

# WOODWORKS

*News from Tolko Manitoba Woodlands*

September 2007

## 1. 2007-08 Annual Harvest and Renewal Plan Public Meetings

Tolko's area planners and other staff members visited 9 communities across the license area through late January-early February 2007 to present the company's proposed annual harvest and renewal plan.

The meetings were advertised in local media. They provided an opportunity for people to learn about where the company was proposing to operate in their area in the coming year, and also about proposed road development, road closures and forest renewal.

Those attending were encouraged to voice concerns and to ask questions. They were also asked to share local plant and wildlife

knowledge, and information about local community issues such as wild rice lakes, registered traplines and cross country skiing and snowmobile trails.

The meetings also offered a way for local people to share traditional knowledge relating to burial and ceremonial sites, and plant gathering areas.

Based on the feedback it received, Tolko revised parts of its 2007-08 harvest and renewal plan. The plan was submitted to Manitoba Conservation for review, and approved June 1, 2007. The plan can be viewed at [www.tolkomanitoba.com](http://www.tolkomanitoba.com).

*Interested in seeing Tolko's 2007-2008 Annual Operating Plan map online?  
Check [www.tolkomanitoba.com](http://www.tolkomanitoba.com).  
For best results, use a high-speed Internet connection if possible.*

## 2. Chisel Lake Railbed to Play Key Role in Secure Timber Supply

Tolko's 1997-2009 Forest Management Plan (13-year plan) provides the broad, overall blueprint for the company's operations in Manitoba. Specific details about harvest and renewal operations at local and regional levels are then broken out and outlined in the company's annual harvest and renewal plans, which must be approved by Manitoba Conservation each year.

Forest investigation work completed since the 13-Year Plan was approved in 1997 has determined that certain areas in the Highrock Forest Section contain significant reserves of merchantable timber.

These include areas near Loonhead Lake, File Lake and Woosey Lake (near Snow Lake), as well as Thunder Hill and Fay Lake (in the Kissynew Lake area). Actual on-ground timber cruises have confirmed volumes of merchantable wood in these areas.



Through the last half of 2006-early 2007, Tolko received approval from Manitoba Conservation to amend all these areas into its 13-year plan. Tolko subsequently developed specific harvest and renewal plans for all the areas. The company presented these specific plans at its annual harvest and renewal plan public meetings in late January - early February 2007 (see “2007-08 Annual Harvest and Renewal Plan Public Meetings” on page 1 of this newsletter).

With respect to Fay Lake and Thunder Hill, Tolko plans to access these areas from the Sherridon Road.

Cutting areas around Snow Lake will be accessed via the Chisel Lake railbed, which Tolko purchased from Hudson Bay Mining & Smelting early in 2007. The mining company had not used the railbed for some time, and had pulled up all the rails and ties.

The section of railbed Tolko purchased starts at the end of PR 395 and runs approximately 90 kilometres west to where it intersects with the Keewatin Railway line near Optic Lake.

All the newly-amended areas, together with the increased accessibility offered by the railbed, are expected to contribute significantly to stability of the company’s timber supply, and thus to its sawmill and kraft paper operations, over the long term.

In order to haul wood out of the Loonhead/File/Woosey Lake areas, Tolko has applied to Manitoba Conservation to build an all-weather road traveling north-south through Grass River Provincial Park on the west side of Reed Lake. This route would also include building a bridge across the Grass River, located just east of Flag Lake. Manitoba Conservation is currently considering this proposal.

### **3. Proposal to Harvest Spruce Budworm-killed Timber in Grass River Park**



Tolko has submitted a request to Manitoba Conservation to harvest inside the open and closed zone of Grass River Provincial Park, where a spruce budworm outbreak north of Iskwasum Lake over the last few years has killed large volumes of timber.

The company estimates that 60,000 cubic metres of bug-killed timber could be salvaged from this area.

Proposed harvesting would occur during the winter period and the Wedge Lake Road would be used as the main access route.

This proposal is currently under review with Manitoba Conservation.

#### **4. 2007-08 Proposed Road Closures**

Tolko has a policy governing the ongoing closing of logging roads it no longer requires for its operations. This policy was brought into effect to reduce or eliminate Tolko's liability for roads it no longer uses, and also to ensure that the safety of the public travelling in cars and trucks is not at risk on these roads.

Tolko must first consult with Manitoba Conservation about any roads it wishes to close, and the company and government jointly decide what methods will be used in each case. Tolko recognizes that the public have used some its roads for many years. In most instances, decommissioning a road involves putting up a berm at the start of the road that keeps trucks and cars out, but allows ATV and snowmobile access.

Tolko plans to close four roads over 2007-08. These roads, with the locations where they will be decommissioned, are as follows:

- Old Naosap Road (its origin at the Sherridon Road; also the junction with the new Naosap Road)
- New Naosap Road (origin at the Sherridon Road)
- South Joey Lake Road (origin at PTH 6)
- Wabishkok Road (origin at Sherridon Road)

Note that since 1998, Manitoba Conservation requires a Forest Road Development Plan for all new primary or secondary forestry roads. Part of every plan includes a decommission strategy. Tolko's policy is meant to apply the same principles to roads pre 1998.

#### **5. Cut Timber Rescued from Baril Lake Fire**

A 3,000-hectare fire in the Baril Lake area in July 2007 resulted in Tolko losing some regenerating cutblocks plus several blocks scheduled for harvest over the next 5 years.

The company was able to haul out 10,000 cubic metres of wood in late July that had already been cut and stockpiled and was not damaged. The Company is reviewing plans to carry out a salvage harvest this winter.

#### **6. 2007 Tree Plant**

Extreme heat during July, heavy rain in the Thompson area and the Baril Lake fire (see related article in this issue) made this year's tree planting season a particularly challenging one.

Approximately 6 million seedlings, mostly spruce, were planted on Tolko's licence area during the 2007 tree plant season. The season ran from just after the May long weekend through to July 20<sup>th</sup>.

Planting sites were concentrated in the Radar Lake Road area south of Thompson, around Wanless and in the Naosap area south of Flin Flon.

Like last year, our contractor brought in hybrid all-terrain vehicles called Rollagons to get crews in and out of the saturated areas. The Rollagon has very high, wide flotation tires and has proven to be a much less expensive alternative to helicopter in accessing certain area.

And with tree planting crews working within a few kilometres of the Baril Lake fire, Tolko worked very closely with Manitoba Conservation during that period to ensure crews could be taken out immediately if the wind shifted. As it turned out, the fire was contained and put out without the workers being in danger at any time.

The 6 million seedlings planted this summer were grown by PRT nurseries, and the provincial government's tree nursery at Hadashville.

## **7. Employees and Contractors Learn about Racism at Training Session**

Elder John Martin of University College of the North and Ron Beardy, a guidance counsellor in Cross Lake, were the featured speakers at a session on racism held at the Kikiwak Inn, The Pas on April 25, 2007. Tolko put on the session for its employees and contractors as a way to raise awareness of racism, and to encourage open discussion of the issue.

Doug Hunt, Tolko's Acting Woodlands Manager, opened the session with a review of Tolko's company values and policies that relate to treatment of others, particularly aboriginal people, in the workplace.

Martin and Beardy each followed with their presentations. Both speakers outlined the frustrations and lost opportunities they had

experienced through their lives due to the racist perceptions and attitudes of others. Each also discussed how they were able to overcome the injustices they had experienced, move forward in a positive way and to take on positions in their communities where they could help others who had suffered from racist actions.

Beardy closed his presentation with a sharing circle. All participants stood in a circle, and a special stone was passed around. While each person held the stone, he/she was free to speak about what was on their mind without interruption or criticism. Everyone was given a chance to speak if they wished. Those who chose to speak were very positive about the whole day's presentations on racism.

## **8. Recent Developments Relating to New Provincial Parks within Tolko's FMLA**

In July 2007, the Manitoba government designated Little Limestone Lake as the province's newest park reserve. This lake 450 km north of Winnipeg is considered the finest and largest example of a marl lake in the world. A marl lake changes colour as its water temperature rises

and calcite dissolved in the water begins to settle out. In warm summer weather, the lake turns from clear to an opaque turquoise or even to a milky blue-white. The area also has many other interesting and unique geological features.

Under provincial park reserve status, no industrial activity of any kind can take place on or within a certain distance of the lake. While the new park reserve is located within Tolko's FMLA, Tolko has no present or future plans to harvest near the lake.

Changes are planned for the Paint Lake Provincial Park near Thompson. The province is proposing that the boundary of the park be extended to include East Paint Lake Park Reserve, that the park classification for the combined park area be established as a Natural Park, and that a Recreational Development land use category be applied to the entire resulting area. Public consultations on this proposal were held in June 2007.

## **9. FMU Amalgamation**

Tolko and Manitoba Conservation continue to discuss Tolko's request to amalgamate certain selected Forest Management Units (FMUs) in the Highrock Forest Section.

The Highrock Forest Section covers a large portion of west-north central Manitoba that includes the communities of Flin Flon, Sherridon and Snow Lake. As with all FMUs across the province, the current boundaries of the Highrock's FMUs were originally set by the provincial government several decades ago according to administrative priorities at the time.

Tolko has applied to combine a few, selected Forest Management Units in the Highrock because it anticipates achieving greater operational efficiency and cost savings by doing so, particularly with respect to log haul operations. The company has put together financial projections outlining the efficiencies and savings it expects to achieve, and has submitted these to Manitoba Conservation to support its amalgamation request.

## **10. Public Welcome to Sit on Forest Resources Advisory Committee**

The most recent meeting of Tolko's regional Forest Resources Advisory Committee (FRAC) was held June 6-7, 2007 in Snow Lake.



The first day included discussions about both ongoing and emerging issues that affect Tolko's operations in The Pas and across its forest management license area. Several of these issues are detailed elsewhere in this newsletter.

On the second day, meeting participants met at the Wekusko Falls Lodge dining room for breakfast, then headed out on a field tour of the Chisel Lake railbed around 8:00. Stops included the access gate, bridge over Woosey Creek, current harvest

area, Grass River Park boundary, sand road (4 mile portage between Reed Lake and Morton Lake), junction of Dickstone and winter roads, and abandoned North Star Mine property.

The field tour wrapped up around 2:00 p.m.

FRAC meetings are a way for individuals or organizations to learn about, and provide input into, the company's planned forestry operations. In addition to the regional FRAC, there are also smaller forest resources advisory committees in Snow Lake and Sherridon.

The regional FRAC usually meets 2-3 times a year. At least one of those meetings includes a field trip focusing on some aspect of forest harvest or renewal, such as the Chisel Lake Railbed tour. A tour of the sawmill operation in The Pas was held in conjunction with the February 2007 FRAC meeting.

***The next regional FRAC meeting is scheduled for September 26, 2007 in The Pas. Contact Doug Hunt, Acting Woodlands Manager, at 623-8542 if you would like to find out more or to sit as a FRAC member.***

#### **11. Tolko Staff Changes**

Bruce Bodie, formerly Tolko's Area Superintendent for the Nelson River Forest Section, has left the company to take a job with Inco in Thompson.

***Questions, concerns  
or suggestions for Tolko?  
Contact Doug Hunt, Divisional  
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or [doug.hunt@tolko.com](mailto:doug.hunt@tolko.com).***