

## Meeting Minutes

9:00 am – 12:00 pm, Friday, October 2, 2020

### Participants

#### Forest Genetics Council of BC:

Annette van Niejenhuis, Bevin Wigmore, Bill Laing, Bob Johnson, Domenico Iannidinardo, Gord Chipman, Juergen Ehling, Katherine Spencer, Keith Thomas, Mark Hay, Pat Martin, and Tony Hopkin.

**Regrets (Proxy):** Jeff Mycock (Bill)

#### Guests:

Brian Barber (FGC Program Mgr.), Dan Mazerolle (NRCan), Kevin Astridge (FIRM), Rahul Singh (Genome BC), Shane Berg (OCF).

### Proceedings

The meeting was held via GoToMeeting video conference. Draft agenda and attachments were posted on [FGC's Secure Access Webpage](#).

### Summary of Motions:

**Motion:** FGC nominates Annette Van Niejenhuis, WFP, to serve another term on FGC as CTAC Chair. Pat/Keith. Carried.

### Summary of Action Items:

Person(s)	Actions	Date
Annette, Kat & Brian	ITAC and CTAC to share safety-related information at their respective meetings, and post important documents and links on the new FGC website.	Next meetings
Pat and Keith	Propose a business planning process for prioritizing 2021/22 LBIS funding allocations to FGC programs.	Oct. 31
Brian	Connect with the strategic plan groups, compile comments and recommendations, and convene a meeting of the subcommittee to review by Nov 15.	Nov 15
Strategic Plan Subcommittee	Prepare draft plan for FGC's Dec. 10 Meeting	Dec. 10
Mark	Confirm BCTS's nomination for FGC to Pat, Dom and Brian	ASAP
Pat	Prepare (re)appointment letters to the Chief Forester for the CTAC, CFS and BCTS positions.	Oct 22
Brian	Send out Meeting invite for Dec 10 FGC meeting and include technical presentation in agenda.	ASAP

## 1. Welcome, Intro & Agenda

There being adequate notice served and a quorum of members present, the Co-chairs may call the meeting to order, welcome participants and guests, confirm regrets and proxies, and review housekeeping, and confirm the agenda.

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

### Proposed Agenda

#	Time	Min		Topic	Presenters
1	9:00	5		Welcome, Intros and Agenda	Pat/Domenico
2	9:05	5	A	Minutes and Actions from June 17, 202	Pat/Domenico
3	9:10	5	B	Minutes and Actions from July 29, 2020	Pat/Domenico
4	9:15	10		Safety Updates	All
5	9:25	15	C	FGC Dashboard	Brian
6	9:40	5	D	SelectSeed Updates	Brian
7	9:45	10		2020 Cone Crop	Brian
8	9:55	15		Climate-based Seed Transfer (CBST)	
				a. CF Direction re CBST Implementation	Kevin
			E	b. CBST-based Species Plan Project	Brian
9	10:10	20		Budget and business planning 2021/22	Pat
	10:30	15		<i>Break</i>	
10	10:45	15		2020-25 Strategic Plan	Brian/Pat/Domenico
11	11:00	15		FGC Membership	Pat
12	11:30	10		News and Announcements	All
13	11:40	5		Next Meeting	Pat/Domenico
14	11:45	15		In Camera Session	Pat/Domenico

## 2. Minutes and Action items from June 17, 2020.

FGC's June 17, 2020 meeting was held in conjunction with AGMs for the BC Forest Genetics Society and Select Seed Co. Ltd. See draft minutes in Attachment A. Separate minutes for the two AGM were prepared and will be reviewed at the next AGMs in June 2021. All actions arising from these AGMs were completed.

**Motion:** The minutes of the FGC meeting held June 17, 2020 are hereby approved. Annette/Kat. Carried

### Action Items from June 17, 2020:

Person(s)	Actions	Status
Brian & Kat	Brian to replace Conservation photo on new FGC website homepage due to safety optics. Kat to ask Parks Canada for alternate photos.	Completed <a href="https://forestgeneticsbc.ca">https://forestgeneticsbc.ca</a>
Pat and Keith	Scope out a strategy for engaging Executive to influence the 2021/22 budget decisions made in the fall 2020. Present plan to FGC next meeting.	See item #9
Strategic Plan Subcommittee	Prepare outline of the 2020-25 Strategic Plan next mtg	See item #10

Domenico, Pat and Brian	Draft a diversity policy/objective for inclusion in FGC's revised terms of reference and the next Strategic Plan.	See item #10
Brian	Issue Doodle Poll for a video conference meeting in September and	Completed
Brian	Arrange some technical sessions on-line for FGC and TAC members.	In progress

### 3. Minutes and Action items from July 29, 2020.

This extraordinary meeting was held to discuss SelectSeed's proposed orchard succession plan, FGC's preliminary guidance, SelectSeed's responses, and actions. Draft minutes were prepared (Attachment B).

**Motion:** The minutes of the FGC meeting held June 29, 2020 are hereby approved. Bob/Bill. Carried

#### Action Items from July 29, 2020:

Person(s)	Actions	Status
Pat and Dom	FGC to provide SelectSeed with guidance re successor rights, and how new orchard decisions will be made by Aug 31.	Completed Aug 3 - see Attachment D
Brian	Initiate discussions with SelectSeed's partners re their interests in orchards contract extensions, management and replacements, and prepare summary and draft plan for FGC by Mar 31 2021	In Progress See Item #6
Pat, Dom & Henry	Discuss orchard plan progress & issues as required	No reports
Brian	Provide updates on SelectSeed's orchard plan, respecting confidentiality of negotiations and positions, and add topic as standing item to FGC agendas, including Sept and Dec 2020 meetings	See Item #6

### 4. Safety First

Members were invited to report on Covid 19 and other safety-related initiatives within the purview of FGC.

Annette offered to share a safety drill conducted at WFP with other orchard managers. Bevin reported an incident involving damage to a rented tow-behind articulated lift used to collect cones on steeper slopes. No injuries reported.

Kat reported a road-side fire occurred at the Ministry's Bailey Seed Orchards this past summer. No damage to trees or property, nor injuries reported. At ITAC meeting on Sept 24, it was recommended site managers prepare fire preparedness plans.

Keith reported that the Ministry has comprehensive safety plans for field workers in addition to those for staff working at the Ministry's research stations and seed orchards.

**Action:** ITAC and CTAC to share safety-related information at their respective meetings, and post important documents and links on the new FGC website.

## **5. FGC Dashboard**

Brian reviewed the FGC Dashboard showing updates and progress on FGC's & SelectSeed's goals and projects for 2020/21 - see Attachment C.

The FGC biennial report 2018-20 is now in draft and should be completed by end of October. Next year will return to producing annual reports. The new [FGC website](#) was recently completed. Thanks to Annette, Juergen for their assistance, and Caorda Web Solutions for designing. The release and other news was shared in FGC's 2<sup>nd</sup> [eNewsletter](#) on Sept 2.

SelectSeed's goals and projects are on track, though this year's seed sales \$ target is conditional on the timely processing and registration of the 2020 crop relative to 2021 seedling requests.

## **6. Select Seed Updates**

Brian provided a brief update on the development of the Quesnel Pli Seed Orchard and showed some photos of the site. He thanked the Kalamalka crew, Hilary Graham, Jack Woods and Central Interior Mapping (local contractor) for a successful phase 1 operation. Brian has spoken with Nick Ukrainetz about coordinating receipt of grafts for planting next spring (phase 2).

He also outlined the next steps in the Company's orchard replacement strategy in consideration of FGC's clarification of "successor rights". Attachment D (Email from Pat Martin to Henry Benskin, Aug. 3, 2020). These are consistent with the recommendations of FGC: 1. Review existing contracts and MTAs; 2. Determine partners interest in extension, continued operation etc.; 3. Identify opportunities - new orchards, expansions etc.; and 4. Bring proposals to FGC for authorization.

Pat acknowledged the process will be incremental and could be spread out over several years. Domenico reiterated SelectSeed's proposals would be treated in confidence and in consideration of potential conflicts of interest. SelectSeed and FGC remain optimistic regarding future opportunities.

Bevin departed the meeting at 10:00 am and provided her proxy to Annette. A break was taken between 10:30-10:45. Gord joined at 10:10 am, and Shane Berg at 10:54 am.

## **7. 2020 Orchard Cone Crops**

The following table summarizing the 2020 Cone Crop was included in the agenda. The hl estimates were provided by Marilyn Cherry, Tree Seed Centre, on Sept 28, and are subject to change (coastal crops still being collected). The estimated kg and seedlings were calculated using the species average yields posted on the TSC's [website](#).

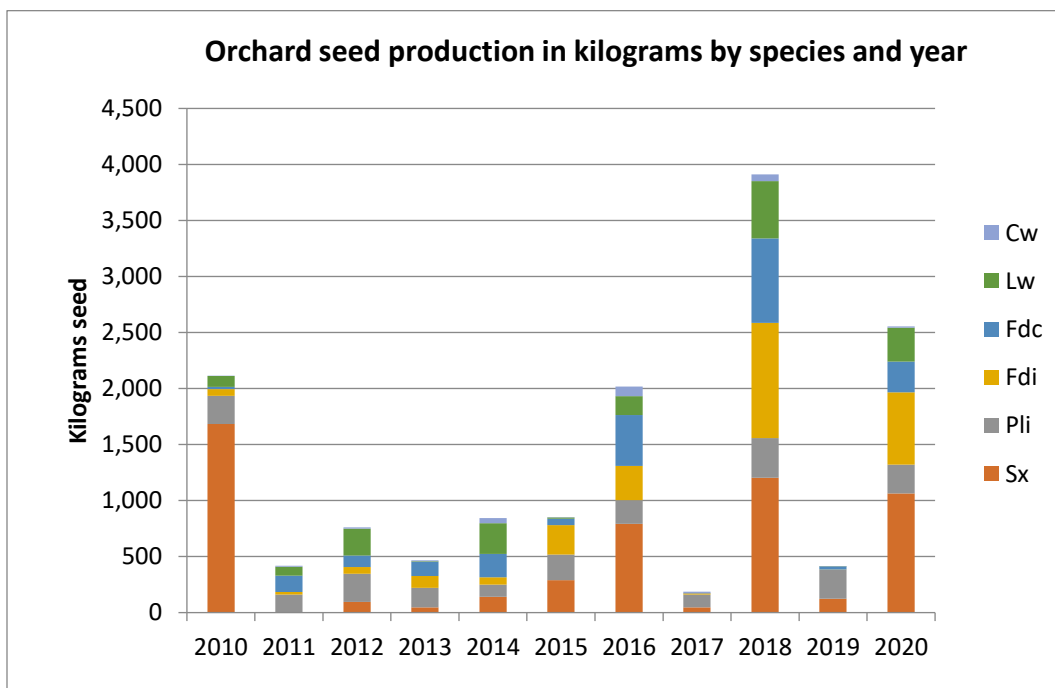
The 2020 orchard crop is the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> largest over the past decade, based on the estimated kg and seedling yields, respectively. See graphs on the following page.

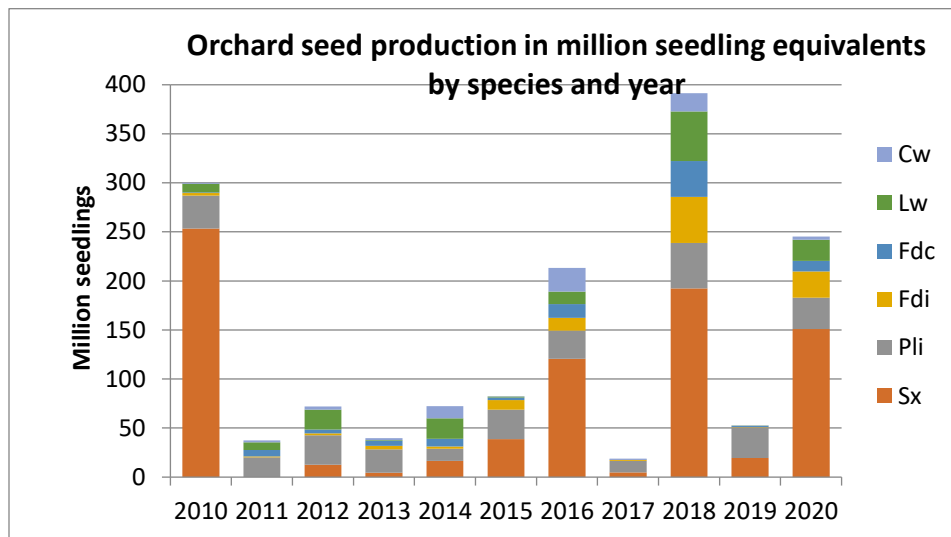
The Tree Seed Centre has started to receive cones from the 2020 crop for processing based on its [priority processing guidelines for 2020](#).

Kat indicated cone transportation from the Interior to the TSC is being coordinated between several agencies. Storage, shipping and processing of the large volumes of cones this year during Covid presents logistical challenges.

Pat indicated Jeff Mycock has raised these matters with the Ministry. Shane also invited feedback on this year's priority processing to address any anomalies. Jeff and Ministry will follow-up as appropriate.

Species Code	Species Names	Hecolitres (hl)	Avg. Yield (kg/hl)	Est. Yield (kg)	Avg. Seedlings per kg (000s)	Total Potential Seedlings (000s)
Cw	Western redcedar	22	0.564	12.4	268.4	3,330
Fdc	Coastal Douglas-fir	804	0.339	272.6	39.1	10,657
Fdi	Interior Douglas-fir	960	0.673	646.3	41.6	26,887
Pli	Lodgepole pine	972	0.264	256.7	124.5	31,958
Lw	Western larch	401	0.754	302.4	70.7	21,376
Sx	Interior spruce	1,237	0.86	1064.2	141.8	150,905
Dr	Red Alder	2	1.005	2.0	795.9	1,600
Pw	Interior white pine	152	0.371	56.2	19.1	1,074
Pwc	Coastal white pine	36	0.371	13.4	19.1	255
Py	Ponderosa pine	64	0.743	47.8	4.7	225
<b>Seed Orchard Total</b>		<b>4,651</b>		<b>2,674</b>		<b>248,266</b>
Fdi - B	Wild Interior Douglas-	133	1.077	143.2	44.7	6,403
Py - B	Wild Ponderosa	102	1.81	185.3	7.5	1,390
Wild total		<b>235</b>		<b>329</b>		<b>7,793</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>4,886</b>		<b>3,003</b>		<b>256,059</b>





## 8. Climate-based seed transfer (CBST)

Kevin provided an update on the implementation of CBST standards, which were introduced on April 1, 2018. Diane Nicholls, Chief Forester, recently directed staff to end the transition period by April 2022. FIRM is currently reviewing policy options, and conducting analyses to identify potential seed supply gaps. For example, alternatives to the standards might be considered where no seed is identified as suitable under CBST. Kevin will engage ITAC, CTAC and the CBST stakeholder working group in the months ahead.

Brian outlined the terms of reference for the CBST-based species plan project which was initiated in September. This project builds on the CBST gap analysis conducted by the Ministry and the recently completed Forecasting Seedling Needs to 2049 project. Forsite has been contracted by SelectSeed, acting on behalf of FGC.

The new CBST plans will not be comprehensive “Species Plans” encompassing 20-yr breeding plans and orchard develop priorities (at this stage). The project team will focus on building some new seed user and seed orchard planning tools, which can be used to guide the aforementioned. Prototypes will be developed this winter and end products available by August 2021 to guide the 2022 sowing requests.

Pat raised issue of building data sets which could be challenging to maintain over time. Data storage, hosting and maintenance will be considered by the team. Project updates will be provided at future FGC meetings.

## 9. Business Planning and Budget 2020/21

In response to the reduction of LBIS funding to forest genetics in 2020/21, FGC recommended a meeting with Ministry Executive to advocate for the restoration of historic funding levels. Pat reported that this approach would not necessarily be well-received, and funding pressures could be more acute due to the Covid pandemic and forecast deficits. However, he did recommend that recipients of FGC’s annual budget recommendation letter be expanded to include the Deputy and other ADMs.

Pat also recommended a more strategic approach to business planning for 2021/22 if the program is allocated more or less than this year. For example, if funding were to be reduced further, should funds previously allocated to OTIP be reduced in order to protect the breeding program? What are projects that best advance FGC goals and targets?

Annette suggested building alliances with other funding programs, such as FESCBC, but acknowledged government departments are often not eligible for funding.

Keith described how limited Ministry Research Program funding is allocated based on an assessment of priorities and impacts. A similar model could be considered. The process should ideally be confirmed prior to issuing the annual OTIP Call for Proposals in November.

**Action:** Pat and Keith to propose a business planning process for prioritizing 2021/22 LBIS funding allocations to FGC programs by Oct. 31.

## **10. FGC Strategic Plan 2020-2025 Draft Outline**

Following the FGC's Strategic Plan Subcommittee May 21, 2020 meeting, TACs and others were asked to review the current goals and performance measures and make recommendations for the next period. Several individuals and groups have reviewed and provided feedback/recommendations. For example....

A subcommittee of Genetic Conservation TAC has proposed similar wording for the conservation objective and performance measure. They also asked if an updated 5-year conservation plan is also required, noting other FGC programs do not have 5-year plans.

The group reviewing the forest health objective is modelling pest hazard ratings by tree species and BEC variant to determine the efficacy of establishing a performance measure associated with deploying pest-resistant seed to the highest hazard sites.

The groups' recommendations have not been finalized nor compiled yet. An outline of the next strategic plan has therefore not been drafted for FGC review. The target date for completing a draft plan for FGC and the CF's consideration should therefore be extended. A draft plan can be prepared for FGC's review at its December meeting, and a final for CF consideration in March 2021.

The timelines for updating the FGC Terms of Reference for FGC, including membership nomination & diversity principles, can also be aligned with those for the strategic plan.

**Action:** Brian to connect with the strategic plan groups, compile comments and recommendations, and convene a meeting of the subcommittee to review by Nov 15.

## **11. FGC Membership**

Tony's 3-year terms as the Canadian Forest Service Rep concluded on Aug 31, 2020. Dan Mazerolle, Director, Strategic Operations, Canadian Wood Fibre Centre, Victoria, has been nominated to replace Tony. Tony was thanked for his engagement and contributions. Dan was welcomed. Dan supervises several scientists working in forest genetics and in collaboration with the Ministry. He looks forward to working with FGC and others.

Annette's fifth term as CTAC Chair and Mark's second term as BCTS Rep expire on Oct. 22. Annette agreed to serve as another term, supported by Bev. Mark will discuss BCTS's position on

FGC with his Director, Al Powelson. The Ministry's Operational Rep remains vacant. Nominations for a suitable representative welcome.

**Motion:** FGC nominates Annette Van Niejenhuis, WFP, to serve another term on FGC as CTAC Pat/Keith. Carried.

**Action:** Mark to confirm BCTS's nomination for FGC to Pat, Dom and Brian ASAP.

**Action:** Pat to prepare (re)appointment letters to the Chief Forester for the CTAC, CFS and BCTS positions.

## 12. News and Announcements

Kat hosted an ITAC mini-meeting on Sept 23 via GoToMeeting. Over 40 persons attended this on-line meeting. See [ITAC website](#) for agenda and speakers. It was a good opportunity for new members of the community to connect and receive updates on the breeding program and seed orchards, as the biennial BC Seed Orchard meeting was cancelled this summer.

New seed orchard managers include, **Nikki Scott**, Tolko Eagle Rock, **Amy Valerino**, Ministry Skimikin and **Angela Nagel**, Ministry Prince George. **Dr. Michael Stoehr**, Ministry scientist and Douglas-fir tree breeder, will retire on Oct. 18. A small ceremony is planned.

Brian will provide an overview of BC's Forest Genetics Program to UNBC's students at this afternoon's webinar.

Rahul reported wrap up of several large-scale forestry genomics projects, and initiation of a few more. Also, partnership with Ministry (Marie Vance) on a Ponderosa Pine genomics project. Pat thanked Genome BC for providing this opportunity.

Several organizations, including the Ministry, Mosaic and Genome BC, provided their staff with Equity, Diversity, and Inclusiveness training over the past several months in response to the Black Lives Matter and Indigenous Reconciliation movements. The conversations continue.

## 13. Next meeting

The next meeting will occur on Thursday am, December 10, 2020. A technical presentation was recommended to be included in the agenda, such as the outstanding invite to CoAdapTree's social-science team.

**Action:** Brian to send out Meeting invite for Dec 10 FGC meeting and include technical presentation in agenda.

## 14. In camera session

In camera session for FGC members only. Guests were thanked for their participation and asked to leave at 12:07. Dan, as incoming Federal Rep, and Shane Berg were invited to remain.

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

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

**Motion:** The meeting is hereby adjourned at 12:12 pm. Annette/Kat. Carried