

## Minutes of the Forest Genetics Council

**8:15 am – 12:40 pm (MT), Thursday, September 27, 2018**

### Members present:

Pat Martin, Domenico Iannidinardo, Annette van Niejenhuis, Dan Peterson, Mark Hay, Kori Vernier, Tony Hopkin, Gernot Zemanek, Bill Laing, Juergen Ehling, Bob Johnson (via phone).

### Regrets (Proxy):

Shane Ford (Pat), Jeff Mycock (Kori), Shane Berg (n/a).

### Others present:

Henry Benskin, Mark Tamas, Stephen Joyce, Dan Gaudet, Barry Jaquish, and Brian Barber

### Summary of Motions:

**Motion:** The minutes of the FGC meeting held on June 25, 2018 are hereby approved. Annette/Mark. Carried.

**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. Annette/Gernot. Carried.

### Summary of Action Items:

Person(s)	Actions	Date
Pat	Forward recommendation to Diane Nicholls, Chief Forester to appoint Bevin Wigmore, TimberWest, to FGC as the Coastal Seed Producer rep.	ASAP
Pat	Provide key messages and speaking points regarding the tree improvement program to members.	ASAP
Pat, Juergen, & Mark	Start scoping out an FGC communication and extension strategy.	Dec. mtg
Ministry	Provide summary of CBST seed gaps and impacts.	Dec. mtg
FGC Members	Provide comments on the draft OTIP briefing note and options	Oct 10
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.	Oct 31
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.	Nov 30
Domenico, Bill & Brian	Scope out an FGC "dashboard" and provide progress report.	Dec Mtg.
Brian	Issue Doodle Poll for next FGC meeting Dec 11 or 12.	ASAP

## Proceedings

The meeting was preceded by a field tour organized by Scott King, RPF, Louisiana-Pacific, Golden. The tour attended by FGC members, SelectSeed directors, speakers and guests. A dinner was also held at the Kicking Horse River Lodge, followed by presentations to departing members (see #2) and a slide show on forestry, tree improvement, and nurseries in Finland by Stephen Joyce.

The FGC business meeting was hosted by Scott King, at Louisiana-Pacific's office in Golden.

There being adequate notice served and a quorum of members present, Domenico called the meeting to order at 8:15 am (MT). Members present, regrets and proxies were confirmed, and guests welcomed. Bob joined the meeting via conference call at ~ 9 am.

### 1. Agenda

A draft agenda was prepared and circulated in advance. Spelling of Juergen Ehltng (item #2) was corrected.

**Motion:** The Agenda for this meeting is hereby approved. Tony/Annette. Carried.

### 2. Membership

The three-year appointment terms for the following members expired on Sept 1, 2018.

- Joe LeBlanc, RPF, Interfor Corp. - Coastal Seed User Rep, since 2005.
- Scott King, RPF, Louisiana-Pacific - Interior Seed User Rep. (large tenures), since 2006.
- Gernot Zemanek, Roserim Nursery and Woodlot - Interior Seed User Rep (small tenures), since 2009.
- Dr. Rob Guy, UBC Forestry - Universities Rep., since 2009.

Diane Nicholls, Chief Forester appointed Gernot to another 3-year term, effective Sept. 1, 2018. She also sent letters of thanks to three departing members. Scott, Joe and Mark were also recognized and thanked by the FGC co-chairs and program manager at the dinner held the previous evening. Rob Guy, unable to attend the FGC tour, will be thanked in person at a later date.

Diane appointed the following persons for 3-year terms, effective Sept. 1, 2018.

- Robert (Bob) Johnson, RPF, Capacity Forest Management – Coastal Seed User Rep
- Bill Laing, RFT, Conifex Mackenzie – Interior Seed User Rep (large tenures)
- Dr. Juergen Ehltng, UVic Centre for Forest Biology – Universities Rep.

Pat sent an email introducing the new members prior to the meeting. Bill and Juergen were introduced and welcomed to council. Bob was also introduced and welcomed when he joined the meeting at 9 am.

### 3. Action items and Minutes from June 25, 2018 and other meetings

The draft minutes of the FGC meeting and SelectSeed's AGM held on June 25, 2018 were circulated prior to this meeting. The SelectSeed AGM action items are listed below, and its minutes will be approved at the next AGM.

**Minutes June 25, 2018:**

**Motion:** The minutes of the FGC meeting held on June 25, 2018 are hereby approved. Annette/Mark. Carried.

**Action Items from FGC June 25, 2018 meeting:**

Person	Actions	Status
FGC	Discuss metrics for advancing FGC's objectives at the next meeting at Sept mtg.	Seed Agenda #9
Pat	Forward ministry's LBIS budget allocations to FGC's program and activities to members & Brian.	Completed
Pat	Circulate revised "Process and timelines for next generation Pli replacement orchards for the new Bulkley Valley zone".	Completed
FGC	Review above updated process and timelines and provide comments to Pat.	Completed
Pat, Jeff, Kori and Brian	Pat, Jeff, Kori and Brian to develop terms of reference (scope, process etc.) for undertaking future seed needs analysis for Pli under CBST, with support from FIRM staff and consultant(s) as appropriate.	In progress See Agenda #8
Margot	Provide information re new GW codes to orchard managers, ITAC and CTAC, and seed users.	Completed
Annette	Complete and circulate OTIP discussion paper	Item #6
Joe, Scott, Gernot and Rob	Consult with their respective stakeholder groups to confirm their continued service and/or solicit nominations for new representatives.	Completed See Agenda #2
Domenico & Annette	Discuss recommendations for a new coastal seed producer rep.	See below
Pat & Brian	Prepare suitable acknowledgements for any departing councilors	See Proceedings
Brian	Provide airline options for FGC's Sept meeting in Golden and assist with coordinating travel.	Completed

**Coastal Seed Producer Rep:**

With Domenico assuming the role of FGC Co-chair in June, the Coastal Seed Producer rep position became vacant. Domenico (TimberWest) and Annette (WFP) discussed and recommended that Bev Wigmore, Seed Orchard Manager, TimberWest, be appointed to this position. In the past, WFP have also had two persons on council at the same time. Bevin's credentials were noted and no concerns were raised by members.

**Action:** Pat to forward recommendation to Diane Nicholls, Chief Forester to appoint Bevin Wigmore, TimberWest, to FGC as the Coastal Seed Producer rep.

**Action items from previous meetings:**

The following actions from previous meetings were provided as reminders and follow-up as appropriate.

Meeting Person(s)	Actions	Status
FGC Dec 8, 2017 FGC	Review new model and update FGC Bylaws following 2018/19 budget submission – as deemed necessary - in Spring 2018. (Carry forward from approved Streamlining actions)	Deferred
FGC Dec 8, 2017 FGC	Initiate processes to develop an FGC Communication and Extension plan in 2018/19. (Carry forward from approved Streamlining actions)	Deferred See below
FGC Dec 8, 2017 Brian	Forward FGC’s seed use recommendations to Diane Nicholls. <a href="#">Chief Forester Guidance on Seed Supply and Use in Areas Affected by the 2017 Wildfires</a>	Completed CF distributed Aug 10, 2018
FGC March 15, 2018 FGC	Review laws and principles governing seed pricing at a future meeting.	Deferred
FGC March 15, 2018 TAC Chairs & FGC Prog. Mgr	Adjust and improve budget and business planning process for next fiscal year.	Due Dec Mtg.
Society AGM June 25, 2018 Brian	Forward the proposed transition plan changes (to Society Constitution and Bylaws) to members... Deadline for submission is Nov 2018	In progress
SelectSeed AGM June 25, 2018 Board	Provide rationale for recommended cash reserve for SelectSeed.	Item #7
SelectSeed AGM June 25, 2018 Brian	Inform FGC of any recognition events for Glen Dunsworth	Completed

**Communication and Extension**

Council recognized that the Ministry, and FGC and TAC members undertake considerable communication and extension activities in the absence of a committee or plan. However, these activities largely directed to or take place within the forest genetics and silviculture communities.

Op-Eds recently published in the Vancouver Sun made references to the tree improvement program’s purported gains. There was no public reaction but Pat provided some key messages for the Ministry in response. FGC members should be prepared to respond any questions that may arise in the press or public forums. Brian can also write timely responses on behalf of Council.

The [FGC website](#) also contains information and links to publications. However, it was noted the website is difficult to navigate and the publications written for public/lay audiences may need to be updated. Outreach opportunities (e.g. association meetings), the use of social media and maintaining a scientific under-pinning were also discussed. The need for an FGC communications strategy was reaffirmed.

**Action:** Pat to provide key messages and speaking points regarding the tree improvement program to members.

**Action:** Pat, Juergen, Mark to start scoping out a FGC Communication and Extension strategy.

#### **4. Climate-based seed transfer update**

An update on this standing item was provided as separate attachment. The Ministry's policy and planning group continues to assess the impacts of CBST on seed supply, demand and inventories. Training was provided via the cone collection workshops and webinars in the summer, and the latter will continue this fall. Full implementation by 2020 will take additional effort. FGC members are also encouraged to assist with extension.

**Action:** Ministry to provide summary of CBST seed gaps and impacts at FGC's Dec. meeting

#### **5. Chief Forester's Guiding Principles**

Since the last FGC meeting, some Councillors raised the question of whether it is time to review and revise the [Guiding Principles Respecting Public and Private Seed Orchard Management in BC.](#)

The Co-Chairs discussed this matter and determined it was best to leave the document alone for now, and apply it intelligently to the questions at hand. Co-chairs will monitor the situation, and reconsider if necessary.

#### **6. SelectSeed Cash Reserves**

This item was moved up in the agenda. Henry Benskin presented SelectSeed's conclusions and rationale for the company's cash reserves. The Board determined that a cash reserve of \$1M is prudent to cover fixed costs for 2 consecutive financial years in the event of poor seed crops, depleted seed inventories, and/or low seed sales. These fixed costs include ~\$250k/yr. to support FGC and a Ministry tree breeder position. The balance of the company's cash reserves, ~\$1M, can be used for new seed orchards investments, and help FGC fill any seed supply gaps.

The establishment costs for a new seed orchard could range from \$10/ramet/yr. on an existing site to \$20-25/ramet/yr. for on a new site with a new partner. If the company were to establish a new 10,000 ramet orchard, at an avg. cost of \$15/ramet/yr. (e.g. \$150,000/yr.), the \$1M investment reserve could be depleted within 7 years, prior to the new orchard reaching its peak production.

Henry reiterated if SelectSeed were to invest in new orchards, the future net income from these orchards could be used to support FGC and the Ministry's tree breeding program. FGC considered the Board's cash reserve rationale to be logical, and the information presented useful for its deliberations on Pli seed orchards.

#### **7. OTIP Review**

In March, ITAC raised the question of Operational Tree Improvement Program (OTIP) eligibility for costs associated with grafting and establishing new seed orchard ramets (replacement vs expansion) to FGC. Annette and Kori offered to review and report back to FGC. Annette, Kori, Brian and Stephen Joyce met, discussed and prepared a draft briefing note. The note was vetted with the co-chairs and circulated to FGC at the meeting.

The note contains four options: 1. Ministry funds grafting and planting of all new orchards; 2. Ministry funds grafting and planting for replacement orchards only; 3. Ministry does not fund any new orchards; 4. Ministry provides grafts for free or a fee, and orchard manager funds all other costs. Combinations and variations of the options are also possible.

A definition of "replacement" for funding eligibility under Option 2 is also required. One suggestion was to distinguish: 1) within-orchard ramet replacement, from 2) the establishment of new orchards and expansions. The current OTIP program could deal with 1) and a separate process could deal with 2).

The financial implications associated with options where Ministry covers some or all of the costs was also not known, nor if the government would consider funding for (replacement) grafts as capital or operating expenses. Estimates would also be helpful should other government funding sources be pursued.

One suggestion was to distinguish between 1) within-orchard ramet replacement and 2) the establishment of new orchards and expansions. The current OTIP program could deal with 1) and a separate process could deal with 2).

The briefing note requires additional refinement and vetting so a recommendation from FGC can be made to the Ministry prior to the next OTIP call for proposals being issued (December). A separate conference call, prior to FGC's Dec. meeting, to discuss the next draft was recommended.

**Action:** FGC members to provide comments on the draft OTIP briefing note and options **by Oct. 10**,

**Action:** OTIP subcommittee to review comments received on OTIP briefing note, revised and circulate to ITAC and CTAC, and set up conference call with FGC to discuss on or soon after **Oct 31**.

## 8. Pli Seed Needs and New Orchards

Background on this topic was included in the meeting agenda, and reviewed at the meeting. This review included summary of Jack Woods' estimated orchard ramet requirements for the four new Pli breeding zones (Sept 7 presentation circulated) and update from subcommittee developing a terms of reference for undertaking future seed needs analysis under CBST.

Pat set the context for this agenda items and introduced the two draft motions presented in the agenda. 1. Should FGC set a target # of ramets for the new BV zone? and 2. Should SelectSeed develop a business case for a new BV orchard? The latter to provide some clarity and direction to the company.

FGC discussed the uncertainties associated with predicting the future seed needs for the new Pli zones. Pli seed demand for reforestation obligations could drop by 50% in the near future. Demand for seed for government programs such as section 108, Forests for Tomorrow, and Forest Carbon Initiatives, could however rise with increased incidence of wild fires and pest outbreaks.

Jacks analysis indicates that ~25K orchard ramets are required for new BV zone alone - based on 50% of current Pli seed use. FGC discussed the merits of establishing orchard ramet targets for the new BV zone and SelectSeed. FGC decided to forego establishing a target for the new BV zone pending outcomes from the seed needs forecast subcommittee and recognizing it will take several years to complete the 2<sup>nd</sup> gen Pli selections. SelectSeed however requires a target number of ramets to develop a business case.

The Ministry indicated it has space for 5400 ramets at its Prince George Tree Improvement Station. VSOC has space for +5000 ramets at its Quesnel site. In consideration of all of the above, council unanimously approved the following motion.

**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. Annette/Gernot. Carried.

**Action:** SelectSeed to prepare a business case proposal for a next generation Pli seed orchard for the new 'BV' zone in the range of 5-10k ramets for FGC **by Nov 30**.

The above action includes vetting the technical aspects of the proposal (i.e. size, location, production assumptions) through ITAC.

## 9. New Business

The Co-chair asked Councillors what they thought about creating a one page "dashboard" of key statistics/indicators relevant to FGC business. This dashboard could include status reports from TACs and subcommittees, and serve as a log of actions deferred, delayed, on-track, and completed. FGC was supportive of this project as deferred actions, such as updating FGC species plans to reflect CBST, are still important.

**Action:** Domenico, Bill and Brian to scope out an FGC “dashboard”.

## 10. News and Events

[Four cone collections workshops](#) were held in June sponsored by the Ministry, TimberWest, BC Timber Sales, Coastal Silviculture Committee, Selkirk College and FGC. Over 160 persons attended.

Large cone collections this year from both orchards and wild stands are resulting in high volumes of cones requiring processing at the Tree Seed Center (TSC). Total est. volume is the largest in over 8 years. Orchard & wild stand Fdi and Sx crops are more than double the previous record volume processed by the TSC. Priority request volumes for Fdi and Sx are more than 5 times the 10-year average. TSC staff are taking a variety of actions to manage the situation. Out-of-province clients have been informed the TSC cannot accept their cones until Feb 2019, at the earliest.

The TSC is celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Associated events include open house during National Forest Week, a Minister’s visit on Sept, 26, and a [technical workshop on Oct 16-17](#).

The ministry will soon begin consultation on an update to their [Cone and Seed Fee Schedule](#).

Marie Vance, new geneticist at the Ministry’s Kalamalka Forestry Centre, is developing business cases to start breeding programs for Ponderosa pine and Interior western redcedar.

SelectSeed has a new website, which includes information about the company and its orchards’ deployment areas under CBST. See [www.selectseed.ca](http://www.selectseed.ca)

## 11. Next meeting

The next quarterly meeting, likely a half-day conference call, is proposed for December 2018.

The dates proposed are Dec. 10 and 11. A Doodle poll will be conducted to identify the best date and time.

**Action:** Brian to issue Doodle Poll for next FGC meeting Dec 11 or 12.

## 12. In camera sessions

**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. Domenico/Pat. Carried

**Motion:** to move meeting in camera for FGC members only. Domenico/Annette. Carried

**Motion:** to move meeting out of in camera. Gernot/Annette. Carried

## Adjourn

**Motion:** to adjourn the meeting. Kori/Annette. Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 pm. It was followed by lunch and an optional tour of LP’s veneer lumber mill.

Thanks again to Scott King and LP for hosting the field tour and business meeting, and our speakers/presenters. Also, thanks to Kicking Horse Lodge for accommodation and catering.

*Draft minutes by Brian Barber, Oct 3, 2018, edited and approved on Dec 11, 2018*