

**Spray Lake Sawmills
Public Advisory Committee
SLS Boardroom
February 23th, 2015**

Present: Corey Stoneman, Joe Nickel, Denise Nickel, Harvey Buckley, Judy Stewart, Sandra Foss, Patrick Brady, George Roman, Tim Giese, Mike Korman, Andy Marshall, Erik Butters, Gord Lehn, Matt Denney

Guests:

Absent: Richard Right Hand, Jacqueline Nelson, Ken Birkitt, Liz Breakey,

Meeting kicked off at 4:03

Items on agenda were re-arranged to quickly provide an update on items that have not changed much since last meeting.

Agenda item - Media Plan

SLS is working with a consulting company on re-branding some components of the company. In order to ensure consistency & prevent redundancy of work, the plan to release newspaper articles and other components of the media plan is on hold until the new branding strategy is completed.

Agenda item – FSC audit outcome

Auditor's report from October visit has not been received by SLS yet. There is nothing to add regarding this topic as SLS needs to have the report on hand before discussing.

Agenda item - Public Participation Program

A revised public participation document was passed around. Changes to the document reflect the review ESRD completed. The document has been submitted to ESRD for final approval; however we are still open to comments from the group on the document as they can be amended in. The public participation program reflects the obligations we have in our Forest Management Agreement and what is outlined in the Alberta Forest Management Planning Standards.

Agenda item – Items from the floor

Questions from the PAC – The public participation program describe the PAC as coordinating public activities. What does this entail?

This means the PAC is helping with how SLS is to bring ideas or information out to the public or means of soliciting public input. Additionally it is helpful to run info or ideas by the PAC and have them act as a sounding board to make sure the message is clear. By no means are they expected to run or host public event.

Question from the PAC -

Some PAC members are receiving questions from the public about the planned activities in B9 south of the Ghost River. Wants to know what meaningful consultation was done about this activity and how they should respond.

The suggestion was put forth to have a workshop to identify issues and values that they are concerned with. The PAC suggested that issues and values identified at this workshop may be of use in the next forest management plan.

PAC also brought up two issues that are being talked a lot about in the public.

Concern is being raised about harvesting around wetlands and if removal of surrounding vegetation has a negative effect. A Member suggested that we should review if there are any scientifically valid negative consequences to a wetland when harvesting is adjacent and possibly have a workshop to address this issue.

Second concern is the scope of the harvest in the Ghost Waiparous area and we need to address this issue with the public.

PAC - SLS could get a head of the new wetland policy by piloting a wetland conservation strategy in their area. Some funds are available from the Government. Determine scientifically valid setbacks. All the right pieces are in place to show how it's going to work and provides an opportunity to get ahead of the regulations.

Some of the information is already covered in the water information that was distributed at the last PAC meeting. Water information was marked as confidential so PAC members are not able to discuss with others outside the PAC.

PAC Comment - Advisory Committees cannot micro manage issues and can end up spinning their wheels when they should be focusing on the larger and guiding issues.

SLS Commented that our planning always has to fall in line with other plans and regulations in place.

Agenda Item - Review of VOITs

Review of higher level plans, what a VOIT represents, and a sample VOIT was discussed with the PAC.

Agenda Item – Discussion of VOITs in the larger public arena

SLS presented the proposed timeline for value and objective development. The first milestone is to get input on values and objectives from the PAC within 2 weeks. The overall goal is to have the values and objectives completed before the summer months. Timeline also identifies having another PAC meeting in March and then one again in May.

PAC – identified that May is a busy time to schedule a workshop, there are 3 other (non SLS) workshops already scheduled for that month.

Commented that these are aggressive timelines and should not be a rushed process.

Need opportunity to provide dialogue.

Other PAC member's comments that if the timeline is too long then the work gets neglected and tight timeline proposed is acceptable.

Suggestion that open houses needs to be implemented as well.

PAC – Should include First Nations in the invitation to workshops.

SLS discussed a proposal to email out a summary document to contact list and to solicit input that way.

PAC suggested that generally there is a lot of work on the front end required to get relevant information and everyone on the same page. Water Smart's from Room for the River provide a good system. Need to improve presentation of the summary document before sending it out.

Communicate at a level that people can understand the first time we talk to them. Get to the point and prepare them to answer questions right away.

Perhaps use a schematic to describe the flow of the process and what we want. If any documents are sent out digitally should include links to the Acts/Standards and web pages for the people who are concerned with it.

Adjourn

- 6:57 p.m.