

Swan Valley Forest Management Plan Newsletter



Volume 1, Issue 1: June 3rd, 2003

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CONTACTS

Forest Management Plan Hotline:
204-734-7703

Email:
Swan.Comments@LPCorp.com

Website:
www.swanvalleyforest.ca

Mail:
LP Canada Ltd.
P.O. Box 998
439 Westwood Road
Swan River, MB R0L 1Z0
Canada

Welcome to the Newsletter

Welcome to the premiere issue of the Swan Valley Forest Management Plan Newsletter. This issue represents a first in a series of publications to be produced by LP Canada Ltd. during the development of the next Forest Ecosystem Management Plan (FEMP). The goal of these newsletters is to inform the public, government, and advisory committees of progress and upcoming events associated with the update of the Plan, which must be completed before the current plan expires in 2005. These newsletters are supplemented with information found on our planning website – www.swanvalleyforest.ca.

This premiere issue is intended primarily to introduce the forest, LP Canada, and the public consultation process. Background information on our forest operations and research programs are also highlighted.

The second issue of the newsletter will also be distributed through several of the community newspapers in the Swan Valley area. The next issue will describe in more detail the steps involved in plan production, and how to provide

your input to the LP planning team. Subsequent issues will be published on a regular basis, and sent to subscribers free of charge. Information on how to subscribe to the following issues of the newsletter is available on our website, as well as the last page of this newsletter.

The Planning Process

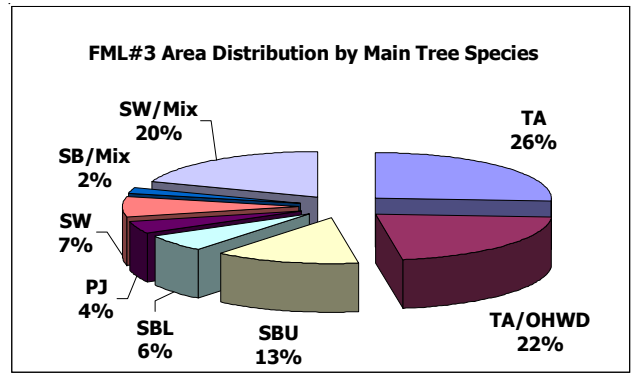
"This issue represents a first in a series of publications to be produced by LP during the development of the next Forest Ecosystem Management Plan."

LP Canada is part of an international forest products company with operations in Canada, the United States and Chile. The LP facility in the Swan Valley began operating in 1996 and produces Oriented Strand Board. This facility primarily uses aspen harvested from LP's

Forest Management Licence (FML#3) area, other Crown land, and private wood sources. Forest management activities within the FML are conducted under agreement with Manitoba Conservation, following the approval of a 10 year Forest Management Plan and the issuance of the Environment Act Licence 2191E. The current plan is in effect for the years 1996-2005 and provides the strategic direction for operation within FML#3. Additionally, Annual



Operating Plans (AOPs) have been created on a yearly basis to provide more detailed information on the exact locations of planned forestry activities for the year. The next major step in planning activities for the forest is the creation of a new 10 year management plan.



Forest Description

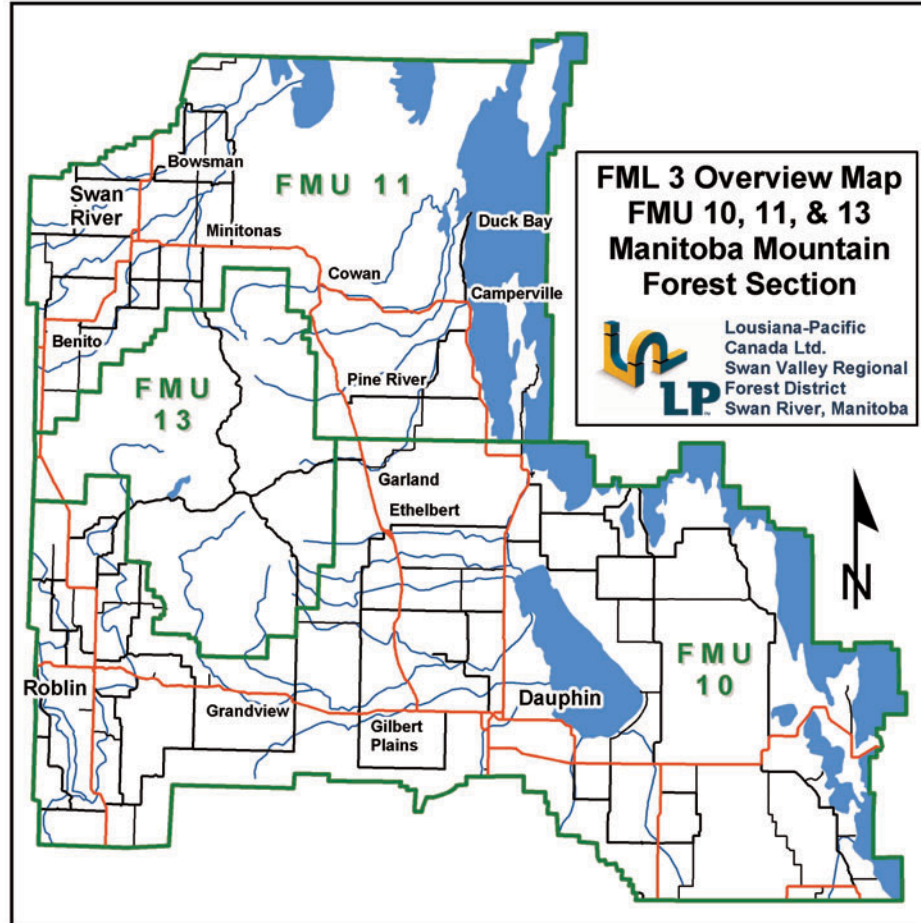
LP's Forest Management License (FML#3) is 2.5 million hectares, located in the Boreal Forest. A total of 33% of the entire area is forested (857,007 ha), and the remaining 67% is farmland, towns, wetlands, water and roads. Last year, Quota

"LP's long-term forest management goal is to ensure that the forest is managed sustainably".

Holders and LP harvested 3,100 ha, or 0.04% of the forested area within FML # 3. The forest area is comprised of 25.9% pure Aspen (TA) stands with Aspen/Other hardwood (TA/OHWD) stands accounting for an additional 21.6%.

Pure Jack Pine (PJ) and White Spruce (SW) stands make up 4.5% and 7.3% respectively, while Upland Black Spruce (SBU) and Lowland Black Spruce (SBL) account for 13.5% and 5.9% of the total area respectively. Black Spruce-mixedwood (SB/Mix) sites occur on 1.8% of FML#3, and

Above: General components of LP's Management Planning Process.
Top Right: Demonstration of the general species composition by area within FML #3.
Bottom: Map of FML#3.



White Spruce-mixedwoods (SW/Mix) cover 19.6% of the area.

Forest Management Strategy

LP Canada's long-term forest management goal is to ensure that the forest is managed sustainably. Sustainable forest management has been defined as 'management that maintains and enhances the long-term health of all aspects of the forest, while providing environmental, economic, social and cultural opportunities for present and future generations. This can further be explained by thinking of the forest in terms of what you value about it – your favorite fishing spot, going moose hunting, listening to the birds, picking blueberries, hiking under big trees or going to work if you are a logger – and what you want to have present in the forest into the future. LP's management strategy is based on trying to balance all these needs, conduct forest operations and ensure we can continue to have a healthy, diverse forest for our kids and future generations to enjoy.

Forest Management Activities

Planning

A Pre-Harvest Survey (PHS) is conducted by LP on all proposed harvest areas. The PHS is conducted a year in advance of harvest allowing time for the information to be analyzed and used in the development of a site specific prescription.

Information collected during the PHS include:

- timber types and volumes
- ecosystem vegetation and soil types
- wildlife signs
- exceptional habitat features
- snags, downed woody debris
- softwood understory densities

This information is then used by the LP Planning Team to develop management strategies to address specific concerns for each harvest area.

Approximately 5000 hectares of forest are surveyed each year.

LP performs stream assessments to determine both biological and physical characteristics of



Above: As part of the stream assessment program, LP collects intricate details about every potential crossing, to properly plan strategies to reduce disturbance.

"Forest renewal is an integral part of LP's commitment to responsible forest stewardship..."

streams prior to any stream crossing construction. Stream assessment information assists LP in developing road access strategies that will minimize disturbance of fish-bearing or potentially fish bearing aquatic habitats. Information collected at

each proposed crossing consists of:

- instream cover
- canopy cover
- stream dimensions
- stream velocity and gradient
- bank stability and composition
- aquatic vegetation present
- invertebrate species present
- fish communities present

Stream assessments also provide information to enhance the provincial inventory of existing fish and fish habitat bearing watercourses.

Harvest/Renewal

LP Planners consider block design as one of the more critical management strategies. Harvest areas are modified to address site-specific concerns such as wildlife habitat and ecological features, by maintaining individual trees and patches of trees. Leaving dead standing trees as well as living trees throughout a block provides habitat and cover for many wildlife species. Another strategy used to enhance ecological values is applied in hardwood and mixedwood stands. Immature conifer already

present in the understory of a stand are protected to quickly advance the regeneration of the future growing forest and maintain natural stand diversity. These plans fit within the larger picture of sustainable forest management and conserving



Above: Example of white spruce regeneration protection.

biodiversity. Forest renewal is an integral part of LP's commitment to responsible forest stewardship and forest management. LP is responsible for all forest management and renewal activities within the license area. These responsibilities apply to all areas harvested (hardwood and softwood), by LP and other operators. LP must ensure that all harvested areas are adequately reforested. Renewal activities may include natural regeneration, site preparation, tree plant and stand tending/maintenance to ensure that regeneration goals are met.

Tree planting is done in the spring and summer, depending on site and weather conditions. In 2003, LP will be planting approximately 2 million seedlings (black spruce, white spruce and jack pine). The trees planted are grown from seeds collected in the license area.

All harvested/planted areas are surveyed and monitored over time to assess seedling survival, densities and growth. All harvested/planted areas must meet provincial forest renewal standards before a site is considered regenerated. If a site is not regenerating within the standards some type of treatment will be prescribed such as replanting or stand tending.

Interesting LP Facts:

- *In the last six years LP has visited 3531 bird monitoring stations for research purposes, assisting LP in making 63,206 bird observations in this period.*
- *Over 20,000 Pre-Harvest Surveys have been conducted to date.*
- *LP has established approximately 450 Long-Term Ecological Monitoring Plots.*
- *LP has planted approximately 10 million conifer seedlings since 1996.*
- *100% of LP's regenerating areas submitted for approval have received the Certificate of Regeneration*
- *Since 1994, LP Canada has held 57 Stakeholders Advisory Committee meetings.*

Research and Monitoring Program

The development of an ecologically sound management strategy requires an understanding of many different aspects of the forest. This requires an awareness of what the forest is (including plants, animals, soil and water), how the forest works, and how the components of the forest are all related. Knowledge of the relationships between these various elements of the forest and how they are linked together is an essential element of ecosystem based management. We will never understand all there is to know about the complexities of the boreal forest but we are attempting to fill in the missing pieces by doing research, developing inventories and conducting long term monitoring projects. The results from these projects will be used to assist LP to develop sustainable forest management strategies to ensure the long term health of the forest into the future.

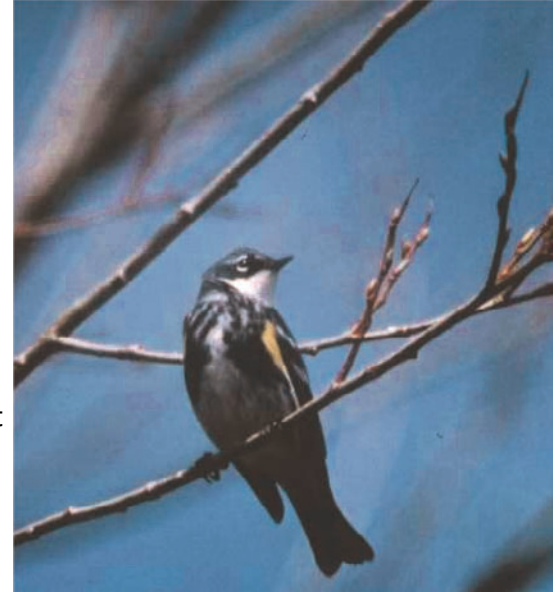
LP Canada has had an active research and monitoring program since 1997. As a first step towards the development of LP's research program, a series of meetings were conducted

with academics, Federal and Provincial government representatives, environmental organizations and other forest industries to develop a list of research priorities for FML #3. A series of research, inventory and monitoring programs have been initiated by LP to address the list of research priorities that was developed. Research is conducted by scientists from within Manitoba and across Canada. The various projects have been directly funded by the Company and through the development of research partnerships and in co-operation with other organizations. Many of LP's research projects have been funded through LP's partnership with the Sustainable Forest Management Network (SFMN),

located at the University of Alberta. The SFMN is a unique collaboration between Federal and Provincial government agencies, Canadian universities, the forest industry and Aboriginals. It has conducted over \$ 24 million of research in the boreal forest across Canada since 1995. The

"Understanding the relationships between all forest elements is essential."

research is dedicated to the development of new tools and strategies for the



Above: Yellow Rumped Warbler, one of many bird species found within FML#3 (Photo taken by Manitoba Conservation)

sustainable management of Canada's forests focusing on the social, ecological and economic aspects of forest management. In addition, LP is a partner with the Manitoba Model Forest, the Ducks Unlimited Canada Western Boreal Program, the Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada, the Prairie Adaptation Research Centre and the Centre for Forest Interdisciplinary Research at the University of Winnipeg.

In future newsletters we will provide more detail on these partnerships and LP's research and monitoring projects. In particular, we will explain how the results of these projects will be incorporated into the long term forest management plan and future monitoring initiatives. These projects include studies on topics such as historic fire patterns, forest regeneration, bird monitoring, the effects of harvest activities on arthropods (insects), climate change impact assessment and adaptation, classification and vulnerability assessment of wetlands and public participation.

Glossary of Terms

Forest Certification - awarded to a licensee of the forest who demonstrates compliance to a standard endorsed by the forestry community.

Sustainable Forestry - the management of forest ecosystems to maintain a healthy forest ecosystem which provides continuous, predictable flow of socio-economic benefits.

Ecosystem Based Management - the development of management systems that attempt to simulate ecological processes. The goal of EBM is to maintain a satisfactory level of diversity in natural landscapes and their pattern of distribution in order to ensure the sustainability of forest ecosystems and forest ecosystem processes.

Forest Canopy - A layer or multiple layers of branches and foliage at the top or crown of a forest's trees.

Biodiversity - The variability of life forms including diversity within species, and among species and their ecosystem.

Certificate of Reforestation - is provided by Manitoba Conservation to LP certifying that regeneration standards have been attained on specific harvest areas.

Canadian Council of Forest Ministers - Criteria and Indicators

The Canadian Council of Forest Ministers (CCFM) was established in 1985 as a method for Federal and Provincial Forest Ministers to cooperate in national and international forestry issues. The Council is responsible for facilitating the development of forest policies and initiatives within Canada. This national body is valuable in providing overall direction to the Canadian forest sector, and demonstrating to the international community Canada's commitment to sustainable forest management.

One of the most influential initiatives undertaken by the CCFM is the development of a Criteria and Indicator (C&I) framework for the evaluation of forest sustainability. In 1993, the Council began consultations with

scientists, government officials, industry representatives, interest groups, and the Aboriginal community. In 1995, this work was formalized into the framework described in a report titled *Defining Sustainable Forest Management: A Canadian Approach to Criteria and Indicators*.

The CCFM Criteria and Indicator framework is comprised of six broad criteria that are subdivided into 22 elements and 83 indicators. The six criteria encompass the following values:

1. Conservation of biological diversity;
2. Maintenance and enhancement of forest ecosystem condition and productivity;
3. Conservation of soil and water resources;
4. Forest ecosystem contributions to global ecological cycles;
5. Multiple benefits to society; and

6. Accepting society's responsibility for sustainable development.

The 83 indicators identify scientific factors that can be measured over time to assess the state of the forest and progress towards sustainable development.

The breadth and diversity of the individual indicators highlights the variety of uses and benefits LP gains from the forest. In evaluating forest sustainability, the C&I framework illustrates the complexity of balancing environmental, social, and economic objectives. No single criterion or indicator can act as a measure of sustainability, but instead the combination of all indicators must be viewed as providing insight into the state of the forest now and through time.

A variety of approaches have been used to implement the CCFM C&I's at the provincial and forest management levels. The 2000 report *National Status 2000*, represents the first attempt to use the indicators to assess forest sustainability at the national level.

The CCFM Criteria and Indicator framework will be an important reference during the development of the Plan. The C&I's will be used both to report on the current condition of the forest and in the evaluation of forest management planning options. More details on the incorporation of the C&I framework into the planning process will be presented in the next issue of the newsletter.

"...the CCFM Criteria and Indicator framework will be an important reference during the development of the new forest ecosystem management plan."

6 Criteria

(e.g. conservation of biological diversity)

22 Elements

(e.g. ecosystem diversity)

83 Indicators

(e.g. percentage and extent of area by forest type and age class)

Above: The CCFM Criteria and Indicator framework is comprised of six main criteria and is subdivided into 83 individual indicators.

More Information...

For more information on the CCFM and how criteria and indicators are used in evaluating forest sustainability see:

[Canadian Council of Forest Ministers](http://www.ccfm.org)

<http://www.ccfm.org>

[National Forest Strategy Coalition](http://nfsc.forest.ca)

<http://nfsc.forest.ca>

Public Participation

Community involvement is an important part of LP's forest management planning. LP established a local Stakeholders Advisory Committee (SAC) in 1994, and it continues to be a valuable and integral part of the LP planning process. The SAC is comprised of individuals from a wide-range of local groups, such as the Cottage Owner's Association, Manitoba Conservation, Manitoba Trapper's Association, and the Intermountain Snowmobile Association. Meetings are held several times a year to provide the SAC with an opportunity to review proposals, have input into the AOP, inform members of current forest management activities and challenges, as well as answering specific questions and concerns.

Public input into the planning of forest operations is also garnered through annual open houses in communities such as Swan River, Roblin, Ethelbert, and Dauphin. These open houses give the general public the opportunity to offer their input and opinions on proposed activities and to learn more about LP operations.

The development of the Plan will provide additional opportunities for the local community to provide input into the management of the forest. Details on upcoming events and how you can get involved in the planning process will be outlined in the next issue of the newsletter.

You can reach LP with any comments or questions by phone (204-734-7703), email (Swan.Comments@LPCorp.com), or visit the website at www.swanvalleyforest.ca.



Forest Certification

Through the 1990's a multitude of forest certification systems evolved worldwide to provide an independent third-party assessment of forest practices. These voluntary systems offered a means for companies to demonstrate their commitment to responsible forest management.

In December 2002, LP's Swan Valley operations became certified under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program. The SFI program is one of the world's most widely applied standards. The SFI program is a comprehensive system of principles, objectives and performance measures developed by foresters, conservationists and scientists, that combines the growing and harvesting of trees with the protection of wildlife, plants, soil and water quality.

The system shares many similarities to the CCFM Criteria and Indicator framework. The SFI system uses 11 Objectives as the guiding principles of sustainable forest management. These 11 Objectives are further subdivided into 36 Performance Measures and 119 Core Indicators which can be directly evaluated during the auditing procedure.

The SFI certification system requires companies to annually evaluate their forest operations and have external independent audits every three years.

For more information about SFI certification, please visit the following websites:

- www.aboutsfi.org
- www.aboutsfb.org



11 Objectives

(e.g. long-term forest productivity)

36 Performance Measures

(e.g. protect and maintain forest and soil productivity)

119 Core Indicators

(e.g. use of erosion control measures to minimize the loss of soil and site productivity)

Above: Certification requirements and process.

Below left: Annual open houses in the surrounding communities are one way LP gathers public input into the planning of its forestry activities.

Upcoming Events

- May 30th/31st** Manitoba Envirothon
- June 9th** Loggers Best Practices Training
- June 10th** Private Land and Hauler Best Practices Training
- Late June** Issue #2 of the Swan Valley Newsletter

Report Card Process

LP made many commitments in the 10 year Forest Management Plan and subsequent Clean Environment Commission hearings. The Forest Management License Agreement and Environment Act Licence issued by the Province of Manitoba outlined specific terms and conditions that applied to LP's forest



Above: TetrES randomly selected cutblocks that would be assessed by its field-inspection team. From these assessments, it was determined whether LP was meeting the criteria set forth by government policy.

management activities. Since 1995, LP has developed many programs and initiatives that were designed to address these commitments and licence conditions. In 2002, LP commissioned TetrES Environmental

Consultants Inc. to complete an independent, third-party assessment. This "evaluation report card" will examine LP's success in addressing the many commitments. The objectives of this assessment are:

- to list all commitments and conditions
- to evaluate performance relative to commitments and conditions
- communicate results on performance to the public and regulatory agencies.

Information was reviewed to assess LP's performance relative to the 246 commitments identified. Supporting documentation included:

- correspondence with government
- meeting agendas and minutes
- training records
- procedure manuals
- work permits
- cutblock files
- LP Annual Reports and Annual Operating Plans (AOP)

In addition to reviewing these documents TetrES also conducted field audits to assess compliance with standard operating guidelines and harvest block prescriptions.

The report card is almost complete and

delivery is expected in the near future. Once received the report will be reviewed by the Stakeholders Advisory Committee. Following this review, the report will be widely distributed.

LP Forest Resources Division

The LP Canada Forest Resources Division is comprised of 15 full time staff. Staff are educated with degrees and/or diplomas in natural and environmental sciences such as Forestry, Engineering, Biology, Geographical Information Systems and Business Administration. LP also hires many seasonal resource technicians with similar training to provide support with LP's data collection and operational support needs.

Each year, staff are re-trained in programs like safety, stream assessments, harvesting practices and fish identification to keep staff up to date on current and emerging issues. LP also offers Best Management Practice training sessions to contractors and private land owners. LP staff are always available to participate in local forestry and environmental events. In the past various staff have participated in career fairs in the local community, and have always been available for guest speaking invitations at schools and interest group meetings in Manitoba.

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