

WOODWORKS

News from Tolko Manitoba Woodlands

2010

Dickstone South Road:

Initial construction has begun on the Dickstone South road which is required to deliver future harvest products from the proposed File Wheadon operating area north east of the Grass River Provincial Park. Development of access to this operating area is needed to ensure the long term supply of wood to the mills in The Pas. The application for the road was submitted March 2008 but much happened previous to the submission. The process all started in 1999 with the planner identifying several areas that had large tracts of mature forest as per the Forest Resource Inventory. These areas were then ground surveyed from 2000- 2002 to determine the volume contain within.

Once it was determined that the area contained the type and volume of timber required, the type of access was decided. Since the wood supply of the area is over 3 million cubic meters, a Class I road – all-weather road with at least a 20 year lifetime would be needed to accommodate the hauling of that quantity of logs. Road options were analyzed as to connections to existing infrastructure (Sherridan road, Chisel lake rail bed, Snow Lake highway). Cost of construction/ upgrading; haul distances and cost of hauling for the six different options were calculated and evaluated. The preferred option was selected based on careful analysis of construction costs, delivery cycle times, environmental implications, traffic impact to communities, payload and total lifetime fossil fuel consumption associated with each route. The selected option runs through the Grass River Park within a corridor designated for future access development in the 1984 Management Plan for the park, and links the Chisel lake rail bed to Highway 39, west of Reed lake.

Then the actual route had to be determined firstly from aerial photographs and then on the ground assessment. Refining initial layout with on the ground information resulted in minor rerouting to avoid difficult obstacles and identify the best locations to cross any creeks. Once the route had been flagged, a heritage resources assessment was undertaken.

Other activities that occurred included reviewing the 1984 Grass River Provincial Park Management Plan to ensure that the preferred option was feasible within the land use categories dictated within the plan; purchase of the Chisel Lake rail bed and submission of the proposed river crossing to Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Transport Canada.

With no heritage resources found to reroute the road and conditional approval for the crossing completed, the proposal could taken to the public for comments. This was done between January and April 2007 with a supplementary survey of support by Tolko's Forest Resource Advisory Committee in September 2007.

All this information was summarized in the application.



The former Chisel lake rail bed is now a forestry road.

In August 2009, an Environment License was issued for the construction. The license had 39 conditions attached to it that had to be met prior to any construction commencing including surveys, decommissioning, gating, restrictions on hauling, reporting, and specifications for the Grass river bridge. Included in these conditions was to complete a survey and report on rare, endangered or species of special concern and migratory birds prior to starting construction. The company completed an initial survey and submitted the report January 2010. The survey was followed with three additional surveys in 2010 that were completed in August 2010.

Individual surveys were completed for frogs, migratory birds and rare plants during the summer of 2010. The detailed survey indicated that the Northern leopard frog does not breed in detectable numbers in the area of the right-of-way, although incidental observations suggest that it is present in low numbers in the general area. Given that right-of-way clearing will occur in the winter months when the frog is hibernating in streams or ponds there should be no impact as a result of the road construction.

Canada warbler, olive-sided flycatcher and common nighthawk, were observed by the field crews. Recommendations from the consultant are to minimize impacts by following Tolko best management practices and Manitoba Forest Practices Guidelines during planning, construction, operation and decommissioning of the road. In addition vegetation clearing for the right-of-way will occur in winter and incidental vegetation clearing will be scheduled outside of the nesting period (June1-July 15). Width of clearing will be minimized, particularly at the Grass river crossing. Ground disturbance will be minimized and shrub habitat retained for olive-sided flycatcher at creek crossings. The consultant recommended that routes through broadleaf mixed forest habitat should be optimized to take the most direct route or use existing trails, this will be considered along with other operational decisions.

One confirmed raptor nest was located adjacent to the right-of-way, but since it is 240 m from the road there is no need for additional mitigation. Although no other raptor or heron nests were found, if any are discovered during construction, work in the vicinity will be delayed until consultation with Manitoba Conservation occurs.

Two rare orchids and two rare ferns were found within the right-of-way by the plant surveyors. The two ferns can be avoided by moving the right-of-way and minimizing stumping or borrow pits in the locations. Two locations for each orchid were found. At one location, the right-of-way can be altered to protect it. The other three locations could not be mitigated due to safety issues if the road was rerouted. None of the plants found are legally protected.



*Round-leaved bog orchid in
Grass River Provincial Park*

Manitoba Conservation approved the revised route and approval to commence construction was received in February 2011. Construction began in March and the first seven kilometers were cleared.

While the public consultation was on-going the Western Canada Wilderness Committee began their campaign to block the road construction that corresponded to their goal that no logging should occur in provincial parks. In 2009, the Forest Act was amended to curtail logging in most parks, including the Grass River. June 20th, 2011 Western Canada Wilderness Committee submitted a request to have a judge decide whether logging roads are considered logging in parks.

Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement

The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA), signed May 2010, is the shared commitment to address sometimes conflicting social, economic, and environmental imperatives in a manner that captures the economic opportunities that are emerging for forest products of the highest environmental quality. The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement sees both forest industry and environment groups committed to working together in the marketplace and on the ground to support governments in the realization of a stronger, more competitive forestry industry and a better protected, more sustainably managed Boreal Forest.

The 21 forestry companies, including Tolko, are all Forest Products Association of Canada members.

There are nine leading environmental groups involved : Canadian Boreal Initiative, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Canopy, David Suzuki Foundation, ForestEthics, Greenpeace, The Nature Conservancy, Pew Environment Group International Boreal Conservation Campaign, and Ivey Foundation (hereafter referred to as ENGOs).

There are six commitments within the agreement:

1. Accelerate the completion of the protected spaces network for the Boreal Forest that represents the diversity of ecosystems within the Boreal region and serves to provide ecological benchmarks.
2. Develop and accelerate implementation of plans to protect species at risk in the Boreal Forest, with a priority focus on Boreal caribou.
3. Implement world-leading, on-the-ground sustainable forest management practices that best reflect the principles of ecosystem-based management in the Boreal Forest.
4. Take action on climate change as it relates to forest conservation and forest product life cycles.
5. Take action to improve the prosperity of the Canadian forest sector and the communities that depend on it.
6. Work to achieve recognition in the marketplace for the environmental performance of the participating companies.

This translates to forest conservation and protection of species at risk (e.g. Caribou) as benchmark goals, regarding which Tolko will participate with provincial planning. Large areas, as seen on map, are short-term deferrals from harvesting in caribou habitat to allow for the development of long term management plans.

The agreement provides for deferral of harvesting in about 30 million hectares of woodland Caribou habitat. In Manitoba, the deferred area is 9.9 million hectares of the 15.9 million hectares of commercial forest in the boreal forest.

Agreement provides for efforts for recovery of species at risk, e.g. Caribou, by addressing harvesting operations and developing management practices.

Climate change is addressed by identifying the areas of climate and energy policy that intersect with forest management and conservation, and creating a work plan for developing joint positions.

One of the challenges is do this and at the same time, seek to minimize the effects on fibre supply, employment, and mills.

The Agreement explicitly recognizes that Aboriginal peoples have constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights and titles as well as legitimate interest and aspirations.

The agreement is for three years with mechanisms to allow for its extension.

(Source: Highlights of the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement. <http://www.canadianborealforestagreement.com/index.php/en/media/>)



Greening the Pulp Mill

The Government of Canada’s Pulp and Paper Green Transformation Program (PPGTP) is laying the groundwork for a greener, more sustainable future for Canada’s pulp and paper sector by supporting smart investments that improve a mill’s environmental performance. This support includes investments in technologies that enhance energy efficiency and the production of renewable energy.

Tolko Industries Ltd. will be applying its PPGTP credits toward a capital improvement project that will improve the energy efficiency and reduce fossil fuel consumption of its mill in The Pas, Manitoba.

The Pas mill operates one power boiler on site that produces steam from both bark and wood waste (60 percent) and bunker C and waste oil (40 percent).

During the process of evaporating water and concentrating black liquor into a combustible fuel, solids tend to bake onto the surface of the evaporator tubes, thereby fouling the tubes and reducing their efficiency. As the tubes become fouled, higher temperatures are required to evaporate the water, which leads to a negative feedback loop of increased baking-on of solids, lower efficiencies and increased power consumption for steam generation.

The new mini-boil system will allow the #1 and #2 effects of the multiple effects evaporator (MEE) to be automatically flushed with water once every four days without interrupting the circulation of black liquor in the rest of the MEE.

Prevention of the gradual fouling of the evaporator through the mini-boil system will reduce the mill's consumption of steam, fossil fuels and electricity — leading to lower greenhouse gas emissions.

How the Pulp and Paper Green Transformation Program Works

Thirty-eight pulp and paper mills across Canada, representing 24 companies, generated credits under the Pulp and Paper Green Transformation Program based on their 2009 production levels of black liquor, a liquid by-product of the pulping process used to

generate heat and power. Qualified companies are required to submit project proposals for their facilities and have until March 31, 2012, to apply the credits to environmental improvement projects. The program is working with these companies as they prepare their project proposals and as projects undergo environmental assessments.

Under the terms of the program, eligible firms can invest the credits generated at one mill in any of their pulp and paper facilities across Canada. Consequently, newsprint and pulp mills that did not generate credits could still benefit from this program.

This program does not limit funding recipients from seeking grants from provincial, municipal or other funding sources to help ensure they meet their environmental stewardship goals.

By investing in clean energy technologies, this program is helping the forest industry contribute to the growth of a domestic clean energy industry and creating and maintaining high-quality jobs for Canadians, while helping to protect and preserve our environment.

(Source: Natural Resources Canada. News Releases. <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/media/newcom/2010/index-eng.php>)

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