
Minutes - Business Meeting

12:40 pm – 2:05 pm, Friday, March 5, 2021

Location: Online via GoToMeeting video conference

Attendees:

GCTAC Members: Dr. Jürgen Ehling (Chair, UVic), Tongli Wang (UBC), Sally Aitken (UBC), Charlie Cartwright (FLNR), Dave Kolotelo (FLNR), Michael Murray (FLNR)

Guests: Keith Thomas (FLNR), Brian Barber (SelectSeed), Meaghan Duke (SelectSeed).

Regrets: Cyndi Smith, Natali Staffl

Proceedings

Meeting was held via GoToMeeting video conference. Dr. Jürgen Ehling, GCTAC Chair, reviewed the agenda and materials circulated in advance. The Business meeting was preceded by a GCTAC Extension meeting.

GCTAC Extension Meeting (am)

9:05 **Dr. Tongli Wang**, Faculty of Forestry, UBC - Conservation Catalogue of BC's Native Trees, Flying BEC Zones v. 3, and Lodgepole pine landscape-level genomics and global climate niches

9:25 **Dave Kolotelo**, Provincial Tree Seed Centre, Ministry of Forests and **Don Pigott**, Yellow Point Propagation - *Ex situ* seed collections

9:45 **Charlie Cartwright**, Cowichan Lake Research Station, BC Ministry of Forests...
– Whitebark pine field screening and parent tree marking

10:00 *Break*

10:30 **Dr. Michael Murray**, Kootenay-Boundary Region, BC Ministry of Forests...
- Disease resistance for whitebark pine

10:50 **Dr. Sally Aitken**, Faculty of Forestry, UBC - Field-testing whitebark pine resistance to white pine blister rust: a cost-effective approach; and Landscape-Level Genetic Diversity.

11:10 **Barb Gass**, Executive Director, and **Kiah Allen**, Seed Orchard Coordinator
- Whitebark Pine Ecosystem Foundation of Canada: Intros and Updates.

1. Business Meeting Agenda

- Juergen proposed discussion on each member proposals (circulated in advance), including consequences of not funding a project in whole or part. The business meeting agenda was accepted.

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- Keith Thomas was asked to provide an update on budget process for this coming year, comment on how likely that things are going to change again.

2. Budget allocations and estimated expenditures for 2021/22

Keith Thomas

- LBIS funding for 2020/21 took a \$500,000 hit. Projects had to be adjusted, including Conversation.
- Last fiscal year, \$179,500 was allocated to conservation projects. See accompanying spreadsheets. All projects anticipated to spend full allocation.
- 2020/21 Conservation allocation included \$66.8k for Tongli's conservation catalogue work.
- For 2021/22 – FIRM put forward its funding requests in December. FGC also lobbied to increase total LBIS allocation \$2.5 million. FIRM will use that amount for planning purposes but does not anticipate firm numbers until mid-summer.
- Budget day is usually second week of February, now pushed back to mid-April.
- Preliminary allocation to GCTAC in 2021/22 is \$200,000, but Keith indicated # could decrease.
- Alternative funding sources are being pursued for the whole of Tongli's salary and overhead for 2021/22 – therefore not included in the budget for 2021/22.
- Sally confirmed Co-adapt request was submitted via CTAC.
- With Co-adaptree and Tongli funded separately, there should be enough allocation to go around.
- It was noted there no process or clear mechanisms for new players or projects to be considered by GCTAC (e.g. request for proposals)

3. 2021/22 Proposals and Budget Options

Tongli Wang

- Climate modelling work, funded separately, still plays an important role for GCTAC. Conservation catalogue was updated.
- Species richness – predictions on full-range species distributions, then after, predictions at community level to see most effect zones for protected areas.
- Some zones are south of BC, into the U.S.

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- Tongli added one thing to his proposal, update of *ex situ* collections annually on website.

Charlie Cartwright

- Instead of doing ABCD budget, we might want to do “what if” scenario, and access possibility of throwing entire projects out.
- Whitebark is priority. Monumenting, Scion are less important.
- Budget A is all 3, B top 2, C is just the Whitebark pine.
- Charlie asked, regarding Whitebark, is there a chance to have some of it funded by through the implementation plan that Kendra working on, as it would free up opportunities in the GCTAC’s limited resources.
- It was suggested that support from SARA should be investigated further.
- Brian asked about risk of losing parent trees if dropping projects 2 years in a row, e.g., *ex situ* and what labour cost are associated.
- Charlie takes care of Hemlock, (Leese?) takes care of the Cedar, John takes care of Douglas fir. Conservation species, Oak, Yew, and Arbutus would drop off as it is external contract labour.
- Jürgen asks, how much more screening would you need to do before deployment to orchards, Charlie answered about 4x what we are currently doing.
- Sally and others are concerned that Whitebark pine is becoming sole focus of GCTAC.
- Charlie agrees but still believes Whitebark is priority and more discussion about outside funding for Whitebark ensues.
- Sally suggests that more parents are needed in the orchards for commercial species.

David Kolotelo

- Dave suggested he just field questions since he was able to discuss his project in the morning session.
- Charlie asked do we have arrangements with other Seedbanks for exchange of information. Dave responded we send samples to the national tree seed centre; however, they are focused on Ash. It’s all about water activity and long-term cold storage. Dave also said there’s good communication between seed centre at Webster, Jeff Dutton, Inland Empire. Oregon not so much.

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- Jürgen asks; what would Dave drop for B and C budgets?
 - Drop viability testing, half as much of the B and get less collections done.
 - Dave hopes for flexibility, for example, when there is a bumper crop then collections should increase.

Sally Aitken

- Asking about 1/3 of her total project costs, remaining is coming from Genome B.C.
- 2-year budget since it is a 2-year project.
- Option A - will give most leverage with Genome BC and will allow sampling of well-established stands coastal Douglas fir and interior spruce.
 - Provides best connection between mixed seedlot and genetic diversity, assisted gene-flow.
- Option B – Less of A,
- Option C – Does not involve any data collection.
 - This scaled-down version would likely result in loss of co-funding.
- Dave asks how does Sally's work tie in with portfolio analysis? Sally responded that her modelling work allows her to build in the portfolio at the landscape level and at the stand level.
- Tongli agrees that this is a good connection and helps our understanding of assisted gene-flow.

Michael Murray

- Accumulated parent trees doing controlled inoculations but are falling behind on field trials, which are essential.
- Option A includes some support for collections on parents that are performing the best in the controlled inoculations.
- Kalamalka is an important operational baseline.
- The difference between A to C would be little to no collection of materials for new field trials.
- Charlie suggested Michael arrange Scion collection at Kalamalka, Michael agreed but clarified that he is not currently asking for funding for this.

4. Summary

- The “A” proposals put forth can all be done within the budget. Brian asked the question, since we are in this position, what else can we add?
- Charlie could ask for more funding for Scion collecting, cone collection, building up clone banks.
- Jürgen mentioned that Sally’s C option is not really an option.
- Budget A option \$187,900 was supported by GCTAC members
- The CGTAC budget and recommendations will be included with budget requests vetted by CTAC and ITAC, and presented to FGC at its meeting in April.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 pm.

Draft meeting minutes by Meaghan Duke, March 30, 2021

Approved by GCTAC on Dec 1, 2021