

Minutes

8:30 am – 11:45 am, Friday, October 15, 2021

Proceedings

This meeting will be held in person at Plaza 400, Northern Region Office, and via video conference. The meeting was preceded by a field tour held between Quesnel and PG on October 14 and attended by 38 participants. See separate agenda.

Attachments for this meeting were circulated in advance and are now posted on [FGC's Secure Access](#) (FGC members only).

Participants

Forest Genetics Council of BC: Annette van Niejenhuis (video), Bevin Wigmore, Bob Johnson, Domenico Iannidinaro (video), Jeff Mycock, Juergen Ehling (video), Katherine Spencer, Keith Thomas (video), and Pat Martin.

Regrets: Dan Mazerolle, Gord Chipman.

Guests: Brian Barber, Kerry McGourlick & Sally John (SelectSeed), Shane Berg (OCF), Stephen Joyce & Kevin Astridge (FIRM), Ann Wong (RPB), Michael Stoehr & Guy Smith (NRCAN), and Rahul Singh (Genome BC).

Summary of Motions

Motion: The minutes of the FGC meeting held June 14, 2021 are hereby approved. Keith/Pat. Carried.

Summary of Action Items

Person(s)	Actions	When
Brian	Share photos of FGC field tour with participants and FGC members	ASAP
Brian	Share Pat and Domenico's reappoint letter to Kerry with Members.	ASAP
Membership Committee	Convene to draft FGC membership policy to inform nominations for vacant positions on Council.	Next mtg
Brian	Draft letter of endorsement of NRCAN's research report for FGC Co-chairs to send to Dan Mazerolle.	ASAP
Pat and Brian	Send email to members prompting a review of FGC's Strategic Plan in advance of the next meeting.	ASAP
Brian	Issue Doodle Poll and/or confirm date with Domenico for Dec meeting and luncheon in Nanaimo	ASAP

1. Welcome, Intro & Agenda

There being adequate notice served and a quorum of members present, and after audio video connection issued were resolved, Domenico called the meeting to order at 08:40. Participants, regrets and guests were confirmed. Kerry McGourlick, SelectSeed's new President, and Sally John, appointed to SelectSeed's Board of Directors on June 14 were welcomed.

Motion: The proposed Agenda for this meeting is hereby approved. Bob/Pat. Carried

#	Time	Min		Topic	Presenters
1	8:30	5		Welcome, Intros and Agenda	Pat/Domenico
2	8:35	5		Highlights from Oct 14 field trip	All
3	8:40	5	A	Minutes and Actions from June 14, 2021	Brian
4	8:45	5		Membership Updates	Pat
5	8:50	10		Safety Reports	All
6	9:00	15	B	FGC & SelectSeed Dashboard	Brian
7	9:15	15		Species Plans & CBST Updates	Brian and Kevin
8	9:30	30	C	Seedling Demand Forecasts	Ann Wong
	10:00	20		<i>Break</i>	
9	10:20	20	D	NRCAN Report: Tree Improvement R&D	Dan, Michael & Guy
10	10:40	30	E	FGC Strategic Plan – Review & Priorities	Pat, Domenico, Brian
11	11:10	5		News and Announcements	All
12	11:15	5		Next Meeting	Brian
12	11:20	10		In Camera Session	Pat/Domenico
	11:30			Adjournment	

2. Highlights from Field Tour Oct 14.

Brian provided a summary of previous day's field tour. SelectSeed, Vernon Seed Orchard Co., West Fraser Timber and Ministry of Forests were thanked for hosting the 38 participants. Discussions were informative, and feedback was positive. Learnings will contribute to FGC's deliberations on strategic plan priorities and seed use & supply.

Action: Brian to share photos of FGC field tour with participants and FGC members.

3. Minutes and Action items from Meetings held June 14, 2021.

Draft minutes of FGC's June 14, 2021 meeting were included as Attachment A(i).

Motion: The minutes of the FGC meeting held June 14, 2021, are hereby approved. Keith/Pat. Carried.

Brian summarized the action items from the meeting and their status.

Actions from June 14, 2021:

Person(s)	Actions	Status
Brian	Update Dashboard to include performance measures in the new 5-year strategic plan	See item #6
FGC	Review new Strategic Plan’s activities and measures	See item #10
Pat	To confirm and prepare CF re-appointment letters for FGC councillors, and a letter for Sally John, new SelectSeed Director	Completed
Pat, Dom & Gord	Draft an FGC membership policy or memo – draft next meeting	In Progress See item #4
Brian	Issue Doodle Poll for fall field trip to Quesnel for Oct 12-15.	Completed

Draft Minutes of the AGMs for the BC Forest Genetics Society and Select Seed Co. also held on June 14, were also attached for information. Officers and Directors for both organization were updated with the BC Corporate Registry via the Company’s lawyer. The AGMs’ minutes will moved at the next AGMs, respectively.

Pat and Domenico issued SelectSeed Board of Director appointment letters to Kerry, Jack and Sally. The letters were similar in content and highlighted several areas of significance to FGC, including the Company’s orchard replacement strategy.

Action: Brian to share Kerry’s re-appointment letter with Members.

4. Membership updates:

The following members, whose terms on Council were to end in Aug and Sept., were re-appointed for another 3-year term: Domenico (Industry Co-chair), Bevin (Coast Seed Producer), and Juergen (Academia + CTAC chair).

Bill Laing’s term as Interior Seed User Rep concluded on Sept 1. He conveyed regrets for being unable to continue. Catlin Harrison, appointed BCTS Rep on Nov 1, 2020, accepted a new position with Resource Practices Branch on Sept 1. These two positions remain vacant.

A membership committee was struck at the last meeting to review FGC membership policies but has been unable to meet to-date. Members are Pat, Domenico and Gord.

Action: Membership Committee to convene to draft FGC membership policy to inform nominations for vacant positions on Council for next meeting.

5. Safety Reports

Pat reported extensive smoke from the southern interior fires in the summer July/Aug posed health risks to persons working outdoors in the Thompson Okanagan region. Measures were taken to reduce these risks.

PRT Armstrong was evacuated for a few days in August due to the proximity of the White Lake fire. Irrigation systems were turned on to reduce risk of fire damaging seedlings and orchard trees at this site.

Brian prepared a Covid Safety Plan for the FGC field tour held on Oct 14 in accordance with Provincial and Regional Health Authority orders.

6. FGC & SelectSeed Dashboard

Brian reviewed an updated dashboard that included status of several FGC and SelectSeed activities of significance. See Attachment B.

SelectSeed's orchard replacement strategy was discussed. Brian reported he had reviewed the draft timelines associated second-cycle Pli, Fdi and Sx parent trees selections with the Ministry's tree breeders. With the exception of new Pli materials provided (and approved in principle) for new seed orchards in Quesnel and PG, no additional orchard grafts will be available until after 12 of Company's 13 orchard agreements expire. For example, second-cycle Sx grafts are not expected be released before 2027, and Fdi 2030.

Subject to the interests of SelectSeed, its partners, and in consideration of seed demand and orchard capacity under CBST (e.g. gaps and surpluses), the existing orchards may need to be managed for another 10-20 years before replacement orchards start producing.

Seed orchard production forecasts, which were recently updated (see next item), will help inform the Company's orchard replacement strategy and discussions with partners in the weeks and months ahead.

Pat noted that there are two levels of analysis to consider: SelectSeed and Provincial. The former would include financial implications for the Company, including services provided to FGC. The latter would include potential impacts on Provincial seed supply and impacts on other players in the sector. The technical competency of the orchard manager should also be considered when evaluating SelectSeed's continued involvement in an orchard.

SelectSeed will apprise FGC of its options, recommendations and potential seed supply implications in due course. This topic remains a standing agenda item.

7. Species Plans & CBST Updates

Brian and Kevin provided a brief update on the status of the on-line Climate-based seed transfer (CBST) “species plans” dashboard. This on-line tool includes seed orchard production and seedling demand forecasts for each species and BEC variant.

The dashboard was not completed by the target date of Aug 31 as orchard production forecasts had not been complete. Using data and analyses compiled by Jack Woods, Kat and Annette facilitated meetings with orchard managers in June-Sept to update the production forecasts for each orchard on the Coast and in the Interior, respectively.

The new orchard forecasts will be incorporated into the dashboard and used to compare supply with demand to identify potential gaps and surplus orchard capacity during the fall/winter. Forsite will also convert the dashboard from ArcGIS to Tableau, which is a more user-friendly platform.

Kevin confirmed the Ministry will end the CBST transition period for the 2022 seedling request season. The registration and deployment of USA seedlots and seed supply gaps in several BEC variants are being examined. Persons will still have opportunity to submit Alternatives to the seed use standards under CBST.

8. Seedling Demand Forecasts

Ann Wong, Resource Practices Branch (RPB) provided an overview of Provincial seedling demand forecasts over the next decade. The forecasts were based on AAC trends, recent disturbances and treatable areas (the knowns and unknowns). See Attachment C.

Over 300M seedlings were planted in 2021, including 46M seedlings by the Ministry’s Forest for Tomorrow (FFT) and Forest Carbon Initiative (FCI) programs. These programs will plant approx. 40 million seedlings/yr over the next decade. The provincial forecasts remain uncertain due to unknown factors such as licensee applications for Section 108 funding, government funding post-COVID, and nursery capacity (including demands from USA wildfires). RPB intends to update the Provincial forecast this winter.

No details on the Federal Government’s [2 billion tree commitment](#) have been made available following the recent Federal election, but Federal and Provincial representatives are discussing opportunities in BC within the THLB (e.g. increase planting densities) and outside the THLB (e.g. restoration projects).

Impacts on seed supply and use, nursery space, seedling production and planting costs will all need to be considered. One comment was that following the expansion of the Ministry’s planting programs the average cost of planting a seedling in the Interior has increased from \$0.50 to \$1.00.

Brian recommended that RPB use the seedling [forecast tool](#) developed in 2019/20 by Forsite in collaboration with SelectSeed, VSOC, BCTS, and RPB to update the provincial seedling demand forecasts.

Funding sources can be added to the existing layers of species, management unit and BEC variant for a more complete and more reliable Provincial forecast.

9. NRCAN Report: Tree Improvement R&D Priorities & Opportunities in BC

Michael Stoehr and Guy Smith presented their report (title above), which was based on their interviews with +50 managers and specialists. See Attachment D.

Several research needs were identified: select seed, informed decision-making, grounded-results; scaling up seed and stock production; fibre supply diversification. Opportunities to leverage Federal expertise to meet these needs included: genomic selection, growth & yield modeling, use of remote sensing, somatic embryogenesis, and DNA diagnostic tools.

Recommended next steps included developing an MoU between the Canadian Forest Service and BC tree improvement research organizations, and forming a scientific steering committee to identify priorities and actions that can be fulfilled within 2 years. The latter could include members of FGC's technical advisory committees

FGC was supportive of the report. Guy and Pat indicated a letter of endorsement from FGC would help advance its recommendations.

Action: Brian to draft letter of endorsement of NRCAN's research report for FGC Co-chairs to send to Dan Mazerolle.

10. FGC Strategic Plan 2021-2025

Due to time constraints, this topic was deferred to the next meeting. In the interim, Pat invited members to do an environmental scan to identify new and emerging issues that have arisen since FGC's [2021-2025 Strategic Plan](#) was completed. Also, to review activities and performance measures in the Plan so members can develop a common understanding and identify priorities and work that needs to be done to realize success.

Action: Pat and Brian to send email to members prompting a review of FGC's Strategic Plan in advance of the next meeting.

10. News and Announcements

An FGC eNewsletter and notice of upcoming events were shared with persons subscribed to FGC's distribution list on August 30 and Sept 17, respectively. All FGC posts are available [here](#).

Juergen summarized his observations of an outbreak of Swiss needle cast on the east coast of Vancouver Island. Spread of this pathogen was portrayed in [news](#) reports as another harbinger of climate change.

Shane thanked and commended Brian and other hosts for the FGC field tour held the previous day.

Shane also announced Stephen Joyce, Manager, Seed Orchards, Ministry, will retire in January 2022. He thanked Stephen for his leadership and services in this role. Notification of any retirement celebration will be provided.

11. Next meeting

Next meeting will be held in early December, in conjunction with a thank-you luncheon for Henry Benskin, former President, SelectSeed. Domenico offered to host the meeting at Mosaic's office in Nanaimo. Video conference options will be available.

Action: Brian to issue Doodle Poll and/or confirm date with Domenico for Dec meeting and luncheon in Nanaimo..

12. In camera session

For FGC members only. Guests left the meeting at this time.

Motion: Move to meeting *in camera* for FGC members only. Kat/Juergen. Carried.

Motion: Move meeting out of *in camera*. Annette/Pat. Carried

Adjournment

Motion: The meeting is hereby adjourned at 11:45 am. Kat/Bob. Carried

Draft Minutes by Brian Barber, Oct 21, 2021.

Approved by FGC on Dec 9, 2021