

**Minutes of Tolko FMLA-FRAC Meeting  
February 23-24, 2005  
Thompson, Manitoba**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Doug Hunt, Divisional Forester with Tolko and FRAC Chairman, welcomed participants to Day 1 of the meeting, held at the Ramada Inn. Participants introduced themselves. Day 2 of the meeting was held at Tolko's Thompson regional office. Attendance for both days is noted on Attachments 1 and 2.

**2. Review of Agenda**

The agenda (Attachment 3) was reviewed and the following item was added: a presentation by Dan Soprovich on wildlife trees left on cutovers following harvesting.

**3. Recent Developments at Tolko**

Doug Hunt provided an update on the roof cave-in at the sawmill that occurred in mid-February, as well as a synopsis of how continuing U.S. duties coupled with the strong Canadian dollar continue to financially impact the company.

**4. Review of Minutes of December 1, 2004 FMLA-FRAC Meeting**

Doug Hunt reviewed the minutes of the December 1, 2004 FMLA-FRAC meeting, noting he would speak to action items arising from the minutes later during the February 23-24, 2005 meeting.

Community wishes and Tolko's responsibility related to maintaining a portion of a logging road in the Thicket Portage area were discussed. Community representatives were advised that Manitoba Conservation is the appropriate agency to follow up with at this time.

Representatives of Thicket Portage indicated that previously identified concerns relating to Tolko's impact on traplines have not been addressed either by Tolko or Manitoba Conservation. Doug Hunt noted Tolko's position is to work with individual trappers to mitigate any effects as much as possible, but that Tolko does not provide monetary compensation. Hunt added there is a need for Tolko to consult, together with a need for trappers to bring concerns forward to Tolko.

Representatives of Thicket Portage indicated that various aboriginal interests have deemed a certain part of a tape about the Northern Forest Diversification Centre presented at the December 1, 2004 meeting offensive, and that they have not received a copy of the tape as requested. They were advised that the tape should be available through the CBC.

A trapper from the Thicket Portage area indicated that fuel drums and other debris have been left on his trapline. It was determined that a contractor to Tolko had left these materials behind. The trapper was advised to follow up with Manitoba Conservation, and also with Don Aikman, Tolko area planner for the Nelson River area. (Later noted by Lyle Saskowski, conservation officer with Manitoba Conservation's Thompson regional office, that Manitoba Conservation has contacted the contractor in question, and that action has been initiated.)

Re Item #6 of the December 1, 2004 minutes: noted that the draft ground rules for the FMLA-FRAC committee were accepted subject to the wording of the ground rules being amended to reflect that the FRAC is one vehicle for, and does not replace, community consultation.

Re Items #1 and #2 of the December 1, 2004 minutes: noted that the word "concerns" is inappropriate as it relates to the proposed FRAC Protected Area Planning Project. The objectives of the project are to involve northerners in collecting and contributing local ecological and traditional knowledge that could be used in the design of a protected area or areas in their "back yards".

Re Item #9 of the December 1, 2004 minutes: the objectives of the proposed FRAC Protected Area Planning Project were once again clarified. Further noted that the definition of those to be involved in the up-front planning for the pilot project should be broadened to also include community councils, Métis organizations and other northern groups.

## **5. Public Issues and Concerns Table**

Doug Hunt distributed a table documenting issues raised by the public during phone calls or one-on-one between September 22, 2004 and January 31, 2005 (Attachment 4). Issues and concerns were also raised by the public during meetings Tolko held in communities through January and February 2005 to discuss its 2005-2006 Annual Operating Plan. Questions raised at these meetings together with answers provided by Tolko staff were recorded in minutes produced for each meeting. Minutes of the AOP meetings are posted at [www.tolkomanitoba.com](http://www.tolkomanitoba.com).

## **6. Results of CSA Survey Questionnaire**

Dan Soprovich noted that the first 6 pages of Tolko's response to T.R.E.E.'s comments on its SFM Plan were missing from the copy he had received. It is believed that a photocopying/collating error occurred. Complete copies of Tolko's response will be mailed to all FMLA-FRAC members.

Doug Hunt reviewed the results of two surveys Tolko had sent out (Attachment 5). One was sent to members of the public who had actively participated in an advisory committee to help Tolko draft its Sustainable Forest Management Plan; the other was

sent to members of the public who did not actively participate but had asked to be kept informed. The surveys were designed to evaluate the satisfaction of both groups relative to their respective involvement.

Noted that T.R.E.E. did not complete an advisory committee survey.

Some questions were raised respecting how certain percentage figures in the survey results had been calculated. After further discussion it was determined that no follow-up would be required.

Further Q&A and discussion followed.

### **7. Public Mailing List**

Doug Hunt noted that Tolko's current public mailing list had been distributed at the last FMLA-FRAC meeting, with the request that committee members review and update it where possible. Hunt then distributed four further lists relating to the CSA process and to the FRAC (Attachment 6), again requesting members present to review and update where possible. Discussion on ways to streamline mailing lists followed.

### **8. Draft Operating Ground Rules for FMLA-FRAC**

Doug Hunt distributed Operating Ground Rules for the FMLA-FRAC dated February 23, 2005 (Attachment 7). He noted that the change requested at the last FMLA-FRAC meeting (i.e. that FRAC meetings are not to replace community consultation or one-on-one meetings) had been incorporated under "Purpose." The draft ground rules were to be further reviewed at the next FRAC meeting scheduled in May.

### **9. Review of Minister of Conservation Letter to CSA Committee**

Doug Hunt distributed the letter received from Stan Struthers, Minister of Conservation, dated August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2004 in response to the CSA Public Advisory Committee letter of May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2004 (Attachment 8).

He also distributed a letter dated February 3, 2005 from Dave Wotton, ADM, Programs Division, Manitoba Conservation in response to the FRAC Protected Area Planning Project proposal submitted by Dan Soprovich December 14, 2004 (Attachment 9).

Hunt further distributed minutes from ten 2005-2006 AOP meetings held in late January/early February 2005. As noted previously, these minutes are accessible at [www.tolkomanitoba.com](http://www.tolkomanitoba.com).

Two guests introduced themselves: John Dojack, acting director for the Manitoba Forestry Branch, Manitoba Conservation, and Lyle Saskowski, conservation officer with Manitoba Conservation's Thompson regional office.

Dan Soprovich reviewed the context for the CSA public advisory committee letter of May 27, 2004, and noted that the committee was looking for further information from the provincial government relative to its response of August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

John Dojack offered the following response/information relative to the questions raised in the CSA public advisory committee letter of May 27, 2004:

Will the Government of Manitoba expedite the Protected Areas Initiative?

Protected Areas development is to follow in step with development of the updated provincial forest inventory. Inventory has proceeded first in the Duck/Porcupine Mountains, will follow on the east side of Lake Winnipeg, then the Saskatchewan River area. Some volume sampling has been completed in the Saskatchewan River Forest Section, with more anticipated in the coming year. The government anticipates delineating boundaries for Protected Areas in the Saskatchewan River Forest Section in early 2006.

Discussion and Q&A followed.

Will the Government of Manitoba commit to the maintenance of records of furbearing species, harvests, etc.?

Noted by Lyle Saskowski that Manitoba Conservation regional offices do maintain such information on an ongoing basis. Noted by John Dojack that Dean Berezanski (Wildlife and Ecosystem Protection Branch) recognizes the importance of records being maintained, and that Manitoba Conservation district offices do maintain their own records.

Discussion and Q&A followed.

Will the Government of Manitoba develop a mechanism for assuming responsibility for forestry road retention and maintenance?

Noted by John Dojack that the Crown land permitting process is trying to address the issue of community use of forestry roads once they are no longer needed by forest companies. Work on trying to resolve this issue is ongoing.

Discussion and Q&A followed.

Will the Government of Manitoba commit to modernizing the northern forest inventory?

Noted by John Dojack that the government has committed to this, and is proceeding as resources allow. The government is currently spending about \$400,000/yr on updating the inventory. Cost-sharing partnerships with other forest users are being explored.

Discussion and Q&A followed.

Will the Government of Manitoba undertake consultations with all interested parties in the North on any re-drafting of, or amendments to, the Forest Act?

Noted by John Dojack that the province has approved funding for development of a new Forest Act and of a new stumpage system. He expects that forest companies, together with First Nations, trappers, advisory groups and others in the north will be consulted in drafting the new Forest Act. Specific consultation mechanisms will be spelled out in a formal plan.

Discussion and Q&A followed.

#### **10. AOP Presentation – Nelson River Forest Section**

Don Aikman, Tolko area planner for the Nelson River Forest Section, presented an overview of current and planned harvest and renewal activities for the area. See Attachment 10.

#### **11. Overview of Nelson River Area**

Bruce Bodie, area superintendent for Thompson, presented an overview of current operations in the area. Tolko works with 3 main contractors. Wood is hauled to and stockpiled at 3 rail spurs for shipment to the mill. Tolko makes use of rail for about 10 months each year. Tolko harvests 300,000-350,000 cubic metres of wood from the Nelson River Forest Section annually.

Q&A followed. Tolko's standard relative to leaving standing trees on cutovers, snag retention and the importance of wildlife concerns were discussed. See Attachment 10.

#### **12. Review of Steps Taken to Reduce Bulldozing**

Shayne Elliott, Tolko area supervisor, reviewed the methods Tolko employs in the Nelson River area to reduce both the area and impacts of bulldozing. He also discussed steps Tolko takes to minimize damage to the landscape during road building.

Q&A and discussion followed. See Attachment 10.

#### **13. AOP Presentation (continued) – Saskatchewan River Forest Section / Highrock Forest Section / Forest Renewal**

Andrew Forward, Tolko area planner for the Highrock Forest Section, presented an overview of current and planned harvest activities for the area. See Attachment 10.

Mike Paddock, Tolko area planner for the Saskatchewan River Forest Section, presented an overview of current and planned harvest activities for the area. See Attachment 10.

Paul Chapman, Tolko silviculture forester, presented an overview of forest renewal activities planned for 2005-2006. See Attachment 10.

#### **14. Overview and Results of Leaving Standing Trees**

Troy Millar, Tolko area supervisor, noted that Tolko's target is to leave 5 standing trees per hectare minimum following harvest. Using the example of a typical cutblock, he explained the processes Tolko's contractors follow to meet this standard and the process Tolko uses to calculate standing trees.

Dan Soprovich distributed a table he had prepared relating to habitat of 5 cavity-dependent bird species in the Duck Mountain Ecodistrict (Attachment 11). The table is from a study related to Louisiana-Pacific's operations, showing what various cavity-dependent species require in terms of DBH in both live and dead trees.

Q&A and discussion followed. See Attachment 10.

### **15. ASI Pilot Project**

Doug Hunt referred to the letter dated February 3, 2005 from Dave Wotton, ADM, Programs Division, Manitoba Conservation in response to the FRAC Protected Area Planning Project proposal submitted by Dan Soprovich December 14, 2004 (Attachment 9).

Hunt noted that Manitoba Conservation prefers to lead this process; in addition, there is no guarantee that the Tom Lamb ASI would become a Protected Area. Dan Soprovich expressed his disappointment with the process to date, adding that Wotton's letter does not provide any alternatives or suggestions on where the process might proceed from here.

Discussion followed on where to take the process next.

**Action item: Doug Hunt to try to meet with Dave Wotton about providing local input (both government and non-government) on the Tom Lamb ASI into the Protected Areas planning process. Door also to be left open to including additional non-government representatives (such as from the World Wildlife Fund).**

### **16. Field Tour**

Committee members were taken on a tour of a contractor operation (John Uhrina) off the Buckingham Road south of Thompson. This winter cut operation includes feller bunching, grapple skidding, processor delimiting and slashing.

**Next meeting of the FMLA-FRAC: May 11<sup>th</sup>. Location and time to be confirmed.**