

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

FORESTRY COMMITTEE MEETING
(Committee of the Whole)

Thursday, July 21, 2016

PRESENT: Chair Rob MacDougall

Directors Taylor Bachrach
Eileen Benedict
Shane Brienen
Mark Fisher
Tom Greenaway
Thomas Liversidge
Bill Miller
Rob Newell
Mark Parker
Jerry Petersen
Darcy Repen
Luke Strimbold
Gerry Thiessen

Director Dwayne Lindstrom
Absent

Staff Melany de Weerd, Chief Administrative Officer
Cheryl Anderson, Manager of Administrative Services
Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant

Other Marc Bekar, Smithers
Anna-Maria Spooner, Cluculz Lake
Roy Spooner, Cluculz Lake
Heather Wiebe, Omineca Spruce Beetle Project Manager,
Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations –
Via Teleconference 10:06 a.m. to 10:24 a.m.

Media Flavio Nienow, LD News

CALL TO ORDER

Chair MacDougall called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

AGENDA

Moved by Director Petersen
Seconded by Director Newell

F.C.2016-5-1

“That the Forestry Committee Meeting Agenda of July 21, 2016
be adopted.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES

Forestry Committee Meeting
Minutes – April 14, 2016

Moved by Director Repen
Seconded by Director Bachrach

F.C.2016-5-2

“That the Forestry Committee Meeting Minutes of April 14, 2016 be received.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DELEGATION

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS – Heather Wiebe, Omineca Spruce Beetle Project Manager RE: Update – Spruce Beetle Management Plan Via Teleconference 10:06 a.m. – 10:24 a.m.

Chair MacDougall welcomed Heather Wiebe, Omineca Spruce Beetle Project Manager, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations via teleconference.

Ms. Wiebe provided a Spruce Beetle Outbreak – Update.

Spruce Beetle Outbreak – Update

Spruce Beetle

- Endemic to B.C.;
 - o Beetles are in the forests at all times;
- Certain conditions that will allow for the population to increase:
 - o Blow down – more significant wind events from climate change;
 - o Warmer winters – allows beetle to have a one year life cycle instead of a two year life cycle;
 - o Very long and dry summers – stress the trees and not able to pitch out the beetles and more susceptible to infestation.

Outbreak confirmed

A spruce beetle outbreak was confirmed in Omineca Region in October of 2015. Elements of an outbreak:

- Significant # of hectares impacted: 156,000 ha for Omineca;
- Beetle present in both one and two year life cycles;
- Beetle successful in attacking large and small diameter spruce;
- Populations are increasingly severe.

Responsibilities during a spruce beetle outbreak

FLNRO: Detection through annual aerial overview surveys, helicopter surveys, and ground surveys.

Licenseses: Treatment through conventional trap trees, targeted harvest. Planned hauling and milling of infested timber to reduce spread.

FLNRO Detection (2015-2016 fiscal)

- \$250,000 aerial surveys;
- \$500,000 ground surveys.

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS – Heather Wiebe, Omineca Spruce Beetle Project Manager RE: Update – Spruce Beetle Management Plan Via Teleconference 10:06 a.m. – 10:24 a.m.

TSA (Timber Supply Area) Working Groups (operations)

Working groups were established for both the Mackenzie and Prince George TSA's in 2015 with the primary focus of using the detection information from FLNRO to prioritize treatment.

Working groups bring licensees and FLNRO to the same table for collaborative planning.

- 5,300 ha was treated in the spring of 2016 with trap trees;
 - Two methods of treatment:
 - Trap trees – mimic blowdown – large diameter spruce trees that are cut down and jammed into the shade;
 - 10 times more successful to draw spruce beetle than live standing trees;
 - Those trees are removed – brought to the mill for processing, bucked up and burned, or the bark can be peeled off them;
- Sanitization treatment:
 - Harvest green timber and process:
 - 4,680 ha harvested removing 226,000m³ of spruce trees with live beetle during the 2016 fiscal year.

Omineca Working Group (strategic)

Licensees impacted by the outbreak reviewed the direction from government (BMPs (Best Management Practices), expectations, guidelines) and developed recommendations to government to support suppression.

- Licensees will share operating areas where necessary;
- FLNRO will provide a formal response document that will outline ongoing efforts, options/decisions/choices/results/findings

Public Advisory Committee

The first meeting of the Omineca Spruce Beetle Public Advisory Committee occurred June 15, 2016. This group will review direction from government and recommendations from licensees and provide advice on forestry and non-forestry values of importance to the citizens of British Columbia.

- Omineca Beetle Action Coalition (OBAC);
- Academia;
- First Nations;
- Community Forests;
- Local governments;
- NGO's;
- Commercial recreation users (guide outfitters);
- Non-commercial recreation users (hunters).

FLNRO Removing Barriers

- Tenures, Competitiveness & Innovation investigating tenures and pricing options;
- Newly developed survey methodologies will eliminate redundancy and costs to licensees to capture data necessary for expedient treatment;
- Will conduct extensive heli surveys with licensees to identify areas for suppression harvest;
- Engineering branch analyzing infrastructure needs to access impacted timber;
- Working with BC Parks to establish trap trees within parks and safeguard values with adjacent harvest opportunities;
- Expedition of authorizations, extension with FN for trap trees;
- Field trials on new pheromone attractants and experimental horizontal traps.

DELEGATION (CONT'D)

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS – Heather Wiebe, Omineca Spruce Beetle Project Manager RE: Update – Spruce Beetle Management Plan Via Teleconference 10:06 a.m. – 10:24 a.m.

Knowledge Management

Spruce beetle outbreaks usually last 7 years; in year 3 in Omineca. There is a small window to mitigate impact by thoroughly and judiciously applying tactics at population epicentres. Industry, stakeholders, and government need to capture, develop, share, and effectively use knowledge for success.

- Recalling retired FLNRO staff (contract/emeritus) & connecting with Beetle Bosses from MPB outbreak to learn from the past;
- Hosting a summit in 2016 to bring together North American experts for BC to gather information on new research or successful operational techniques and for BC to provide training to other provinces experiencing spruce beetle population growth;
- Durable products and processes developed for Omineca are provincially relevant therefore shelf- ready for other regions;
- Reaching out to all NRS staff to increase knowledge of the outbreak to better integrate with their clients and communities.

Ms. Wiebe mentioned that 2016 will be a very telling year in regard to the population of the spruce beetle.

Ms. Wiebe commented that there are limitations to hauling the spruce beetle impacted trees to mills as the beetle flies when it is warmer than 16 degrees Celsius and between May and August. During those times there will only be night hauling and the trees arriving at the sawmills are processed immediately. Discussion took place regarding the risk to transport the trees. Ms. Wiebe noted that there is a higher risk of infestation if the trees remain in the bush and every attempt is made to mitigate the risks.

Director Miller requested clarification as to the sharing of the information provided in regard to the spruce beetle outbreak. Ms. Wiebe indicated that all information can be shared and that documents produced will be available online.

Discussion took place regarding the potential volumes impacted in the Mackenzie and Prince George areas.

Chair MacDougall thanked Ms. Wiebe for attending the meeting.

Director Miller provided a brief summary of the Spruce Beetle Public Advisory Committee (PAC).

SPRUCE BEETLE PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Knowledge Management

- Province sensitive to social license;
- Host of pressures;
- Don't overharvest:
 - o impact midterm timber supply;
 - o Riparian areas, etc.
- Individuals chosen on PAC:
 - o wide spectrum of knowledge and experience;
 - o engaged University of B.C. representatives;
 - o FLNRO;
 - o Good cross section of stakeholders;

SPRUCE BEETLE PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CONT'D)

- Ministry of Forests, Lands and Resource Operations has indicated that the information and recommendations that will be produced from the PAC will be information that government uses.
- Working with licensees and licensee foresters.

Director Miller will bring forward further information in regard to comments made at the PAC meetings and can provide comments from the RDBN Forestry Committee to the PAC.

Director Miller indicated that First Nations are being consulted but he noted the need to have First Nations representation on the PAC.

Discussion took place regarding partition cuts and potentially shifting cuts from some areas to other areas. Director Miller commented that it is currently being discussed.

Silviculture, reforestation and the possible use of other species of trees was brought forward for discussion. Director Miller mentioned that discussions throughout the region have taken place in regard to building a better more resilient forest.

Director Newell brought forward concerns regarding the socio economic affects management plans provided by the pipeline companies and the lack of methodologies for the use of fibre from the pipeline right of ways/corridors and the replanting of cleared areas. Chair MacDougall directed staff to work with Director Newell to write a letter to TransCanada Coastal GasLink to address the concerns.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Director Parker
Seconded by Director Brienen

F.C.2016-5-3

“That the meeting be adjourned at 10:34 a.m.”

(All/Directors/Majority)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Rob MacDougall, Chair

Wendy Wainwright, Executive Assistant