

Minutes of the Forest Genetics Council

9:00 am – 12:00 pm, Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Members present:

Annette van Niejenhuis, Bill Laing, Bevin Wigmore, Bob Johnson, Dan Peterson, Domenico Iannidinardo (Co-chair), Gernot Zemanek, Juergen Ehling, Pat Martin (Co-chair), Shane Ford, Tony Hopkin

Regrets (proxy):

Jeff Mycock (Bill), Kori Vernier (-), Mark Hay (Gernot).

Others present:

Brian Barber, Margot Spence, Shane Berg.

Summary of Motions:

Motion: The minutes of the FGC meeting held on Sept 27, 2018 are hereby approved. Annette/Mark. Carried.

Summary of Action Items:

Person(s)	Actions	Date
Brian	Add Safety to future draft agendas items as a standing item.	Next mtg
Brian & Annette	Follow-up with Shane re FIRM's safety initiatives and AgSafe training	ASAP
Margot	Schedule meetings to review CBST seed gap analysis and policy options.	Jan-Feb
Pat and Domenico	Draft letter to TAC chairs with budget and business planning instructions for 2019/20.	Early Jan.
SelectSeed	Provide FGC with another interim report on its Pli orchard business case end of Jan and a final report in advance of FGC's budget meeting.	Mar 2019
Brian	Forward draft Communication Strategy Scoping document with cover note to members to forward to communications staff/contacts for their review and comment, and to solicit participation in a subsequent call to discuss options and next steps.	ASAP
Members	Provide further comments on draft Dashboard to Brian.	ASAP
Brian	Include Safety and other projects/tasks underway in Dashboard and include in future draft agendas as a standing item	Next Mtg
Annette, Kori and Shane	TAC chairs to inform FGC and others of their upcoming winter meetings, as scheduled.	ASAP
Brian	Issue Doodle Poll for next FGC meeting face to face in Richmond between March 13-22.	ASAP
Brian	Arrange 1-1 interviews with FGC members to solicit ideas and feedback on FGC, including priorities for FGC and him. Report to Co-chairs.	Mar 2019
Pat and Domenico	Subject to advice received from the Society's lawyer, Co-chairs to schedule extraordinary meeting of the BC Forest Genetics. Separate or in conjunction with FGC meeting in March.	Mar 2019

Proceedings

The meeting was held via conference call. A draft agenda and materials were circulated in advance.

There being adequate notice served and a quorum of members present, Domenico (Co-chair) called the meeting to order at ~9:00 am (PST). Members present, regrets and proxies were confirmed, and guests identified and welcomed. Shane was excused at ~10:30 am. The meeting closed following an in camera session at ~12:00 pm.

1. Agenda

The draft agenda was reviewed. Shane Ford asked for leave at 10:30 so his staffing update and agenda item 'Budget and Business Planning 2019/20' were moved up to follow item #6, 'Climate-based seed transfer'.

Motion: The Agenda for this meeting, as amended, is hereby approved. Annette/Shane. Carried.

2. Membership

On Oct. 1, Bevin Wigmore was appointed to FGC as the Coastal Seed User Rep for a 3-year term effective Oct. 1, 2018. Bevin was welcomed to FGC. Bevin looks forward to participating on council.

On Nov. 22, a luncheon was held for Dr. Rob Guy at UBC to salute him for serving on FGC as University Rep from 2009 to Sept 2018. Email and photos of event were circulated. Thank you again Rob.

3. Safety

This topic was proposed to be a standing agenda item. Intent is to provide members with updates on incidents and safety related initiatives of interest/relevance to members. Members agreed it was important to share this information and make it a regular topic of discussion.

Shane reported on the Ministry's recent safety inspection at its Prince George Tree Improvement Station by the BC Forest Safety Council and formation of a branch healthy and safety team. It has also provided safety training to staff related to use of ATVs, chainsaws and radios.

Since seed orchard operations are more aligned with agriculture than field forestry, the Ministry is also interested in accessing training and resources available through [AgSafe BC](#) (but not currently not an eligible client). Discussions are underway.

Action: Brian to add Safety to future drafts agendas as a standing item.

Action: Brian and Annette to follow-up with Shane re FIRM's safety initiatives and AgSafe training.

4. Minutes from Sept. 27, 2018.

The draft minutes of the FGC meeting held in Golden on Sept 27 were circulated for review and edits. A revised draft was circulated with this meeting's agenda.

Motion: The minutes of the FGC meeting held Sept 27, 2018 are hereby approved. Annette/Bob. Carried.

5. Action Items from FGC Sept 27, 2018 meeting:

Person(s)	Actions	Status
Pat	Forward recommendation to Diane Nicholls, Chief Forester to appoint Bevin Wigmore, TimberWest, to FGC as the Coastal Seed Producer rep.	Completed
Pat	Provide key messages and speaking points regarding the tree improvement program to members.	Pat to provide ASAP
Pat, Juergen, &	Start scoping out an FGC communication and extension strategy.	See item #12

Mark		
Ministry	Provide summary of CBST seed gaps and impacts.	See item#6
FGC Members	Provide comments on the draft OTIP briefing note and options	See item #9
OTIP Sub-committee	Review comments received on OTIP briefing note, revised and circulate to ITAC and CTAC, and set up conference call with FGC to discuss.	See item #9
SelectSeed	Prepare a business case proposal for a next generation seed orchard for the new 'BV' zone, in the range of 5-10k ramets, for FGC by Nov 30.	See item#10
Domenico, Bill & Brian	Scope out an FGC "dashboard" and provide progress report.	See item #13
Brian	Issue Doodle Poll for next FGC meeting Dec 11 or 12.	Completed

Updates on previous actions and announcements

Pat informed FGC the Ministry's public consultation on a proposed update to seed and services fees has been delayed to January.

Brian reported the future seed forecast analysis project, (terms of reference shared earlier; championed by Jeff Mycock and Pat Martin) has been delayed. A request for proposals will be issued soon with consultant selected in the new year.

6. Climate-based seed transfer (CBST) update

Margot Spence provided a couple of handouts in advance of the meeting. Currently, over 50% of the 232M seedling requests entered for the 2019 sowing year (approved and pending), were based on CBST (compared to 2% last year).

Funding Source	Seedling Use	Total # of seedlings requested as of Dec 6, 2018	Percent with Subject To=CBST
BCT	BCTS Reforestation	45,237	71%
FTM	FFT Reforestation	24,194	80%
FTM	FES Carbon	28,253	91%
LFP	Licensee Reforestation	129,551	33%
Other	Other Reforestation	4,969	30%
All	All	232,204	52%

The Ministry and Forsite continue to assess potential gaps under CBST (e.g. areas that do not have seed sources and seedlots that cannot be deployed under CBST). Two-page species summaries will be provided to stakeholder advisory working group soon, and reviewed at ITAC and CTAC meetings in February.

Transition policy options and timelines will also be shared & reviewed by a proposed new advisory committee, which would consist of members of the CBST Policy and Stakeholder Working Groups and would only meet as required.

Only minor changes to SPAR updates are planned in 2019 as refinements to climate data and CBST-areas-of-use will not be ready until 2020. Margot and Susan Zedel will also retire in 2019.

Action: Margot to schedule meetings to review CBST seed gap analysis and policy options, as appropriate, in Jan-Feb.

7. Ministry Staffing

Pat acknowledged and thanked Margot, Susan and Leslie McAuley for tremendous effort in developing and implementing this complex policy. They have been nominated for an ABCFP Climate Innovator Award, which if approved, will be presented at ABCFP's AGM and Conference in Kamloops on Feb 7, 2019.

Pat also announced Sabina Donnelly, Research Technician, Forest Genetic Section, was the successful candidate to replace Susan as the Ministry's Seed Information Officer. Significant Ministry staff turn-over is expected over the next couple of years.

Shane shared a staffing update for the Forest Genetics Section. Jon Degner has been hired as a new coastal tree breeder. Shane himself will be taking on a temporary assignment for the next several months. An A/Manager, will soon be appointed soon, and be responsible for rolling up and presenting the tree breeders' budgets to ITAC and CTAC. Shane will continue to serve on FGC and chair GCTAC.

8. Business and Budget Planning for 2019/20

The 2018/19 budget requests and allocations were included in the agenda. Shane Ford summarized expenditures to-date in the Breeding program. In 2018/19, the Ministry found additional funding for some of Tongli Wang's work at UBC (in support of CBST/ClimateBC and Genetic Conservation Catalogue) as his contract with the Forest Enhancement Society of BC was not renewed.

Pat indicated that the ministry may obtain some funding for tree improvement from the BC-Canada Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund (LCELF), in addition to the \$2.5M allocation expected again through the Land-Based Investment Strategy (LBIS).

Pat proposed sending a letter to TAC chairs, similar to his Jan 2018 letter (attached separately) with business planning instructions and budget targets for fiscal year 2019/20. Pat proposed TACs prepare a core program for a target budget provided, plus additional activities should additional funding be made available. Questions re funding and TAC reviews of CBST (including Tongli Wang's work on ClimateBC) and CoAdapTree projects were also brought to Pat's attention.

Action: Pat and Domenico to draft letter to TAC chairs with budget and business planning instructions for 2019/20.

9. OTIP Review and new Pli Seed Orchards

At FGC's Sept 27 meeting, a draft briefing note regarding Operational Tree Improvement Program (OTIP) funding eligibility for orchard ramet replacements and expansion was circulated and discussed.

The briefing note was revised, and comments solicited from FGC and ITAC members and others. The ad hoc OTIP review committee submitted its final note to FGC and the Ministry on Nov 14, 2018.

The Ministry accepted the committee's recommended eligible activities for ramet replacement to improve genetic gain and included them in its annual OTIP [Call for Proposals](#) issued on Nov. 29.

The Ministry, however, also made it clear it would not fund the establishment and expansion of new Pli orchards through OTIP, in part due to concern such proposals would utilize all available OTIP funds.

Pat explained the Ministry plans to organize all scion collection and grafting for the 2nd gen Pli orchards, and to allocate ramets to proponents. VSOC and SelectSeed also support this approach. Allocation of grafts will be based on proponents' site capacity, CF Seed Orchard Principles, and other considerations. Further information will follow in the weeks ahead, following the return of Pli tree breeder, Nick Ukrainetz.

10. SelectSeed Co. Ltd. Business Case for a new Pli orchard

On Sept 27, 2018, following a discussion on SelectSeed's cash reserves and future Pli seed orchard needs, FGC passed the following motion on Sep.

Motion: Council directs SelectSeed to propose a business case for a next generation Pli seed orchard for the new BV zone in the range of 5,000-10,000 ramets.

Brian provided FGC an update on the development of this business case. A comprehensive report prepared for and reviewed by the company's Board of Directors on Dec 4. This report included site

selection criteria, climate analysis of existing Pli orchard sites and areas of interest, and an overview of a reconnoiter of sites between 150 Mile House and Prince George. The latter, conducted by Brian and Jack Woods, included meetings with several First Nations, and visits to VSOC Quesnel and PRT Red Rock.

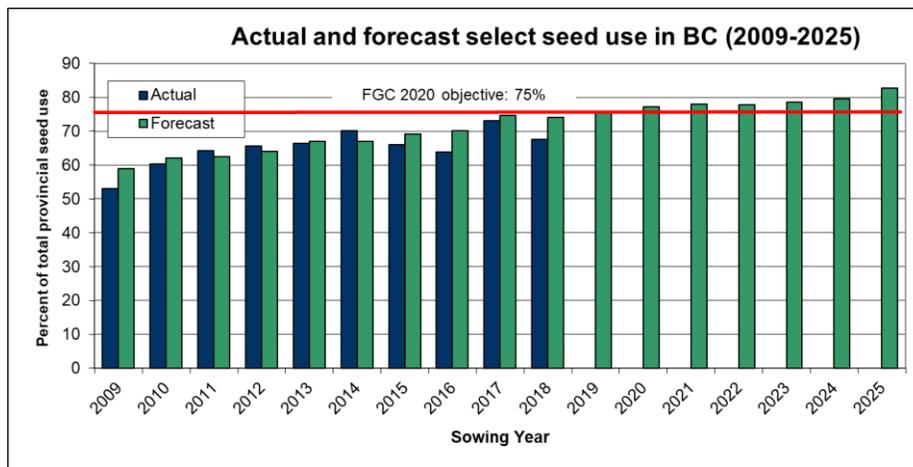
The most suitable Pli orchard sites are located along the Fraser River (West and East sides) below 650m, and <10 km North and <35 km South of Quesnel. Cleared agriculture lands (hay fields) with no adjacent natural Pli (i.e. limited pollen contamination) and close to services and labour are plentiful.

Additional financial, seed production forecast and risk analyses are required to complete this business case. Pending ministry decisions regarding Pli grafting and associated charges are also important factors.

Action: SelectSeed to provide FGC with another interim report on its Pli orchard business case end of Jan and a final report in advance of FGC’s March 2019 budget meeting.

11. Select Seed Use Trends

Brian provided an update on current seed use and trends for FGC for information. FGC’s Annual Report tracks progress of goals and performance measures for select seed use and genetic gain. The 2017/18 annual report, also in progress, will include the following select seed use graph.



Select seed use (A and B+ seed) as a percent of total seed was 73% in the 2017 sowing year. It dropped to 68% in 2018 as a result of higher total sowing requests - 268M in 2017 vs 280M in 2018 (including non-SPAR sowing requests for private land) and limited supplies of Pli orchard seed. Of the 104M Pli seedlings requested in 2018, only 28% were grown from Class A seed, compared to 40% in 2017.

There was also interest in seeing the seed use trends by Class and funding source (similar to CBST table above). These reports are available on SPAR.

Sowing requests for 2019 currently total 211M seedlings, compared to 203M at this time last year. Total seedling requests for 2019 are estimated to be 280-300M due to the 2017-18 wildfires. Nursery space is limited and seedling prices are higher, which could result in higher seed utilization to optimize seedling production. The 2018 Pli orchard crop has also not yet been registered due to the large Sx and Fdi crops. Persons with reforestation obligations are subsequently entering sowing requests against B seedlots.

No issues were identified with implementing the Sept 2018 [Chief Forester Guidance on Seed Supply and Use in Areas Affected by the 2017 Wildfires](#).

12. Communications Strategy

At the last meeting, Pat, Juergen, Mark volunteered to start scoping out an FGC Communication and Extension strategy. A draft scoping document was provided and reviewed. FGC's 1999 Communication Strategy was also shared.

Recommended next steps include reaffirming FGC's communication goals, audiences, and their information needs. Updating the website and preparing some short videos on CBST were also suggested.

Action: Brian to forward draft Communication Strategy Scoping document with cover note to members to forward to communications staff/contacts for their review and comment, and to solicit participation in a subsequent call to discuss options and next steps.

13. Dashboard

At the previous meeting, Domenico, Bill and Brian offered to scope out Dashboard. A short committee report and draft dashboard were shared for review and discussion. The dashboard included FGC's strategic goals, FGC and SelectSeed's budgets, and FGC tasks. Its purpose is provide FGC and others (including Ministry Exec.) with a snapshot of activities and progress, monitor deviations from targets, and to help set priorities. Members agreed this is a useful tool.

Action: Members to provide further comments on draft Dashboard to Brian.

Action: Brian to include Safety and other projects/tasks underway in Dashboard and include in future draft agendas as a standing item.

14. TAC Updates

The Genetic Conservation Technical Advisory Committee (GCTAC) held a meeting at UBC on Nov. 22. A revised species conservation status report (including updated methodology and data), project reports, and TAC membership were reviewed. GCTAC will hold a face-to-face meeting before fiscal year-end to complete the status report, identify species priorities, and update the [2009 genetic conservation strategy for white-bark pine](#).

Interior TAC (ITAC) will hold its annual extension and business planning meetings in Vernon on Feb 5-6, 2019. Agenda and registration information to follow soon.

Coastal TAC (CTAC) is also planning species meetings and business planning meetings in the new year. Dates and location to be determined.

Action: TAC chairs to inform FGC and others of their upcoming winter meetings, as scheduled.

15. Next Meeting

A one-day face-to-face meeting for annual business planning and budget meeting was proposed for March in Richmond.

Action: Brian to issue Doodle Poll for next FGC meeting face to face in Richmond between March 13-22.

16. New Business and Updates

As part of Brian's annual performance review, the FGC Co-chairs and SelectSeed Board tasked Brian with the following for this fiscal year:

Identify relevant new and emerging issues and opportunities, and assist FGC in developing strategies in response to these by conducting one-on-one interviews with FGC members to solicit their view and ideas, identify challenges and options, manage conflicts and create alignment on potential solutions.

Brian will schedule interviews with current and recent past FGC members. Questions will be provided in advance to help guide these conversations. Feedback will also be used to improve FGC conducts its meetings and affairs, and help him set priorities.

For example, competing priorities have resulted in delays for completing this year's business plan and last year's annual report. These will be completed this winter, and next year's reports moved forward to Spring (vs. fall) next year.

It was asked who decided not to produce FGC's annual species plans this fall. Brian indicated it was his decision in consultation with others and in consideration of CBST implementation (current plans based on Seed Planning Units that will no longer exist), seed inventories do not include the large 2018 crop (most still in process at the Tree Seed Centre).

Nonetheless, 5-year avg. seed use demand (#seedling requests) by SPU have been updated, and 2018 crop summaries and updated orchard ramet #s will be compiled to inform business planning and OTIP proposal reviews for 2019/20. Brian would like to start building new CBST-based species plans with collaboration and input from TACs this winter.

Action: Brian to arrange 1-1 interviews with FGC members to solicit ideas and feedback on FGC, including priorities for FGC and him. Complete with report for co-chairs in advance of FGC's March mtg.

17. Next meeting of the BC Forest Genetics Society

As reported at previous FGC meetings, all BC societies were required to update their constitution and bylaws, and submit a Transition Application to the BC's Registrar by Nov 28, 2018 to comply with the [BC Societies Act \(2016\)](#). Several minor changes to the [BC Forest Genetics Society Constitution and Bylaws](#) (last updated in 2002) were required. The changes were administrative in nature and did not require a members' resolution. These changes included moving the last two paragraphs of the Constitution to the end of the Bylaws.

The Society's updated Constitution and Bylaws, and transition plan were filed by the Society's lawyer on Nov. 21, 2018. Transition Plan with revised constitution and bylaws was provided.

An extraordinary meeting of the BC Forest Genetics Society may be required in January to review the Society's Constitution and Bylaws, membership, and to elect new directors (Rob Guy and Scott King are no longer members of FGC but remain officers of the Society). The Society's relationship with FGC and SelectSeed, and members' duties and obligations could also be reviewed.

Action: Subject to advice received from the Society's lawyer, Co-chairs to schedule extraordinary meeting of the BC Forest Genetics Society separate from or in conjunction with FGC's March meeting.

18. In camera session

The chair motioned to move the meeting in camera at ~11:45 am. Guests were excused.

Motion: to move meeting to move meeting in camera for FGC members and staff. Domenico/Pat. Carried

Motion: to move meeting out of in camera. Domencio/Pat. Carried

19. Adjourn

Motion: to adjourn the meeting. Gernot/Bill. Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at ~12:00 pm.

Draft minutes by Brian Barber, Dec 18, 2018 Edits incorporated. Approved by FGC on April 2, 2019.