

**Fort St. John Results Based Pilot Project  
Public Advisory Group Meeting #70  
Thursday, December 11, 2024  
Northern Grand Conference Centre**

PAG Meeting (Open to Public) 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

**Meeting Attendance:**

***Participants***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Carmen Anderson	Canfor	250-787-3629	<a href="mailto:carmen.anderson@canfor.com">carmen.anderson@canfor.com</a>
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Emily Pollington	BCTS		<a href="mailto:emily.pollington@gov.bc.ca">emily.pollington@gov.bc.ca</a>
Lyle Mortenson	Halfway River First Nation	250-784-8001	<a href="mailto:lylemort@telus.net">lylemort@telus.net</a>
Sara Rowe	Doig River First Nation	250-793-0993	<a href="mailto:srowe@doigriverfn.com">srowe@doigriverfn.com</a>

***PAG Interest Representatives and Alternates***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Lisa Hardy	Saulteau First Nation	778-256-4791	<a href="mailto:forestry@saulteau.com">forestry@saulteau.com</a>
Dave Harris	Range	250-827-3503	<a href="mailto:dhharris@pris.ca">dhharris@pris.ca</a>
Jim McKnight	Environment / conservation	250-785-9758	<a href="mailto:jimk01@telus.net">jimk01@telus.net</a>
Darryl Kroeker	Rural Communities	250-219-0798	<a href="mailto:dkroeker@pris.ca">dkroeker@pris.ca</a>
Ray Ensz	Trapping	250-793-2825	
Andy Ackerman	Urban Communities	250-787-8457	<a href="mailto:ackerman@telus.net">ackerman@telus.net</a>

***Other***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Gail Wallin	Facilitator	250-305-9161	<a href="mailto:gwallin@wlake.com">gwallin@wlake.com</a>
Patrick Smook	Advisor - BCER		<a href="mailto:patrick.smook@bc-er.ca">patrick.smook@bc-er.ca</a>
Julie Robinson	Guest advisor - FOR		<a href="mailto:julie.p.robinson@gov.bc.ca">julie.p.robinson@gov.bc.ca</a>
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Shayla Blue	Guest - WLRS		<a href="mailto:shayla.blue@gov.bc.ca">shayla.blue@gov.bc.ca</a>

**Meeting start: 6:00 pm**

**1. Welcome and Introductions, Review of Meeting #69 draft summary[AT, GW]**

- Land Acknowledgement
- No questions or revisions to agenda.
- No comments/corrections on the meeting #69 summary. Summary approved as-is.
- Round table introductions from all.

**2. Review of meeting agenda and meeting protocol [GW]**

**3. Review of Meeting #69 action items and approval [GW]**

- YP: Item 1 –Transfer tenure process broad overview: tenure holder can go out and find a company to take over the tenure. The minister would need to approve the tenure. The minister would solicit comments from the public during a 30-day comment period within an online process. Minister would use the input to approve, not approve, or use to formulate conditions.
  - Q: How long would this process take?
    - A: A few months likely
  - C: Something this significant should have public consultation, public meetings, people in region should have a say. Significant economically, culturally, etc.
  - Q: How is a person notified if it is available?
    - A: **ACTION** – Yvonne to provide more info on how we know when comment periods are open
  - Q: When you transfer tenures, does a certain amount get transferred back to government?
    - A: Need more info, roll into action

Actions from last meeting not completed are listed below and to be addressed.

Action	Responsibility	STATUS	Comments
PAG would like to have an update from the government for what the tenure transfer process is, and where is the opportunity for public input.	Government Representative	In progress	<b>Answered but more info needed. Carry forward.</b>
Update TOR – participant list and travel compensation verbiage	Participants	DONE	Completed by participants.
Circulate updated TOR to PAG	Participants	DONE	Completed by participants.
Compile PAG membership list for PAG to identify gaps of representation	Andrew Tyrrell	DONE	Completed and posted on EnergeticCity.ca – see Section 10 for link.

Lisa Hardy to confirm with participants what her role is in the group	Participants	DONE	LH confirmed at Dec 11 2024 meeting she is a PAG member
Ensure that the SFMP addresses wildlife friendly fences	Participants	In progress	Carry forward into SFMP planning process.
Have update from government for what is required for wildlife friendly fencing	Government	DONE	<b>DONE</b> – discussed at meeting, see notes below (Section 5)
Send out invite to PAG for SFMP review meeting – tentative Dec 11th	Participants	DONE	Done and meeting complete.

#### 4. Update from Participants [CA, ET, LM, SC]

- **BCTS Update – ET**

- outlined 2025 timber sales schedule
- One 200k net volume timber development contract to come next fiscal period (2025)
- Spring/summer planting 1.8m trees
- Manual brushing, silviculture surveys
- Two new planning foresters hired, hiring for multiple positions
  - Q: Will there be deciduous developed for sale in 2025?
  - A: Yes

- **Canfor Update – CA**

- FSJ sawmill done, planer still operating
- Some mill staff retained into next year
- One contractor still active in TFL 48
- Pulp logs still going to PG from FSJ fire salvage
- Woodlands - Three people ending in December, 5 ending in January, long term 6 people working past this, 4 people indefinitely. Two of these longer-term people are Andrew and Carmen

- **HRFN Update – LM**

- Halfway has developed forestry guidelines – good cooperation from the licensees. Nothing negative back about the guidelines.
- Lineal CWD piles – studies in Fort St James. Preferably attach to adjacent timber.
- First time in history Halfway will have its own forest license

- **LP Update – SC**

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- Mill update – producing ahead of forecasted numbers – additional 60 days. Introduced new product lines – diversifying. Lowest cost producer in LP. Hired 10 people from Canfor, more planned for 2025.
- Woodlands updated – 160k m3 delivered, 8k from crown. Granted first NRFL - 1 permit currently issued under our NRFL. Begin logging next week.
  - o Q: Lowest cost in all of LP, including US?
    - A: Yes, companywide.

## 5. Range Fencing – Wildlife Friendly Options [LM/DH/JR]

- Current fencing
  - o Start with reference photo of a brace post fence portion that range branch wants to be built. The problem with the fence is the stays between the fence post. The bottom, middle, and second wire is very narrow. Does not allow cow or calf moose to get through the fence. Fence design is good for cattlemen and keeping cattle back on side-by-side ranges (cows on each side).
  - o Fence is very expensive to build. \$25-30k per km. Difficult to maintain as well.
- Peace river regional cattleman had meeting with Range and Lyle in 2023, proposed 4 strand fence, 18 feet span, top wire 42”, no higher - but can be lower. Bottom wire 15-18” from ground. Big thing is no stays on fence. Stays prevent young ungulates from spreading the wires enough to travel through the fence.
  - o Fence works well when there is not another herd to worry about. In situations that warrant it, want to be able to build these fences to a lower standard (3 or 4 strand).
- Fenceline clearing width issue – was told can only be 3-4m wide. Not wide enough if you want the fence in the middle of the R/W to be able to travel and maintain on both sides. Would like to have more width allowed on R/W.
- Other kinds of fencing options.
  - o Q: Can it be used only on bush on both sides?
    - A: Dave uses it on all his land except for where it is butting-up with neighbors or the road. Cows are not interested in going through if they have enough to eat on one side.
  - o Q: Do you want to use smooth wire on the bottom? Why not?
    - A: High tensile strength and difficult to work with. Doesn't splice together easily. When it breaks it piles up and causes a mess. Some ranchers use it, but most prefer not to.
- HRFN supports wildlife friendly fencing. One size does not fit all. The original fencing standard was not set up for wildlife, it was set up for cows.
- Want the ability to choose different types of fences where required.
- HRFN would like to work with the rancher and have the Ministry to cooperate with what they determine is suitable. Rancher knows cows, FN knows wildlife. Want the Ministry to support taking steps for treaty rights and wildlife.
- Don't need the stays in the fence, there are markers that show where the fence is to prevent cow collision with fence.
- Multiple different designs to choose from.
- Also concerns with cattle getting out and polluting water. Photo documentation of cattle in the Halfway River every year. HRFN draw water from the river. Would like wildlife-friendly fencing to be in place to prevent this but allow wildlife through.
- Virtual fencing options – some options out of Alberta right now. Basically, a collar that the cow wears. Cow gets shocked when approaching fence line. Fenceline is set on the computer and can be changed whenever.
  - o Limitations
    - Need cell service and online of sight from the tower to the cows.
    - 6k for tower, 350 for collar.
  - o Q: Can you have concentric fences within the fence – i.e. fence of a mineral lick

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- within the virtual fence area?
  - A: Yes. There are limitations but it is possible.
- Q: What is the power source?
  - A: Collars are batteries – 4 12v batteries 6 months, towers are solar. You could also plug it into power.
- C: Pet owners have been using this system before. This is a step up from that it seems.
- Q: For line of sight – how many would you need?
  - A: 1 tower depending on terrain will cover 10k acres. 30-70 miles depending on the line of sight.
- Q: Is there a policy that is preventing this next step?
- Range response:
  - The challenge has been that the government policy has been stagnant. Starting to consider new developments only if they have wildlife friendly fences.
  - Originally needed to get a variance to build anything other than what is currently the standard (4 strand etc.), but realize there is a fair amount of flexibility available in approvals.
  - Thinking of changing the fence to a modified standard to wildlife friendly fencing. However, now variance is required to build fence to a higher standard in areas of risk (i.e. adjacent to roads)
  - The Ministry has just sent out an engagement to get feedback on fencing standards but hearing lots of different opinions.
  - MOF does not regulate temporary fencing but is working on providing options for this. Ministry is inline in electric fencing but does not have specs for them currently.
  - The challenge around virtual fence is that the technology has not caught up with the concept. Cell providers are not available in our area as well. There will be progress in the future on this but not at this time. Must be something staged over time due to cost. Forest types affect the ability for different collar types (dense forest cover affects charging of systems).
  - GPS ear tag was explored – did not work very well.
  - Long story short: right now, the ministry is open to transitions.
    - C: NDIT may be interested in this. Definitely an opportunity for innovation here.
    - C: Nice to see interest from the government.

## 6. BREAK

## 7. SFMP #4 Updates [SC]

- SFMP overview
  - Required by FSJ pilot project regulation
  - Requires Landscape Level strategies and performance indicators that are linked to them
  - Non-legal indicators – not linked to strategies but developed to meet third party certification.
- We are currently in the SFMP rewrite process. Currently at the point where the PAG reviews and provides feedback (on some things).
- Planning team has reviewed all strategies in the plan
- Additional gaps will require new strategies
  - Proposing a wildlife and biodiversity strategy.
- Indicator review – Significant changes
  - **6.2 Seral**
    - Concern has been expressed that the scale of NDU's is too large of a

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resolution for this indicator.

- Previously aspatial (NDU) and spatial (OFMA) component. Remove spatial for now and just do 'LU by NDU', as per SFMP#1.
- Proposed change to aspatial and measuring seral from current measure by NDU to measure by LU by NDU. Interim indicators change while waiting for outcome of Watershed Management Basin planning (likely 2 years).
  - Q: Why did this approach go away after the first plan? And why propose to return to this method?
    - A: Was seen as appropriate to bring NDU's in at the time (SFMP #2 development), and in line with MoE direction. Boreal Plains NDU is very large and there was concern over the distribution of Old forest related to FN traditional territory. We could be meeting target for Old, but not have any in large areas of the DFA for decades.
    - A: The Ministry of Environment at the time influenced NDU's as the trend at that time.
- No concerns to change from PAG
- CA added this is an interim indicator that will be updated to include landscape plans once they are ready for implementation
- **6.6 Snags/Cavity Sites**
  - Change from *6 snags and/or live trees >23cm dbh per hectare* to retain at least *8-20 snags or live trees per hectare on harvested area, of which 6 must be >23cm dbh.*
  - Change the name to *Dispersed Retention*
  - Change name
    - Q: Do you care what tree species?
      - A: No
    - Q: Do you do this on fire salvage?
      - A: Yes, more snags typically available
    - Q: Are the snags for birds or furbearers?
      - A: For a wide range of birds and mammals. Mostly primary cavity excavators are woodpeckers (eg. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker) 23cm dbh minimum).
  - No concerns from PAG regarding changes
- **6.22 River Corridor**
  - Currently just no openings exceeding 1 hectare in blocks within major river corridors.
  - Proposing to change the river corridors covered by this indicator to incorporate additional areas as directed by First Nations. Currently mostly in the west portion of the DFA, trying to distribute mover evenly throughout .
  - No concerns from PAG regarding changes
- **6.24 Permanent Access Structures**
  - Currently measures max 5% of total area on 3-year rolling average. Total area is calculated *excluding external* wildlife tree patches.
  - Moving towards corridor WTPs – want to change calculation to include external WTP in Total Area calculation to better reflect the practice of designing corridors and get 'credit' for them.
  - Concerns have been heard that this will allow us to arbitrarily designate WTPs to meet PAS limits. To address this concern, there is a statement added to the write-up that we will provide information and rationale on establishing WTPs.
    - C: FN do not receive WTP spatial information at the time of

consultation with the government, and would like this to be included in the process.

- A: Not sure how to implement this into the SFMP. 'Baked' into the consultation process. Government responsibility, but participants can ensure that we are continuing engagement and sending maps/shapes as needed and as requested.
- C: Information is not consistent (government consultation).
- C: licensees are now including final cruise maps with permit submissions, which show WTP locations
- C: BCTS does things a little differently – lots of consultation before doing layout. We can work out during layout as per the SFMP guidelines – the SFMP should support the layout. When the final layout is done it should not be surprising and the SLP should be done accordingly.
- C: Its getting a lot better but it would be wonderful to have a standardize mapping requirement.
- No concerns from PAG regarding changes
- **6.26 Salvage**
  - Current indicator references using LRMP Management Intensity Zones. Not useful now because of significant land use changes, and doesn't reflect current practice very well.
  - Propose to report annually the percentage of AAC/volume allocation requested for harvest authorization during the AR period that focuses on salvage and sanitation harvest as well as the amount of area disturbed each year to put this into perspective
  - Added *and Sanitation Harvest* to name.
    - Q: Was there a connection with fire intensity mapping?
      - A: No, we use it as a tool to support harvest decisions, but it is not tied into this indicator.
  - No concerns from PAG regarding changes
- **6.27 Silviculture Systems**
  - Currently Even-aged silviculture systems will be employed on at least 80% of the total area harvested annually in the DFA
  - This is a carryover from a CSA SFM certification standard requirement. Has not driven any action, nor is it required under SFI certification.
  - Proposing to remove this indicator.
  - No concerns from PAG regarding proposed removal
- **6.35 Protection of Streambanks and Riparian Values on Small Streams**
  - 'No non-conformance' type indicator – if you did not prescribe you did not have to report.
  - Proposed change to include RMA for small streams and NCDs. Require certain level of retention prescription for streams (variable retention) based on stream class:
    - Within 30m of S4 – Retain min 20% area, basal area, or merchantable stems.
    - Within 30m of S5, W3, L3 – Retain min 10% of area, basal area, or merchantable stems.
    - Within 20m of S6 or connected NCD – Retain min 5% of area, basal area, or merch stems.
    - Within 5m of S4, S5, S6, NCD – retain over the length of the feature naturally occurring ground vegetation, shrubs, advanced regeneration, non-merchantable conifers, and non-merchantable

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- stems, to the extent practicable considering partial cutting activities being conducted.
  - Changed name to *Small Streams and NCD Management*
  - No concerns from PAG regarding changes
- **6.37 Coordinated Developments**
  - Added that access management plans must be reported in Annual Reports. E.g. “The number of access management planning engagement opportunities presented to applicable FN and stakeholders and outcome.”
  - Where deactivation is planned, FN and stakeholders will be engaged on new or existing access roads greater than 5km in length. Additionally, anything else brought to the participant’s attention will be discussed.
  - Added *and Access Management* to name.
  - No concerns from PAG regarding changes
- **6.49 Cut Control**
  - Proposing to move to a table using actual cut control years rather than specific years and then separate by license. Aligns licenses better and makes more sense to the reader.
  - No concerns from PAG regarding changes
- FYI Indicators – small language changes, modernizing
  - **6.19 Graham Merch Area Harvested**
    - Added next period, changed name to include merchantable
  - **6.25 Forest Health**
    - Added detected to target statement. Added silviculture obligation areas to title so it’s clear this indicator is specific to silviculture obligation areas
  - **6.41 Visual Quality Objectives**
    - Added that cutblocks outside of VLI areas will be designed to be natural without straight edges
  - **6.42 Recreation Opportunity Spectrum**
    - Unable to reconcile 1996 base areas in the GIS layers. Working on getting new base areas and will update numbers
  - **6.45 Forest Health and FOS Planning**
    - Changing data to determine what is a significant health event. Looking at provincial AOS (Aerial Overview Survey) data instead of complex CFS table. Removed any reference to silviculture obligation areas as indicator 25 covers these areas.
  - **6.52 Number of Known Values and Uses Addressed in Operational Planning AND 6.63 Effective Communication – Aboriginal Communities**
    - Changed Aboriginal to First Nations
  - No concerns from PAG regarding any of above changes

#### New Indicators

- **Incorporation of New Land Use Plans**
  - All applicable land use plans (Landscape Level Processes) will be incorporated into the SFMP where necessary, through an amendment submitted to government for approval within one year of each plan being implemented.
  - C: That term (LUPs) is commonly known among people outside of the government circles. Maybe we should keep the terminology simple to avoid confusing the reader.
  - Q: The where necessary is concerning – what is the process?
  - A: Review with government. In the body of the indicator, we are listing the

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- plans we are currently aware of, but there will likely be others.
  - No other concerns from PAG regarding new proposed indicator
- **Visual Screening**
  - 100% of SLPs prepared annually for blocks adjacent to existing roads and other linear features will have retention of screening prescribed.
  - Focus is on mainline and secondary roads.
  - A list of variances is included in the body – e.g. not safe to prescribe retention, does not exist.
  - Q: is there a set distance or is it loose?
  - A: We did not put a distance, but considered it. This is dependent on what screening is there, but it is more site specific.
  - No other concerns from PAG regarding new proposed indicator
- **Coarse Woody Debris Structure**
  - Already have CWD Volume indicator, but we are proposing an additional indicator to reflect the practice of creating CWD piles and corridors. This practice has been requested by FN too.
  - A minimum of 1 CWD pile retained for wildlife habitat structure per 5 hectares, in harvested areas. More guidance on CWD corridors too.
  - Participants are already doing this – want to include it in SFMP.
  - No concerns from PAG regarding new indicator proposal
- **Reporting on Road Deactivation and Current Conditions**
  - Report on the amount of deactivation occurring during reporting period
    - Deactivated
    - Roll-back
    - Planted
  - Report on current conditions of roads
    - Look at roads within blocks where free-growing surveys being completed
    - Working on developing surveying methodology, to get a 'baseline' idea of where our roads are in terms of path to restoration.
  - Q: Who is working on this road density study?
    - A: Jason Lawson notified us of this, but we are not sure who is working on it. Best to contact him to get info.
  - Q: When these roads are decommissioned – are the ditches flattened out on high grade road? Are roads being planted?
    - A: Deactivation is simply water control, to prevent erosion and sedimentation. There are also methods to prevent or control vehicle access. We can go to full rollback, and beyond to rehabilitation. There is a continuum of treatments for roads.
    - A: Just asking surveyors to give us data to create a baseline of current road conditions that we can build on.
  - Q: Roll back? Are you just pulling material back on the road?
    - A: Pulling material back onto the road, putting soil back on, stumps, stripping etc.
- No further concerns from PAG regarding new proposed indicator
- SFMP 4 Next Steps
  - Proposing another SFMP PAG Meeting: February 12<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup>
  - **ACTION** – Participants will send an email confirming. Please provide us with feedback.

## 8. Audits Updates [ET]

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## BCTS

- SFI Management Limited Scope – Field Based by KPMG
- No non-conformances
- 4 Observations for improvement
  - o Problem with harvest map templates ribbon colours
  - o Issue with harvest season stated on map
  - o TPL training leger lacking supplemental training documentation
  - o Two self-inspections required for risk rating – only one completed due to change in requirements
- Corrective
  - o Add missing special management zone ribbon into the legend
  - o Add season of harvest restrictions to the harvest plan map
  - o Add supplemental training
  - o Ensure updates to requirements are followed through as soon as possible.

## 9. 2025 Meeting Schedule

- Feb 12<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> tentative

## 10. PAG Satisfaction Survey 2024

- Online survey sent out October 11<sup>th</sup> via email.
- A survey was sent to all PAG members, 9 respondents.
- 80% Satisfaction level required to meet indicator statement
- Results: 93.2% satisfaction level overall
- Lowest rated question: #15 Participants have made an effort to recruit new members. 78%
- Highest scoring questions:
  - o #7: Advisory Group Meetings are run efficiently and effectively. 100%
  - o #13: A broad cross-section of interests is represented at Public Advisory Group Meetings. 100%
- Re: Lowest scoring – PAG Membership current vacancies:

Commercial Recreation (R,A)

Non-Commercial Recreation – non-

Environment/Conservation (A)

consumptive (R,A)

Forest Contractors/Workers (R,A)

Range (A)

Labour (R,A)

Rural Communities (A)

Oil & Gas Industry (R,A)

Trapping (A)

Non-Commercial Recreation – fishing,  
hunting (A)

Urban Communities (A)

Energy (R,A)

- **ACTION** – look at updating the categories for membership at next meeting (eg. Group Oil/Gas and Energy into simply “Energy”)

## 11. Q&A Sesson; Feedback on meeting [Gail Wallin]

- Audio issues – microphone
- Consider larger fonts
- Potentially print outs so people can have references in front of them.
- **ACTION** – Readjust layout in conference room so people can see and hear better.

Thanks everyone for coming and for meaningful participation.

**Actions**

New Action	Responsibility	STATUS	Comments
Ensure that the SFMP addresses wildlife friendly fences	Participants	In progress	Participants to continue with addressing within SFMP
<p>PAG would like to have an update from the government for what the tenure transfer process is, and where is the opportunity for public input.</p> <p>Specific Q's: How would people know that the comment period is open – is there notification?</p> <p>Does part of the tenure go back to the government during a transfer?</p>	Yvonne Parkinson or other Gov Rep	Carried Forward In Progress	
Readjust layout in NGH conference room to accommodate sound better – microphone, moving “U” up towards speaker, etc.	Participants	<b>NEW</b>	
<p>Look into updating the categories for membership in the PAG TOR</p> <p>e.g. Amalgamate Oil and Gas Industry and Energy into just Energy</p>	Participants	<b>NEW</b>	
<p>Participants to confirm date for next PAG meeting – SFMP Review</p> <p>Feb 12<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> tentative.</p>	Participants	<b>NEW</b>	

**Meeting end: 8:30 pm**