external companies or SFL companies should be considered.

Action Required:

1. Values collection is the responsibility of the MNRF. Bancroft District will ensure values collection is carried out according to priority blocks identified by MLFI.
2. MLFI will identify harvest blocks likely to be included in upcoming AWS's with an area equivalent to 2 years of average annual available harvest or less.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** Status of blocks identified in the 2018/19 and the 2019/2020 AWS as part of the MNRF review process and included in the List of Required Alterations. Annual values collection work plan developed as per the priority blocks identified by the SFL prior to field collection season.
2. **Completed.** Annual priority list will be provided to MNRF Bancroft District.

Future Tracking Requirements:

- 1 and 2. **No future tracking required.**

Recommendation #7:

Bancroft District MNRF shall review and speed up its processing of FMP amendment requests and the submitted amendments to bring its turnaround time in line with the targets in the 2009 FMPM.

Action Required:

1. Bancroft District MNRF will work with MLFI to ensure clear and concise information is provided prior to the review of FMP amendment requests submitted following the timelines provided in the 2009 Forest Management Planning Manuals.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** Amendment summary report available for tracking purposes and kept on file at the Bancroft MNRF office. Amendment review times have improved to meet the requirements of FIM.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. **No future tracking required.**

Recommendation #8:

MLFI shall increase the range of stands that it prescribes for clearcutting and increase the intensity of its partial harvesting in stands where appropriate.

Action Required:

1. Identify a short list of specific options where clearcutting is not currently implemented but could be justified to address the recommendation.
2. Review current FMP to determine if such actions are permissible under the current FMPM & Silviculture Guide.
3. If not permissible – defer decision until next FMP, subject to proper consultation process.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** Forest units were developed and incorporated in the planning inventory and discussed during the development of the Support for the Forest Classification and Current Forest Condition checkpoint for the 2021 FMP. Changes were made to forest classification definitions to address this recommendation. An analysis of specific options for increasing clearcutting where not currently implemented will be included with the documentation for the new 2021 FMP (i.e. SGR and tree marking adjustment options).
2. **2 and 3. Completed.** Some flexibility exists in the current FMP to increase the intensity of treatment where justified (i.e. which sites are treated with hardwood shelterwood vs. selection). The SFL views this issue as also relating to tree marking intensity while following prescriptions and it is currently working with tree markers to improve coverage and marking intensity.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. Analysis of options to increase clearcutting in the new 2021 FMP included. Submitted with FMP to be implemented starting April 2021.
- 1, 2 and 3. **No future tracking required.**

Recommendation #9:

MLFI's management and shareholders shall increase the amount of tendered sales that are conducted on the MLF.

Action Required:

1. MLFI General Manager to develop tendered sale work plan.
2. Yearly monitoring of implementation of work plan.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** The company board of directors approved a plan to allow licensees to offer up allocations for tendered sale if they will not cut them (Board meeting in March 2019).
2. **Completed.** Monitoring of the work plan is conducted by the General Manager throughout the year. The tendered sale group as a whole often performs better than other licensee groups in the SFL (see management unit annual reports). This would indicate that this group is using more allocation than the majority of other shareholder groups.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1 and 2 No future tracking required.

Recommendation #10:

MLFI shall follow through with its stated intent to apply for a permit under Endangered Species Act section 17 to determine whether this avenue is viable. MNRF should be prepared to promptly respond to this application and assist in suggesting options for “mitigation of an adverse effect” and provision of an “overall benefit”, consistent with permits that have been issued in other business sectors.

Action Required:

1. MLFI to prepare Section 17 application, if desired.
2. MNRF will continue to advise MLFI on the requirements for an overall benefit permit through the application process.
3. MNRF will work with MLFI to identify overall benefit actions as part of the permitting process.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** MLFI hired a consultant to help scope the requirements to get a permit. A meeting was held with MNRF Bancroft District to discuss this. After the meeting MLFI had no desire to pursue with a Section 17 application due to the onerous requirements to getting a permit.
2. **2 and 3 Completed.** Responsibility for Section 17 has been transferred to MECP. Pursuing the permit is on hold while MLFI considers options given the information obtained in order to achieve overall benefit.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1, 2 and 3. No future tracking required.

Recommendation #13:

Bancroft District MNRF shall address the deficiencies found with regard to information management and document control, and should consider utilizing guidance outlined in the Ministry's existing policies and procedures.

Action Required:

1. Bancroft District MNRF will file electronic and hardcopy documentation as per the OPS file planning structure.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** Bancroft District electronic and hardcopy documentation has been filed as per internal filing structure for forest management activities. Required files for forest management decisions (e.g. amendment, revisions) are retained in the appropriate folders and readily available when needed.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. **No future tracking required.**

Recommendation #14:

MLFI shall share its analysis of the previous year's compliance record with the overlapping licensees and review relevant parts of the Operations Binder with overlapping licensees on a regular basis.

Action Required:

1. MLFI will review previous year's compliance findings during operator's meetings.
2. MLFI will review relevant components of the company operations binder focusing on issues of recent concern or focus on sensitive areas that may be affected by operations in the upcoming year.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** Compliance is a standing agenda item in the yearly spring operators meeting. Presentation is provided to operators based on compliance trends and issues.
2. **Completed.** The company continues to review relevant parts of its operations binder with operators at annual spring meetings to increase knowledge and understanding of the rules.

Future Tracking Requirements:

- 1 and 2. **No future tracking required.**

Recommendation #15:

Bancroft District MNRF and MLFI shall work jointly to encourage E. Schutt and Sons Ltd to improve its compliance performance.

Action Required:

1. Bancroft District MNRF will use a risk based priority assessment to ensure the highest risk operators (i.e. Schutt) will be the primary focus of ministry initiated compliance inspections and assign certified compliance inspectors to conduct field audits.
2. Joint inspections where possible will be completed by both MNRF and MLFI.
3. The MLFI General Manager, MLFI Senior Forest Compliance Technician and Forestry Technical Specialist will meet once a year to discuss options for encouraging greater compliance performance in E. Schutt & Sons Ltd. operations.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** Forestry Technical Specialist risk ranked blocks released to E. Schutt and assigned certified compliance inspectors to conduct field audits. This is ongoing and performed regularly as new information is provided regarding upcoming operations. Priority blocks for assessment are entered into a table on file at the Bancroft MNRF District office.
2. **Completed.** Several joint inspections have been conducted between MNRF and MLFI for blocks assigned to E. Schutt's during the operating seasons.
3. **Completed.** Meeting completed in 2017. Meeting will be scheduled in 2019.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1, 2 and 3. No future tracking required.

Recommendation #16:

MLFI shall submit draft Annual Reports on time.

Action Required:

1. Staff involved in preparing the Annual Report will be assigned specific timelines to complete tasks in their annual work plans.
2. Monitoring throughout the year will be implemented to ensure timelines are being met.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** Through our annual work planning exercise, FIM and FMPM annual report requirements and timelines are discussed in great detail with the General Manager.
2. **Completed.** Significant progress has been made on submitting Annual Reports on time.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. **1 and 2. No future tracking required.**

Recommendation #17:

Bancroft District MNRF and MLFI shall strengthen their efforts to provide meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal communities to obtain benefits provided through forest management planning.

Action Required:

1. Bancroft District MNRF will support and participate in the efforts of MLFI to develop opportunities for Aboriginal communities in the Management Unit to derive benefits associated with the implementation of the Forest Management Plan (e.g. MNRF participation in annual AWS review meetings or other similar opportunities, as appropriate).
2. Bancroft District MNRF will communicate information to the Algonquins of Ontario (AOO) related to available corporate forestry training activities (e.g. Tree Marking, Scaling, Forest Compliance Certification) and work with MLFI to provide relevant training opportunities of interest to local Aboriginal communities.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** MLFI continues to engage in the Algonquin Land Claim process with involvement on various committees and attends meetings as requested. MNRF attended the AWS review meeting with MLFI and the AOO in February 2019. MNRF also attended the joint MLFI/AOO “forestry transition” meetings at the AOO consultation office November 2018 to discuss the future of the proposed settlement lands which overlap future operations. During the February AWS review meetings (with MNRF in attendance), contracts available are discussed and individual communities that express interest are contacted. Work has been completed by community members for MLFI. Members of the communities continue to be employed by SFL shareholders and conduct silviculture work for MLFI. MLFI continues to work with AOO to ensure that forest operations are consistent with identified considerations in the proposed Crotch Lake Park.
2. **Completed.** AOO was provided information pertaining to Forest Compliance Certification course (Jan 1st, 2019) and a forestry scholarship program provided by industry (Oct 3, 2018). Also, contact information was provided to communities regarding upcoming forestry training activities (i.e. tree marking, scaling and forest compliance) on July 3, 2019.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1 and 2. No future tracking required.

Recommendation #19:

MLFI and Bancroft District MNRFB shall decide how to address outstanding obligations related to the X, Y, Z lands on the Mazinaw-Lanark Forest, the Company shall promptly undertake the agreed-upon actions and the MNRFB shall sign off upon completion of this responsibility.

Action Required:

1. MLFI will review the status of X, Y, Z lands and summarize the findings in a tabular format corresponding with the original MNRFB summary. The review will identify the outstanding areas still to be addressed.
2. All outstanding areas will be evaluated in the field by March 31, 2018, and the results will be reported in the 2017-2018 Annual Report.
3. All areas found not Free to Grow (FTG) and requiring further treatment in the short term will be added to the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 AWS. The areas that are identified in need of additional treatment in the longer term will be allocated in the 2021-2031 FMP with follow-up assessments under the terms of that plan.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** Table has been included with Final IFA report – see page 62.
2. **Partially Completed.** Z lands have been inventoried during the 2008 FRI and will be categorized appropriately in future planning efforts. X & Y lands will be fully surveyed by the end of the 2019-2020 operating year.
3. **Partially Completed.** Review treatment need for X & Y lands to be completed once surveyed.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. **No future tracking required.**
2. Final X & Y lands to be reported in the 2019-2020 Annual Report due November 15, 2020. Letter to be sent to MNRFB district office to conclude the requirements for Z lands. Organization and position responsible: MLFI Plan Author. Method of tracking progress: 2019-2020 Annual Report.
3. Schedule X & Y lands for treatment if areas requiring treatment are found after all surveys are completed in April 1, 2020 AWS. Organization and position responsible: MLFI Plan Author. Method of tracking progress: 2020 AWS.

Recommendation #20:

MLFI and Regional MNRFB shall prepare the action plan and status report for this audit within the prescribed timeframes.

Action Required:

1. MLFI and Regional MNRFB will determine a schedule for production, review and endorsement of the action and status reports prior to the due date and work together to ensure the development of the action and status reports follows the agreed upon schedule.

Progress to Date:

1. **Completed.** A schedule for the action plan was developed on Feb 2, 2017 and for the status reports May 2, 2019 and agreed upon both organizations. The action plan and status reports were approved by the District Manager on April 24, 2016 and August 12, 2019.

Future Tracking Requirements:

1. **No future tracking required**