

Spruce River Forest 2003 Annual CSA Z809-02 Report

The purpose of this annual report is to describe progress in meeting and maintaining the Sustainable Forest Management plan requirements. The certification audit of the Spruce River Forest was conducted in June 2003 and officially granted in November.

The CSA protocols do not seem to require an annual report in the year of DFA certification and this report is produced to set baseline objective target achievement levels for comparison to future years

Section 5 of the SFM Plan describes the SFM performance requirements for the DFA. In this section, DFA specific values, objectives, indicators and targets (VOIT's) were created for each CCFM SFM criterion and element. A total of 26 indicators were developed in the SFM Plan. In addition to the values, objectives and targets associated with each indicator, a summary of acceptable levels, management strategies, forecasts, predicted results and outcomes, monitoring/reporting and the implementation schedule is provided for each indicator. Many indicators describe a requirement to provide information regarding progress to meeting targets in the annual report. Other indicators are best measured within a long term planning environment such as the forest sustainability assessments made in the government regulated forest management plan (FMP).

Indicator 1.1.1: Forest composition (area in hectares by forest unit).

Target: To ensure that harvest disturbances maintain each forest unit within defined eco-regional bound of natural variation.

Annual FRI depletion updating was completed in 2002/03 Annual Report AR-1 for the November 2003 submission to the MNR. This indicator is primarily measured during preparation of the next FMP, scheduled for 2006.

Indicator 1.1.2: Area of white and red pine working group.

Target: To increase the presence of white pine and to increase the red pine working group.

A total of 40,982 white pine and 192,526 red pine seedlings were planted in 2003. This indicator is primarily measured during preparation of the next FMP, scheduled for 2006.

Indicator 1.1.3: Area (ha) and frequency distribution of harvest and natural disturbance areas (by size class).

Target: To establish harvest disturbance patches on the forest in a manner which is consistent with the historic size class and frequency distribution.

As reported in the November 2003 submission to the MNR for the 2002/03 harvest depletions, the average cutover size was 160 hectares and the largest was 3,600 hectares. Approximately 57% of the harvest blocks are small clearcuts less than 50 hectares and cover only 5% of the total harvest area. At the other end of the scale, clearcuts over 250 hectares comprise 70% of the area and 10% of the number of harvest blocks. There were 2 forest fires covering a total of 189 hectares. This indicator is primarily measured during preparation of the next FMP, scheduled for 2006.

Indicator 1.2.1: Habitat for selected wildlife species (hectares of preferred habitat).

Target: On a long-term basis, ensure that available preferred habitat of the provincially featured species is maintained within plus or minus 20% of the null run as determined from the FMP SFMM run.

This indicator is measured during preparation of the next FMP, scheduled for 2006.

Indicator 1.3.1: Compliance with seed and stock transfer guidelines (% of inspections in compliance).

Target: Ensure that all seed and stock used in artificial renewal program is used in accordance with seed zones and transfer guidelines.

This indicator will be first reported in the 2004 annual report.

Indicator 1.4.1: Compliance with Area of Concern prescriptions associated with Parks, Conservation Reserves and Natural Heritage Values (% of inspections in compliance).

Target: Forest practices will be carried out on all sites in a manner that protects all significant natural heritage and landscape values.

There were no compliance infractions associated with AOC's for parks, conservation reserves or natural heritage areas noted in the compliance inspections completed in 2003.

Indicator 2.1.1: Amount of area of regeneration reported and declared FTG (ha).

Target: The amount of area declared FTG in annual reports will correlate to that predicted in SFMM.

According to AR-7 submitted to the MNR in April 2003, a total of 9,396 hectares were reported and approved as FTG for the 2002 calendar year. Annual report table AR-7 and AR-9 are attached to this report.

Indicator 2.2.1: Total growing stock (Mm³) by tree species.

Target: Total growing stock will remain above 40 million cubic meters through the next 100 years.

This indicator is measured during preparation of the next FMP, scheduled for 2006.

Indicator 3.1.1: Compliance with forest soil protection guidelines (% of inspections in compliance).

Target: Forest practices on all sites must minimize adverse effects on soil, remaining vegetation and other values. Forest operations will not be undertaken in areas where forest practices threaten the long-term health and vigour of the site.

There was one compliance infraction for rutting noted in the compliance inspections completed in 2003 representing a compliance rate of 98.4%.

Indicator 3.2.1: Compliance with the Guidelines for the Protection of Fish Habitat and the Guidelines for Access Roads and Water Crossings (% of inspections in compliance).

Target: Forest practices on all sites must minimize adverse effects on water quality and fish habitat.

There were no compliance infractions for water quality reserves installations noted in the compliance inspections completed in 2003. There were 5 compliance infractions for water crossing installation, representing a compliance rate of 85.7%.

Indicator 4.1.1: Net primary productivity (NPP) (g/m²/annum).

Target: The Spruce River DFA should have a positive contribution to global ecological cycles, by taking carbon from the atmosphere and storing it in the forest.

This indicator is measured during preparation of the next FMP, scheduled for 2006.

Indicator 4.2.1: Non-forested crown land area (ha).

Target: The total non-forested managed Crown land area on the DFA should remain less than 2% of the total managed crown forest area over the next 100 years.

This indicator is measured during preparation of the next FMP, scheduled for 2006.

Indicator 5.1.1: Long-term wood supply, volume available by species group vs. industrial demand during critical supply periods.

Target: To develop harvest strategies to minimize the impact of future age class imbalances.

This indicator is measured during preparation of the next FMP, scheduled for 2006.

Indicator 5.1.2: Planned vs. actual harvest volume (Mm³) by species.

Target: The annual average planned harvest volumes by species for the 2001-2006 term are: 120.2 Mm³ of jack pine, 336.8 Mm³ of spruce, 35.6 Mm³ of balsam fir, 6.0 Mm³ of cedar/larch, 138.6 Mm³ of poplar and 50.3 Mm³ of birch.

Approximately 38% of the planned softwood and 36% of the planned poplar harvest volume has been completed in the first 2 years of the FMP. Birch utilization has been poor but is improving. Annual report tables AR-3 and 5 are attached to this report.

Species	Plan Harvest	Actual Harvest	Plan Harvest	Actual Harvest
	Mm ³ /yr	Mm ³ /yr	To Date %	To Date %
Spruce	336.8	281.5	40%	34%
Jack Pine	120.2	170.6	40%	57%
Balsam Fir	35.6	13.7	40%	15%
Poplar	138.6	126.7	40%	36%
Birch	50.3	12.2	40%	10%
Cedar/Larch	6.0	2.3	40%	15%

Indicator 5.1.3: Planned vs. actual depletion area (% of available harvest area actually utilized by forest unit).

Target: The 2001-2006 annual average planned harvest area by forest unit is 479 ha of jack pine, 776 ha of conifer mix, 1,845 ha of upland spruce, 548 ha of lowland spruce, 261 ha of Balsam fir, 336 ha of poplar, 317 ha of birch, and 740 ha of hardwood mix. The total annual planned harvest area is 5,300 ha.

Over 35% of the total available area allocated for harvest during the five year term of the FMP has been harvested at the end of year 2.

Forest Unit	Plan Harvest	Actual Harvest	Plan Harvest	Actual Harvest
	Hectares/yr	Hectares/yr	To Date %	To Date %
Jack Pine	479	613	40%	51%
Conifer Mix	776	718	40%	37%
Upland Spruce	1845	1749	40%	38%
Lowland Spruce	548	259	40%	19%
Balsam Fir	261	297	40%	45%
Poplar	336	275	40%	33%
Birch	317	123	40%	15%
Hardwood Mix	740	657	40%	35%

Indicator 5.1.4: Compliance with wood utilization /wasteful practices guidelines (% of inspections in compliance).

Target: Forest operations will be carried out on all harvest areas in a manner consistent with the legislative requirements concerning wood utilization/wasteful practices.

There were 2 compliance infractions for wasteful practices noted in the compliance inspections completed in 2003, representing a compliance rate of 96.4%. Annual report table AR-12.1 is attached to this report.

Indicator 5.1.5: Number of roads with access restrictions.

Target: Maintain existing road access restrictions where required and examine opportunities for enhancing access.

In 2003, there were 2 road systems with gate access restrictions. The first, the Kennah road was gated due to the presence of Camp 231. When the camp moved in July 2003, the gate was removed. The MNR maintains a gate on Whitefin Road 710 to control hunting activity. The MNR has placed use restrictions on the Kitchen and Roaring roads to limit access to the Gull and Mooseland waterway parks. Long-standing use restrictions are in place on the Grew, Madden and North roads to protect the remote tourism interests in the area. In 2002 and 2003, two bridges were removed on the Sowden Lake Road due to safety concerns. Several temporary bridges were also removed in 2003. As well, several culverts were removed on the Gull Road due to potential environmental impact concerns.

In 2003 the Mile 43 road received enhanced access through multiple culvert re-installation. In addition, the Reba road was brushed to improve access.

Indicator 5.1.6: Number of resource stewardship agreements (RSA's).

Target: Abitibi will attempt to establish an RSA with at least 50% of resource-based tourism operators on the DFA prior to 2006.

The RSA process was initiated in late 2003. To date, 3 of the 8 resource based tourism operators who have facilities on the DFA have responded with an interest in pursuing an RSA.

Indicator 5.2.1: Volume of wood requested/made available for small business use.

Target: To make available for small business use, all birch and cedar remaining on site following harvest operations of the primary and large overlapping licensees.

A small business use request for cedar was received in October 2003. This request was recommended to the MNR.

Indicator 5.3.1: Number of access restriction issues.

Target: To develop the mechanism that will enable a full opportunity for public consultation when road de-activation becomes necessary.

There were no public comments or complaints received regarding access restrictions in 2003.

Indicator 5.3.2: Number of fuel wood permits for personnel use.

Target: To identify areas suitable for fuel woodcutting and to encourage personal use fuel wood opportunities throughout the DFA.

According to AR-5, a total of 9 fuel wood permits were issued and 62 m³ were harvested for fuel wood in 2002/03.

Indicator 6.1.1: Percent of Aboriginal communities in or adjacent to the DFA involved in the forest management consultation process.

Target: Abitibi will continue to seek involvement from all Aboriginal communities associated with the DFA in the planning process.

This indicator is primarily measured during preparation of the next FMP, scheduled for 2006. Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation expressed an interest and have been invited to participate on the Spruce River Forest LCC and 2006 Planning Team.

Indicator 6.2.1: Compliance with area of concern prescriptions for aboriginal and cultural heritage values.

Target: Forest practices on all sites must minimize adverse effects on Aboriginal and cultural heritage values.

There were no compliance infractions for AOC prescriptions for aboriginal and cultural heritage values noted in the compliance inspections completed in 2003.

Indicator 6.3.1: Degree of satisfaction with the planning process (based on the 2006 FMP LCC report and ongoing public opinion survey).

Target: Based on the LCC reports and public opinion survey for the DFA, maintain or increase current levels of support in future planning initiatives.

This indicator is primarily measured during preparation of the next FMP, scheduled for 2006. There were no further public opinion surveys filled out on the website following the SFM plan completion in June 2003.

Indicator 6.4.1: Funding for forest research.

Target: Conduct and participate in research projects.

Forest research activities funded in 2003 include: marten habitat project; growth and yield – permanent growth plot project, succession model development and managed stand density management diagram project; second generation tree improvement project; riparian zone harvest project; poplar spacing project; and greenhouse stock trial evaluations. Total expenditures for 2003 are \$245,988.

Indicator 6.4.2: Training of Local Citizen's Committee (LCC).

Target: LCC members will receive FMP and SFM training and opportunities to participate in at least one audit or field trip per year.

There were 8 LCC meetings in 2003. Specific FMP training was provided at 2 of the meetings and SFM training was provided at one meeting. Opportunity was provided to the LCC to participate in the CSA registration audit in June 2003.