

MINUTES

Forest Genetics Council – Meeting March 12, 2015

Meeting held at the Sandman Signature, Richmond, BC

Attending: Brian Barber (Co-Chair), Rob Guy, Mark Hay, Stephen Joyce, Scott King, Joe LeBlanc, Michael Stoehr, Mark Tamas, Annette van Niejenhuis, Raoul Wiart, Gerry MacDougall (by phone; part of meeting)

Regrets: Larry Gardner, Domenico Iannidinaro, Gernot Zemanek

Others: Lee Charleson, Bevin Wigmore, Darrell Wood, Jack Woods

Action Items

| Responsibility | Action |
|--|---|
| Annette, Mark T., Scott, Lee, Jack | Review the extension governance model as per motion 3, and make a recommendation to the FGC at the June, 2015 meeting. |
| Committee on Class-A seed use for non-THLB land | The Committee was asked to complete their report and bring a recommendation to Council at the June, 2015 meeting. |
| Tree Imp. Branch | Prepare options for the soliciting and reviewing of a call-for-proposals for the Genecology, Applied TI and Biotechnology, Cone and Seed Pest Management, and Genetic Conservation programs for the June, 2015 FGC meeting. |
| Jack | Complete the Interior Class-A seed supply and demand report for presentation at the June, 2015 FGC meeting. |
| Strategic Planning Committee (Brian, Annette, Raoul, Mark, Jack) | The Strategic Planning Committee is asked to finalize the outstanding items in the new Strategic Plan and present a new draft to Council at the June, 2015 meeting. |
| Joe | Discuss the issue of class B seed inventories with Dave Jackson, Interfor. |
| Jack | Put an item on the June, 2015 agenda about the FGC / SelectSeed role in class B seed supply. |
| Jack | Poll FGC members to determine if the June FGC meeting can be held on June 17th rather than 18th as currently scheduled. |
| Jack | Present Matador trial results at the September, 2015 meeting. |

Summary of Motions:

- MOVED** (King / van Niejenhuis): That the prepared agenda with the addition an item on class B seed inventories, is hereby approved. CARRIED.
- MOVED** (Tamas/ van Niejenhuis): Minutes of the meeting held December 17, 2014 are hereby approved. CARRIED.
- MOVED** (Barber/ King): That the Extension Technical Advisory Committee is hereby disbanded and specific extension budget items are managed through the Decision Support Technical Advisory Committee. (no vote held). **Amendment to the motion** (Tamas): To amalgamate the Decision Support TAC and the Extension TAC mandates, to assign extension responsibilities to other TACs, and to form a committee to review the governance model and to make a recommendation to Council at the June, 2015 meeting. CARRIED.
- MOVED** (van Niejenhuis / King): The budget recommendation shown in Table 1 is hereby accepted and will be recommended to Ministry executive members Diane Nicholls and Tom Ethier. CARRIED. One member opposed.
- MOVED** (King / Stoehr): The SelectSeed Business Plan for 2015/16 is hereby approved as presented. CARRIED.

Meeting called to order at 9:00 A.M. by Brian Barber (FLNRO Co-Chair)

1. Agenda:

The agenda was reviewed and an item on class B seed inventories was added.

MOVED (King / van Niejenhuis): That the prepared agenda with the addition an item on class B seed inventories, is hereby approved. **CARRIED.**

2. Minutes, old Business and Action Items from December 17, 2014

Brian welcomed Michael Stoehr and Gerry MacDougall to the FGC as FLNRO representatives.

Jack reviewed action items from the December 17, 2014 meeting:

| Responsibility | Action | Action taken |
|---|--|-------------------------------|
| Stephen | Lead a review by ITAC members of sowing factors currently used in species plans. | In progress - to be presented |
| Jack | Assist Stephen with an ITAC review of sowing factors, incorporate new sowing factors and seed orchard production profiles in the supply/demand analysis, and update the " <i>Interior seed demand and supply</i> " report for review at the March, 2015 FGC meeting. | In progress - to be presented |
| Brian, Lee, Jack | Seek input from all TAC chairs on extension needs and develop options for FGC discussion prior to the March 2015 meeting. | Done |
| Domenico (chair), Scott, Annette, Stephen (Jack to support) | Develop principles for the sale of Class A seed for use outside the timber harvest land base in BC for discussion at the March, 2015 FGC meeting. | Report prepared |
| Jack | Include both CBST and succession planning on the agendas of all future FGC meetings. | Done |
| Jack | Initiate the process of finding a new Industry Co-Chair for Council with the intent that a new person will be in place before June, 2015. | In process |
| Jack | Conduct a Doodle Poll to find a date for the March, 2015 meeting within the range of March 11th to 20th. | Done |

MOVED (Tamas/ van Niejenhuis): Minutes of the meeting held December 17, 2014 are hereby approved. **CARRIED.**

3. Extension planning

Lee Charleson presented a summary of input from people who are members of the various TACs on how extension should be delivered. The over-arching messages are:

- Extension is important;
- TAC's and individuals conduct extension and participate in extension activities in addition to what the Extension TAC does;

There were mixed views on whether an Extension TAC is needed or whether extension activities could be allocated to other TACs. Lee suggested that extension budgets could be explicitly identified in the budgets of other TACs and any provincial-level extension budget items could be referred to the Decision Support TAC.

MOVED (Barber/ King): That the Extension Technical Advisory Committee is hereby disbanded and specific extension budget items are managed through the Decision Support Technical Advisory Committee.

Discussion on the Motion:

Discussion centered on the importance of extension, what would be lost if there was no specific Extension TAC, and how extension activities could be delivered through other TACs.

Amendment to the motion (Tamas): To amalgamate the Decision Support TAC and the Extension TAC mandates, to assign extension responsibilities to other TACs, and to form a committee to review the governance model and to make a recommendation to Council at the June, 2015 meeting. CARRIED.

Committee members: Annette van Niejenhuis, Lee Charleson, Mark Tamas, Scott King, Jack Woods

4. Committee report on seed production and sales for non-THLB use

This item is reports on an action item from the December 17, 2014 meeting. Jack presented a draft committee report on behalf of Domenico. Following discussion on the information presented, the following action was advised:

ACTION: The Committee was asked to complete their report and bring a recommendation to Council at the June, 2015 meeting.

5. Update on climate-based seed transfer

Lee Charleson provided an overview of activities and progress in the FLNR-led climate-based seed transfer (CBST) project. This work continues according to the Charter, but implementation is projected for 2018. Review of a scientific framework paper will begin in March, 2015. Council members questioned their role in guiding this project. CBST will remain a standing agenda item. Documents are available at ftp://ftp.for.gov.bc.ca/HTI/external/!publish/CBST_Plans/

6. Coastal Douglas-fir realized-gain trial presentation (Michael Stoehr)

Deferred to a future meeting to save time. An extension note on these trials is available on the FGC website, or click [here](#).

7. Subprogram budgets and business planning for 2015/16

An overview of the business-planning process and steps was presented by Jack. The purpose of this budget review is to develop recommended subprogram budgets to the FLNRO for LBIS Tree Improvement Program investments.

Tree Breeding:

Annette, Stephen, and Michael discussed process followed by the Coastal and Interior TACs. CTAC- and ITAC-approved budget recommendations for coastal and interior breeding programs are \$635,500 and \$799,000, respectively. These are for operational activities only and include no FLNR salary costs.

It is expected that reductions to this budget will be necessary. Raoul questioned how these investments link to strategic objectives and what will the consequences be if there is a budget reduction. Brian stated that Michael, as manager of the breeding programs, will need management flexibility to make decisions about budget needs and changes to meet provincial

objectives. It was agreed that there is a need to better link activities and budgets with FGC goals and performance objectives.

Operational Tree Improvement Program:

Darrell Wood presented an overview of the process followed in the call for proposals and reviews for both coast and interior proposal submissions. Sixty-six proposals totaling \$644,589 were received. The total for projects recommended by review committees is \$142,025 for the coast and \$342,406 for the interior. A second option would remove lower-ranked proposals, resulting in a total budget of \$484,431.

Extension

No extension budget is proposed pending discussion on how extension work will be delivered.

Genetic Resource Decision Support subprogram

Lee Charleson presented the budget recommendation from the Genetic Resource Decision Support TAC (DSTAC) on behalf of Jason Regnier, the new DSTAC chair. Three projects are proposed under an "A" budget, totaling \$85,000. Under a "B" budget one project is dropped for a total budget of \$65,000.

Communication needs around climate-based seed transfer were discussed. Lee anticipates the need for some public-outreach and communication in light of recent papers that critically discussed the process used to develop western larch seed transfer guidelines. Work done by Rob Kozak and others as part of the AdapTree project will help in this regard. Brian suggested that consideration be given to setting some funding aside to further this type of public outreach and engagement.

Cone and Seed Pest Management:

Stephen presented the budget recommendation put forward by the Pest Management TAC. This budget includes 7 projects totaling \$96,700 under a "A" budget option. A "B" budget option drops one project for a total of \$71,072. All projects focus on seed orchard pests or on developing data in support of the registration of new pesticide options in seed orchards.

Genecology and Seed Transfer

Lee Charleson presented the budget recommendation from the Seed Transfer TAC. The call-for-proposals component of this budget includes two projects totaling \$73,827. A budget of \$408,500 for the Forest Genetics Section of the Tree Improvement Branch was also presented. It was noted that the Forest Genetics Section genecology budget is closely linked to the tree breeding budget, as the same people do the work and some trials have both a genecology and breeding function. A "B" budget option does not change the budget for the 2 projects, but reduces the Forest Genetics Section genecology budget request to \$347,225.

Genetic Conservation:

On behalf of Pia Smets, Jack provided an overview of the budget process followed by the Genetic Conservation TAC (GCTAC). Projects were approved for 4 groups (UBC Center for Forest Conservation Genetics, FLNRO TIB Forest Genetics Section, FLNRO Tree Seed Center, and the FLNRO Nelson Region for whitebark pine blister rust screening (Michael Murray). It was recognized that the about \$46,000 of the UBC budget supports the climate modeling work led by Tongli Wang and that this climate modeling work is a cornerstone to all forest climate-change work being done provincially for genetics projects and for other applied projects that are not directly related to the FGC-led provincial program.

Questions were asked about work with whitebark pine and inputs by other agencies. Jack outlined other inputs from the Columbia Basin Trust, non-profits, and some in-kind work by mining companies. This work also links to whitebark pine recovery strategies.

Applied Tree Improvement and Biotechnology subprogram

Jack presented the budget recommendation from the Applied Tree Improvement and Biotechnology Steering committee. One proposal for \$189,324 was submitted to the Steering Committee. The committee worked with the proponent to reduce this proposal, and two budget options were put forward (\$139,050 and \$125,550).

Brian advised that a more robust process is needed for this program area to ensure a call-for-proposals is put forward that will meet FLNRO contract procurement requirements. Combining this call with the genecology call and perhaps with Cone and Seed Pest Management is an option.

ACTION: Prepare options for the soliciting and reviewing of a call-for-proposals for the Genecology, Applied TI and Biotechnology, Cone and Seed Pest Management, and Genetic Conservation programs for the June, 2015 FGC meeting. (Tree Improvement Branch).

Questions were asked about follow-up budget needs to complete the proposed project. It was explained that the cone-induction component of the project will be nearly completed in 15/16 with some follow up needed in 16/17. The seed fungus part of the project is expected to run for several years, unless it is determined that fungus is not critical to seed set in Pli.

Budget discussion and recommendation

Raoul raised the point that budget items need to be better mapped to program objectives. While this is partially accomplished by the linkage of subprograms to objectives, it would be helpful to have a tighter linkage to allow FGC members to better understand what is being lost when budget reductions are proposed.

The total of all budget requests summed to \$3,226,660 on a budget of \$2,500,000. Substantial discussion ensued regarding options for budget reductions. Risk management was considered important to increase budget efficiency and to allow implementation of more projects. As the FLNRO-TIB cannot over-commit its LBIS budget allocation, any risk management will have to be undertaken within TIB. Budget recommendations are shown in Table 1, including an option summing to \$2.5 million. Reductions are shown in programs delivered by TIB (i.e. breeding and genecology). It is recognized, however, that TIB will have the option of redirecting surplus funds realized across all subprograms to support breeding and genecology projects.

Table 1. FGC budget requests and recommendations by subprogram.

| Subprogram | 2014/15 approved | Requested amount | 2015/16 A | 2015/16 B | FGC recommendation | Adjusted for TIB Internal Risk Mgmt |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Genetic Conservation | \$ 222,391 | \$ 283,920 | \$ 283,920 | \$ 238,970 | \$ 238,970 | \$ 238,970 |
| Tree Breeding | \$ 1,223,265 | \$ 1,434,500 | \$1,434,500 | \$1,291,050 | \$1,248,925 | \$1,148,925 |
| Operational Tree Imp. Prog. | \$ 512,274 | \$ 644,589 | \$484,431 | \$461,542 | \$484,431 | \$484,431 |
| SelectSeed Ltd. | \$ - | \$ - | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Extension and Communication | \$ 12,000 | \$ - | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Cone and Seed Pest Mgt. | \$ 80,670 | \$ 96,700 | \$96,700 | \$71,072 | \$71,072 | \$71,072 |
| Genecology and Seed Transfer | \$ 325,000 | \$ 482,327 | \$482,327 | \$421,052 | \$421,052 | \$361,052 |
| Decision Support | \$ 115,000 | \$ 85,000 | \$85,000 | \$65,000 | \$60,000 | \$60,000 |
| Tree Imp. Branch administration | \$ 10,000 | \$ 10,000 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 |
| Applied Tree Impr. and Biotech. | \$ 159,400 | \$ 189,324 | \$139,050 | \$125,550 | \$125,550 | \$125,550 |
| Subtotal | \$ 2,660,000 | \$ 3,226,360 | \$3,015,928 | \$2,684,236 | \$ 2,660,000 | \$ 2,500,000 |
| TIB risk mangement | \$ 160,000 | \$ 160,001 | \$160,000 | \$160,000 | \$160,000 | \$0 |
| TOTAL | \$ 2,500,000 | \$ 3,066,359 | \$2,855,928 | \$2,524,236 | \$2,500,000 | \$2,500,000 |

MOVED (van Niejenhuis / King): The budget recommendation shown in Table 1 is hereby accepted and will be recommended to Ministry executive members Diane Nicholls and Tom Ethier. CARRIED. One member opposed.

9. SelectSeed Ltd. business plan

Jack presented a Business Plan for SelectSeed Ltd that was approved by the SelectSeed Board of Directors on March 5, 2015. SelectSeed anticipates total expenditures of \$870,800 on revenue of \$612,000. This budget includes SelectSeed costs, FGC management costs, and \$100,000 to be paid to the FLNRO under the Multi-Year Agreement that will be used to hire a new interior tree breeder. A loss of \$258,800 is anticipated in 2015/16. Seed sales are forecast to generate revenue of \$580,000.

MOVED (King / Stoehr): The SelectSeed Business Plan for 2015/16 is hereby approved as presented. CARRIED.

10. Interior Class-A seed supply and demand

Jack outlined progress to date with this report. Since it was first presented (December, 2014), there has been work to further develop sowing factor inputs to seed need projections (led by Stephen), and to better refine ramet production/age curves. Both of these components need review by ITAC members and will be included in the Supply-Demand report when the review is complete. Mark Tamas added that new seed inventory numbers will also be needed. A final report is anticipated for the June, 2015 meeting.

ACTION: Complete the Interior Class-A seed supply and demand report for presentation at the June, 2015 FGC meeting (Jack).

11. Strategic Plan update

Brian led discussion on the current draft of the FGC Strategic Plan for 2015-2020. While largely complete, there are several parts of the plan that require further work. He noted the addition of the forest health objective and a section at the end that outlines anticipated budget needs.

Raoul asked if the targets for genetic gain could be quantified in terms of timber volume rather than seed genetic worth and seed use. Jack responded that this is technically possible, but much more difficult to track as several additional steps are needed and a number of assumptions need to be made.

ACTION: The Strategic Planning Committee is asked to finalize the outstanding items in the new Strategic Plan and present a new draft to Council at the June, 2015 meeting.

12. Succession

Brian and Michael outlined FLNRO progress towards the hiring of a new interior breeder. Interviews are currently underway. The need to communicate about the financial input from Council, through SelectSeed Ltd., was discussed. Brian said that there will be further communication on this matter when the position is announced.

13. New business

A. FGC / SelectSeed role in class B seed inventories

The question was asked by Dave Jackson (Interfor) at the Interior TAC meeting about Council and/or SelectSeed taking a larger role in developing class B seed inventories to assist small licensees who do not have the resources to plan or manage seed supplies. Mark Tamas pointed out that the TSA steering committees are a good place for this discussion and for the development of cooperative approaches. Stephen suggested that developing and communicating a list of people who can do collections would be helpful.

ACTION: Joe will discuss this issue further with Dave Jackson, Interfor.

ACTION: Jack will put an item on the June, 2015 agenda about the FGC / SelectSeed role in class B seed supply.

B. Genomics

Brian provided an update on the GenomeBC request to the Provincial Government for \$80 million to form a Forestry Sector Innovation Center. There have been no communications with the FGC on this matter.

14. Upcoming meetings

It is preferred to keep FGC meetings on Wednesdays to avoid other meeting conflicts.

ACTION: Jack will poll FGC members to determine if the June FGC meeting can be held on June 17th rather than 18th as currently scheduled.

ACTION: Jack will present Matador trial results at the September, 2015 meeting.

Mark Tamas volunteered to host the September FGC meeting at the Tolko office in Vernon on September 23rd.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.

Next meeting: June 2015 – Date to be determined – conference call

Minutes prepared by Jack Woods