

## MINUTES

### Forest Genetics Council – Meeting December 15, 2010

#### Meeting by Conference call

Attending: Brian Barber (chair), Judi Beck, Larry Gardner, Rob Guy, Scott King, Joe LeBlanc, Al McDonald, Kerry McGourlick, Barrie Phillips, Annette van Niejenhuis, Gernot Zemanek

*Regrets:* Tim Lee, John Mitchell

*Others:* Darrell Wood, Jack Woods

*Guests:* Lee Charleson

#### Action Items

Responsibility	Action
Jack Woods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• lead the preparation of a “Letter of Intent” (regarding a biotechnology call-for-proposals) on behalf of Council</li><li>• ensure that CTAC and ITAC meeting agendas are sent to FGC members</li><li>• screen FGC members regarding school spring break time and their availability on these two dates</li></ul>
Al Powelson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• distribute a list of the people on the Natural Resource Board</li></ul>
Brian Barber, Joe LeBlanc, Larry Gardner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• review recommendations in Lee’s terms-of-reference report for the Decision Support subprogram in advance of discussions during the March FGC meeting</li></ul>
Brian Barber, Annette van Niejenhuis, Joe LeBlanc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• further discuss whitepine seed costs to see if any solutions are available to lower seed cost and increase use</li></ul>
Barrie Phillips, Judi Beck, Jack Woods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set up a workshop for May, 2011 to discuss issues and opportunities and to inform a possible call for proposals</li></ul>

#### Summary of Resolutions:

1. **MOVED** (Joe LeBlanc / Gernot Zemanek) that the agenda is adopted with additions. **CARRIED**.
2. **MOVED** (Joe LeBlanc / Barrie Phillips): Minutes of the meeting held September 22, 2010 are hereby approved with a correction on page 4. **CARRIED**.

#### Meeting called to order at 1:35 PM by Brian Barber

##### 1. Welcome and announcements:

Brian announced the resignation from Council of Madeline Maley, Ministry of Natural Resource Operations. The Ministry of Forests, Mines and Lands will appoint another representative in the near future.

**2. Agenda**

MOVED (Joe LeBlanc / Gernot Zemanek) that the agenda is adopted with additions. CARRIED.

**3. Approval of September 22, 2010 minutes:**

MOVED (Joe LeBlanc / Barrie Phillips): Minutes of the meeting held September 22, 2010 are hereby approved with a correction on page 4. CARRIED.

**4. Old Business and Action Items from September 22, 2010**

**Summary of action items and progress from the September 22, 2010 FGC meeting**

Person	To be done	Action taken
Jack Woods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>set up a meeting of the Applied Biotechnology Steering Committee to discuss terms of reference for setting up a call for proposals, and report back to FGC at the December 15, 2010 meeting.</li> <li>include statistics in the Annual Report on seed-use by genetic class and class-A seed use by species.</li> <li>PMTAC will be asked to recommend a new chair to the FGC by December 2010</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 9<sup>th</sup> conference call. (under agenda item 10)</li> <li>Done. Annual Report in press</li> <li>Done. Jim Corrigan nominated and appointed by Council</li> </ul>
Brian Barber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brian to write letter of thanks to former decision-support subprogram members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Done</li> </ul>
Lee Charleson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee Charleson to serve as interim-lead of DSAC and, through consultation with FGC members, will recruit persons with representation from various client groups to develop a terms of reference for DSAC. TOR for DSAC to be consistent with findings and recommendations of the Decision Support Subprogram Review, and deliberations of council. Recommendations for new TOR, committee members, and a new chair (preferably an industry seed user) to be brought before FGC in December.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Done (see agenda item 9)</li> </ul>
Brian, Barrie Judi Jack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide recommendations to the FGC on restructuring subcommittee process for the development of a 3-year FGC business planning cycle (by December, 2010)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See agenda item 8</li> </ul>

Action items reviewed and accepted as presented.

**5. Meeting with Shelagh Ryan-McNee – Kerry McGourlick**

On September 29<sup>th</sup>, Kerry, John, Brian, Barrie, Susanna Laaksonen-Criag, and Jack met with Shelagh Ryan-McNee (MFR) regarding the loss of FTE's for tree breeding activities, the need for succession planning, and the degree to which industry relies upon the MFR to provide this expertise and service. Also discussed were how industry can help with breeding and genetics research work. An action item from the meeting was for Brian, Barrie and Jack to develop ideas to overcome some of these outstanding issues, however, recent changes to the MFML have delayed this. It was pointed out, however, that this task still stands and should be given attention now that changes are settling. It was noted that Shelagh Ryan-McNee is no longer with the MFML, but ideas can be taken to Jim Snetsinger and to Susanna Laksonen-Craig in her new role as Deputy Chief Forester.

**6. MFML updates – Brian**

a. Brian provided an overview of changes with the re-organization of Ministries and the creation of the Ministry of Forests Mines and Lands. The Research Branch has been dissolved and the Forest Genetics section was moved to the Tree Improvement Branch, including research stations at

Kalamalka and Cowichan Lake. While a good deal of organizational change is still being implemented, the move of the Genetics section to TIB resulted in relatively little disruption for tree improvement and has many positive aspects to it.

b. Al McDonald outlined changes to BC Timber Sales Ltd. While changes are still being implemented, BCTS will remain primarily with MFML. At this point there is uncertainty regarding where the nursery services group will end up.

c. Seed and seed-service prices: A recommendation regarding new pricing for seed and seed services has gone to the Deputy Minister. A decision is pending.

#### **7. Update on Land Base Investment Program – Al Powelson**

The LBIP has completed workshops with stakeholder groups and, based on these, has received direction from the MFML executive. They are currently putting together their coordination team and programs. Both tree improvement and inventory work have received strong support. Service Plan goals set out under the old MFR will continue, including contributions to timber supply (about half of which are derived from the provincial tree improvement program).

Some funding pressure is likely for 2011/12. A budget is expected by about January 6, 2011 that will guide various program investments, including tree improvement. Brian pointed out that some tree improvement projects have biological time-lines and budget approvals for these is needed on or before April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Al explained that a Natural Resource Board (NRB) will advise on investments. This group includes the MFML executives and people from industry. They are moving to a 3-year budget planning cycle. The tree improvement program has, from their perspective, a very well developed business planning system and it is used as an example for other programs.

**Action:** Al will distribute a list of the people on the NRB.

#### **8. 3-year budgeting processes – Jack**

As requested by Council during the September 22, 2010 meeting, Judi, Brian, Barrie, and Jack discussed 3-year budgeting processes and concluded that this will not be difficult. Adjustments to budget process are underway for the Breeding, OTIP, Genetic Conservation, Cone and Seed Pest Management, and Seed Transfer subprograms. SelectSeed currently budgets over multi years. The Decision Support subprogram is under development and will consider three year planning, and the Extension subprogram has a modest budget that can be extrapolated over more years.

It was confirmed by Al Powelson that LBIS is only seeking broad guidance on budget needs for years 2 and 3, as budget approvals will remain on a one-year basis. It was agreed that Council can provide this guidance for years 2 and 3 with the modifications currently underway. Judgment will be needed to anticipate significant program shifts and needs, such as adjusting orchards for changes that may result from climate-based seed transfer implementation.

#### **9. Seed Transfer and Decision Support updates – Lee Charleson**

##### **Seed Transfer:**

Lee outlined the Seed Transfer TAC's work to develop a business structure with two components. One will result in MFML TIB scientists taking the overall lead for long-term genecology science development through a business planning process. It is envisioned that this process will involve the STTAC for guidance and for making recommendations to the FGC. The second will be a

restricted call for proposals to allow non-MFML researchers to participate in genecology and seed transfer developments. This structure is currently being implemented.

A meeting is being set up for February to bring together experts on climate-based seed transfer for a discussion of a policy framework. In addition, the STTAC will meet in February to develop a budget recommendation for the 2011/12 fiscal year.

**Decision Support:**

A Decision Support Advisory Committee has been structured, as endorsed by the FGC in September. Lee is chair in the interim, but a decision from Council will be needed on who will take on this role in the longer term. It was pointed out that implementation of climate-based seed transfer will increase the demand on this committee. Joe mentioned that he was working to find a coastal industry rep and will follow up on this. Brian suggested that FGC members review Lee's brief Decision Support report in advance of the March 2011 meeting so they understand it.

**Action:** Brian, Joe and Larry will review recommendations in Lee's terms-of-reference report for the Decision Support subprogram in advance of discussions during the March FGC meeting.

**10. Applied biotechnology**

An overview of the current "biotechnology" projects was provided by Jack. Work by Yousry El-Kassaby (and students) and by Patrick von Aderkas has been ongoing, with Patrick's project ending in 2009. Extending projects such as these to a "biotechnology" subprogram with a possible call for proposals was discussed. Such a call could result in more collaboration with other groups, such as the CFS. Brian pointed out that more work doesn't necessarily mean more cost to the overall program. Judi pointed out that leverage of funds is often important for other funding programs. A workshop on opportunities was proposed for May. Information on a potential call would come back to Council in 2011. There was agreement to distribute a "letter of intent", following the workshop, that would seek collaboration from others. If Council chooses to proceed with a call, it would result in projects being funded starting April 1, 2012.

**Action:** A May, 2011 workshop will be set up to discuss issues and opportunities and to inform a possible call for proposals. This initiative will be led by Barrie, Judi, and Jack

**Action:** Jack will take the lead in the preparation of a "Letter of Intent" on behalf of Council.

**11. FGC Business Plan and Annual Report**

Jack announced that the Business Plan has been printed and mailed out, and that the FGC Annual Report for 2009/10 is currently being printed.

**12. ITAC and CTAC updates**

Annette reported that CTAC held an extension meeting at UBC in November where reports and discussion on a number of research projects took place, as well as updating on several subprograms, including Genetic Conservation and Cone and Seed Pest Management. OTIP eligibility lists were also reviewed, with additional attention to inventories on class A seed in storage. The concept here is that OTIP investments in crop enhancement and management should be limited when there is a significant inventory of high-gain seed in storage. Another CTAC meeting will be held during the winter to review breeding plans and budgets. Barrie mentioned that he wants breeders to present a strategic budget this year, rather than just planned activities and associated costs. Annette also discussed a letter-of-response from CTAC to the Tree Improvement Branch regarding their intent to establish a red alder orchard. Although redundant

to another orchard that is in the propagation phase, there were no objections given the uncertainty with this species.

Jack reported for Tim Lee that ITAC members completed a review of OTIP eligibility lists for the 2011/12 call for proposals. As with coastal eligibilities, the amount of seed in storage was given consideration in setting priorities. This information will be made available to OTIP review committees. An ITAC meeting is scheduled for January 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> in Vernon.

**Action:** Jack will ensure that CTAC and ITAC meeting agendas are sent to FGC members.

### 13. Update on issues - Brian

- a. Forest Practices Board review of adherence to seed transfer standards: This is still underway and there has been no request for information or timeline sent at this time
- b. Professional reliance: several workshops have been held around the province. This review is proceeding in conjunction with the Association of BC Forest Professionals.

### 14. New business - Brian

- a. Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS): Canada has signed a consensus international framework agreement on genetic diversity that obligates Canada to develop methods for granting access to biological materials and protecting aboriginal rights and access. No impacts are anticipated for the current system of material transfer agreements used in BC.
- b. Seedling requests for the 2011 sowing year are expected to be roughly 200 million; well above the 176 million in 2010.
- c. A request for the Ministry to reduce costs for whitepine seed, or a seed trade, to encourage additional use of whitepine, was discussed. **Action:** Brian, Annette and Joe will have further discussions on this matter to see if any solutions are available to lower seed cost and increase use.
- d. Genetic Conservation TAC request that the FGC send a letter of support to the Director General of the Canadian Wildlife Service in support of the COSEWIC recommendation to list whitebark pine under the Species At Risk Act: This request was declined, as Jim Snetsinger advised that such a letter is outside the purview of the FGC and Pa is already blue-listed by the provincial government.

### NEXT MEETING:

Date to-be-determined. March 16<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup>. **Action:** Jack to screen FGC members regarding school spring break time and their availability on these two dates.

Minutes prepared by Jack Woods and Darrell Wood

