

**Spray Lake Sawmills (1980) Ltd**

**Public Participation Program**

**For Renewal of the 2018**

**Forest Management Plan**

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**Spray Lake Sawmills (1980) Ltd**  
**Proposal for a Public Participation Program**  
**For Renewal of the 2018 Forest Management Plan**

**Introduction**

Spray Lake Sawmills (1980) Ltd's (SLS) Forest Management Agreement (FMA) area is located in the southern east slopes of Alberta. It is the southern most FMA in the province, covering approximately 2800 sq km in a long narrow band from Sundre to the southern end of Kananaskis Country. This places it between Calgary, the provinces largest urban centre, and a heavily used parks system to the west. The FMA is dissected by the Trans-Canada Highway and has a number of smaller towns dotting it's eastern edge. The area has a long-standing history of timber harvesting, ranching, recreation and oil and gas activity. Combined, these characteristics provide the FMA with a high profile and a corresponding need for a meaningful public involvement process.

This submission details the background and proposed structure for a public participation program for the renewal of the 2018 Forest Management Plan for the FMA.

**Background**

Sections 10. (1) and (2) of the Forest Management Agreement outline the requirement for Spray Lake Sawmills(1980) Ltd to conduct public reviews of their proposed Forest Management Plan prior to submission to the Crown. The Agreement does not specify the process or structure for these reviews.

The Alberta Forest Management Planning Standard requires companies to have a public participation program that addresses the standards specified in CSA Z809 Section 5.0. This document provides a more detailed listing of public participation requirements andt has left it up to the individual organizations to define how to address requirements.

The Provincial Planning Standard defines "meaningful consultation" as requiring consultation in good faith, with honest communication and an open exchange of relevant information before decisions are made. This document provides an outlines for such a process; one that will provide an opportunity for input for anyone who has an interest through one of several mechanisms.

## **Objectives**

The terms-of-reference for public participation are focused on a four-year window for development of a Forest Management Plan for the combined area made up of the FMA and B9 Quota.

The FMP must conform to higher order planning documents such as the newly approved South Saskatchewan Regional Plan, which is required by the Alberta Land Stewardship Act, and the various other integrated resource management plans or sub-regional plans that cover the FMP planning area. The FMP must also abide by provincial and federal legislation, the terms of the Forest Management Agreement and the current Alberta Forest Management Planning Standards.

In order for any landscape management strategy to be successful it must contain a blend of social, economic and environmental values. It must be open, transparent and accessible and must promote dialogue rather than a one-way input of comments.

Program participants are not expected to be technical experts but to bring insight to the table on a broad spectrum of societal values and how they may be integrated with natural elements of the landscape. Not all recommendations will necessarily be accepted but they will be given thoughtful consideration.

In our experience there is good value in using several tools during the course of the program. Personality types vary as do their preferred method of communication. A broad range of input opportunities will provide a more complete range of public opinion.

## **Proposed Structure**

Spray Lake Sawmills' proposed program contains a blended package of several tools; open houses, surveys/questionnaires, workshops, website/blog and a public advisory committee (PAC).

The mechanisms and proposed structure for the Public Participation Program have been summarized in a one page schematic format, Figure 1. The structure has been designed with the detail required to meet regulatory obligations while providing a degree of flexibility to meet changing planning and input needs as they are identified.

### **Public Advisory Committee**

A public advisory committee will work closely with Spray Lake Sawmills at a broad overview level. The committee represents a cross section of backgrounds and interests. It is an "umbrella

group” which provides review, feedback and direction on a range of FMP development activities, including:

- helping to define FMP objectives
- helping to guide and coordinate public participation activities
- develop a plan to monitor performance and effectiveness of the Public Participation Program
- critique plan development

Key elements within the PAC’s Terms-of-Reference are outlined as follows:

The Public Advisory Committee is expected to monitor and represent interests of their respective sectors and may act as a point of contact for other members of the public although it is not their mandated responsibility to provide an on-going liaison with their respective constituencies.

They will assist in any discussions to help resolve resource use conflicts. In the event of a dispute between Spray Lake Sawmills and another individual or stakeholder group the Public Advisory Committee may be asked to act as a sounding board to hear both sides of the issue and explore any possible resolutions to the dispute. This will not be binding on either side but may be useful for an impartial third party group to provide their opinion on an issue.

The Advisory Committee will operate by consensus. A recommendation from the Committee will proceed where all members of the Committee can live with it, although not necessarily support it. Spray Lake Sawmills will endeavor to accept the Committee’s recommendations wherever possible. Recognizing that the company is still responsible for regulatory compliance, costs and any liabilities that may flow out of the plan, Spray Lake Sawmills still retains the final decision on which recommendations to accept. In the event that a recommendation is not accepted it will still be noted together with rationale for the decision.

Summary minutes will be prepared following each meeting. Once the Committee has approved the minutes they will be posted on the Company’s website and be open to public access.

Spray Lake Sawmills will provide the meeting space and administrative support as may be required to conduct PAC business. Spray Lake Sawmills will also provide information to the PAC and outside expertise as may be required for the PAC will be able to have full and informed discussion.

The Public Advisory Committee would remain intact as a standing committee for the duration of the FMP development.

### Open Houses

As critical benchmarks are reached during the planning process open houses will be held to provide opportunities for the general public to review developments, ask questions and provide comment for further consideration.

The exact timing, location and content of these open houses will be determined through discussion with the Public Advisory Committee.

### Website

Website technology will be used as a tool to post upcoming planning activities, approved minutes from Public Advisory Committee meetings, periodic progress reports or provide responses to various types of public input.

It will be designed together with an on-line comment page that can be used as an alternate communications link for those unable to attend open houses.

Further to the SLS website the company maintains a Blog site as another alternative for people to provide input into the plans development.

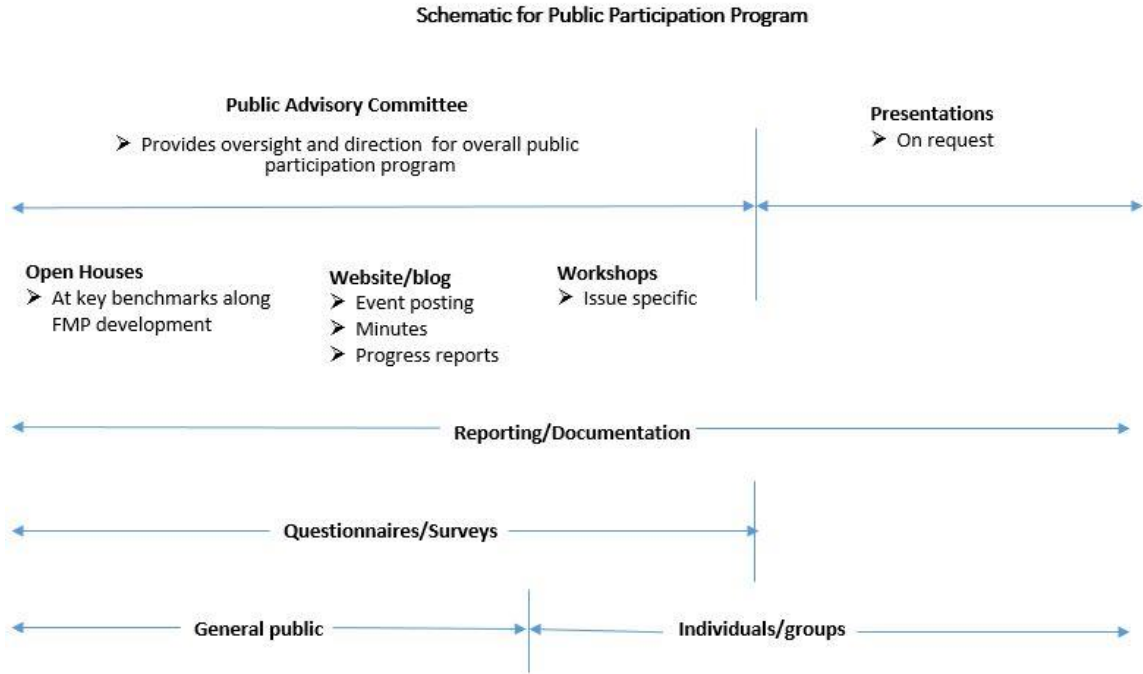
### Workshops

Workshops will be set up on an issue or topic specific basis. Topics and details of workshop organization will be as per direction received from the PAC. It will generally be used as a tool to help work through key issues which may have a broad or divergent range of public sentiments. It is anticipated that workshop participation will generally occur via invitation to people or groups with an anticipated interest.

## Questionnaires/Surveys

Questionnaires may be used as a tool to help document public views on specific issues or to monitor overall performance of the Public Participation Program. Questionnaires will typically be used as part of the Open Houses, workshops or through the SLS website.

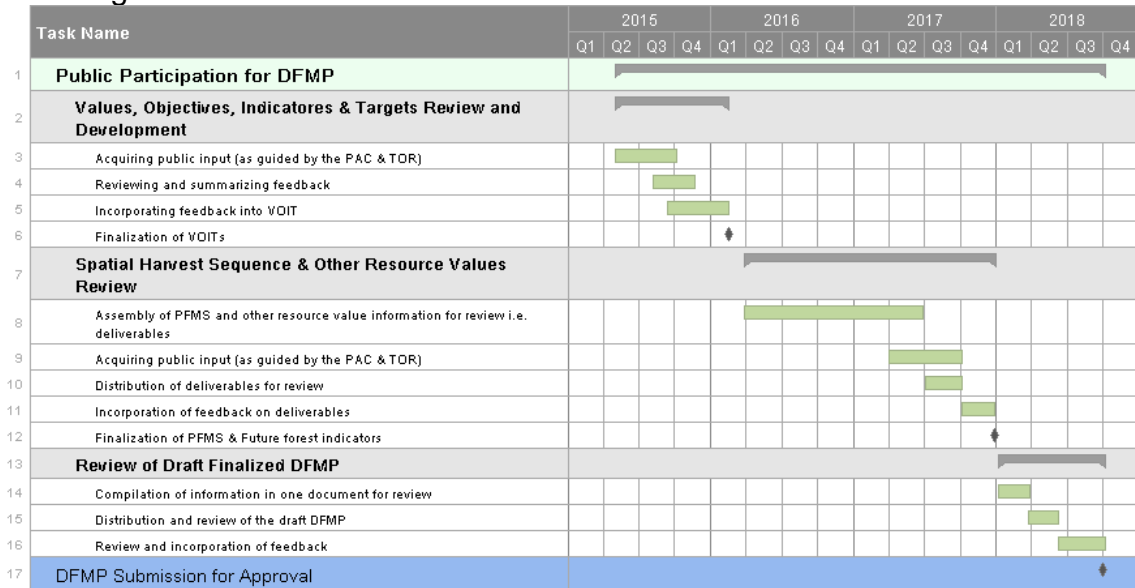
Figure 1



## Timeline

The timeline for FMP development and corresponding public participation will follow the timeline as indicated in Figure 2.

Figure 2:



Note: Timelines shown in Figure 2 have been developed with the intent to align various sub-regional plans arising out of the SSRP with the FMP. Some of the sub-regional plans have targeted timelines identified within the SSRP and some have been left open ended. The FMP submission date is a fixed date as defined within the FMA Agreement. Should sub-regional plans not be completed within the targeted timelines SLS will need to complete and submit the FMP with what is available at the time. Sub-regional plans which are completed after the FMP will be incorporated within the next FMP revision.

### Documentation/Reporting

All FMP public participation activities will be documented along with details of the feedback received, and how it was used within the FMP. If the feedback was not able to be incorporated within the FMP, a rationale will be provided as to why. This documentation will form part of the FMA submission package and will be made available for public viewing.

In recognition of the provinces privacy legislation details of the source and contact information will not be disclosed.

### Note

An independent consultation program, with its own terms-of-reference, will be conducted for the Treaty Seven First Nations Bands. Likewise an independent program will be held with the imbedded coniferous timber quota operators.