

## MINUTES

### Forest Genetics Council – Meeting September 17, 2014

#### Meeting held at Western Forest Products Saanich Forestry Center

Attendees to the meeting in person: Brian Barber (Co-Chair) Larry Gardner (Co-Chair), Stephen Joyce, Joe LeBlanc, Barrie Phillips, Mark Tamas, Annette van Niejenhuis, Gernot Zemanek

Attending by phone or video: Scott King

*Regrets:* Domenico Iannidinardo, Patti Kagawa, Rob Guy, Raoul Wiart,

*Others:* Paul Bavis, Guy Burdikin, Bevin Wigmore, Jack Woods

#### Action Items

Responsibility	Action
Brian	Prepare thank-you letters to Patti Kagawa and Dan Peterson for their work and contributions to the FGC.
Jack	Prepare a report on expected seed demand for all interior seed planning units with orchards for the December, 2014 FGC meeting.
Jack	Complete the 2013/14 Annual Report publication and circulate it to FGC members with a resolution to approve it for publication. A vote on the resolution will take place by email prior to October 31, 2014.
Strategic Planning Committee	Develop framework objectives for a new Strategic Plan for the period 2015-2019. The following timeline was agreed upon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early November 2014 - first draft of framework objectives; solicit feedback from FGC members</li><li>• Mid January 2015 - prepare a full draft of the 5-year Strategic Plan for 2015-2019</li><li>• Late February 2015 - Final draft of Strategic Plan</li></ul>

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#### Summary of Motions:

1. **MOVED** (LeBlanc / King): Minutes of the meeting held June 18, 2013 are hereby approved. **CARRIED.**

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

Brian chaired the meeting.

#### Introduction and welcome:

Annette welcomed Council members and guests to the Saanich Forestry Center and completed an onsite safety review.

The FGC Co-chairs thanked Western Forest Products for hosting the meeting and congratulated them on their 50th anniversary for the SFC.

1. **Review of agenda**

The SelectSeed review discussion was moved up to #10 on the agenda and will be held "in-camera". The revised agenda was approved. No formal motion.

**2. FGC membership**

Dan Peterson has stepped down from Council and a replacement from a FLNRO region was being sought by Brian.

Patti Kagawa (BC Timber Sales Ltd.) is being replaced by Mark Hay, also from BCTS

Brian Barber and Larry Gardner have been reappointed to 3-year terms as co-chairs.

Annette van Niejenhuis has been reappointed to a 3-year term on Council.

**Action item:** Brian will Prepare thank-you letters to Patti Kagawa and Dan Peterson for their work and contributions to the FGC.

**3. Old minutes and action items:**

Action items from the June 18th meeting were reviewed as follows:

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Action taken</b>
Brian	Consult with Len Mannix in FLNRO regarding first nations consultations and whether there is likely to be interest in participating in this survey.	Contact made; FN invited to participate in survey
Council members	Review the draft stakeholder survey and comment back to Brian or Jack.	Done
Jack	Conduct an email vote of Council members of the final draft of the survey prior to sending it to stakeholders.	Done
Larry	Propose to the Provincial Forestry Forum that the FGC make a presentation regarding the process of 5-Year Strategic Plan update and the survey.	Done
Jack	Include further discussion on seed need and seed use issues in the September 17, 2014 meeting agenda.	Further analysis done; in meeting agenda
Jack	Include staff succession on all future FGC meeting agendas to ensure it is reviewed regularly.	Done
Council members	Send agenda items for the September 17, 2014 meeting to Jack.	Done

**MOVED** (van Niejenhuis / Phillips): Minutes of the meeting held June 13, 2014 are hereby approved.  
**CARRIED.**

**4. Breeder succession planning**

Barrie Phillips reviewed the outline of a succession plan that is currently being prepared by the Tree Improvement Branch Genetics section. Completion expected in December, 2014. This plan will be given to the FGC for review at the December 2014 meeting. Larry pointed out that the plan needs to connect staff needs to provincial objectives.

**5. LBIS Tree Improvement Program budget status**

Barrie reviewed the current LBIS budget status on behalf of Darrell Wood. Spending and work is largely on track for this point in the fiscal year. Barrie proposed that guidance on changes to the budget from those authorized through the business planning process should be reviewed, as there is currently uncertainty among those with spending authority in the FLNRO. No specific action item was established.

**6. Direct seeding trials in the interior – Guy Burdikin, West Fraser Timber Ltd.**

Guy reported on direct seeding trials being implemented by West Fraser in the Cariboo/Chilcotin area with a Brakke seeder. They are considering this as an option for areas that are difficult to plant, areas such as large burns, and lower site index areas. This appears to be a good option on drier Chilcotin sites west of Williams Lake. Direct seeding uses about 5 times more seed than planting on a per hectare basis.

Council members discussed the implications of increased direct seeding on Class A seed use. As this work is still at a trial level, the degree to which it will displace planting is not well understood.

**7. Interior seed needs for Pli, Sx and Fdi – Larry and Jack**

Larry and Jack reviewed an analysis initiated by West Fraser Timber and Canadian Forest Products Ltd. to better understand future seed needs in relation to post-MPB planting levels. Data were collected for nearly all interior management units. Jack extended this analysis to include current use and production projections from species plans and some trends that are expected under climate-based seed transfer. An graphic format was presented that illustrates all of these expected trends. This format was applied to most interior seed planning units.

**Action item:** Jack will prepare a report on expected seed demand for all interior seed planning units with orchards for the December, 2014 FGC meeting.

**8. Genome Canada "SpruceUp" project – Brian and Jack**

The Canadian Wood Fibre Center, Laval University, and JD Irving Ltd. in New Brunswick are submitting a project to Genome Canada to develop genomic selection for spruce. The focus population will be JD Irving's genetically selected spruce. The objective is to move previous research to a more operational platform. The FGC and the Ministry have been asked to participate on an Extended Users Committee to aid with discussion on how these technologies can be integrated into existing breeding programs. Brian, on behalf of the FLNRO, and Jack, on behalf of Council, will participate on the Extended Users Committee. This item was for information only at this point.

**9. FGC Annual Report – Jack**

Jack presented data and graphs that will comprise the FGC Annual Report for 2013/14. This report is close to being ready for publication.

**Action item:** Jack will complete the 2013/14 Annual Report publication and circulate it to FGC members with a resolution to approve it for publication. A vote on the resolution will take place by email prior to October 31, 2014.

**10. SelectSeed Ltd. review – Brian Barber**

This discussion was held "in camera". Brian Barber presented a response from ADM Tom Ethier regarding recommendations made by Council in November, 2014.

Minutes pertaining to this discussion are contained in a separate document.

**11. Strategic Plan development and stakeholder survey results - Brian**

The stakeholder survey discussed at the June meeting was sent out and over 100 people have responded. Results were summarized. In general there is a high level of support for Council objectives and structure. The following points were raised by a number of respondents. Council discussed the top three of these issues and provided the following guidance to the Strategic Planning Committee:

1. Forest health: breeding programs are considering many pest issues and more pest-resistant orchards will develop over time.

**Action item:** Council would like to see the development of a performance measure for the use of pest-resistant seed in the next Strategic Plan.

2. Genetic diversity: Current limits are placed on minimum genetic diversity for individual seedlots, plus there is a great deal of natural regeneration in many areas. There are, however, some informed geneticists who are concerned that minimum genetic diversity levels need review and may be somewhat too low. At the present time, a very large percentage of orchard seedlots greatly exceed minimum levels of genetic diversity as measured by effective population size. Development of a provincial level performance measure for genetic diversity would likely not be very informative. Council concluded that this is an item for further discussion on seedlot minimum effective population size if new information comes forward. Also, it is an extension issue.

**Action item:** Ask the Extension TAC to consider preparing extension materials on genetic diversity.

3. Genetic gain versus resiliency: It was concluded that this is largely a forest health issue and that priorities between selection for growth or selection for pest resistance are made using the criteria appropriate for each species and pest.

**Action items:** Develop framework objectives for a new Strategic Plan for the period 2015-2019. The following timeline was agreed upon:

- Early November 2014 - first draft of framework objectives; solicit feedback from FGC members
- Mid January 2015 - prepare a full draft of the 5-year Strategic Plan for 2015-2019
- Late February 2015 - Final draft of Strategic Plan

**12. Technical presentation: Lignin genetic modification in poplar; opportunities for reduced pulping and bio-energy cost - Shawn Mansfield, UBC**

Shawn presented work done by his lab group on lignin modification using poplar. The modified lignin trait can be achieved with genetic modification or through selection and breeding in natural populations. It has the potential to substantially reduce energy requirements in the pulping process. Council discussed Shawn's needs for field arboreta that are needed for continued research. These needs will be discussed between Shawn and Brian following the FGC meeting.

**There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:15**

**Site tour: Annette kindly provided FGC members and others a tour of the Saanich Forestry nursery and seed orchards.**

**Next meeting: December 17, 2014**

(to be held by conference call)