

WOODWORKS

News from Tolko Manitoba Woodlands

March 2004

Tolko Sets its Sights on CSA Environmental Standard

Many consumers are looking for assurance that the wood products they buy have been sustainably produced. For forest companies like Tolko, that means proving that they can continue to harvest wood and produce products like lumber and paper without depleting or irreparably damaging the resource.

Getting certified to the ISO 14001 standard (see story on next page) was the first step for Tolko's Manitoba Woodlands division. In the last year the Company has started on the next step, certification to the standard for forest management set by the Canadian Standards Association. To meet this standard, Tolko must put together a Sustainable Forest Management Plan.

Since June of 2003, a group of interested people has been meeting regularly to help Tolko draft its Sustainable Forest Management Plan. This group is known as the CSA Public Advisory Committee. These people represent a broad cross-section, from retired individuals with a personal interest to representatives of diverse groups like Ducks Unlimited, Manitoba Métis Federation, Town of Snow Lake, Manitoba Conservation and several others. Sheldon McLeod, a consultant based in Winnipeg, has facilitated these meetings.

The CSA standard sets out six broad criteria, or categories, related to forest management. At each meeting participants first identified values relating to the criterion being discussed they felt were important. For example, with respect to species diversity, participants decided that **'Continued existence of all animal and plant species native to the area'** was an important value.



Tolko's CSA Public Advisory Committee met at the Kikiwak Inn January 21-22, 2004. Its next meeting is scheduled for March 24-25, 2004.

They then identified objectives for Tolko to work toward in addressing those values. For 'species diversity', one such objective was: ***Provide wildlife habitat for woodland caribou.***

The next step was to come up with indicators that could be used in assessing whether Tolko was meeting the objectives. For the objective listed in the above paragraph, one indicator the group came up with was: ***Woodland caribou habitat for the Kississing-Naosap lakes herd.***

Finally, targets were set – specific actions to be taken to meet the requirements of the indicators. For the indicator noted above, for example, the group decided on the

following target: ***Implement forest management strategy for the Kississing-Naosap woodland caribou range.***

The method of achieving this target will be a joint Manitoba Conservation and industry committee to identify critical habitat and no-harvest areas.

Most of the pieces are now in place for Tolko's Sustainable Forest Management Plan. The group will meet again in March 2004 to review the whole draft plan, and address any outstanding items. Once the plan has been approved, it will guide Tolko in all its future operations, and Tolko's performance in following the plan will be regularly audited by an independent auditor.

CSA Public Advisory Committee and Regional FRAC to Combine

The work of Tolko's CSA Public Advisory Committee will wind down over the next few months. However, Tolko does not want to lose the knowledge and enthusiasm that committee members have brought to drafting its Sustainable Forest Management plan. At the January 2004 Public Advisory Committee meeting, it was agreed the CSA committee and Tolko's regional FRAC would be combined. The restructured committee will provide input to Tolko's ongoing operations, as well as be involved in any follow-up work after Tolko has applied for its CSA certification.

Tolko Continues to Meet ISO 14001 Environmental Standard

Tolko's Woodlands operations were audited in February 2004 by a group of employees from other Tolko divisions. This audit was to ensure that Tolko continues to meet certain levels of environmental performance for its Woodlands operations as set out by the International Standards Association (ISO). Tolko's Woodlands operations were initially certified by the ISO in November 2002 to what is known as the ISO 14001 standard. This benchmark of environmental performance is used by all kinds of companies and organizations around the world to guide their operations. It is a way

for companies to demonstrate that they take their environmental responsibilities seriously.

2004 Annual Operating Plan on Schedule

Tolko received approval from Manitoba Conservation for its 2004 Annual Operating Plan (AOP), also known as its forest harvest and renewal plan, late last year. The AOP covers all planned activities across the licence area including site preparation and planting, areas to be harvested, harvesting methods, road construction and retirements, and water crossings.

The plan also outlines steps Tolko will take to minimize the environmental impacts of its work on the land and on watercourses. Before any actual work is undertaken this year, Tolko must apply for and receive the necessary permits from provincial and/or federal authorities.

At the meeting of Tolko's regional Forest Resource Advisory Committee (FRAC) last November, Tolko's area supervisors/planners outlined where harvesting was planned for their areas from 2004 through 2006. There are several quota holders across the license area that sell wood to Tolko. Tolko also does harvest planning for these quota holders.

The Company has several First Nations contractors, and is also developing more extensive partnerships with First Nations such as Chemawawin Cree Nation in the Interlake. This partnership, which also involves the provincial government, includes training and employment opportunities for band members. Tolko also has a contractual arrangement with Sturgeon Landing First Nation to harvest wood on band land. Some band members were employed in building seven kilometres of ice road across Namew Lake this winter.

A caribou management plan has been produced for the Naosap Lake area and signed off by Manitoba Conservation. Work is continuing to develop a caribou strategy in the Wedge Lake area, which is addressing issues related to movement of animals

between summer and wintering areas, and critical habitat.

Snow Lake and Tolko Continue to Strengthen Working Relationship

Over the last year, representatives of Tolko and the people and Town of Snow Lake have been meeting to discuss the potential for Tolko to begin operating in the Snow Lake area. A Forest Resources Advisory Committee has been established, and Tolko has also met with some members of Snow Lake Town Council.

Tolko presented its proposed short-term and long-term plans for harvesting and forest renewal in the Snow Lake area at a public meeting in the community in late January 2004. Harvesting operations are scheduled to begin in early March 2004.



Andrew Forward, Highrock Supervisor/Planner, outlines Tolko's proposed operations for the Snow Lake area at a public meeting in January 2004.

2004 Tree Planting Program

Tolko will be planting six million trees across its licence area this year. Just over 60% of the planting program will take place in the Nelson River Forest Section. Most seedlings planted there will be white spruce and black spruce, with some jack pine. This year, Tolko will plant at Suwannee, northwest of Thompson. At about 550 km from The Pas by road, this will be the furthest from The Pas that Tolko has taken its planting

program to date. There will also be a lot of activity around Moose Lake, and in the Limestone Road and Cormorant areas.

All seedlings to be planted in the Saskatchewan River forest section have been grown from improved seed, collected from Tolko's seed orchards in that area. Next year, seedlings for Tolko's planting program could come from nurseries in the Okanagan, or even from as far as Nevada, still using seed from the licence area. Because such nurseries incur lower heating costs to grow seedlings, this will represent a saving for Tolko.

Saskatchewan River Forest Section Inventory Data Being Updated

Tolko and the provincial government are working together to update inventory information in the Saskatchewan River Forest Section. This area extends roughly from the Saskatchewan border to just south of Grand Rapids, then north to a point just east of Ponton, and from there west to the Saskatchewan border.

The approach to inventorying forest resources has expanded over the years from simply looking at the forest as a fibre basket. Newer inventory methods are now taking into account the diversity of species, both plants and animals, in forests. They also factor in many other uses or values of the forest in addition to harvesting, such as recreation, or preservation of unique ecosystems.

Aerial photographs of the Saskatchewan River Forest Section were taken in 1995-96. Since then, the painstaking work of creating base maps based on the photography has continued. These maps show where stands are located, the tree species in those stands, their year of origin and many other useful pieces of information.

The next step is to determine how much wood (the volume) each of these stands contains. Fieldwork to collect this volume data began in December 2003. Tolko and Manitoba Conservation are working together to collect the necessary field information.

Once all the volume data have been collected, wood supply modeling can be done. Results from the modeling will be used to more accurately determine the Annual Allowable Cut – exactly how much wood Tolko will be permitted to harvest each year – from the Saskatchewan River Forest Section.

Woodlands People

With the retirement of long-time Tolko planner **Doug Taylor** last year, **Mike Paddock** and **Andrew Forward** have ably stepped into Doug's work boots. Mike is Supervisor/Planner for the Saskatchewan River Forest Section, and Andrew is Supervisor/Planner for the Highrock Forest Section.



Mike Paddock (above) and Andrew Forward.



Two young employees have also joined Tolko. **Travis Romanchuk** is responsible for supervising contractor operations in the Saskatchewan River Forest Section, while

Leanne Kalinowich is doing the same in the Highrock.



Travis (above) and Leanne (below).



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Minutes of all Tolko's FRAC meetings, together with documents like the Annual Operating Plan, are all posted on the Tolko Woodlands Web site:
www.tolkomanitoba.com.

The names and contact numbers of key Woodlands staff members are listed. There's also a link to the main Tolko Web site: www.tolko.com.