
MINUTES

Forest Genetics Council — Meeting

March 8, 2006 -- Executive Airport Plaza, Richmond BC

Attending

Councillors: Sally Aitken, John Barker, Michael Carlson, Dale Draper, John Elmslie, Frank Gundersen, Chris Hawkins, Gary Hogan, Scott King, Al McDonald, Alvin Yanchuk.

Regrets: Henry Benskin, Mike Madill

Others: Roger Painter, Jack Woods

Guests: Tim Crowder, Robb Bennett

Summary of Action Items

Person	Action
Program Manager	Arrange for Brian Barber to discuss climate change policy development in the MoFR with Council at an upcoming meeting.
	Seek input from operational foresters through a questionnaire concerning their needs and expectations with respect to MPB-linked seed needs.
	Ask Diane Douglas to provide councillors with a package of FGC information products.
Dale Draper	Send a letter to Tom Urban of Cellfor informing him of Council's decision to not support the somatic embryogenesis proposal presented at the December 14, 2005 FGC meeting
	Discuss the issue of a first nations representative on Council with the Provincial Chief Forester to better understand his needs and to receive input on how to proceed.

Summary of Motions Carried

1. That the agenda be accepted as presented. (Draper / Elmslie) CARRIED
 2. That the minutes of the December 14, 2005 meeting are hereby accepted. (King / Draper) CARRIED.
 3. That the budget for ongoing subprograms in the 2006/07 FIA - Tree Improvement Program budget be approved in the amount of \$4,370,000. (Barker / Carlson) CARRIED
 4. That the incrementally-funded activities totaling \$1.5 million are approved-in-principle, pending further information. (King / Barker) CARRIED
 5. That surplus 2005/06 FIA Tree Improvement Program funds are to be used to support the IUFRO Tree Seed conference (\$2,000) and needs in the Tree Breeding subprogram (\$71,000). (Aitken / King) CARRIED
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Meeting called to order at 9:00 A.M.

1. Adoption of agenda and approval of minutes

Agenda adopted as presented.

1. **MOVED** (Elmslie/Draper): That the agenda be accepted as presented. CARRIED
2. **MOVED** (King / Draper): Minutes of the meeting held December 14, 2005 are hereby approved. CARRIED

2. Old Business

A. Breeding succession planning

The response letter from Jim Snetsinger, to Council's letter encouraging breeding program succession planning, was tabled. Alvin Yanchuk explained that a succession plan for the MoFR Stewardship Division is underway and will include breeding staff.

B. MoFR Species Selection Policy

A letter was sent to Lorne Bedford (MoFR Forest Practices Branch) by Woods, on behalf of Council, and subsequently followed up with Pat Martin (team leader for species selection). FGC input was appreciated, and climate change response is being given attention in this overall initiative. There is a current Climate Change policy group led by Brian Barber. It was suggested that Brian present policy development and process to Council at a future meeting (JW action item).

3. MPB and seed needs

JW presented an analysis and strategy options on possible FGC actions to help address seed needs associated with mountain-pine-beetle caused additional harvest and planting. A model and report were distributed separately.

Discussion included:

- Pli B+ seedlot collections are being done by industry. Tree Improvement Branch has provided support information (on TIB website). Proposed that FGC monitor industry and BCTS collections, and review progress in September 2006, with discussion at that time on possible actions in 2007.
- Seed orchards: FGC recommended that the model prepared by JW be reviewed by the ITAC, and that seed orchard managers be canvassed for their interest in establishing any orchards identified. FGC to review in September, 2006.
- **Action item** (JW) will use a questionnaire to seek input from operational foresters on their needs and expectations with respect to MPB-linked seed needs.
- Cellfor Somatic embryogenesis proposal: Council agreed to not support this proposal due to other priorities, insufficient funds, and concern over seedling costs associated with SE use. **Action Item**: Dale Draper will send a letter to Tom Urban of Cellfor informing him of Council's decision.

4. Proposed change-of-direction for FIA MPB incremental funding

Dale Draper reviewed process and expectations associated with the FIA incremental funding. Following a fall 2005 presentation to the Forest Investment Council, and the submission of a budget proposal from FGC, the FIC awarded a FIA budget uplift of \$1.5 million in 2006/07, with the expectation for similar amounts in the ensuing 2 years. Analysis of potential MPB seed needs suggests that the opportunities for orchard developments to address these needs are limited. Therefore, through discussion among the Co-Chairs, Program Manager, and others, a package of projects is proposed that will support and enhance the current systems through breeding, orchard production support, and information development to inform policy and operations.

5. Subprogram budgets and business planning for 2006/07

OTIP :

The Operational Tree Improvement Program proceeded as in previous years, with a call for proposals, proposal submission, reviews, and development of a recommended project list for Council approval. The CTAC and ITAC recommend a project package totaling \$685,935, plus a risk managed amount of \$35,000, for a total project list of \$720,893. An MPB incremental amount of \$200,000 is proposed. This will have to be fast-tracked to get Interior TAC input on project eligibility, followed by a call for proposals similar to the other OTIP calls, but with a smaller project eligibility list. This will begin immediately if FGC approves the recommended incremental budget.

Extension:

The Extension TAC has identified a project list summing to a budget of \$35,000. In addition, the extension position within the MoFR TIB is supported through this subprogram (total request of \$120,000).

Action item: JW will ask Diane Douglas to provide councilors with a package of FGC information products.

Gene Resource Information Management:

Projects and budget were presented by Dale Draper on behalf of Leslie McAuley. Provincial information needs on all aspects of seed use and seed supply, as well as for other gene resources, is increasing. MPB and climate change issues are further driving this need. Projects listed (information provided in advance of the meeting) include contributions of \$95,000 from the MoFR Tree Improvement Branch, and approximately \$140,000 from other sources. Councilors asked that projects be described in ways that will allow them to better understand how they contribute to overall records management and gene resource management.

SelectSeed:

The SelectSeed Company Business Plan was presented (distributed in advance). The Business Plan has been approved by the SelectSeed Board of Directors. The total budget request for seed orchard developments and FGC Program Management activities is \$890,000 for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2007. This will be funded through \$23,000 in seed sale and interest income, and \$867,000 of FIA funds through the existing Multi-Year Agreement with the MoFR.

Tree breeding:

Alvin Yanchuk presented a total breeding program budget request of \$2.6 million; \$2.1 million from the ongoing FIA component, and \$0.5 million from the incremental FIA component. Activities include all site establishment, measurement, and maintenance activities, as well as breeding work, support research, and genecology.

Gene conservation:

Sally Aitken presented an activity plan totaling \$220,000 (distributed prior to meeting). The plan was previously reviewed and approved by the Gene Conservation TAC. Work included ongoing cataloguing and documentation of species diversity, the genetic structure of indigenous tree species of lesser commercial importance, climate change and gene conservation, support research, and extension activities.

Pest management:

Robb Bennett presented a budget prepared and approved by the Pest Management TAC (projects and budget distributed prior to meeting). Work include two on-going research projects from a call for proposals, a series of projects to be led by the pest management scientist (Ward Strong), previously-agreed salary costs. In addition, the amount of \$80,000 was proposed for to-be-determined projects under the incremental FIA budget component. The total budget proposed is \$421,000, of which \$284,000 would fall within the ongoing FIA component, and \$137,000 under the incremental FIA component.

6. Program review:

Dale Draper discussed the merits of developing a comprehensive external review of the provincial tree improvement program. It was agreed that a terms-of-reference would have to be developed carefully and receive agreement among Council and the Provincial Chief Forester. It was agreed that some exploratory work should be done to determine how to proceed, and that this project would be discussed further.

7. Overall FIA Tree Improvement Program budget

3. **MOVED** (Barker / Carlson): That the budget for ongoing subprograms in the 2006/07 FIA – Tree Improvement Program budget be approved in the amount of \$4,370,000 (Table 1). **CARRIED**

Incremental budget items:

The incremental projects shown in table 1 (below) were discussed. Projects associated with the tree breeding, gene resource information management (GRIM), and provincial broadleaf analysis were considered acceptable and are supported. An additional project to conduct a reconnaissance of lodgepole pine B+ stands to determine cone crops was proposed by Scott King and accepted by Council.

Other incremental projects were generally approved in principle, but require more information and discussion prior to final approval. Additional information requirements, as set out in table 1, are to be developed and brought to Council at a future date.

Table 1: Proposed 2006/07 FIA Tree Improvement Program budget.

Subprogram	Budget 2005/06	Budget 2006/07	Comments from FGC discussion
Gene Conservation	\$220,000	\$220,000	Approved
Tree Breeding	\$2,200,000	\$2,100,000	Approved
Operational Tree Improvement Program (OTIP)	\$600,000	\$686,000	Approved
Extension and Communication	\$120,000	\$120,000	Approved
Gene Resources Information Management	\$50,000	\$50,000	Approved
Seed and Orchard Pest Management	\$250,000	\$284,000	Approved
Administration	\$40,000	\$43,000	Approved
Expansion of Class A Seed Supply (SELECTSEED Ltd.)	\$890,000	\$867,000	Approved
Total	\$4,370,000	\$4,370,000	Approved
Incremental projects			
Gene Conservation (CC & seed zone change)		\$50,000	Supported in principle; further details needed
Climate change - policy development (TIB)		\$30,000	Supported in principle; further details needed
Tree breeding		\$448,000	Supported as outlined in meeting
Incremental seed orchard production enhancements (OTIP)		\$200,000	Proceed with discussions
UNBC capacity building in genetics (Chair position)		\$150,000	Supported in principle; further details needed
Pest management (TBD)		\$137,000	Supported in principle; further details needed
Broadleaf analysis		\$40,000	Supported as outlined in meeting
Applied tree improvement and biotechnology (UBC – El-Kassaby)		\$200,000	Supported in principle; further details needed
Cone induction/crop enhancement (Uvic – von Ardekas)		\$120,000	Supported in principle; further details needed
Inter-specific, long-term trials to evaluate zone changes and climate-change response		30,000	Supported in principle; further details needed
Review of provincial gene resource mgt. program		\$50,000	Supported in principle; further details needed
Strategic planning and analysis (GRIM)		\$30,000	Supported as outlined in meeting
Pli B+ cone reconnaissance		\$15,000	Supported as outlined in meeting
Total		\$1,500,000	
TOTAL - BASE AND INCREMENTAL	\$4,370,000	\$5,870,000	

4. **MOVED** (King / Barker): That the incrementally-funded activities totaling \$1.5 million are approved-in-principle, pending further information. **CARRIED**

8. FGC membership

Jack Woods presented an analysis of FGC membership with respect to current allowable annual cut (AAC). The only group with a significant AAC that is not currently represented on Council is first nations. Council agreed that it needs to remain primarily a science body making recommendations on technical matters, program objectives, and policy, and that it should avoid becoming too political. While there may be merit to having a first nations representative on Council, it is not currently understood how much pressure there is for this change, or where a person could be found to represent FN in general, and not a specific band or forestry operation.

Action item: Dale Draper will discuss the issue of a first nations representative on Council with the Provincial Chief Forester to better understand his needs and to receive input on how to proceed.

9. New Business

Unused funds from the 2005/06 budget:

Approximately \$80,000 remains from the 2005/06 budget. This money was not spent by the Pest Management and OTIP subprograms. It is proposed that the extra money is used to support needs in the Breeding subprogram (\$71,000), and to fund a request for \$2,000 to support a IUFRO conference on Tree Seed to be held in July on Prince Edward Island. Approximately \$7,000 will remain surplus.

5. **MOVED** (Aitken / King): That surplus 2005/06 FIA Tree Improvement Program funds are to be used to support the IUFRO Tree Seed conference (\$2,000) and needs in the Tree Breeding subprogram (\$71,000). **CARRIED**

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM

Next meeting is scheduled for June 15, 2006 .

Minutes prepared by,

Roger A. Painter

Tree Improvement Co-ordinator



Jack Woods
FGC Program Manager