
MINUTES

Forest Genetics Council—Meeting October 2 and 3, 2006

Location: Vernon – VSOC site

Attending

Councillors: Mike Carlson, Dale Draper, John Elmslie, Frank Gundersen, Gary Hogan, Alvin Yanchuk.

Regrets: Sally Aitken, Chris Hawkins, Scott King, Mike Madill, Al McDonald

Others: Roger Painter, Keith Thomas, Jack Woods

Guests: Tim Lee, Dan Gaudet, David Reid, David Kolotelo, Brian Barber, Kathy Hopkins, Nick Ukrainetz, Ward Strong, Robb Bennett, Jim Corrigan

Summary of Action Items

Responsibility	Action
J. Woods	<p>Ask Paul Wood for a list of interviewees and timelines on the GE³LS project, and invite Paul to provide Council with an update presentation at the next FGC meeting.</p> <p>Prepare letters from Jim Snetsinger and from the FGC thanking John Barker for his service to Council.</p> <p>Prepare a discussion paper by December 13, 2006, on the role seed orchard expansions could play in meeting interior seed needs over the next two decades. The discussion paper will include structural and funding options for seed orchard expansions, should expansions be a realistic option.</p> <p>Represent the FGC on the CONFORGEN Interim Steering Committee, and bring more detailed information to the FGC when it is available.</p> <p>Approach industry and industry associations for nominations to fill the existing FGC membership gaps.</p>
Roger Painter	<p>Inquire whether there is a need to make a presentation on progress to the Forest Investment Council.</p>
Jim Snetsinger / Dale Draper	<p>Engage the First Nations Forestry Council in a discussion to determine what level of interest they have in membership on the FGC</p>

Summary of Motions Carried

1. **MOVED** (Hogan / Carlson): Minutes of the meeting held June 12, 2006 are hereby approved. CARRIED
2. **MOVED** (Draper / Hogan): That Council approves-in-principle a change in the use of funding approved for a UNBC genetics faculty position to support for two Post-Doctoral Fellowships in the field of forest quantitative genetics. Final approval of funds will require completion of a proposal from UNBC that is acceptable to Council. CARRIED.
3. **MOVED** (Yanchuk / Gundersen): That the Annual Report for 2005/06 is hereby approved and publication may proceed. CARRIED.

Meeting called to order at 11:00 A.M., October 2, 2006

1. Adoption of agenda

Agenda adopted as presented.

2. Approval of Minutes

1. **MOVED** (Hogan / Carlson): Minutes of the meeting held June 12, 2006 are hereby approved. **CARRIED**

3. Old business

- FGC input on the FFEI initiative was submitted to the Chief Forester. A letter of acknowledgement and thanks was received.
- UVIC Chair on Environmental Genomics: UVIC (Tom Pedersen) has not been successful in obtaining matching funds for the Leading Edge Endowment Fund application, and this application has been terminated. However, Dr. Pedersen is attempting to collaborate among the four major universities in BC to develop a collective submission requesting support from softwood lumber returns. A steering committee is being set up, and Jack Woods has been asked to sit on the committee.
- UNBC capacity building in forest genetics: Max Blouw (UNBC) has not been able to use FGC support to leverage additional money for a faculty position. Max has requested that the FGC consider allowing UNBC to use the funds to support two Post-Doctoral fellowships (PDF). Topics for the PDFs are to be worked out with FGC (specifically Alvin, Dale, and Jack).
 2. **MOVED** (Draper / Hogan): That Council approves-in-principle a change in the use of funding approved for a UNBC genetics faculty position to support for two Post-Doctoral Fellowships in the field of forest quantitative genetics. Final approval of funds will require completion of a proposal from UNBC that is acceptable to Council. **CARRIED**.
- Genome BC GE³LS submission: The Genome BC panel held a meeting last week at UBC. Alvin stated that Genome Canada will not approve genomics projects without a GE³LS component being completed. The GE³LS process in support of tree genomics is now underway, and interviews are being held. Alvin will be keeping in touch with the GE³LS process and they will be asked to provide updates to Council from time to time.

Action Item: Jack Woods is to ask Paul Wood for a list of interviewees and timelines on the GE³LS project, and invite Paul to provide Council with an update presentation at the next FGC meeting.

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) circulated a questionnaire on the release of plants with novel traits. Jack Woods spoke with Wendy Shearer of the CFIA to determine whether submissions from the FGC would receive attention beyond those of individual submissions, but the questionnaire is not structured that way. The questionnaire was distributed by email to FGC and TAC members, and Councilors are asked to complete it as they see fit.

4. Perspective on the meeting with Jim Snetsinger

Chief Forester Jim Snetsinger met with John Elmslie, Dale Draper and Jack Woods on July 19th, 2006. John and Dale shared their perspective on the meeting. They agree that there is a need for the FGC to understand the Chief Forester's vision and goals on stewardship, and on the framework of actions he has set out. It is important that Council work with Jim to clearly understand what role the FGC should play.

5. FGC 2005/06 Annual Report

The FGC 2005/06 Annual Report was presented to Council by Jack Woods.

3. **MOVED** (Yanchuk / Gundersen): That the Annual Report for 2005/06 is hereby approved and publication may proceed. **CARRIED.**

Publication of the Annual Report is expected in November.

6. Update on 2006/07 budgets and spending:

Roger Painter presented the current commitments for the 06/07 FIA Tree Improvement Program Budget. Of the overall \$5,870,000 allocation, a total of \$5,624,000 has been committed with \$1,246,000 going towards the Incremental program. \$246,000 is not committed. In the absence of approved projects, it is recommended that this money be turned back to FIA at the end of November.

The ETAC has identified publication of a note on the reproductive biology of western larch, in conjunction with the Inland Empire Tree Improvement Association (about \$10,000). Alvin Yanchuk also mentioned that there are additional projects within the breeding program, and he will develop a list and seek discussion among technical committees.

7. Subprogram and project updates:

Jack, Roger, and Alvin briefly discussed subprograms and projects. At the six-month period, all subprograms are on track with activities. Some funding adjustments are being made to take advantage of opportunities and to shift minor sums from projects that appear underspent to projects requiring resources. Incrementally-funded projects are also proceeding well. Some will likely have a surplus (i.e broadleaves). The UVic cone-induction work is proceeding very well, with new information revealed on the timing of reproductive bud induction in lodgepole pine.

8. Pest Management Sub-Program update – Robb Bennett, Ward Strong, Jim Corrigan

The Pest Management Subprogram is now implemented in accordance with the plan prepared by the PM TAC, and approved by Council. Activities are divided into pest research, led by Ward Strong in the Research Branch, and operational extension, led by Robb Bennett (coast) and Jim Corrigan (interior). Robb Bennett, as chair of the PM TAC, provided an overview of all activities, including pesticide trials on seed pathogens, ongoing orchard operational support, a field guide, Leptoglossus research, and cone midge management. In the current year Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) has also become an issue in Okanagan orchards as well as in Prince George.

Jim Corrigan provided an overview of MPB attacks in both Prince George and Okanagan orchards. Most Okanagan orchards had very little to no attack, but the Kalamalka site of the MoFR was heavily hit (>1000 trees). Control measures were taken immediately, but success will

not be known until next year. In the MoFR Prince George seed orchards, virtually all pine of susceptible size has been killed. Provenance-based Pli orchards were treated, and this appears to have been successful. Older orchards had already been retired, so the impact on seed forecasts is minimal at this point. At the Skimikin orchard site, the Western white pine orchard was monitored, but there were no attacks found. Regular monitoring is recommended in all Pli orchards of susceptible size.

Ward Strong presented an overview of the pest management Research Program he is leading. A Call for Proposals was submitted in January and from that 5 projects were funded: Pesticide trials, Adelgids, Dioryctria, and two Leptoglossus projects. The systemic pesticides trial used injections to test the effects of new, registrable chemicals on production. Adelgids were studied to identify species, and to better understand their effects. Dioryctria study is assessing various monitoring techniques and is investigating the life history and flight phenology. The first Leptoglossus project included work on pest communication and host finding as well as pheromone testing. The second Leptoglossus project involved marking pests releasing them and recapturing them to determine their movement and distribution.

Robb, Ward, and Jim were thanked for their presentations and support of all seed orchard operations.

9. Business planning and FIC contact needs

Jack provided a brief overview of the FGC business planning cycle. No changes were identified, and it is the expectation of the FGC that subcommittees, led by the CTAC and ITAC will develop business plans for submission to Council at the March meeting. Issues arising in the interim are to be brought to Council at the December 13th meeting.

Action Item: Roger Painter to inquire whether there is a need to make a presentation on progress to the Forest Investment Council.

10. Interior seed supply and use with MPB

Dave Kolotelo presented his analysis on seed inventories and efficiencies for interior species (particularly lodgepole pine). Most Pli seed zones have greater than a 10-year supply of seed in storage at the present time. This is being added to by recent collections from B+ stands. However, most of this seed is held in reserve, and will not be generally available. The MoFR Tree Improvement Branch is preparing a series of seed planning bulletins that will be made available on their website.

Jack Woods presented seed use trends. Planting increases have caused a fall in the FGC provincial indicator for the use of select seed (50% in 2005 to 46.5% in 2006). This reduction is a result of large increases in planting over the last 4 years due to increased harvest associated with MPB.

Action item: Jack Woods will prepare a discussion paper by December 13, 2006, on the role seed orchard expansions could play in meeting interior seed needs over the next two decades. The discussion paper will include structural and funding options for seed orchard expansions, should expansions be a realistic option.

11. CONFORGEN

CONFORGEN is a Canada-wide initiative intended to promote and coordinate forest gene conservation activities. It is being initiated by CFS staff from Fredericton, NB. A Steering Committee has been set up to develop objectives and a program structure.

There was agreement that the FGC supports CONFORGEN in principle, and will address participation when more details are available.

Action item: Jack Woods will represent the FGC on the CONFORGEN Interim Steering Committee, and bring more detailed information to the FGC when it is available.

12. New Business

FIA Land-Base funding for tree improvement projects: Due to the small number of projects, the Land-Base funding component of FIA has decided to no longer include tree improvement projects on their eligibility list. It is their preference that these are dealt with by the FGC organized FIA Tree Improvement Program. There are three projects province-wide. These will be reviewed and considered within the breeding subprogram.

FGC Membership: John Barker has announced his retirement from the FGC. Council thanks John for his many years of contribution, and would like a letter of thanks sent.

Action Item: Jack Woods will prepare letters from Jim Snetsinger and from the FGC thanking John Barker for his service to Council.

THE MEETING WAS TEMPORARILY ADJOURNED AT 4:30 PM.

THE BUSINESS MEETING CONTINUED AT 8:30 AM, OCTOBER 3RD.

13. Discussions with Provincial Chief Forester, Jim Snetsinger

Chief Forester Stewardship vision:

Jim Snetsinger presented his Vision and Framework for sustainable forest management on provincial forest land. From a genetics perspective, this includes:

- Seed and genetic resources as a component of policy and strategic planning
- A comprehensive Gene Resource Management strategy; this is identified as a gap
- MPB-linked seed supply is an important issue
- Climate change is an increasingly important issue, and it is being addressed as part of the Future Forest Ecosystems Initiative (FFEI). Genetics is a component.

Jim looks to the FGC for advice on provincial genetic resources, and feels that the FGC may need to revisit some of its objectives (i.e. 75% select seed use by 2013 – this objective needs to be ambitious, but is it still realistic with new issues like MPB-linked harvest lifts).

John Elmslie stated that there is a need to clarify the many issues for operational people. Jim said that an implementation strategy would soon follow current consultations.

Jim stated that it would be helpful for the FGC to provide more detail from it's perspective on the GRM "bullets" in his Stewardship Vision and Framework.

FFEI – Kristine Weese (MoFR):

Kristine thanked Council for it's submission on the Future Forests Ecosystem Initiative. The FFEI has a strong focus on the biological and environment components of forest management. Jim stated that finding balance between biological and economic is important, and that FFEI will provide context for the biological.

Climate change – Kathy Hopkins (MoFR):

A Climate Change Task Group is being put together to help focus on both biological and economic issues associated with climate change, and to develop a long-term strategy. Collaboration is key due to the multi-faceted nature of this issue. Next steps will be to develop an implementation plan, create awareness, enhance collaborations, and communicate with a community of practice. Genetics considerations are part of this initiative, and the Task Group is well represented in this area.

Gene Resource Management Dialogue – Brian Barber:

Brian provided an overview of the current Challenge Dialogue status. A Challenge Paper is being created to seek broad input from the GRM community of practice. The "dialogue" is anticipated to take place in two steps: an initial focus on the immediate community of practice that will provide information for strategy or action plan. This will then go out to a broader set of stakeholders for input. The dialogue is focused on three pillars of GRM (Gain, Risk, Conservation).

It is expected that the Challenge Dialogue outcomes will assist Council and the MoFR in strategic planning.

FGC Membership:

Based on the FGC membership formula set out in the Strategic Plan, there are now 3 vacancies (2 coast industry and 1 interior industry). Jim Snetsinger stated that the membership model has served Council well, but with the vacancies, there may be opportunities.

First Nations representation on Council may be important given new directions with FN provincially.

Action item: Jim Snetsinger will work with Dale Draper, and engage the First Nations Forestry Council in a discussion to determine what level of interest they have in membership on the FGC.

It was agreed that current vacancies should now be filled.

Action item: Jack Woods will approach industry and industry associations for nominations to fill the existing membership gaps.

The need for FGC representation from community forests and/or woodlot owners requires further discussion. The Challenge Dialogue process will assist with this.

The business meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM.

14. Orchard Tours

Three members of the SelectSeed Board of Directors (Reid Carter, Shane Browne-Clayton, Russ Clinton) joined Council for a tour of the VSOC seed orchards. Tours were led by Tim Lee and Dan Gaudet, and focused on the new orchards established through long-term contractual agreements between VSOC and SelectSeed Company Ltd. All four orchards were established in the 2001 to 2003 period, and are expected to have their first crops in 2007.

Following the VSOC tour, members of the SelectSeed Board, along with Jack Woods and Council member, Frank Gundersen, toured SelectSeed orchard developments at PRT Armstrong and the Tolko Eaglerock sites.

THE VERNON SEED ORCHARD COMPANY IS SINCERELY THANKED FOR HOSTING THE BUSINESS MEETING AND PROVIDING AN INFORMATIVE ORCHARD TOUR.

Minutes prepared by:

Jack Woods, FGC Program Manager

Roger Painter, Tree Improvement Branch

and

Keith Thomas, Tree Improvement Branch

