

**Spray Lake Sawmills
Public Advisory Committee
SLS Boardroom
May 26th, 2016**

Present: Bette Beswick, Erik Butters, Doug Collister, Jacqueline Nelson, Denise Nickel, Judy Stewart, Jason Mogilefsky, Matt Denney

Guests: Rob Berndt (SLS), Darrell Panas (SLS)

Absent: Liz Breakey, Corey Stoneman, Tim Giese, Mike Korman, Harvey Buckley, Ken Birkett, Daniel Grant, Scotty Many-Guns, George Roman, Gord Lehn,

Meeting kicked off at 4:09

Agenda item – Miscellaneous housekeeping items

- Gord is absent today as he is attending a Linear Footprint Management Plan workshop in Blairmore
- Round table introductions were held to start the meeting as this was the first PAC meeting that Betty could attend to since joining at the beginning of this year.

Agenda item – Silviculture operations update

- Darrell let off with the silviculture activities for the upcoming year. He also spoke to what activities occur after a stand is harvested to align with Government legislation and the current management plan.
- General silviculture process (and time frames for activities)
 - Pre-harvest assessment before logging activities occur
 - After the stand is harvested, SLS has two years to treat the block – legislated requirement
 - Generally site prep the block with equipment the first summer after harvest
- PAC Question – How is erosion controlled at this point?
- SLS – Spray Lake practices stump site processing by which the limbs and un-merchantable top of the tree is removed at the stump and left distributed across the block. This debris helps to keep moisture on the site, reducing desiccation issues for regenerating trees, as well provides barriers for water movement. Season of operability is also evaluated for each block and if there is potential for soil compaction or rutting, the block is logged under frozen conditions.
 - Trees are planted on the block two years after harvest, using obstacle planting to protect the seedlings from the chinook winds in the region. About 1400-1600 stems are planted per hectare. Generally consisting of a mix of pine and spruce (depending on the site characteristics)

- Seed used in tree nurseries to grow the seedlings is collected from areas of similar characteristics and deployment is governed by Alberta's approved seedzones.
 - Eight years after harvest, an establishment survey is completed. This is a legislated requirement. Current standard is for 80% stocking
- PAC Question – Are you anticipating that 80% of the planted stock will survive at the eight year survey?
- SLS – A more appropriate term for stocking could be coverage – the standard is that 80% of the harvest area must have trees of adequate size and health present.
- PAC Question – Monitoring understorey post-harvest, how is this accomplished?
- SLS – At the pre-harvest assessment if a significant understorey is present, operations will be conducted to try and minimize damage to understorey vegetation present on site. Post-harvest blocks are planted, we are only revisiting the area to monitor how well it is growing back, we do not conduct any thinning, fertilizing, herbicide or commercial thinning, so the stand is left to develop naturally on its own successional pathway. The best tool we have is to put a healthy tree in the ground on a good site and let it grow.
- PAC Question – Mortality issue, who is responsible if the seedlings die or the harvest area fails?
- SLS – This is still our responsibility. A lot of effort is placed on making sure the tree seedlings from the nursery are healthy and the tree planters are correctly planting the trees. The Government is only concerned that the standards are met.
 - 12-14 years after harvest a performance survey is completed on the harvest area. At this point the stand is assessed for how well it is growing compared to what was modeled in the annual allowable cut determination
- SLS then detailed the plans for the upcoming road reclamation plan. Generally it occurs after all of the harvest areas that are accessed by the roads are planted (3-5 years post-harvest)
- SLS – to view good source of information on planting, check out the website: <http://www.replant.ca/> . This is the website set up by a tree planting crew member who has worked with Spray for a long time.

Some PAC members recommend we organize a field tour as was done in the past. SLS will look at trying to have a tour in the summer.

Agenda item – Presentation on Forest Harvest Operations

- Rob went through a presentation on the upcoming General Development Plan (GDP)
- Pulled up the GDP table and described how to use the information in conjunction with the map; outlining the wood flow to the mill from the various areas. The GDP, the table and the map are all available through the SLS website (www.spraylakesawmills.com) under the quick links.
- PAC Question- Has the amount of logs being stored in the yard here in Cochrane changed?
- SLS – the capacity is still the same and has not changed over the years.

- PAC Comment – the company should look at signage in areas of high public use to try and raise awareness of the forest management the company is associated with.

Some discussion about facebook and passing on articles – all members are encouraged to visit, or like the facebook page as well as share posts. (<https://www.facebook.com/spraylakesawmills/>)

- PAC comment - Maybe have a notice on SLS website about log hauling in the Spring, so the public knows SLS is not actively logging that time of year.
- PAC comment - There was an article in Alberta Views Magazine discussing the ills of Provincial forest management being lopsided toward fiber production. We should read it and respond.

Agenda item – FSC/SFI update

- Jason opened the Spray Lake Sawmills web site and showed where some of the videos the company has created are stored. Then he used the quick links on the site to bring up the page containing the FSC/SFI content.
- SLS is now certified under two independent sustainable forest management organizations. Sustainable Forestry Initiative is now being recognized by the US Green Building Council and endorsed by the IUCN (International Union of Conservation of Nature).
- Opened up the SFI audit report on the website and went through the outcomes of the report.
- All the audit reports, as well as the studies & material required to be SFI and FSC certified are posted on SLS's website under Forest Certification.
- PAC Question- SLS recently switched auditors for FSC, why was this?
- SLS – The key contact person from the previous audit team quit, which was the main point of contact for SLS. This prompted a review of providers, and Bureau Veritas bid was very competitive.
- PAC Comment - Consider using SFI logos more on our brochures and on the lumber wrap.

Meeting concluded without being able to complete the last agenda item; the presentation to external stakeholders on developing a detailed forest management plan. This will have to be reviewed at a PAC meeting in the future.

Next PAC meeting – sometime after the summer has concluded; most likely September or October.

Adjourn

- 6:55 p.m.