

**Public Involvement in Forest Management and Planning in Manitoba:
The Role of Stakeholder Advisory Committees (SACs)**

by

Brett C. McGurk

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Natural Resources Management

Natural Resources Institute
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Abstract

It is now widely accepted that public involvement is a critical component of sustainable forest management (SFM). However, achieving meaningful participation continues to be a challenge. Problems with public involvement in SFM tend to be directed at the continued use of passive involvement techniques such as open houses by forest products companies (FPCs) and governments at the expense of more participatory methods. In an effort to provide more active involvement, many FPCs have started to use an advisory committee approach. There are few empirical studies, however, that evaluate advisory committee processes, and that clarify the roles of such committees in forest management and planning. The purpose of the study was to help fill these gaps. The specific objectives were to: 1) establish the degree of overall success of stakeholder advisory committees (SACs) in forest management and planning in Manitoba; 2) determine the involvement techniques used in the advisory committee processes and identify the preferred techniques; 3) consider whether informal learning occurred among the participants on the committees; 4) determine what barriers exist to involvement on the committees; and 5) provide recommendations on how to improve the public involvement capabilities of SACs in SFM.

The study focused on the advisory committees of the three FPCs that hold forest management licences in Manitoba, Canada: Tembec, located in Pine Falls; Louisiana-Pacific, in Swan River; and Tolko, based in The Pas. A qualitative research approach was used to address the goals of the research, including: 1) standardized open-ended interviews with selected members of each committee (N=25); 2) a meeting with key



actors in the forest policy community; 3) participation observation; and 4) document review – literature review and reviewing the minutes of meetings of the committees. Atlas Ti, a qualitative data analysis software program, assisted with data analysis.

Results established numerous strengths and weaknesses of the committees relating to both processes and outcomes. Respondents identified: 1) the use of appropriate involvement techniques; 2) good facilitation; 3) openness; 4) effective conflict management; 5) learning; 6) committee members' optimism about advisory committee processes; 7) relationship-building; and 8) ability to influence site-specific forest management and planning decisions as the strengths of the committees. Notable weaknesses were: 1) insufficient breadth of involvement; 2) lack of Aboriginal involvement; 3) poor attendance; 4) representation problems; 5) membership changes; 6) complexity of language (terminology); 7) infrequent meetings; 8) inadequate involvement in forest management and planning decisions; and 9) issues surrounding time.

While the advisory committee approach shows promise in a forestry context, its potential has not been fully realized. The committees and their respective sponsors had difficulty engaging members meaningfully, thus marginalizing the ability of the committees to play an important role in forest management and planning.



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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The forests and forest industry are of fundamental importance to Canadian society. Beyond their significant contributions to the Canadian economy, they have both played an important role in developing our society culturally. Of the total amount of legally defined forested areas in Canada, approximately 94 per cent are held in the public interest by federal and provincial governments (World Resources Institute 2000). However, most decisions pertaining to Canada's forests have been made bilaterally between provincial governments and forest products companies (FPCs) with minimal or no public input (Tanz and Howard 1991; Higgelke and Duinker 1993; Howlett and Rayner 1995; Blouin 1998; Cote and Bouthillier 1999). The result has been the degradation of forest resources due to the continued reliance on the market-oriented "sustained-yield" forest management paradigm (Tanz and Howard 1991; Bengston 1993; Adamowicz and Veeman 1998). This paradigm emphasizes the need to have a constant yield of timber with extraction of merchantable timber the paramount goal.

The current state of Canada's forests, coupled with the lack of opportunity for public involvement in managing this public good, has left the public critical of forest management and planning throughout Canada. The public has started to speak out about the inadequacies of decisions that have been made without public involvement (Higgelke and Duinker 1993). "Citizens, stakeholders and communities across Canada are seeking to democratize forest policy processes through increased citizen decision-making power and devolution of management control to community levels" (Robinson et al. 2001).



This push to democratize forest decision-making was one of the catalysts for the paradigmatic shift that recently occurred in forest management and planning – sustainable forest management (SFM). SFM is “management that maintains and enhances the long-term health of forest ecosystems for the benefit of all living things, while providing environmental, economic, social and cultural opportunities for present and future generations” (Natural Resources Canada 2001). This management approach is more holistic than conventional reductionistic methods of forest management and planning and advocates the inclusion of public involvement in all stages of decision-making.

As FPCs and governments begin to develop a better understanding of SFM, and realize the inadequacies of conventional methods of involvement in forest management and planning, new methods of involvement have been and need to be developed. One recent addition to the public involvement landscape in an attempt to engage the public more directly in SFM is the use of advisory committees (Duinker 2001). An advisory committee can be defined simply as “a relatively small group of people who are convened by a sponsor for an extended period of time to represent the ideas and attitudes of various groups and/or communities for the purpose of examining a proposal, issues or set of issues” (Lynn and Busenberg 1995). In the province of Manitoba, Canada, all three FPCs that hold forest management licences (Tembec, Tolko, and Louisiana-Pacific (LP)) are legally required to use advisory committees to aid in their forest management and planning activities.



1.1 Purpose/objectives

The purpose of the study was to improve understanding of the contribution that advisory committees make to public involvement in forest management and planning including SFM. The specific study objectives were to:

1. Establish the degree of overall success of SACs in forest management and planning in Manitoba;
2. Determine the involvement techniques used in the advisory committee processes and identify the preferred techniques;
3. Consider whether informal learning occurred among the participants on the committees;
4. Determine what barriers exist to involvement on the committees; and
5. Provide recommendations on how to improve the public involvement capabilities of SACs in SFM.

1.2 Significance of the study

The results of the research will have benefits extending far beyond the immediate study location. Few studies have examined SACs in a forestry context. The research will build on existing studies by analyzing dimensions of public involvement from the perspectives of the participants themselves, not just theorists and practitioners. The findings from the research will also enrich our understanding of the learning that occurs during public involvement activities. Furthermore, the findings could have implications for policy reform in the forestry sector in Manitoba and abroad.



1.3 Study sites

The study sites chosen for the research included the head office locations of the three FPCs that hold forest management licences in Manitoba: Pine Falls (Tembec), Swan River (LP), and The Pas (Tolko). Data were obtained during site-visits to each town where the SACs meet regularly. According to Hreno (2001), all three FPCs use their respective committees to varying degrees in their decision-making activities, and all have had varying degrees of success in obtaining input to their decisions from SAC members. Figure 1 indicates the location and geographic area of the forest management licence area(s) (FMLA) of the three FPCs being considered, as well as the two integrated wood supply areas (IWSAs) that are managed by the province. Tembec has the first right to purchase wood from the IWSAs, but its forest management and planning responsibilities are confined to FMLA-1.

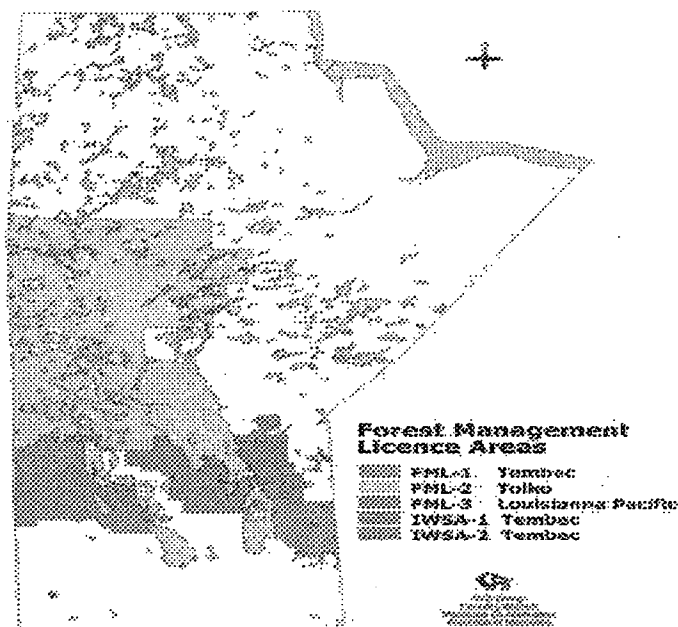


Figure 1: FMLAs and IWSAs of the three FPCs that hold forest management licences in the province of Manitoba, Canada (Map by Manitoba Conservation)



1.4 Methods

The research approach was qualitative and consisted of three components. First, secondary data were obtained through reviewing the relevant literature on the thesis topic and reviewing the minutes of meetings of the three committees. Second, in-depth interviews were carried out with SAC facilitators, selected members of each committee, and non-SAC members who were key actors in the forest policy community. The interviews were conducted during site-visits to the location where each committee operates: Pine Falls, Swan River, and The Pas. Third, I was a participant observer at four of Tembec's committee meetings. A detailed description of the research methods can be found in chapter 3.

1.5 Organization

The thesis is organized into six chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction, states the purpose and objectives of the research and discusses the research methods. Chapter 2 provides a review of the relevant literature. The review presents a background on the rationale for public involvement, the benefits of public involvement, a chronological overview of public involvement in forest management and planning in North America, and an overview of the advisory committee approach.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodological framework and the specific research techniques employed in this study. In chapter 4, results are presented. This is followed in chapter 5 by a discussion of the results. The final chapter contains conclusions and recommendations relative to the objectives of this study.



CHAPTER 2: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN FOREST MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING

2.1 Definition of public involvement

Numerous definitions of public participation, also commonly referred to as public involvement, are offered in the literature. A key difference among the definitions is the degree to which the public is able to influence, share and control decision-making (Roberts 1995). For example, Praxis (1988) defines public involvement as “a means by which public concerns, needs, and values are identified prior to decisions, so that the public can contribute to the decision-making process.” Bregha (1978) describes public participation as “...active involvement and commitment to a collective action.” Connor (1992) claims that public participation is “a communication process between planners and the public with the objectives being to share in the decisions that are made in the formulation and implementation of projects.”

For the purpose of this research, Roberts’ (1995) definition has been adopted. Roberts’ (1995) postulates that public involvement includes both public participation and consultation: “...consultation includes education, information sharing and negotiation, with the goal of better decision-making by the organization consulting the public.” Public participation, on the other hand, involves bringing the public into the decision-making process (e.g., co-management or shared decision-making). This distinction has also been made in Arnstein’s (1969) seminal work “A Ladder of Citizen Participation,” where she correlates the degrees of power with levels of involvement describing consultation as mere tokenism and citizen participation as “true” citizen empowerment.



2.2 Rationale for public involvement

Throughout the literature, several rationales are provided for increasing opportunities for public involvement in all decision-making contexts. Six reasons for this are commonly cited in the literature.

First, the public no longer perceives its governing institutions as credible. The traditional structures and methods of government decision-making that tend to exclude the public are no longer viewed as acceptable. In the words of Pal (1997), "People want to be consulted, they want to participate, and they want their voices heard."

Second, governments have started to look beyond their traditional decision-making networks as a result of fiscal constraints. In regard to environment portfolios, this has meant that environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS) have been used to provide information and quasi-regulatory services to governments at both the federal and provincial levels (Macdonald 1991).

Third, the economic and political influence of interest groups can significantly hinder governments' ability to manage public goods such as forests in the best interest of the public. Therefore, obtaining input from the "general" public can aid governments in developing balanced decisions that are beneficial to the general population and not just polarized interest groups.

Fourth, interest groups and the general public have successfully used the judicial system to halt mega-projects as a result of inadequate public involvement (See *Rafferty-Alameda and Oldman River Dam* federal court decisions) (Macdonald 1991; Vanderzwagg and Duncan 1992).



Fifth, in the context of this research, it is advocated that publicly owned forests must be managed according to the values and preferences of its owners. In Canada, 94 per cent of forested areas are public lands; therefore, their management "... must be decided by the owners of the forests and deserve the greatest possible public participation" (Baskerville 1988).

Sixth, public involvement is a fundamental component of democratic governance, especially within the ideals of representative and, even more so, participatory forms of democracy. A deeper understanding of these governance models is imperative to realize why public involvement has taken the form it has, and why there is renewed interest in employing a more participatory form of democracy.

The catalysts for representative democracy theory were the exponential growth and complexity of governments (Pateman 1970). Although the ideal democracy is the rule of the people through maximum participation (i.e., participatory democracy), the considerable growth and complexity of bureaucracies had rendered it infeasible (Pateman 1970). As a result, the resurgence of representative democracy occurred during the early 1900s and participatory decision-making had only a marginal role.

Representative democracy can be defined simply as the voting of elected representatives to act on behalf of the citizenry. Representative democracy theorists believe there are inherent dangers in broad-scale public involvement in politics, and that increased levels above what is required results in the destabilization of the workings of government (Pateman 1970). This sentiment, in conjunction with the fact that the citizenry was perceived as apathetic and incompetent to participate in civil society activities, were the justifications for the limited role of public involvement during the



beginning of the 20th century (Pateman 1970; Moote et al. 1997; Overdevest 2001). This style of governance often centralizes decision-making authority and disempowers citizens, reducing their ability to influence decisions that affect their lives. As Pateman (1970) asserts, often the only participation that took place by the vast majority of the public was in the election of government legislators.

The resurgence of participatory ideals in the latter half of the last century was the result of two aspects found in western democracies: 1) considerable growth in functions performed by the state; and 2) increased concentration of decision-making authority by the governing elite (Pateman 1970; Cook and Morgan 1971; Webler and Renn 1995). Unlike the representative theorists interpretation of democracy, the participatory view of democracy is based on the premise that people whose lives are affected by a decision must partake in making that decision (Gibson 1975; Naisbett 1982; Howell et al. 1987; Overdevest 2001). The reason being is that "it has been established in democratic thought that each adult is assumed to be the best guide to his welfare" (McAllister 1982). Therefore, individuals need to have the opportunity and be encouraged to participate in decisions that affect their lives, especially considering that they are ultimately the ones who know how they feel (Cook and Morgan 1971). Naisbett (1982) argues that the lack of empowerment afforded through representative democracy has catalyzed a societal shift toward participatory democracy. This trend has been labeled one of the ten largest mega-trends occurring in American society and institutions (Naisbett 1982).



2.3 Benefits of public involvement

Numerous public involvement practitioners and researchers have written extensively on the benefits of public involvement in all decision-making contexts. The following captures in part the numerous benefits of public involvement, many of which embody the rationales outlined earlier.

2.3.1 *Involvement and creativity*

Through public involvement, there is an opportunity for participants to expand their knowledge, enrich debate and provide alternatives in matters to be solved (Howell et al. 1987; Praxis 1988; Connor 1992; Mitchell 1997). According to Praxis (1988), "...many times agencies have discovered that the public's expertise and creativity was invaluable in contributing to the development of sensitive compromise solutions to problems."

2.3.2 *Effective decision-making*

Public involvement contributes to the effectiveness of decision-making because those with authority to make decisions and those affected by decisions have the opportunity to develop solutions that accommodate rather than compromise the participants' interests (Howell et al. 1987; Praxis 1988; Owen 1998). Cook and Morgan (1971) argue that in some occasions amateur experts (i.e., the public) are "...equal to, if not more important than elected officials in decision-making because their feelings, reflections and experiences lead them to better choices of ends and means."



2.3.3 Credibility

Substantive public involvement often results in participants perceiving decision-making processes, their outcomes, and those facilitating the process as credible. The result is greater support for the plan, program or policy to be implemented, which helps build working relationships with potentially affected and interested individuals (Creighton et al. 1980; Howell et al. 1987; Higgelke and Duinker 1993; Roberts 1995; Mitchell 1997; Blouin 1998).

2.3.4 Reduce conflict

Public involvement in decision-making, specifically the discourse among participants, has been known to avert and/or reduce conflict (Roberts 1995; Blouin 1998). Wilmot and Hocker (1997) assert that it is through discourse that parties in conflict realize they do not have incompatible goals (i.e., shifting from positions to interests), win-win solutions are possible, and the negative attributes that each party associates with the other party are often incorrect.

2.3.5 Acquisition of information

Since most decisions facing modern societies are qualitative rather than quantitative in nature (Cook and Morgan 1971), substantive public involvement is crucial for soliciting information from citizens on their goals, preferences, values and attitudes (Creighton et al. 1980; Mitchell 1997). Higgelke and Duinker (1993) claim that "...local people can provide information that is otherwise unattainable."



2.3.6 Minimizing time and money

It is frequently noted in the literature that there are two drawbacks to public involvement. First, public involvement activities can be very time-consuming and laborious. Second, public involvement can be an expensive undertaking. Despite these assertions, most practitioners claim that public involvement can reduce the costs and delays often associated with public controversy that arise because of no public participation (Praxis 1988; Roberts 1995).

2.3.7 Participation as experiential education

Many participatory democracy theorists argue that there is an educative component to direct participation that fosters human growth and development. For example, Rousseau, as cited in Pateman (1970), asserts that through the educative experience an individual "...learns to take into account wider matters than his own immediate private interests if he is to gain cooperation from others, and that public and private interests are linked." While the participatory experience aids in developing the skills necessary for harmonious and fulfilling participation, it also continually makes activities more effective and cooperative (Gibson 1975). The result will be increased public involvement that will not lead to social instability, as representative democracy advocates claim, but will be self-sustaining through the impact of the educative experience and, therefore, allowing for harmonious social interaction and decision-making (Gibson 1975).



2.4 Public involvement in Canada

While informal public involvement began in community and citizen initiatives in the 1930s (Draper 1978; Sadler 1978; Roberts 1995), the demand for substantive public involvement began to take shape in the 1960s in the form of social activism regarding environmental and natural resource matters (Macdonald 1991). Many reasons are provided in the literature as to why there was a demand for more involvement. As alluded to earlier, governments became more centralized and bureaucratic causing the public to feel alienated. As a result, profound distrust of government activities ensued, and the Canadian citizenry demanded a more participatory style of governance (Sewell and O'Riordan 1976).

The mass media also played an important role in the evolution of public involvement. For example, the eutrophication of Lake Erie in the 1970s due to the discharge of phosphates found in laundry and industrial detergents stimulated concerns amongst the Canadian public. Newspaper headlines portraying a metaphor of a "dead" Lake Erie were seen throughout Canada (Macdonald 1991). The effect was a growing public displeasure with government apathy toward environmental and natural resource problems.

As support for the environmental movement grew, provincial and federal governments felt compelled to respond. The environment became politicized and the federal government responded in numerous ways. The first step was to establish the Federal Department of the Environment in 1971.



Second, the federal government enacted environmental legislation and policies such as the Environmental Assessment Review Process (EARP) Guidelines Order in 1973. The establishment of a federal environmental assessment process through EARP was to assess projects funded or initiated by the federal government or that were to occur on federal lands (Macdonald 1991). Environmental assessment became a fundamental vehicle for public involvement in natural resource and environmental decision-making. Unfortunately, even throughout its amendments, EARP rulings were based on self-assessment and were non-binding, which led the public to question the utility of its involvement (Jeffery 1991; Delicaet 1995).

Third, provincial and federal governments allowed selected interest groups to gain access into the policy community to legitimate decision-making processes. Bregha (1978) characterizes this time period as "participation by invitation." The special interest groups that gained access into the policy community had only a quasi-consultative role with no direct influence on decisions.

In the 1970s, public involvement came to the fore in the minds of many with experiences such as the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry. Justice Thomas Berger facilitated an inquiry and established a forum for local citizens to express their concerns about a proposed pipeline through the Mackenzie River Valley, which would export gas and oil from Alaska to the United States. Malvern (1985), as cited in VanNijnatten (1999), claims the inquiry legitimated and elevated public involvement to a new status in policy making. However, as VanNijnatten (1999) describes,



While the presence of such inquiries may have indicated a tendency toward more participatory policy making, their ad hoc, advisory nature and the discretion left to political officials to accept recommendations or not provided little support for such interpretation.

Since the early 1980s, environmental assessment (EA) has become important in defining public involvement, and one of few legislated processes that specifically requires decision-makers to involve the public. In 1992, the Government of Canada solidified the public's role in EA by passing the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA), S.C. 1992, c.37 in 1992. One of the central goals of CEAA is to provide "an opportunity for public participation in the environmental assessment process." While CEAA presented new opportunities for public involvement, some critics felt there were only marginal improvements from EARP to CEAA, and others claim CEAA was a step in the wrong direction. Nikiforuk (1997) postulates that, "Canada is further from its goal of objective and effective environmental assessment with increased levels and significance of public participation than it was a decade ago."

In recent years, there has been a shift toward involvement techniques that afford participants a greater role in decision-making (shared decision-making). Co-management and community-based resource management are a few approaches that are more participatory than conventional involvement mechanisms. The bottom-up approach of these methods allows participants to play a greater role in normative decisions pertaining to the use and management of natural resources.



2.5 Public involvement in forest management and planning in North America: an overview

As noted earlier, the public has historically been afforded little opportunity by governments and FPCs to participate in decisions pertaining to the management of crown (public) forests in Canada. Despite this contention, the literature suggests that public involvement was vibrant and advocated as early as the 1900s, especially by the Canadian Forestry Association (CFA). The CFA claimed that engaging the public in determining how public forests were managed and used was a fundamental component of democratic governance and, therefore, a right and obligation of every Canadian citizen. According to Blouin (1998), it was quite common to have hundreds of thousands of Canadians participate in CFA lectures in a single year during the early 1900s. The involvement of the public in forest management and planning has obviously changed since these early years. So where are we now with respect to public involvement in forest management and planning and how did we get here?

The ensuing discussion traces the history of public involvement in forest management and planning. The discussion is divided into two sections. First, the early years of public involvement in forestry are analyzed using a policy analysis approach (1800s-1950s). It is through examining the decision-making arrangements in the forestry sector that it becomes apparent why and how the public was marginalized and had little opportunity to participate in decisions pertaining to forests. The second half of the discussion uses primarily the literature to trace how involvement of the public in forest decision-making evolved during the last five decades, and notes the current status of public involvement in this context.



Howlett and Rayner (1995) identify four stages in the evolution of forest policy development in Canada: 1) unregulated exploitation; 2) regulation for profit; 3) conservation of forest resources; and 4) regulation to ensure long-term resource supplies. A brief overview of each stage is provided. The forestry sector in Canada began in the early 19th century in eastern and central Canada and was characterized by Howlett and Rayner (1995) as largely unregulated exploitation. Exploitation of forest resources occurred largely due to settlement purposes and persisted as export markets became available. During the second stage – regulation for profit – the forest policy community began to take shape. The first legislative controls on the industry were introduced by the middle to late 19th century. Government realization of the potential revenue derived from this sector was the impetus for regulating the industry. Forest tenures, licencing policies, and the introduction of stumpage and ground rents were a few regulations imposed by governments on the industry.

In the third stage, which occurred from the later part of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century, focus was placed by governments on developing policies that attempted to avoid the careless destruction of forests. Long-term leases were also extended and granted to companies during this period so governments could ensure a continuous stream of revenue from the sector.

2.5.1 Review of policy communities and networks

Political scientists have written extensively on policy development and decision-making arrangements in the forestry sector in Canada (Grant 1990; Howlett and Rayner



1995 and 1997; Ross 1995). Policy analysis involves examining both the policy community and the decision-making arrangements within the community (i.e., policy networks). Two components constitute a policy community (Figure 2). The subgovernment is at the centre of the policy community where decision-making occurs and is dominated by large institutions (groups) and key government departments that are affected by a potential policy. The decision-making authority is centralized in the subgovernment, and the decision-making arrangements between the various actors are known as policy networks. Policy networks evolve based on which of the actors have the most decision-making clout. The policy actors in the subgovernment try to limit participation from any external actors and are often only concerned with furthering their own interests (Pal 1997).

The second component of the policy community is known as the attentive public. Policy actors in this section include members of civil society and less influential special interest groups, which end up located on the periphery of the policy community with no direct influence on decisions.



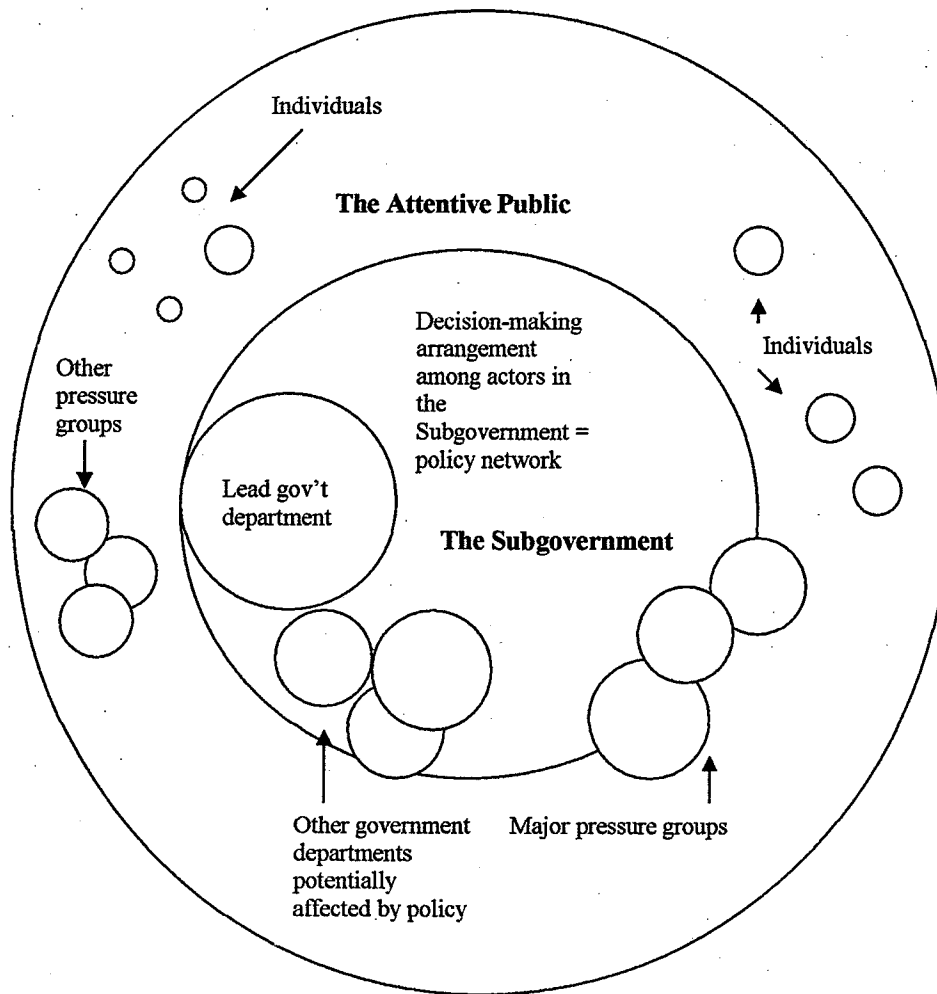


Figure 2: Policy community "bubble" diagram (after Pal 1997)

As noted above, the forest policy community in Canada did not start to take shape until the mid 19th century when governments realized that substantial revenue could be derived from the sector. This stage set the tone for forest policy development for the next hundred years. When governments realized how much revenue could be generated, they allowed FPCs to secure long-term and large forest tenures to guarantee profits for both governments and FPCs. These two parties became the dominant actors in the subgovernment, and the financial benefit of the relationship between FPCs and



governments was an incentive for both to try to limit influence from those in the attentive public.

While governments did introduce more regulations on the industry as the years progressed, the purpose of the regulations was to reduce and minimize waste of forest resources, and to ensure that there was a consistent and perpetual flow of revenue derived from the sector. The paradigm that drove this demand was sustained-yield management, which focuses on having a constant and high yield of timber indefinitely. The sustained-yield management paradigm, which is disciplinary, reductionistic, and detached from people, policies and politics (Holling 1998), had some resource managers believing that the public lacked knowledge on forest management and planning issues. Therefore, resource managers argued "... they should make management decisions because forest managers 'know best'" (Magill 1991; McMullin and Nielsen 1991). As a result of this mindset, forest managers and governments perceived public involvement as an opportunity to educate and perhaps even manipulate the public to legitimize their activities, but not as an opportunity to learn from the public and understand its concerns surrounding forest management and planning (Tanz and Howard 1991; Howlett and Rayner 1995; Smith et al. 1999). Some, of course, may still believe this despite the now documented importance of public involvement in forest management and planning.

The policy network (decision-making arrangement) involving these two actors took a variety of forms in different provinces. First, in some provinces, it is claimed that the FPCs "captured" the network (Howlett and Rayner 1995). This situation usually occurs when the industry is a major contributor to the regional economy. In other jurisdictions where the power imbalance favours government, the network is described as



“clientelistic” (Howlett and Rayner 1995). While each provincial context is different, it seemed that throughout Canada during the 1850s to 1950s, the decision-making arrangement in the subgovernment had taken the form of a concertation network, in which the two policy actors, government and FPCs were “...equal partners in long term planning and policy making” (Pal 1997). Regardless what form the policy network took in the 19th to mid 20th century, the financial beneficiaries were governments and FPCs, while the public had little say in how public forests were managed and used.

The fourth and current stage of forest policy development resembles the first half of the 20th century. Howlett and Rayner (1997) argue that,

The fundamental features of provincial forest policies have remained remarkably stable over the past fifty years. Canadian forests remain managed primarily for the purposes of commercial timber production through incentive-based tenure arrangements with large forest products corporations.

A few differences with respect to policy direction between the first and last half of the 20th century, however, included the requirement of management plans, reforestation policies, and the gradual shift toward long-term management of forests (Howlett and Rayner 1997).

One continuing trend was the reliance by FPCs and governments on the sustained-yield forest management paradigm, and a lack of public involvement in resource allocation decisions. The environmental implications of this paradigm, however, were becoming more apparent. The public’s perception of governments and FPCs’ apathy toward the effects of forestry, compounded with their reluctance to include the public in decisions pertaining to this and other public goods, were responsible for initiating the new environmental movement in the 1970s (social activism) (Macdonald 1991). The



public no longer perceived the governing institutions as credible, and the public demanded a more participatory style of governance in an attempt to hold governments accountable for their decisions. As support for the environmental movement grew, governments felt compelled to respond. In an attempt to pacify the public, governments allowed selected interest groups to gain access into the policy community to legitimize decision-making processes. In a forestry context, "...NGOs were responsible for numerous incremental changes such as reducing the maximum size of clear cuts and protecting unique landscapes from logging" (Howlett and Rayner 1995). However, the primary goal of "initiating a shift from policies aimed at achieving sustainable output levels of specific forest products to a policy that sustains native forest ecosystems...had yet to be recognized as a valid policy goal in any Canadian jurisdiction" (Howlett and Rayner 1995).

In the 1980s, a new vision to addressing global environmental and natural resource issues came to the fore and affected all resource sectors, including forestry. The concept was sustainable development and was popularized by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). The Commission defines sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs" (WCED 1987). The central idea of the concept is that socioeconomic and ecological systems are inextricably linked, with a change in one affecting the other. This idea was responsible for initiating a global understanding that environmental and natural resources problems are complex, interconnected, multidimensional, interactive and dynamic, and that it is imperative not to dissociate the socioeconomic and ecological components when attempting to solve these



problems. An important element of sustainable development is the need to engage the public at all decision-making levels. The WCED (1987) report claims that attaining sustainable development will largely depend on,

widespread support and involvement of an informed public and of non-governmental organizations, the scientific community, and industry. Their rights, roles and participation in development planning, decision-making, and project implementation should be expanded.

The WCED (1987) report was one of the driving forces for the forestry sector adopting a forest management paradigm that was more holistic, environmentally-oriented, and mirrored the concept of sustainable development. The result was the development of SFM. Implied in the definition is the need for greater public involvement in all stages of decision-making. This shift to a new management paradigm was imperative due to: 1) governments and FPCs' difficulty adapting to the changing values of the public with respect to how it wanted its forests managed and used; and 2) the continued displeasure of the public in regard to its inability to participate in and influence decisions pertaining to forests. Two comparable national surveys, one conducted in United States in 1992 and another undertaken in Canada in 1996, highlighted the public sentiment of wanting to have a more active role in the management of forest resources. Participants were asked in one question what role they would prefer to play in forest management. "Over two-thirds (seventy-two per cent) in the United States and sixty-seven per cent in Canada wanted citizens to play an active role where they could serve on advisory boards or be a full partner with forestry professionals in making decisions" (Shindler 1998). Similar sentiments were captured in a poll of the Manitoba public regarding forest management and planning on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. 43 per



cent of respondents felt the public should "...act as a full and equal partner with government and industry resource professionals in setting management goals" (Fenton et al. 2000).

Even after the signing of the Canada Forest Accord in 1992, which advocates that, "Canadians are entitled to participate in determining how their forests are used and the purposes for which they are managed" (Government of Canada 1992), there appears to still be reluctance by governments and FPCs toward greater public involvement in the management of publicly owned forests, although improved from years past. This is in part revealed in Table 1 that outlines the most commonly cited methods used to engage the public in forest management and planning activities during the last twenty years. As Table 1 highlights, most of the involvement techniques used are passive in nature, indicating a reluctance on the part of governments and FPCs to involve the public in more meaningful ways in forest decision-making.



Table 1: Most commonly used methods and associated timing of public involvement in forest management and planning

Methods and timing of public involvement	Source
<p>“The usual method for including public input on forest management activities in Canada is to invite the public to comment on a draft forest management plan, typically available for viewing at an open house during some specified period of time.”</p>	<p>(Tanz and Howard 1991)</p>
<p>“Public involvement occurred at the beginning and end of forest planning. There was little public involvement during the middle stages of planning when alternatives were being developed...only brochure mailings were used to update the public... There was a great reluctance to accept suggestions that could require major changes in the draft plans.”</p>	<p>(Blahna and Yonts-Shepard 1989)</p>
<p>“The public participation techniques most frequently used by the Forest Service are one-way communications, such as formal statements at hearings and written correspondence.”</p>	<p>(Moote et al. 1997)</p>
<p>“Two most commonly used methods to elicit public comment – statements at public hearings and written comments on draft plans – exclude people uncomfortable with public speaking or formal letter writing.”</p>	<p>Fortman and Lewis (1987), as cited in Moote et al. (1997)</p>
<p>“For the most part, the old involvement and participation techniques did not change. They continued to be bureaucratic techniques to exchange information, to request comments on issues or proposals that had already been formed, or to hold public meetings or consultations about restricted alternatives.”</p>	<p>(Cortner and Shannon 1993)</p>
<p>“The frequently used public participation model included a public hearing that forced interests into hard positions at the outset; a draft plan that, predictably, satisfied no one; more public comment; and later a final plan that again satisfied no one. Amid the ensuing appeals and threats of lawsuits, the Forest Service would call appellants and ask, ‘Why don’t we get together and negotiate?’</p>	<p>(Sirmon et al. 1993)</p>



"In most cases, the [Forestry] agency practices 'consultative' public involvement: it is a rather passive, arm's-length proposition in which managers 'consult' from time to time with an amorphous 'public' seeking responses to initiatives developed or modified in-house."

(Behan 1988)

Despite the general lack of opportunity for meaningful involvement in most forest management and planning activities, there have been examples of more participatory approaches in recent years. The following illustrates forest management and planning processes that have achieved varying degrees of success as a result of extensive public involvement.

- 1) Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE) Process – a land-use strategy in British Columbia (B.C.), Canada, that with extensive public involvement, resulted in land-use decisions in four B.C. regions: Vancouver Island, Cariboo-Chilcotin, East Kootenay, and West Kootenay Boundary, just 2.5 years after the commission began (Owen 1998).
- 2) The Model Forest Program – an initiative across Canada designed to develop new ideas and solutions to aid in the quest toward SFM. A large component of the initiative is to develop ideas and solutions in a collaborative manner among aboriginal groups, industry, environmental organizations, community-based associations, recreationists, and land owners.



- 3) Community Forestry – an approach that devolves management control of forests to local communities and has become a popular concept in Canada, the United States, and Europe (Duinker et al. 1994). The forest management arrangement is perceived as a way to empower local communities by allowing communities to manage the resource base according to their needs and interests and, thereby, ensuring community sustainability.
- 4) In an environmental and natural resource management context, advisory committees have become a popular method of public involvement and have had varying degrees of success in engaging the public more meaningfully (Vasseur et al. 1997; Duinker 2001). The following discussion provides an overview of the use, advantages and disadvantages of the advisory committee approach.

2.6 Advisory committees

A plethora of names for advisory committees can be found in the literature: citizen advisory committees (CACs), stakeholder advisory committees (SACs), local citizen advisory committees (LCCs) and community advisory committees (CACs). Despite their many names, advisory committees often perform the same function and can be defined simply as “a relatively small group of individuals who are convened by a sponsor for an extended period of time to represent the ideas and attitudes of various groups and/or communities for the purpose of examining a proposal, issues or sets of issues” (Lynn and Busenberg 1995). Employing advisory committees to obtain public



input into environmental and natural resource decision-making processes has become quite popular in Canada in recent years. In the United States, however, this form of public involvement dates back to the 1960s. Advisory committees were and continue to be used for siting hazardous waste facilities and airports; developing legislation; remediating contaminated sites; water resources planning; and land-use planning decisions. Despite the long history of use of advisory committees, there is little empirical research evaluating this form of public involvement. The research that has been conducted establishes some of the advantages and disadvantages of the advisory committee approach.

2.6.1 Advantages

An advisory committee:

- Educates the public regarding the proposed actions of the sponsor (Lynn and Busenberg 1995)
- Educates the proponents about the concerns and opinions of the general public (Roberts and Marshall 1996);
- Serves as a communication link to the wider public (Lynn and Busenberg 1995);
- Provides two-way communication with a number of interested and informed parties (Smith 2000);
- Fosters relationship-building in the group, which can lead to a deeper understanding of the concerns and interests of others (Lynn and Busenberg 1995); and
- Improves support for decisions (Petts 1999).



2.6.2 Disadvantages

An advisory committee:

- Can become elitist and/or unrepresentative of the constituents it represents due to the participants being exposed to one another's ideas and becoming educated about topics (Lynn and Busenberg 1995);
- Can be a very expensive and time consuming method of involvement (Petts 1999);
- May not be representative of the general public (Smith 2000); and
- Might not have its input incorporated into the sponsor's decisions (Petts 1999).

2.7 Key elements of good public involvement

The evaluation of the advisory committees was partly guided by three ideas developed in the public involvement literature: 1) timing of involvement; 2) degrees of involvement; and 3) participation techniques. A brief discussion about each concept is provided in the ensuing paragraphs.

2.7.1 Timing of involvement

Timing of participation is a concept used to determine at which point the public is brought into planning and decision-making processes. Smith's (1982) modification of Ozebekhan's (1969) "Hierarchy of Planning," identifies three levels at which involvement can occur. Smith (1982) asserts that involvement can take place at normative levels of planning (what should be done), strategic levels (what can be done), and operational levels (what will be done).



Most public involvement so far has taken place at the operational level (late in planning and decision-making processes). Smith (1982) postulates that members of the public need to be involved at normative and strategic levels; otherwise, participants will likely perceive the exercise as mere tokenism, with a lack of commitment of the sponsor to substantive involvement. Moreover, the earlier that involvement occurs, the more opportunity for participants to influence important normative decisions such as goal and objective setting and designing means to attain desired goals. Advisory committees are viewed by Smith (1982) as one of the few public involvement methods that can facilitate involvement at normative levels and, in his opinion, foster more meaningful involvement.

2.7.2 Degrees of involvement

In Arnstein's seminal (1969) work, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," she identifies different types of involvement based on the power dynamic of the decision-making arrangement between participants and the sponsor of the exercise. The application of Arnstein's (1969) ladder to this study was intended to enrich understanding about the involvement of the committees in decision-making. There have been many variations to Arnstein's ladder in the literature (Connor 1992; Rocha 1997). For the purpose of this study, Arnstein's ladder was adopted because it is a commonly used model to assess degrees of involvement in public involvement exercises.



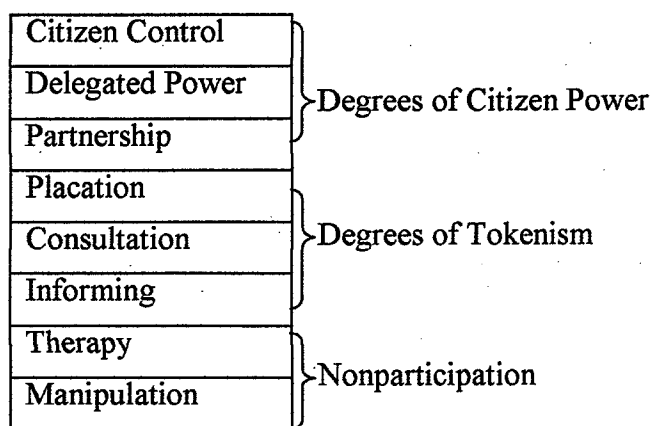


Figure 3: Forms of participation with associated degrees of citizen control
(after Arnstein 1969)

Arnstein's (1969) model identifies eight rungs (levels) of involvement (Figure 3). The bottom rungs on the ladder, manipulation and therapy, are characterized by Arnstein as non-participatory. At these levels, the sponsor's goal is to "educate" or "cure" participants. (i.e., attempt to shape participants' opinions). The middle rungs on the ladder (degrees of tokenism), which include informing, consultation, and placation, can be characterized as largely one-way information flows from the sponsor to participants (informing). They offer participants a forum to express their concerns, but those concerns and interests are not necessarily listened to or taken into consideration when decisions are made (consultation/placation). The highest level of empowerment (decision-making authority) affords participants various degrees of citizen power. In a partnership, parties have the opportunity to engage and negotiate trade-offs. At the top two rungs on the ladder, delegated authority and citizen control, citizens steer the process and outcomes of decision-making with minimal interference or influence from external pressures. Arnstein's (1969) central argument is that to have meaningful involvement,



a redistribution of power in favour of the public is imperative.

2.7.3 Analysis of public involvement mechanisms

There are plenty involvement mechanisms available to public involvement practitioners. The involvement techniques are well documented in the literature (Praxis 1988; Mitchell 1997). Two common problems are noted in the literature regarding public involvement mechanisms: 1) often little thought is given to the types of techniques to use during involvement exercises; and 2) there is a misunderstanding that various involvement mechanisms function in the same way and can achieve the same goals. This latter factor was the impetus for me to analyze the involvement techniques used on the committees in this study

My research uses Praxis' (1988) review of involvement techniques, which provides a categorization based on function (Table 2). Praxis (1988) uses five categories of techniques: 1) public information – keeping the public informed about an activity; 2) information feedback – soliciting participants' concerns and perspectives about an activity; 3) consultation – two-way communication flows between the sponsor of the activity and the public; 4) extended involvement – high levels of engagement of the public in the decision-making process of the sponsor with the ability to influence decisions; and 5) joint planning – sponsor and participants share decision-making responsibilities (e.g., co-management).



**Table 2: Summary of public involvement techniques
(after Praxis 1988)**

Public involvement techniques	
Public information:	Advertising, News conferences, Contests/events, Reports, Citizen training programs, Position papers, News releases, Publications, Brochures, Direct mail, Newsletters, Political previews, Exhibits/displays, Newspaper inserts, Public service announcements
Public information feedback:	Analyzing public involvement data, Community or social profiles, Content analysis, Interviews, Polls, Written submissions, Briefs, Computer-based participation, Focus groups, Policy profiling, Questionnaires
Consultation:	Delphi process, Brainstorming, Large meetings, Panels, Public meetings, Town meetings, Coffee klatches, Dialogues, Nominal group processes, Participatory television, Simulation games, Trade-off games, Conferences, Field offices, Open houses, Phone lines, Technical assistance, Workshops
Extended involvement techniques:	Advisory committees, Charrettes, Task forces
Joint planning techniques:	Arbitration, Negotiation, Conciliation, Mediation, Niagara process



CHAPTER 3: METHODS

3.1 Overview

The purpose of this study was to obtain the feelings and perspectives of members about their respective committees. The study design was thus qualitative. Several research methods within a qualitative paradigm were employed. Secondary data were obtained through reviewing both the relevant literature on public involvement and applicable documents. Documents (minutes of meetings) were analyzed in relation to the operation of the three committees. Primary data were obtained largely through interviews, which were conducted with government staff responsible for regulating the forest industry, selected SAC members, and the SAC facilitators. I was also a participant observer at four of Tembec's committee meetings. Atlas TI, a qualitative data analysis software program, assisted with data analysis.

3.2 Literature and document review

The first step in the research process was to review the literature regarding public involvement, public involvement in forest management and planning, and advisory committees. The purposes of conducting the review were to provide background on the rationale for public involvement; identify the benefits of public involvement; provide a chronological overview of public involvement in the forestry sector; develop a better understanding of the advisory committee approach; and to describe the theoretical underpinnings on which the research is based. The literature review also helped to



inform survey development and the analysis of the results.

A review of minutes provided a better understanding of the content and format of the committee meetings. I asked for three pieces of information from each company before proceeding with the research: 1) a contact list of the committee members; 2) committee terms of reference; and 3) a complete set of minutes of meetings. The minutes also aided in the selection of members to be interviewed. Unfortunately, the minutes for all three committees were incomplete in varying degrees.

3.3 Key informant interviews

In November 2001, Dr. John Sinclair and I met with Manitoba Conservation staff: Trent Hreno, Manager of Land Use Approvals, and Dr. Floyd Phillips. Both are responsible for regulating the forest industry in the province, which includes the advisory committees of the three FPCs. The purposes of the interview were to obtain information regarding the evolution of the committees, develop a better understanding of the role and function of the committees, and to obtain contacts of individuals within each company who were responsible for the operation of their respective committees.

3.4 Standardized open-ended interviews

Primary data were collected largely through the use of standardized open-ended interviews. Patton (1990) describes this research method as "...a set of questions carefully worded and arranged with the intention of taking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions with essentially the same



words.” There were numerous reasons for choosing this research method: 1) because respondents answer the same questions, there is an opportunity for comparability of responses; 2) the method facilitates organization and analysis of the data; 3) data are complete for each participant on each topic addressed in the interviews; and 4) interview effects and biases are reduced (Patton 1990).

Two interview schedules were used in this study – one for advisory committee members (Appendix 1), and one for the facilitators of the committees (Appendix 2). Twenty-five individuals were interviewed. The lengths of the interviews varied. The shortest interview took approximately 45 minutes, while the longest interview took approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes. The average interview length was 1 hour and 15 minutes. During the first few interviews, the interview schedules were pretested. Participants were asked to discuss with me after their interviews aspects of the schedule that they felt needed to be changed or things they felt should be included. Both interview schedules consisted of three sections: decision-making, public involvement, and learning.

1. **Decision-making:** After a few brief background questions, questions relating to decision-making were asked. The objectives were to obtain information regarding the decision-making structure of the committees, the types of decisions made by the committees, the amount of ownership of decision-making processes by the committees, and the nature of the decisions the committees made or influenced.



2. **Public Involvement:** A multitude of questions were asked to determine: (a) whether participants felt their own committee was a successful form of public involvement, and what was responsible for its success; (b) barriers to involvement on the committees; (c) what involvement techniques were used and which were preferred; (d) non-conventional involvement techniques that committee members felt FPCs should employ; and (e) how to improve public involvement through SACs.
3. **Learning:** The objective of the section was to identify what committee members learned, how learning occurred on the committees, and how learning could be better facilitated.

3.5 Interview process

3.5.1 *Tembec (Pine Falls)*

Drs. Sinclair, Miller and I had a conference call with company staff to discuss current research activities. I then described my research and the company agreed to participate in the study. On December 3, 2001, I attended my first committee meeting as a participant observer, presented the objectives of the research, and informed committee members that some of them would be contacted to participate in an interview. A letter describing the research was provided to all attending members, and other members who were not present were mailed the letter. This generic letter was mailed out to all committee members on all three committees before any of them were contacted to



participate in this study (Appendix 3) Shortly after, I obtained the minutes of the committee meetings.

A goal of the interview process was to interview between eight and ten individuals per committee and to capture the heterogeneity of members on the committees. A non-random sampling technique was employed to achieve the sampling frame. I was successful in obtaining a good cross-section of committee members except for First Nations representation. Prior to conducting the interviews, I provided an introductory statement that outlined the format of the interview (Appendix 4). This letter was different from the letter mailed to participants informing them of the research and its objectives. During the first few interviews with Tembec's committee members and the facilitator, the interview schedules were pretested. Nine individuals on Tembec's committee were interviewed (Table 3). Table 3 indicates the organizations represented, committee meeting attendance, and interview dates for the nine participants. The table does not account for changes to representatives within each organization represented on the committee, or determine when specific organizations joined the committee.



Table 3: Organizations represented, interview dates, and committee member attendance for the nine respondents interviewed that participate on Tembec's committee

Organization	Date interviewed	Attendance based on 14 committee meeting minutes
TREE – Time to Respect Earth's Ecosystems	February 12, 2002	57% (8)
InterGroup Consulting – Facilitator	February 18, 2002	35% (5)
Tembec	February 25, 2002	100% (14)
Manitoba Trappers Association	March 7, 2002	35% (5)
Manitoba Conservation	March 12, 2002	92% (13)
Resource Conservation Manitoba	March 20, 2002	92% (13)
Individual representative – Bisset	March 28, 2002	42% (6)
P & A Contracting	May 2, 2002	71% (10)
Manitoba Model Forest	May 2, 2002	78% (11)

3.5.2 Louisiana-Pacific

Louisiana Pacific's committee was the second committee considered in this study.

I was in contact with Margaret Donnelly, a former employee of LP, who forwarded the proposal to Paul Leblanc, District Forester for the company. Paul agreed to research being conducted on the committee. Once the minutes of the meetings were obtained, the generic letter introducing the research and me was sent out to all committee members. Following a two-week period, the individuals selected for the study were contacted to arrange a time for an interview. I spent one week in Swan River, Manitoba, the head office location of the company, during May 2002 to conduct eight interviews (Table 4). All interviews were in person except for one that had to be conducted via phone. The



following table does not account for committee member changes within organizations represented on the committee, or determine when organizations joined the committee.

Table 4: Organizations represented, interview dates, and committee member attendance for the eight respondents interviewed that participate on LP's committee

Organization	Date interviewed	Attendance based on 20 committee meeting minutes
Louisiana-Pacific – Facilitator	May 28, 2002	15% (3)
Swan Valley Sport Fishing Enhancement	May 28, 2002	40% (8)
Parkland West Economic Development	May 28, 2002	60% (12)
Cottage Owners Association	May 29, 2002	70% (14)
Manitoba Naturalist Society	May 29, 2002	85% (17)
Riding Mountain National Park	May 31, 2002	25% (5)
Northern Association of Community Councils	June 10, 2002 (Phone Interview)	55% (11)
Manitoba Conservation	June 13, 2002	35% (7)

3.5.3 Tolko

John Sinclair made the initial contact with the facilitator of Tolko's advisory committee. I then contacted the facilitator to further discuss the research and obtain the minutes of meetings. Once the minutes were received, the introductory letter was mailed to all committee members. Phone calls were then made to selected participants to arrange a time for an interview. I spent one week in July 2002, in The Pas, Manitoba, the head office location of the company, and conducted interviews with eight committee members (Table 5). All but one of the interviews were conducted in person; one had to be conducted via phone. Table 5 does not account for changes to representatives within



each organization represented on the committee, or determine when specific organizations joined the committee.

Table 5: Organizations represented, interview dates, and committee member attendance for the eight respondents interviewed that participate on Tolko's committee

Organization	Date interviewed	Attendance based on 13 committee meeting minutes
Manitoba Conservation	July 3, 2002	53% (7)
Tolko – Facilitator	July 23, 2002	76% (10)
NW Wildrice Growers Coop Ltd.	July 23, 2002	23% (3)
Kelsey School Division No. 45	July 23, 2002	30% (4)
Swampy Cree Tribal Council	July 24, 2002	23% (3)
Manitoba Forestry Association	July 25, 2002	84% (11)
Nelson House First Nation Trust Office	August 13, 2002	92% (12)
The Pas History and Heritage Society	August 16, 2002 (Phone Interview)	61% (8)

3.6 Participant observation

The use of participant observation was critical in increasing clarity and depth of the phenomenon under study. According to Babbie (1997), participant observation is "...a method of data collection in which the researcher becomes a participant in the social event or group under study." This method of data collection was employed for a variety of reasons, in particular, because it afforded me an opportunity to obtain first-hand accounts of the group dynamics, enriched my understanding of processes and operations, and allowed me to triangulate results with other methods of data collection. A list of issues to observe was developed to aid in the participant observation exercise



(Appendix 5). Unfortunately, due to long travel distances to two of the three committees, only Tembec's committee meetings could be observed. I managed to observe four of Tembec's committee meetings:

1. December 3, 2001 – I presented the research project to the committee; matters discussed during committee meeting included: 1) natural disturbance; and 2) certification pre-scoping audit.
2. February 18, 2002 – Matters discussed: 1) Tembec's environmental management system (EMS), a primer; 2) EMS implications for contractors; 3) review of the pre-scoping audit results; and 4) State of Forestry – implications for Tembec.
3. October 5, 2002 – Field Tour – Matters discussed: 1) competition effects on planted seedlings; 2) black spruce natural regeneration; 3) plantation tending; 4) two-pass harvest system; and 5) road decommissioning and bridge removal.
4. December 9, 2002 – Matters discussed: 1) introduction of new Vice President of Woodlands; 2) status of earlier topics discussed at committee meetings; 3) roadside buffers: issues and alternatives; 4) 2003 annual operating plan (AOP); and 5) provincial forest practice guidelines.



3.7 Data analysis

Once interviews were completed for each committee, they were transcribed verbatim into a word processing program. Following transcription, the documents were imported into a data analysis software program, Atlas Ti. Atlas Ti is one of two popular software packages available for qualitative data analysis (Barrie 1998; Lewis 2002). The software program helped organize data in a manner that allowed for easy documentation of results, and it expedited the coding process (identifying themes in the data) compared to conventional manual methods. It also permitted me to analyze complex relationships in the data visually. Identifying themes in the data was an iterative process. Themes were refined further each time I went through the data using the above software program. The dominant themes in the data can be found in Table 6.

3.8 Validity and reliability

Two concepts central to conducting sound research are reliability and validity. Disregarding these concepts can compromise the quality of research. According to Neuman (1991), "Researchers want to maximize the reliability and validity of indicators, because if indicators have a low degree of reliability or validity, then the final results will be of questionable truthfulness."

Baker's (1999) definition of reliability is useful in considering this issue. He defines reliability as "the degree to which a measurement procedure produces similar outcomes when it is repeated." If you have a reliable measure or indicator (e.g., a questionnaire) then it should yield similar results each time the same thing is measured by



the same measure – if so, it can be deemed reliable. Babbie (1997) provides a few useful ideas to keep in mind to ensure that research measures and indicators in qualitative studies are reliable, and this research was guided by these three ideas. Ask people only questions they are likely to know the answers to, ask about things relevant to them, and be clear in what you are asking.

The concept of validity can be defined simply as a test for determining whether an instrument is measuring the concept that the researcher thinks is being measured. There are three main forms of validity: content validity, criterion-related validity, and construct validity. Validity is a difficult concept and was given serious consideration in this study. One method to ensure validity is through the process of triangulation. Triangulation is simply obtaining multiple types of data using different sources and methods of data collection. “The concept of triangulation is based on the assumption that any bias inherent in particular data sources, investigators, and methods will be neutralized when used in conjunction with other data sources, investigators, and methods” (Neuman 1991). Therefore, the idea is that measurement improves when diverse indicators are used. Multiple methods of data collection were employed in this study as described in the preceding sections, including: document review (reviewing the relevant literature and the minutes of meetings of each committee), participant observation, and standardized open-ended interviews.



CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Overview

The objective of the chapter is to identify and document common themes in the data that respondents felt were the strengths and weaknesses of the advisory committees. The chapter begins with a brief overview of the three committees. The strengths and weaknesses of the committees, as perceived by the members, are then explored.

4.2 Manitoba's forestry SACs

4.2.1 *Tembec's Sustainable Forest Management Advisory Committee (SFMAC)*

Tembec's Pine Falls operation is Manitoba's only newsprint mill, and it is Manitoba's largest recycler of newspapers and magazines. The SFMAC was established in 1997 as part of Tembec's predecessor, Abitibi-Price Inc.'s, licencing requirement pursuant to the Manitoba Environment Act. In regard to the development of the committee, the company's licence states:

The licensee shall cooperate with the establishment and operation of a Stakeholders Advisory Committee (S.A.C.) and shall provide funding for the S.A.C., if so instructed by the Director. The composition, mandate and funding formula of the S.A.C. will be determined by the Director.

The impetus for the committee was a recommendation from the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission (CEC) report with respect to Abitibi-Price Inc.'s Forest Resource Management Plan 1991-1998. Manitoba Conservation, formerly known as Manitoba Environment, turned the recommendation of the CEC into a condition of its



licence. The Terms of Reference of the SFMAC states that the purpose of the committee is to provide organized and regular input and advice into the company's forest management planning and operations (Appendix 6).

The first committee meeting was held on November 18, 1997. Initially, the committee was chaired by a representative from Manitoba Conservation. Shortly thereafter, Manitoba Conservation shifted the chairing responsibilities onto the company. The Divisional Forester chaired the meetings for a short period of time. It was decided by the SFMAC that an independent facilitator would be preferred for chairing the meetings. Since November of 1999, an independent facilitator has led committee meetings. Both attendance and membership of the committee have fluctuated throughout the years. However, since an independent facilitator has been leading the meetings, attendance has remained consistent. On average, the SFMAC meets approximately four to six times a year, and at least one of the meetings is in the form of a site-visit. The last two meetings show promise that the membership will be increasing. Figure 4 provides a list of all the organizations represented on the committee.



Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union	Individual representative – Bisset
Nopiming Cottage Owners Association	Wildlife Association
Agassiz School Division	R.M. of Alexander
P & A Contracting	Canadian Parks and Wilderness
Tembec (Pine Falls)	Manitoba Model Forest
Resource Conservation Manitoba	Laverendrye Trail Association
Brokenhead First Nation	Manitoba Conservation – Land Use Approvals
Hollow Water First Nation	Powerview Métis Federation
Manigotagan	Little Black River First Nation
Manitoba Recreational Canoe Association	Shining Waters Heritage Region
R.M. of Lac du bonnet	Seymourville Community Council
Sagkeeng First Nation	Manitoba Trappers' Association
South-East Forest Products	Windstock Lodge
TREE – Time to respect earth's ecosystems	Manitoba Conservation – Lac du bonnet

Figure 4: Complete list of organizations represented on Tembec's committee

4.2.2 LP's Stakeholders' Advisory Committee (SAC)

LP is headquartered in Portland, Oregon, and it manufactures building materials



Figure 5: LP's OSB mill located in Minitonas, Manitoba (Photograph by the author)

at facilities throughout the United States, Canada and Chile. LP's division in Swan River, Manitoba, manufactures oriented strand board (OSB). LP's SAC, an initiative of the company, was formed in 1994. The impetus for developing a SAC for the Manitoba operation was the good experience the

the company's forest manager had with advisory committees in Ontario. In 1996, Manitoba Conservation formalized the committee by making it a condition of LP's Environment Act licence, which states:



The licensee shall establish a Stakeholders' Advisory Committee, having representation from a cross-section of forest users and interest groups. The purpose of the Committee shall be to:

- (i) identify resources or land uses that may be impacted by proposed activities and to recommend alternative harvest and renewal plans to minimize those impacts; and
- (ii) assist in the development of Standard Operating Procedures to minimize potential impacts.

Although the committee itself has not developed any Terms of Reference, the facilitator, who is a company employee, stated that the mandate of the committee is "to provide input into the forest management and planning activities of the company, and for the company to incorporate those concerns into its plans when possible."

There is a good cross-section of individuals who participate on the committee, but membership and attendance have fluctuated over the years (Figure 6). The SAC meets on a more sporadic basis than the other two committees. The committee meets most frequently when the company is preparing its operating plans, at which time it is not unusual for the SAC to meet two to three times in a two-month period. Annually, the committee meets approximately six to eight times. The committee holds both formal meetings at the company's head office and informal field tours once to twice a year.



Swan River Snowmobile Club	Swan Valley Sport Fishing Enhancement
Pine Creek First Nation	Manitoba Quota Holders' Association
Manitoba Conservation – Brandon	Midwest Manitoba Lodge and Outfitters
Riding Mountain National Park	Cottage Owners' Association
Manitoba Naturalist Society	West Region Elk Management
LP staff	Manitoba Conservation – Swan River
Intermountain Conservation District	Northern Association of Community Councils
Intermountain Snowmobile Club	Manitoba Trappers' Association – Ethelbert
Manitoba Trappers' Association – Duck Bay	Parkland West Economic Development
Manitoba Conservation – Winnipeg	Roblin Snowmobile Association
Durban Snowmobile Club	

Figure 6: Complete list of organizations represented on LP's committee

4.2.3 Tolko's Forest Resources Advisory Committee (FRAC)

Tolko Industries Ltd. is a family-owned company whose primary business is

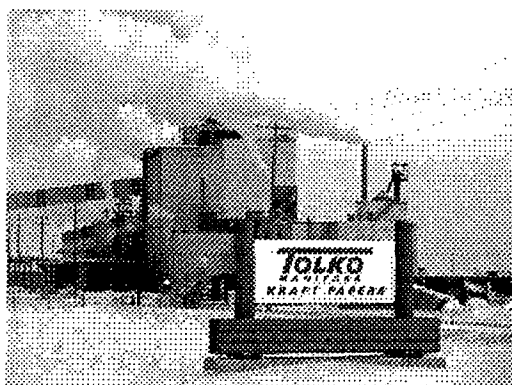


Figure 7: Tolko's kraft paper mill located in The Pas, Manitoba (Photograph courtesy of Tolko Industries Ltd.)

marketing and manufacturing specialty forest products. Tolko has two divisions located in The Pas, Manitoba. The Manitoba operations produce kraft paper and random length lumber.

Tolko's FRAC was constituted in 1996 when

the company was known as Repap Manitoba.

The FRAC became a licencing requirement of

the company pursuant to its Environment Act licence. The licence states:

The licensee shall ensure that the Forest Resources Advisory Committee (FRAC) continues to function, that it includes representation from a cross-section of forest users and interest groups, and that membership of the FRAC not be limited only to those individuals residing within Forest Management Licence Area #2.

As described in the Committee's Terms of Reference, the purpose of the FRAC is



to (Appendix 7):

serve as an on-going forum where representatives from a broad cross-section of interests can share interests, knowledge, views, values and concerns with respect to forest management activities that are to be conducted on the Tolko FMLA. This forum is intended to allow for open, fair and orderly discussion of these matters.

Company staff chair Tolko's committee meetings. As with the other

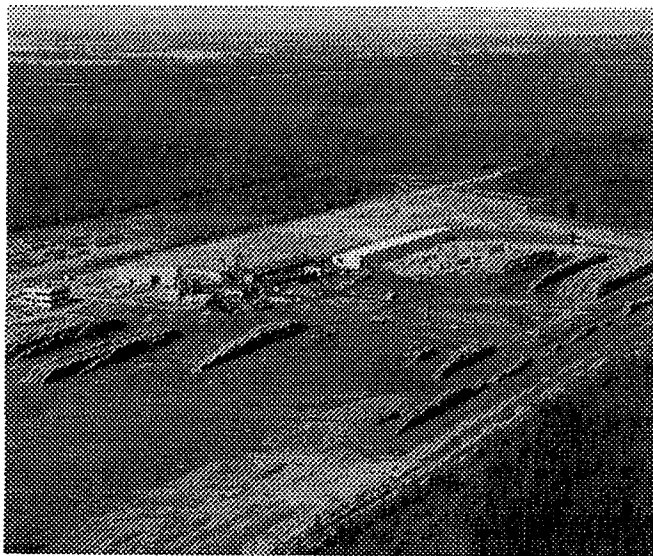


Figure 8: Tolko's sawmill located in The Pas, Manitoba
(Photograph courtesy of Tolko Industries Ltd.)

committees, a good cross-section of individuals participate, but membership and attendance have fluctuated (Figure 9). The FRAC has tried some unique ways to engage the general public with its activities, as will be described at length later. The FRAC holds both formal meetings that take place at

the company's head office and field tours. The committee has also held meetings in different communities in the FMLA that are open to the general public.



Carpenter's Clearwater Lake Lodge	Manitoba Quota Holders' Association – Swan River
Grass River Corridor Tourism Association	Northern Association of Community Councils
Kelsey School Division No.45	R.M. of Mountain
Manitoba Conservation – The Pas	The Pas History and Heritage Society
Manitoba Quota Holders' Association – Roblin	Manitoba Conservation – Thompson
Moose Lake Loggers	Ducks Unlimited Canada
Norman Regional Development Corp.	Keewatin Community College
R.M. of Kelsey	Manitoba Forestry Association
Swampy Cree Tribal Council	Manitoba Wildlife Federation
Councillor – The Pas	Nelson House First Nation
IWA – Canada – Local 324	NW Wildrice Growers Coop Ltd.
Manitoba Conversation – Winnipeg	Setting Lake Cottage Owners' Association
Kelsey Conservation District	MMF – The Pas region
Manitoba Trappers' Association – The Pas	TREE – Time to respect earth's ecosystems

Figure 9: Complete list of organizations represented on Tolko's committee

4.3 Strengths and weaknesses of the SACs

An analysis of the data revealed a number of strengths and weaknesses related to both processes and outcomes of the SACs. Table 6 provides an overview, and each strength and weakness is discussed in turn.



Table 6: Strengths and weaknesses of the committees

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Processes	4.3.1– Appropriate involvement techniques	4.4.1 – Insufficient breadth of involvement
	4.3.2– Good facilitation	4.4.2 – Lack of Aboriginal involvement
	4.3.3– Openness	4.4.3 – Poor attendance
	4.3.4 – Effective conflict management	4.4.4 – Representation problems
		4.4.5 – Membership changes
		4.4.6 – Complexity of language (terminology)
		4.4.7 – Infrequent meetings
Outcomes	4.3.5 – Learning	4.4.8 – Inadequate involvement in forest management and planning decisions
	4.3.6 – Committee members' optimism about advisory committee processes	4.4.9 – Issues surrounding time
	4.3.7 – Relationship-building	
	4.3.8 – Ability to influence site-specific forest management and planning decisions	

4.3.1 Appropriate involvement techniques

One of the research questions was to determine what involvement techniques were employed and to identify the preferred techniques. The most commonly used methods to facilitate involvement and the exchange of information included: computer-based presentations (power-point); minutes of meetings; discussions (facilitated through questions and answers); site-visits; maps; handouts; and reviews of AOPs. The techniques were deemed a process strength because respondents noted their value in terms of learning. Respondents also identified the techniques that helped



them learn specific topics. For example, respondents claimed that discussions and review of maps were the methods that facilitated learning about the concerns, values, perspectives, and local knowledge of committee members. Overall, many interviewees commented that they learned the material in a multitude of ways.

Just listening to the other people around the table, and also the presentations that are made by the various presenters...whether it be Tembec about its ongoing operations, or a power-point presentation about the caribou herd. These are all ways of learning (Respondent # 7).

The learning is multiple – from the academic power-point presentations Louisiana-Pacific does, from the SAC members – the trappers, biologists, greenpeacer, they bring a wealth of information that I thoroughly enjoy from them and the field trips, so there are three, SAC members, Louisiana-Pacific and the field trips (Respondent # 11).

It became evident throughout the interviews that visual techniques of participation



were the preferred choices by respondents, particularly, site-visits. 52 per cent of the respondents felt this way because they found site-visits to be the most effective way to learn about the scientific aspects of forestry.

Committee members who benefited most from

Figure 10: A FRAC meeting discussing an AOP site-visits were those not involved with the
(Photograph courtesy of Tolko Industries Ltd.)

with the industry and not working with the issues on a regular basis. The following quotes capture the essence of why respondents preferred site-visits:



Site-visits...because we are all from different backgrounds. I will use the example of a clearcut. You and I could sit around a table and I know what a clearcut is in my mind, and you know what a clearcut is in your mind, and this guy over here has another vision that he seen on the national news in B.C. on a slope. So that is why any kind of issue like free to grow or emulating natural disturbance, if you actually go on-site and you say this is what we mean by emulating natural disturbance, and this is what we mean by a clear cut, then everyone sees the same picture (Respondent # 3).

We go into areas where they are actually logging and see what it looks like. It is hard to visualize on a map sometimes how large a cutblock is, so many hectares – so what does that mean and look like? So when you can actually go and stand in it and see after it has been cut then you see how big it is, so the on-site stuff is good and the slides and pictures are excellent ways of being able to visualize what they are talking about (Respondent # 15).

Maps were also used frequently by the FPCs during committee meetings. This was largely due to the committees' role of reviewing AOPs; however, more often than not, it was simply reviewing cutblocks to see if members had any questions or concerns. Maps were viewed as being useful because they indicated the location and size of cutblocks, and the proximity of the companies' activities relative to committee members' interests. Many members noted the benefits of using conventional and computer-generated maps.

I think the maps cover so much because if you can read the map you can see exactly what they are doing, what they have done, and what they are going to do. I think maps are by far the most useful (Respondent # 13).

Last year they switched to where they had all the maps on the computer and they projected them, so the person that was leading that particular discussion would go over the map and point out salient features and I thought that was a much better way of doing it. It got everybody involved and the other thing that they were able to do with that was they were able to overlay their cutting plans with some other information such as slopes. I thought that was much better for me anyways then just going around the room and looking at the maps against the wall, that was not all the useful, but I thought it encouraged a lot of discussion and people were right in their understanding what was going on in each block (Respondent # 12).



Overall, visual methods of information dissemination such as site-visits, pictures, and maps were preferred by participants. LP's facilitator specifically noted why he thinks employing visual methods of communication are important.

We know to use maps and pictures where possible. We have a whole image library. [Showed images – harvesting, cutblocks] For example, we have images...digital cameras are wonderful if you have enough storage space to look at them. We often have a laptop and show people specific things if there are specific issues. Here are examples of cutovers with in-stand structure. We are talking about protecting under story like spruce so we can call these up at a moments notice. Here is white spruce under story that is left behind and some aspen trees left beside it to keep the spruce from blowing down. Lots of visuals where possible because dealing with lay people it is very easy to use acronyms and technical terms that they might not understand; things that we deal with everyday as professionals, but the members only deal with this stuff once a month, but if you can show them all the better (Respondent # 16).

Participation in one of Tembec's SFMAC field tours on October 5, 2002, supported this evidence. The matters addressed during the tour included: 1) competition effects on planted seedlings; 2) black spruce natural regeneration; 3) plantation tending; 4) two-pass harvest system; and 5) road decommissioning/bridge removal (Appendix 8). The tour, which lasted approximately eight hours, consisted of driving to the site locations with discussions at each site. Despite having some knowledge about the issues, information provided on the site-visit enhanced my knowledge about site-specific forest management activities and issues.



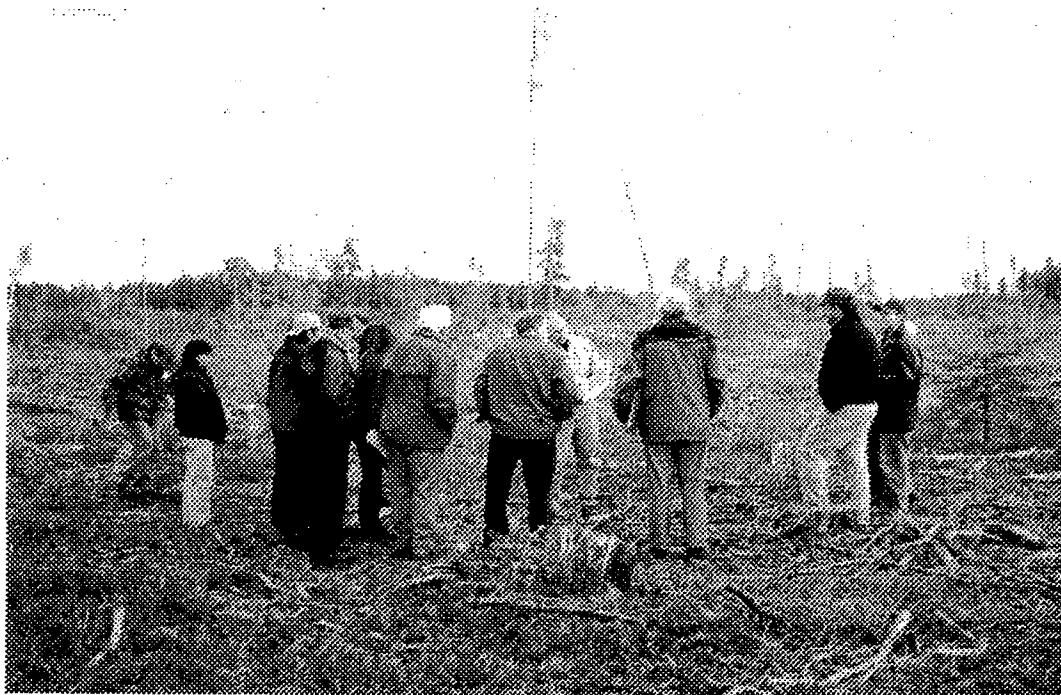


Figure 11: Discussion at a cutover harvested using the two-pass harvest system
(Photograph by the author)

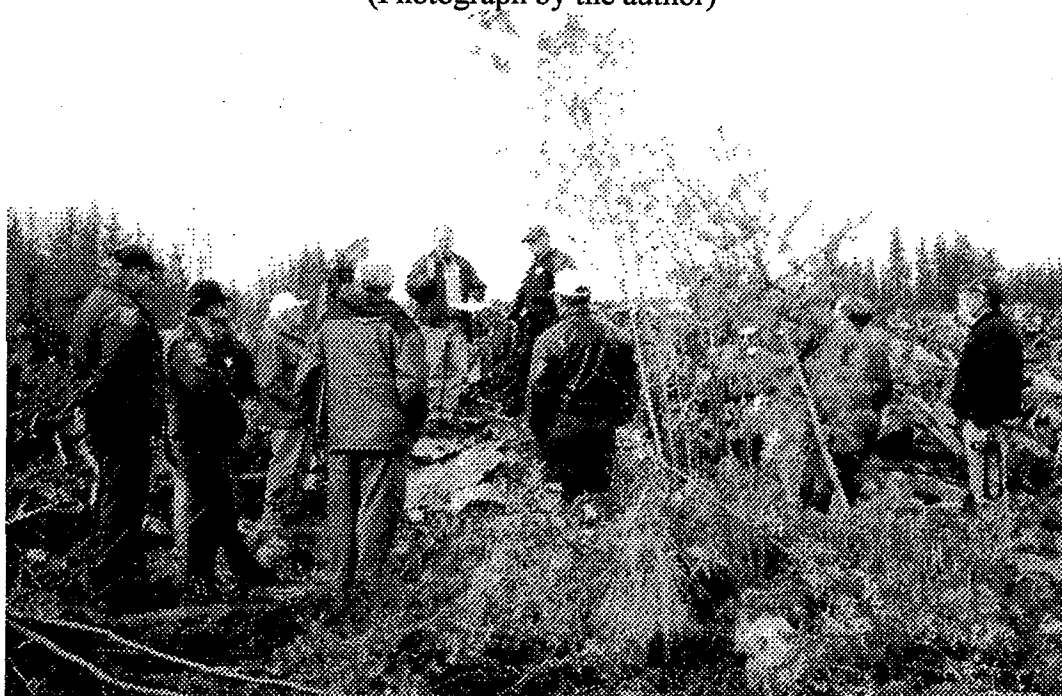


Figure 12: Road decommissioning and bridge removal discussion at the
Manigotagan River (Photograph by the author)



In addition to learning about forest management and planning, there were two other positive outcomes that the forum facilitated. First, the informal nature of the tour appeared to be a catalyst for greater relationship-building among committee members, and between committee members and those invited to participate on the tour who were not active participants on the committee. For example, an effort was made to include First Nations on the tour, who have been reluctant to participate on the SFMAC. The facilitator paid special attention to their concerns and encouraged them to participate on the committee as full-time members. This is a very important step for the group considering that First Nations people have chosen thus far not to participate on the committee. Furthermore, during travel time between each site and at the lunch break, there was ample time for participants to converse with each other, which further contributed to relationship-building.

Second, the forum provided many opportunities for individuals who were not comfortable with speaking in front of other people to ask questions on a one-on-one basis with company staff and other members. On numerous occasions, I observed individuals who were often reserved during committee meetings, ask company staff and committee members questions that were important to them.

Despite these benefits, there also seemed to be missed opportunities. For example, the company attempted to inform the group about the safety of a herbicide (Vision) being used to reduce the competition of hardwoods on desired softwood tree species. Information from the manufacturer about the environmentally benign nature of the chemical was provided to field tour attendees. The company reiterated throughout the discussion that the herbicide was safe to both flora and fauna and to those applying it



because it was government approved. There was no discussion about any studies conducted on the herbicide's potential deleterious effects on flora and fauna. There was limited opportunity for input or questions from the committee about the chemical, and most importantly, the committee was not asked for advice on its use. One committee member at the following meeting indicated that he was not convinced about the safety of the chemical, but the company did not respond to his concern and quickly went on to another issue.

Another missed opportunity on the tour occurred during a discussion about roadside buffers. Committee members were asked how they felt about clearing buffers right to the road. A few attendees noted their feelings on the issue. One attendee commented that he would prefer to leave buffers adjacent to the road because this is how he and many others perceive wilderness (mature trees), and he claimed it would spoil his and others' sense of wilderness. The same member also raised the often contentious issue of whether timber harvesting should take place within provincial parks as was occurring at that particular site. The company's perspective was that if it removed buffers along roads for certain distances, and placed signage indicating what it was doing, over the years, people would realize that forests are indeed renewable resources that grow back. From the company's perspective, it would use cutovers with signage as a means to educate the public.

All the points raised were valid, and the facilitator indicated to the secretary that these were important issues and all the concerns needed to be documented. There was no closure on the issue, however. There was no indication as to when or if roadside buffers would be discussed again, how the issue was important to the company, and what the



company was going to do with roadside buffers considering the input it received. The site-visit could have been an opportunity to review different perspectives of committee members, and final resolution could have been made at a subsequent meeting regarding buffers.

The company did, however, address many of the items discussed on the field tour at the following committee meeting held on December 9, 2002. This was the most productive committee meeting of the four that took place over the course of the research. First, the meeting was one of the best attended in the last few years according to members and company staff. The individual largely responsible for this was the company's newly hired secretary. His diligent and persistent nature was noted by many during the pre-meeting dinner. For example, I was contacted on three occasions by phone, and a few more times via e-mail to make sure I was going to be attending the meeting.

Second, a few First Nations that participated on the field tour were also present at the meeting. Their follow-up visit to the committee was an important event for the SFMAC. They appeared to realize the benefits of being involved in such an activity, and took home the 2003 AOP to review and see how it would affect their community.

Third, there was a "check-back" on issues that were discussed at previous meetings to determine their status and the direction the company was taking on the issues. Company staff gave updates on the following: 1) buffers; 2) implementing natural disturbance; 3) road management; and 4) creation of a dispute resolution mechanism for its certification process. The committee appeared to appreciate the updates and new directions of the company on these issues. One member noted how relieved he was to find out what was going on with buffers considering the committee discussed them so



frequently at previous meetings. Unfortunately, in none of the discussions was there an indication as to how the SFMAC affected any of the decisions or directions of the company. I asked committee members during the break and after the meeting adjourned how they felt about the meeting. They were quite pleased and felt it was a very productive meeting. It is important to note, however, that members also mentioned that the style of meeting was quite uncharacteristic in approach.

4.3.2 Good facilitation

In two of the three committees, respondents acknowledged that excellent facilitation was a key factor that contributed to their committees' success. Furthermore, poor facilitation was identified as a factor that limited the success of Tolko's committee. Respondents on Tembec's committee articulated during the interviews, that prior to using an independent facilitator, the SAC was ineffective and often adversarial. Once an independent facilitator had taken over the chairing responsibilities, respondents saw a significant improvement in how meetings were run and felt that they were making progress in addressing the issues. Many respondents, including a company representative, attributed the success of Tembec's committee to facilitation. A representative on LP's committee commented:

They are well prepared for the meetings; they set out an agenda; they do not do all the talking; they want to listen to the members; this is a method they use to take minutes [referring to the tape recorder] which is to me wonderful; they provide us with the minutes and if there is anything that is not right you take it up with them (Respondent # 14).



One of Tolko's committee members, who captured the sentiment of others, felt that there could be improvements with how the meetings were facilitated.

I think there could be an improvement in how the meetings are chaired and how the information is getting out. I agree that there are some strengths to having the meetings informal, but I think it could be tightened up a bit, the way it is run; that would be helpful (Respondent # 25).

4.3.3 Openness

Many respondents felt that openness contributed to their committees' success. Respondents identified three aspects: 1) the companies' openness to disclosing information; 2) the companies and committee members' willingness to listen to each other; and 3) the companies' acceptance of criticism. The following comments reflect these ideas.

I think the selection of people and also the openness of the company to accept the criticism and do whatever they can to make changes, whatever practical changes (Respondent # 12).

They are very open to, especially to the committee and I think the public at large. If you have a legitimate complaint you can go ask them questions, and I think that comes about because there is a SAC, if there wasn't a committee there would be no avenue to use (Respondent # 14).

It is the input of all of the stakeholders and Tembec willing to listen. Tembec goes out of their way to listen and they go out of their way to follow up on a lot of this stuff. They do not try to bulldoze their way; in fact I think they go too far sometimes (Respondent # 6).

4.3.4 Effective conflict management

A process strength that respondents thought contributed to the committees' success was their ability to manage conflict (i.e., addressing and solving forest



management and planning issues before they became significant problems). One respondent commented:

For me personally, wonderfully successful. I would hope Louisiana-Pacific thought so too because we put out a little smoke before they get forest fires (Respondent # 11).

The facilitator of Tolko's committee provided a detailed explanation as to why he felt his committee and the concept of an advisory committee were successful. He attributed the success to the fact that issues were addressed in a collective manner before they became significant problems. The respondent postulated that not having a committee could result in misunderstanding and conflict. An example of a controversial herbicide spraying program was used to demonstrate the value of advisory committees. In his opinion, the problem would have been rectified if such a committee were established before the herbicide program was implemented.

We had a committee before this SAC, a herbicide committee, back in the mid80s because of an issue that flared up and became political. We were doing a joint research project with the government on spraying some herbicides, and the local people got wind of it and thought it was going to be like insecticide spraying where we were going to be spraying all areas in Manitoba. There was a lot of emotion and misinformation, so we had a town hall meeting and it was just worse. So the government said we have to do something, so we decided to start up an advisory committee. At the first meeting their position was that we do not want spraying. So we said we would like to try find some common ground, so we had a lot of meetings and a lot of education and we went back to basic forestry 101 and tried to enlighten these people, and after a couple of years they agreed to see a herbicide research project started because we used to say herbicides are tested around the world and they are safe. So we got into a detailed research program and that is how we moved forward on that one. The research continued and we had meetings and showed the people the results of the research. It started in 1984 and ended in 1989 because we could not even get anyone to come out anymore – they had no concerns. So that is what kind of gave us impetus for this SAC. If we would have had this SAC that issue would have been addressed before going ahead with the herbicide program. These advisory committees do work (Respondent # 20).



4.3.5 Learning

An outcome strength of the committees was the amount of learning that occurred as a result of respondents' participation. Two primary themes emerged from the data regarding what committee members learned: 1) forest management and planning activities; and 2) the concerns, perspectives, values and local knowledge of committee members. Table 7 identifies the breadth of what members learned in relation to these themes, and notes the methods employed to facilitate learning of specific topics.



Table 7: Learning on advisory committees

Primary learning themes	Sub-themes	Public involvement techniques
Forest management and planning operations	Regulations and guidelines – licensing that governs the companies' activities, buffer guidelines, road and bridge building and decommissioning guidelines, and standard operating procedures	Handouts, power-point presentations, site-visits, discussions with government representatives that sit on the committees
	Planning – AOPs, short-term and long-term plans, certification, environmental management systems, and other public involvement techniques used by the companies in their planning activities (e.g., open houses, community meetings)	Handouts (AOPs), power-point presentations discussions (facilitated through questions and answers) maps
	Management – pre and post harvest surveys, reforestation, riparian management, and wildlife issues relating to forestry Harvesting techniques – clear cutting, two-pass harvest system, natural disturbance, etc.	Visuals (pictures) handouts power-point presentations site-visits discussions (facilitated through questions and answers)
Concerns, perspectives, values and local knowledge of committee members	Concerns of others – First Nations issues (burial grounds, areas of spiritual significance), trapping issues, fisheries concerns, ENGO perspectives, and private contractors' concerns Local knowledge of landscape Local knowledge of animal movements and habitat – feeding, breeding, spawning grounds, etc.	Discussions (facilitated through questions and answers) maps

Learning has recently become an important criterion used to evaluate the success of public participation exercises. Numerous respondents noted learning as one of their



main reasons for participating in the forum. Members commented that they wanted to learn about the forest management and planning activities of their sponsors and, consequently, inform their sponsors how their activities affect them. Respondents commented that the advisory committee structure itself was largely responsible for their learning due to the continual exchange of information, thus allowing for continuous and mutual learning. The following responses capture the essence of continuous and mutual learning that many alluded to during the interviews.

I think we convey to them our fears and things we would like to see and they are willing to listen. It is a good forum for exchanging information; this is where you learn; we learn their side and they learn our side (Respondent # 14).

I think it is continuous educating, you get people that are knowledgeable, people that are in the middle, and you get people that are on the committee and they do not understand, so it is a steady circle of learning and this is why it is successful - this continuous learning (Respondent # 10).

4.3.5.1 Forest management and planning operations

On all three committees, respondents noted how enlightened they became about the forest management and planning activities of their sponsors. The most surprising revelations for participants were the number of regulations that FPCs must follow at both the federal and provincial levels, the extent of planning that is required before the companies can start harvesting timber, and the many aspects of forest management FPCs conduct at the site-level, including harvesting techniques. The following comments illustrate what topics were discussed regarding forest management and planning and what committee members learned:



[I didn't know about] the massive amount of regulations that [forest products companies] have to follow. I think that was a shock; they cannot go in and do whatever they want. There are regulations galore before they can do anything. They have many levels of approvals before they can do anything. I think this is one of the big revelations about this [SAC], just the amount of regulations and paper work before they can do anything (Respondent # 9).

I guess the whole operation of the mill, surveying of the blocks and what is involved in that. Some of the bush operations and some of the machinery I have never seen before – learning the new ways they are conducting forestry – the planting, planning, etc. (Respondent # 10).

Clearcutting, tourism, recreational activities, wildlife, to an extent what they have to go through for road building. They put on a whole day tour for us up in Beaver Creek road, which was very educational and showed us actually what they were doing. We got a chance to get away from a formal meeting to do some chatting about what was happening, and most of it was explained very well, at least to me (Respondent # 8).

Natural disturbance is a big one; ones that have been raised are timing of cutting, buffer zones and insect invasions. The FSC certification has been a topic a far bit recently. One of the very interesting things with the FSC was...I was on the tour when they brought the people in; they were not aware that there was a difference between treaty hunting, fishing, trapping rights and commercial fur harvesting. So I felt I had very important input in easing up some of the requirements on the company for certification because the FSC was very gung ho (Respondent # 7).

Access, buffers, the amount of standing timber that is left, protected areas, volume harvested, amount of the watershed that can be harvested before there is an impact on stream yield, annual operating plans – all these things are components of the annual operating plan – that is a major part of the business of the SAC is to review and examine the maps and upcoming operations, and to get people to comment on anything they know about that area that might be a limitation to what can be done on the ground (Respondent # 12)

Learning was not limited to those members who knew relatively little about forest management and planning. Regulators and company personnel intimately involved with the operations were also learning. One committee member, who happened to be the former mill manager for one of the FPCs, claimed that the forestry staff were learning. The respondent commented that when he was obtaining his forestry degree at university



that there were no courses regarding how to involve the public or how to conduct public participation exercises, because the public did not play a role in forest management at the time. The respondent went on to suggest that because company staff were participating in these processes, they were learning how to deal with the social aspects of resource management, in particular public involvement, which he views as an inevitable component of forest management and planning now and into the future.

It is an education thing too for the forestry staff, especially the younger lads coming along. You do not get anything in school with regards to public relations, dealing with the public or writing reports or that crap, so you have to learn it on the job, so in that respect it is a good learning tool for the forestry staff. I think it has been effective from that point of view (Respondent # 18).

As well, an industry regulator, who was intimately involved with Tolko's operations, commented that "he had a better understanding of the day to day operations of the company and the roles and responsibilities within the company" (Respondent # 25) due to his participation on the committee.

4.3.5.2 Concerns, perspectives, values and local knowledge of committee members

The other theme regarding learning that emanated from the data related to the concerns, perspectives, values and local knowledge of committee members. Respondents commented that they were not only learning from company staff, but from and about other committee members, and that was important to them. Advisory committees appear to be a good form of public involvement for facilitating learning about other participants and their concerns. One committee member noted that, "I am learning about the other stakeholders and their concerns and issues, and it is a good opportunity for me to see the



issues and concerns of the other stakeholders. Where else would I have had the opportunity or chance?" (Respondent # 6). Other comments illustrating learning about the concerns of committee members included:

I was not aware of what the trappers' concerns were until I hear them at the meetings. You are learning what the other groups' concerns are too and how they present their concerns. So you learn not only logging or forestry procedures and new policies that are introduced, but you are learning about the other stakeholders' concerns and what they want and what they would like to see (Respondent # 14).

On the SAC, I am learning more from the stakeholders, not from Tolko. I am learning more from the TREE representative, the President of the Manitoba Trappers' Association (MTA), Keewatin Community College, Tribal Council representatives, the other stakeholders. We have the same cries, issues and concerns – that is what I am learning. The good feeling is that I am not by myself, I am not alone. We are a community and we come together all the time with the same cries (Respondent # 24).

In addition to developing a better understanding of the concerns of other committee members, numerous respondents felt that the forum facilitated the exchange of local knowledge regarding the landscape. A regulator, who participated on Tolko's committee, commented that what he was missing in his understanding of the company's operations was the knowledge of the landscape that locals possessed. The expertise he brought to the meetings, in conjunction with the local knowledge of other committee members, he felt enriched the discussions and learning experience for all participants. Furthermore, he claimed that the local knowledge he has acquired helps him perform his job more effectively.



In general terms, I understand the forest products industry. I know the business, but what I do not know is the site-specific factors that might affect or create greater impacts. A lot of the people that are at the table are trappers or guides, hunters and even local people that do a lot of hiking or have their favorite spots to go fishing – they know the site-specific things – so between their knowledge of the local terrain and my knowledge of the way industry works, I think it is a good mix (Respondent # 12).

Another example in which the exchange of local knowledge proved useful occurred as a result of a discussion at one of Tembec's committee meetings between the Manitoba Recreational Canoe Association (MRCA) representative and one of the company staff members. It was determined that it would be useful for the company to give a presentation to the MRCA about its forest management and planning activities, and to identify the most frequented canoe routes, drop-offs, and campsites. At the meeting, the company had a map of the rivers and lakes in its FMLA, and MRCA members indicated the most popular canoe routes and campsites. This activity was conducted to aid the company in determining cutblock locations in areas that would not be visible to canoeists who were concerned with the aesthetics along the most popular canoe routes. The meeting between MRCA and the company, which was facilitated through the SAC, was a success, according to the company, because it allowed them to obtain information from those who most frequented the areas. The company imported the information into a geographic information system (GIS), and the canoe routes are now a factor that the company takes into consideration when determining cutblock locations.

Another example of how local knowledge from committee members had been beneficial to one company was noted in meeting minutes. In Section 13 of LP's licence, it states that the company is to provide a response to Manitoba Conservation regarding its



present position and future directions in establishing priorities for baseline monitoring and forest ecosystem research. This report was found in the minutes. Regarding the committee and its operation, the report stated that:

Louisiana-Pacific has found the involvement of the SAC to be very beneficial. The SAC provides knowledge and raises concerns and issues at both local and provincial levels, and for our proposed plans and management activities. Meetings were held with the SAC to discuss our activities, as well as provide valuable input into our 1997/1998 Annual Operating Plan. A SAC member provided the company with knowledge of the location of a rare plant species near a proposed route. The member also suggested an alternative route that would bypass the area. Local knowledge provided by the SAC is invaluable to Louisiana Pacific's forest management planning process.

Through the acquisition of this new knowledge, there was often a change in the learner in their perspective and behaviour. Respondents on all committees asserted that by being exposed to the forest management and planning activities and other committee members' concerns, they became more empathetic and willing to accommodate others' concerns when decisions were made. Many respondents noted the change in behaviour and perspectives of other committee members and themselves.

I am sure there is an improvement among the SAC members as it has evolved because listening to the trapper I have more empathy for his concerns, and the native lady I have more empathy for her concerns. By hearing their concerns and articulating their facts, I have much more empathy for their concerns and I realize they are all legitimate. I am assuming that we have all learned from one another. I know the trapper talking about the pine martin and some of the problems that it created for him. I never thought of half of those issues; some have learned to respect that we have different opinions and again that the forest is for many users and many users who have no voice like the pine martin and the otters (Respondent # 11).

We have different topics that we are concerned with and I would say we are accepting each other's opinions and each other's concerns, and if you have a concern I will back you up on it because you are part of the group. If you think a Mountain Ash tree should not be cut down...as a commercial trapper or fisheries person an ash tree does not mean much to me, but it means a lot to whoever is trying to preserve it (Respondent # 13).



I think there has been a definite growth in acceptance over a period of time through the fact that people have had their interests and their positions listened too, but are also willing to discuss what other people's thoughts and interests are and how it intertwined with somebody else's. They look at it in their own little world, but how does it affect everything else, so you maybe want this, but in the end you are willing to accept less because that may not be good for someone else. That has been a steady process – I think it has been a credit to the people involved (Respondent # 15).

One of Tembec's committee members provided a detailed account of how participating on the SFMAC had affected all aspects of his life. The respondent noted that throughout his life he spent most of his time in the forest because of his occupation and did not converse with many people. The respondent noted how uncomfortable he was in crowds because of his level of education, and he found it difficult to convey his feelings and perspectives to others. When he first agreed to participate ~~on the committee~~, he said that he was very quiet. After a few meetings, he became more comfortable and began to participate in discussions more frequently. He noticed that his ability to communicate with others improved through practice and, consequently, he became more confident in his abilities.

4.3.6 Committee members' optimism about advisory committee processes

When respondents were asked whether they viewed the concept of an advisory committee as an effective method of public involvement in forest management and planning, 72 per cent of respondents felt that they were effective. 20 per cent of respondents felt that advisory committees were partly or somewhat effective at involving the public, leaving only 12 per cent feeling that they were not a good vehicle.



Those who were optimistic about the advisory committee approach had various reasons. The most common response was that these types of committees are one of very few methods of involvement that allow for a diversity of stakeholders to discuss and solve forest management and planning issues in a collective manner and on an on-going basis. The following quotes capture the above sentiment.

It is bringing everybody's input into the one organization. You can have too much conflict if you do not sit down together and try make something out of it (Respondent # 6).

If there wasn't a committee most of the individuals that you can reach with a committee would not get involved – it is bringing people together (Respondent # 8).

I think it is an important vehicle because it is a way for different stakeholders to meet with one another and company officials and find out areas of agreement and disagreement and I think that has to happen (Respondent # 4).

I think it is pretty effective. There are many different forums that you can use and [Louisiana-Pacific] uses them as well like open houses and those sorts of things. I think to be able to get the majority of the individuals who really have a vested interest in the area where they are working and living it is a really effective way of getting things resolved and out to the people too as to what [the company] is doing. They are a good communications tool (Respondent # 15).

Respondents also noted that an advisory committee can be an effective method of public involvement due to the high level of involvement the forum affords participants.

I think that when you invite the public to be an active participant you are doing a little bit more than just presenting something to them for their information. It takes only those who feel it is important enough to invest the time to participate and learn, who are going to be there and be active and you have to hope that those people would be there or people would get the sense that no one cares about what the company is doing. The concept of a SAC of... a public exchange is good (Respondent # 23).

A member on Tolko's committee held similar views as the above respondent. The committee member postulated that the effectiveness of the forum is due to members



being actively involved in the exercise rather than just passively involved like many conventional methods used in the forestry sector such as open houses and community meetings.

Actually, the SAC is one of the most direct ways of involving the public, even more so than anything like newspaper stories, or articles because you actually have people like trappers and lodge operators sitting across the table from you and listening to what you have to say and presumably you are listening to what they have to say about their concerns and often the two of them blend together very well. But before these committees no one knew they did (Respondent # 18).

Although numerous respondents felt that advisory committees were an effective method of public involvement in forest management and planning, it is important to note, as the facilitator of LP's committee commented, these forums allow for the involvement of only a limited group of individuals. Therefore, advisory committees should be used in conjunction with other public involvement methods in order to engage all potentially affected and interested individuals.

The SAC is an effective method for public involvement, but do not fall in the trap of relying on it as your only method of public involvement. It is a good tool for involving the local people, but you are not addressing the whole public. In Manitoba, half of the population lives in Winnipeg, the SAC does not exactly address the Winnipeg issues. There is a fly-fishing group based out of Winnipeg that told me that if we are ever there on a Tuesday night we have an open invitation to give a presentation on stream buffers. A vehicle for keeping the local people informed it is excellent, but it should be one prong of a many pronged approach (Respondent # 16).

4.3.7 Relationship-building

The openness of the committees and FPCs facilitated another outcome strength that was less obvious to respondents – relationship-building. Some respondents



described the forum as a fantastic opportunity for relationship-building and, consequently, had fostered trust between the companies and their respective committees and among committee members. This was largely due to the forum facilitating open and continuous two-way dialogue, and also the openness of committee members and FPCs to learn about others' perspectives, concerns and values. As a result, trust and relationships were built, and committee members became more empathetic and willing to listen and accommodate the concerns of others when decisions were being made. As one facilitator commented,

Yes – from the standpoint of relationship building. While I have already established some of the limitations. But as a vehicle for relationship-building and building understanding it seems to be working out (Respondent # 2).

A committee member commented,

I think it has been successful in certain areas; in terms of creating a better understanding and a level of trust between members that sit around the table, and it has facilitated communication among stakeholder groups, so there are several positive outcomes (Respondent # 17).

One facilitator clearly articulated why he attributed the success of his committee to the concept of openness and relationship-building, and noted the positive results it produced.

They are very open; they are not afraid to bring issues to us; they are friendly; they talk to us; they are very open and trusting. I think there has been some good relationship-building over the years. There is greater awareness of the company as to what their needs are as a user of the forest and vice versa. It has been a mutually beneficial process. We are getting better planning because of it; we are getting a better appreciation of each other's needs, and that is beneficial (Respondent # 16).



4.3.8 Ability to influence site-specific forest management and planning decisions

70 per cent of respondents felt they were influencing decisions to a certain extent, which was a strength of the process, although they still wanted a greater role. However, when asked to provide an example of when the committees' influenced a decision, a specific example could rarely be provided by committee members. Furthermore, there was contradicting evidence within interviews where respondents noted in different questions that in general, they felt they had influenced decisions, and in other instances, they felt they had not. Even the committees' facilitators, two of whom were company staff, had trouble indicating if and how their respective committees influenced decisions.

As far as decision-making is concerned, I do not think we see much to suggest that it has been much of a player in decision-making. Some of the things it offers up will have an influence on decisions, no question about that, but you would have a hell of a time in establishing some of those direct linkages (Respondent # 2).

From the interviews and observation at committee meetings, the decisions influenced by the committees had been largely site-specific in nature such as affecting the placement of roads, buffers, bridges and location of cutblocks. Respondents noted their ability to influence such decisions as an outcome strength of the advisory committee process:

I think comments that SAC members provide regarding their concerns have resulted in changes to Tolko's forest management decisions at the site-level. For example, the impacts on potential trapping, I recall with respect to a road closure in an area that was going to affect a trapper's access to an area and his traplines, and they left the road open for him so he could gain access to the area and his traplines; so yes it does (Respondent # 25).



We have been pushing for more fire fighting and we are burning our forests faster than we are using them, that was a big issue through the SAC. They have a section now that is more involved in handling fires and assisting with the provincial fire protection and fire fighting; this is one area where we pushed and it seemed to affect their decision (Respondent # 22).

I think when it comes down to the cutting areas we do. When the company does the proposals for its cutting blocks I think the SAC committee has lots input on that in terms of where they cut. I remember this one in the Bell Canyon, we had quite a discussion about cutting in this area and the SAC had some concerns about where they were cutting, so I think the area was changed to accommodate the SAC's concerns (Respondent # 10).

Yes. I see a lot of little specifics. Things like salt licks occur all over the forest area, those are not always visible at particular times of the year, and when they are doing their work out in the bush they may not see some of these, so there again they are altering on the basis of what they hear from the people that are out in the bush on a daily basis working or making their living. The company is basically taking their word that this is fact. So they are basically relying on the word of the people that are at the table there, so full cutblocks have moved in their plans from one place to another. Buffer zones are adjusted, sometimes they will try to skimp in certain areas. I can imagine using my own mind there are certain areas that have a lot of rich forest and they would like to shrink those down a bit and that is something that comes up a lot. It is important to most of the people around the table to keep to those standard buffer zones and if they are cutting them down there is always a pretty good discussion as to why they are doing that and what the effect is. We do definitely affect their decisions (Respondent # 15).

4.4 Weaknesses

There were many weaknesses with regard to the committees and their operations.

The following section describes the key weakness themes identified by committee members: 1) insufficient breadth of involvement; 2) lack of Aboriginal involvement; 3) poor attendance; 4) representation problems; 5) membership changes; 6) complexity of language (terminology); 7) infrequent meetings; 8) inadequate involvement in forest management and planning decisions; and 9) issues surrounding time.



4.4.1 Insufficient breadth of involvement

While the concept of an advisory committee is seen as a form of public involvement, there has been little empirical research to indicate whether advisory committees could be used as a vehicle to foster broader involvement. This study explored the opportunity for advisory committees in the forestry sector to act in such a capacity.

The three committees in this study were being used as a form of public involvement largely in and of themselves and rarely attempted to facilitate broader involvement. Some of Tolko's committee meetings, however, were held in different areas of the FMLA and were open to the general public to solicit communities' concerns. These meetings were advertised and had very good participation from individuals in the communities. On November 25, 1997, for example, Tolko held a committee meeting in Thompson, Manitoba. A total of 11 committee members were present and 22 local citizens participated in the meeting. There was a good cross-section of individuals including trappers, snowmobile clubs, First Nations communities, and provincial government employees. The minutes indicated that there were many questions from non-members. The meeting opened the lines of communication between the company and user groups that the company had traditionally not worked with. For example, an individual from a snowmobile club advised the company that they were planning for a new snowmobile trail to a local lake, and that they would like to be informed by the company about its cutting plans in the area so they could plan for an alternate route if necessary. However, unfortunately, only a few meeting were held in different locations.



Conversely, committee members were afforded the opportunity to become involved in other public involvement activities of their sponsors such as attending open houses and participating in meetings between selected stakeholder groups and the companies. On Tembec's committee, for example, committee members were even encouraged to participate in a two-day pre-scoping audit for the company's certification process.

When the facilitators were asked whether the general public was allowed to sit in on committee meetings, one facilitator was puzzled and responded, "I do not know; I have not come across that." While all facilitators were not averse to the idea of making information at the meetings available to the general public or having the public participate in meetings, there was little effort to engage the public with the activities of the committees. Tolko's FRAC decided, however, that one role of the committee should be to try to facilitate broader involvement through the committee. As a result, the FRAC created a communications sub-committee that consisted of volunteer FRAC members and company staff. The sub-committee met independently and fed information to the FRAC for its input. The committee was developed to assist Tolko with improving its communication with directly affected interests, assist the company with its public involvement activities, and to ensure that communication on the FRAC was adequate. Many members noted the utility of the sub-committee. The minutes indicated that the committee aided the company in facilitating a greater number of community contacts for its 1999 annual harvest plan and increased the company's mailing list substantially. Furthermore, the sub-committee was responsible for initiating the FRAC newsletter, which was to create awareness of the activities of the committee and company, and to



inform communities how to participate in the activities of the company and committee (Appendix 9). The newsletter, unfortunately, was a short-lived exercise, and the sub-committee has not been active during the last two years. Inadequate funding by the company, and the arms-length nature of the sub-committee, according to one respondent, appeared to threaten the sponsor (Respondent # 21).

In terms of the other committees, the extent of their efforts to facilitate broader public involvement was limited to sending a copy of meeting minutes to the local newspapers, which most often resulted in nothing being published. Given the lack of activity regarding broader public involvement, participants were encouraged to think about how the committees might facilitate broader involvement. Respondents developed some very interesting ideas, as outlined in Table 8. Nonetheless, most respondents were puzzled by the question because they never thought of SACs acting in such a capacity. Furthermore, a few respondents felt this was not the role of advisory committees. For example, one respondent commented that his committee in essence would be doing the job of the government or company if its mandate was to try to engage the broader public. One company staff member was also adamantly opposed to his company's committee acting in such a capacity, yet when asked why, he did not have a specific reason.

One of the ways noted by respondents to facilitate broader involvement through the committees was through the representatives. Respondents felt that mechanisms needed to be in place to ensure members were in regular contact with their organizations. Members felt that the committees should develop questionnaires for members' constituents to find out their concerns and values, and that the FPCs should periodically help members disseminate information to their organizations.



Table 8: Methods to facilitate broader involvement in forest management and planning through advisory committees

Methods
Ensure that all committee members represent an interest/organization on the committee.
Individually call and speak to other locals in the community – make them aware of the operations of the committee and the company – invite them to participate in a committee meeting.
Have the advisory committee and company sponsor a public workshop on forestry in the community where the company operates. Educate the community about SFM, the role of the advisory committee and solicit more participation.
Have a mechanism to ensure that all committee members are taking the issues back to their constituents, and that the issues of their constituents are being brought to committee meetings.
Have a rotating advisory committee seat for any individual(s)/interest(s) that want to participate – advertise that such a seat is available.
FPCs should help members convey information dealt with at committee meetings to organizations that the members represent.
The committee and company should advertise and invite the general public on field tours.
The committee should make a few committee meetings a year open to the general public.
The committees should develop newsletters and write columns in local newspapers – write a synopsis of what occurred at committee meetings.
Educate new members through full-day workshops so they can more effectively inform their constituents about the activities of the company and how it affects their interests.
Change the locations of meetings within the FMLA, and invite locals to participate and voice their concerns during meetings.
Use local radio and television stations to create awareness of the company and committee's activities.
Review representative list periodically among members to see who else should be contacted to participate on the committee.
The committee should develop a questionnaire for the local communities and committee members' constituents in order to find out their concerns and values.
Have advisory committees serve as an integral component of resource and co-management boards.
Hire a public relations specialist to help disseminate information about the committee and company's activities.
In Tolko's case, use its liaison forester to educate organizations about the company and the committee and solicit more participation.
Have a meeting every few years of the advisory committees of the three FPCs operating in the province to share ideas and collectively solve problems that burden the FPCs in the province.



4.4.2 Lack of Aboriginal involvement

Conventional methods of public involvement are often inadequate when attempting to engage Aboriginal people. Advisory committees are no exception. In the context of this study, attendance of Aboriginals at meetings had been inconsistent at best, with non-participation the norm. Respondents expressed their feelings as to why Aboriginals were reluctant to participate. The most commonly noted reason across all committees was that:

First Nations [involvement] has been a disappointment. Originally they all agreed to be part of the advisory committee, but very shortly afterwards...I think the minutes from one of the meetings will show it...they came almost as a group...I think there was Little Black, Hollow Water, and I think Sakeenge was there...and they basically came forward with the point that we are not stakeholders; we are government and do not want to sit on a stakeholder group – we want to be treated independently (Respondent # 1).

There are some people that choose not to come like the First Nations groups, they do not come because they say they are not a stakeholder they are a unique government –that is fine. I have seen meetings where there were First Nations individuals there and the other SAC members tended to beat up on them on specific issues like unregulated hunting, it really detracts from the meeting and it gets almost nasty (Respondent # 16).

As a result, many committee members, and in particular forest company staff and the facilitators, questioned whether advisory committees were the proper vehicle to engage Aboriginal people and their organizations. A few respondents commented on ways they thought Aboriginal people could be engaged in FPCs' activities. One facilitator suggested,

There is the whole First Nations side, maybe a SAC is not the way to deal with First Nations, maybe you need a separate First Nations SAC (Respondent # 16).



A government regulator of the industry held a similar view as the above respondent with respect to having a separate process, but advocated the importance of eventually getting all interested and affected individuals planning for the landscape collectively. This respondent noted that one of the problems with past landscape planning and management was that individuals/groups were managing and planning for the landscape in processes independent of each other. The results had often been misunderstanding and conflict.

We have found it difficult to get [First Nations] to sit around the SAC. They are not stakeholders, they are First Nations people, you and I are stakeholders, they are not stakeholders, so you have to be careful, so there almost has to be a separate process and yet over time you have to bring the two together to work together because you cannot have a SAC here and a SAC there or these people and those people (Respondent # 3).

Notwithstanding the apparent problems of using advisory committees as a method to engage Aboriginal people, a First Nations respondent was optimistic about the use of such approaches. He understood why some Aboriginal communities were reluctant to participate in these processes, and alluded to poor past relationships with resource sector companies and governments as responsible for their reluctance. The respondent commented that he views advisory committees as an opportunity to foster greater understanding of the concerns, values and interests of all resource users, and thereby helping build trust, working relationships, and opportunities to manage the land base in a collective manner. He advocated that to ensure the sustainability of the land base, it is no longer feasible to have resource users and managers planning and managing resources in independent processes. The respondent postulated that the broad range of interests that constitute an advisory committee could be a vehicle for more effective, efficient and



accepted resource-management decisions. However, for the committees to work with Aboriginals, and in particular his community, he commented that it would be useful if,

The FRAC committee could come to [my community] for one meeting and we would be the head table and we could go through the issues, or Tolko could be telling some of its concerns and issues and what they want to bring out to the FRAC, and then there could be time for the resource users to ask their questions and concerns (Respondent # 24).

In his opinion, the effort brought forward by the committee would help develop trust and foster better working relationships in the future between Tolko and his community. The respondent reiterated the consequences of having First Nations people plan on their own and the misunderstanding it would breed regarding how his people value the land and the traditional knowledge they possess. This is one method he claims that could integrate conventional western science with traditional ecological knowledge and, therefore, provide some balance in decisions that all resource users would regard as legitimate.

4.4.3 Poor attendance

Attendance was an issue with all committees. Many respondents noted inadequate attendance at meetings as a significant weakness.

The stakeholder list is quite large, and I have not seen nearly the number of people that are on the list. There are a lot of no shows and it might take over one year before everybody has seen everybody around the table (Respondent # 23).

Poor attendance resulted in a lack of diversity within the group, therefore, affecting the quality of input, the quality of meetings, and the learning experience for participants. Respondents identified three possible reasons for inconsistent attendance: 1)



distance; 2) daily stresses in people's lives and other commitments; and 3) respondents feeling they were not influencing the decisions of their sponsors. Since the third reason is an outcome weakness, it is addressed later in the chapter.

Many committee members suggested that distance was a problem that affected attendance at committee meetings. Many noted that their sponsors' FMLAs were so large that the length of time it took members to travel to meetings could possibly be a contributing factor to poor attendance.

Because some of the members are from Dauphin, Riding Mountain National Park, some are from Ethelbert and to drive in here in the middle of winter for a meeting at 6:00 pm and then drive home in the middle of the night and there is a storm...so distance is a problem, time and knowledge are problems (Respondent # 17).

We have a very vast area and it costs lots of money to move around. It is hard to have involvement from all stakeholders in the FMLA because we have to travel such a far distance (Respondent # 22).

Another factor that respondents claimed might have precluded committee members from being able to fully dedicate themselves to their respective committees was other commitments. Many of the respondents already participate in other activities and organizations. For example, on Tembec's committee, at least six members are actively involved with the Model Forest Program, represent another organization on the advisory committee, and participate on the SAC. Furthermore, committee members have families, and a few respondents claimed that they were too busy to adequately review materials or attend meetings.



I do not think there is sufficient time and that is not necessarily LP's problem, it is perhaps more my problem because they certainly give us the data. We can take the annual operating plan home and read them over. Having said that, I also have a job, family and other interests. I coach and I am on the other committee. So I do not think I personally do enough away from the meetings (Respondent # 11).

4.4.4 Representation problems

There are two common problems noted in the literature regarding advisory committees and their representatives. First, it is often difficult to capture and represent all interests on a single committee. Second, when an advisory committee becomes educated about the issues of the sponsor, often the group can become elitist and unrepresentative of the organization(s) they represent (Smith 2000). Although the data did not support these assertions, the respondents had other unanswered questions with respect to their fellow members. First, were the committee members informing their respective organizations about the content of committee meetings and taking their issues back to the committees? Second, did the committee members accurately represent their respective constituents? Third, were the members chosen to sit on the committees the best persons to convey the information? One respondent commented:

I think one of the things the SAC falls down in is...does that person really represent their organization, does the information ever get back to their organization. I guess a good example is the MRCA where [the representative] said I cannot communicate all of this to my organization, will you help me. Now everyone that came to that meeting with the MRCA heard it and there will be a big announcement to the association about this planning. I think there may be some, but there is no communication back to the people they represent (Respondent # 1).



On Tolko's committee, one of the respondents asserted that a major weakness of the committee was that none of the information was ever brought back to the member organizations.

On Tolko's committee, people participate and go home and nothing was ever transmitted to anybody. I think that is one of the biggest underlying problems with the committee (Respondent # 19).

When respondents were asked whether they communicate to the organizations they represent about the progress and concerns of the advisory committees, and whether they take the concerns of their organizations back to the committees, many of the respondents did not. One respondent commented:

No I do not; not for any particular reason, one is that it does not come up. We have an annual meeting with the cottage owners on the lake, and I chair it and that has never been an issue. Having said that, once a year we get all the cottage owner groups of the whole mountain together and we talk about strategies for the mountain as a whole. I should be taking back to my cottage owners and saying for those of you that do not know I am on LP's advisory committee, are there any concerns you guys have that you would like me to take to LP? – it is an obvious (Respondent # 11).

This was not the only individual who had overlooked the importance of informing his constituents that he sits on an advisory committee, and that he was speaking on behalf of the group/organization. The following quote parallels the above sentiment.

There are so many different organizations that sit on there. I do not think the information gets out and the people do not know. For example, there is a Manitoba Trappers' Association representative on the committee, and we got a person that is a trapper in the area and she had lots of concerns, and she did not know that there was a representative on the advisory committee. The information kind of stops here (Respondent # 10).

There were some respondents on all three committees, however, who passively interacted with their member organizations. More frequently than not, it was simply the distribution



of meeting minutes. Some respondents were content that the information contained in the minutes was sufficient. A respondent on Tembec's committee suggested:

I have not been asked to report on what the SAC has been doing, primarily because the SAC sends a copy of the minutes. So the board gets a copy of the minutes fairly regularly and they know what is happening. And if they had any questions they could ask and somebody there would answer them. So I guess the minutes are fairly clear as to what is and is not happening (Respondent # 15).

After reviewing the minutes of all the committees, it became apparent that those who were not present at committee meetings would not be able to understand the material through the minutes in great detail. For the first few meetings, all three committees had verbatim transcription of the minutes and those probably would have been sufficient, but shortly thereafter, the minutes were less detailed and inadequate for the purpose of conveying information.

In addition to those members who passively provided material to their organizations, other committee members felt more inclined to engage in discussion with their organizations about the matters discussed at meetings. Often it was those directly affected by the FPCs or regulators of the industry who took a more vigilant role in engaging in discussions with superiors and colleagues about the committees' information.

4.4.5 Membership Changes

A process weakness on all committees was the constant change of members. Membership changes slowed the progress of the committees and introduced a steep learning curve for new members to catch up on issues that had been discussed. One committee member articulated this view clearly:



I think weaknesses are probably mostly to do with the representatives themselves...the changes that take place around the table...both on the industry side and on the government side, as well as the interest groups and so forth. Everybody seems to be changing their representatives, so there is always a certain amount of time taken for people to get up to speed on what we are discussing, where we are at and what we have discussed in the past and things, but there is nothing much you can do about it. Conservation changes its people fairly frequently and the same with the company and Aboriginal communities that work on elections (Respondent # 15).

One respondent on LP's committee commented how overwhelmed she was when she began attending committee meetings:

I think if you are new on the committee...when I first went there I was lost and it was a heavy burden on me because I did not understand half of the words they were talking about, so for new people it is just too much (Respondent # 10).

After an interview with one of the individuals who noted the above problem, I asked whether a forestry primer would have been of use to her at the outset. The respondent indicated that such a manual would have been very helpful considering she had no knowledge about forestry. We both brainstormed some topics that we felt should be addressed in such a manual. The selection of topics included: why and how the committee evolved; purpose and role of the committee (Terms of Reference); an introduction of the interests/organizations that committee members represent and their concerns regarding forestry; a list of important forestry terminology and concepts (e.g., SFM, ecosystem-based management, natural disturbance); a list of main tree species in the boreal forest with information regarding the environmental conditions required for each species; and an overview of wildlife and fishery issues as they relate to forestry. We also agreed that pictures should be used. The respondent felt that such a manual would have been helpful to her when she first joined her committee because in her



opinion it would have allowed her to contribute more meaningfully at committee meetings earlier in the process.

One other respondent that also noted the above problem suggested that his committee adopt a similar approach as the Manitoba Model Forest in regard to educating new members. He claimed that the all-day workshop that the Model Forest conducts for new board members was an excellent way to inform new members about forests and forest management and planning. The respondent suggested that educating new board members prior to participating in meetings affords them the opportunity to become actively engaged in the exercise shortly after joining.

4.4.6 Complexity of language (terminology)

The literature suggests that lack of knowledge is a barrier that significantly hampers one's ability to effectively participate in public involvement exercises. For many years, FPCs' justification for unilaterally making decisions was due to the public being perceived as apathetic and unknowledgeable about forest management and planning (Magill 1991; McMullin and Nielsen 1991). Advisory committees were conceived as a method to combat the knowledge problem by affording participants a high level of involvement and providing them with an opportunity to become continuously educated about the issues. The participants in this study, however, commented that the information presented to review was difficult to comprehend and this affected their ability to provide informed input. The company staff also identified this as a problem on the committees.



People still do not know the science, so to take somebody from the Canoe Association or somebody from the Métis Association, or somebody from anywhere...the forest ecosystem is so complex, to have people understand the functions of the ecosystem and why they do such things is a hard one to get across...autecology of trees, etc. Until you fully understand, you do not fully understand why you are doing things (Respondent # 1).

Although the material was indeed scientific and technical, other factors were identified by respondents that affected members' abilities to comprehend the material. For example, the use of forestry jargon and language were commonly noted as problems by respondents.

Sometimes the words get a little bit big. They should watch a little bit in there and consider who is sitting there. You can get your education in university and you get all kinds of words that we do not see at my level. You have to kind of drop down your vocabulary when you are talking to a general audience; not everyone in there has a university degree (Respondent # 6).

A member on Tolko's committee mentioned:

I needed to know forest speak. If I would have learned forest speak in the beginning I would have been much better off, it was a big hurdle. To know the acronyms and the slang about the mill; I did not know what a header box is, I could see some box on some guy's forehead (Respondent # 21).

Despite the above problems, when asked if there was sufficient information, and if there was an attempt to present information in a manner that everyone could understand, most respondents answered affirmatively on both questions.

I feel they are quite open in providing information and there is definitely enough of it (Respondent # 8).

Conversely, a few respondents commented that they felt their sponsors were withholding information, and that there was a substantial gap in terms of the information that was available to the companies and the information that was available to the committees.



I think there is a gap in terms of what I know and what the decision-makers know, so I never feel totally confident that I can question LP with any firmness of conviction. There are always other factors that go into decisions that we are not aware of, so no, unless I was an employee of LP with all the information they have then I can make the decisions too. So we are always kind of in the dark partially (Respondent # 17).

There are a lot of uniformed decisions coming out of that committee and of course the company is coming to the table and directing the decisions as best they can. They narrow the information; the information is given out very selectively so you do not hear any of the bad stuff that is going on; it is well cleansed before it gets to the table and the company sanitizes everything (Respondent # 21).

All the above problems resulted in committee members not being able to provide informed input nor question critically the content of the material.

4.4.7 Infrequent meetings

A process weakness that respondents explicitly noted as hampering their ability to learn and retain information was the length of time between meetings. The infrequency of meetings posed a large problem for participants who were not in the industry or familiar with forest management and planning. The following responses capture the above problem:

[One of] my concerns is that there is a big rush for the SAC to all be there for months prior to submitting the plan and then after the plan is submitted from February on there is nothing, and next meeting is scheduled for September. You get lost on what is happening and you forget (Respondent # 10).

It is a one day session a couple times a year and it is tough to maintain your momentum on certain things that are talked about. It would actually be good if the time that you took to review or learn about this certain topics or issues could be revisited in e-mail form or some type of form a week later with a bit of a consensus from the group rather than three or four months down the road when you try to go back to it (Respondent # 23).



The respondent in the preceding quote identified methods to alleviate the gap between meetings. He felt that it would be useful to provide participants with small tasks that would be discussed at a following meeting. For example, he suggested that it might be useful to have each member present something about their respective organizations, or have phone or conference calls at certain times for members to discuss their concerns. Furthermore, for computer-literate members, there could be an advisory committee webpage with online chat capabilities, or a webboard so members could discuss issues through a different medium. Employing a variety of these methods could help members retain information provided at meetings and thus stimulate discourse among members.

4.4.8 Inadequate involvement in forest management and planning decisions

To develop a better understanding of the role of advisory committees in forest management and planning, it was of paramount importance to explore the involvement of the committees in decision-making. It was well established by respondents that a major outcome weakness of the committees was their inability to participate in and influence decisions.

One factor that contributed to this problem was the ambiguity surrounding the process of decision-making on the committees. When the question was posed to respondents regarding how decision-making was structured on their committees, there were several responses. Some respondents explicitly indicated that no decisions were made by their committees or at committee meetings; others felt the decision-making process was ill-defined; some thought the decision-making process was through informal



consensus; and others felt it was simply information-sharing with the hope that their input would be reflected in forest management and planning decisions. A few comments are provided below to illustrate this ambiguity.

Decisions on the SAC are unclear in my mind; it is not very structured at all. The SAC makes decisions from time to time but not in any real structured way. The SAC often just reviews or is made aware of an issues and no decision-making is necessary (Respondent # 25).

It is basically just discussion and consensus. We do not do official votes or counting votes of who is in favor and who is against type of thing. It is more a discussion forum and it seems like if there is any one group that is voicing any real serious reservations about a certain plan then the company will go and take another look at it and come back with something altered that they can present to be acceptable and that is the way it goes (Respondent # 15).

When trying to determine the participants' feelings about whether they were influencing their sponsors' decisions, responses were mixed. The interviewees who felt they were not influencing decisions perceived the exercise as ineffective, and noted their inability to influence decisions as a major weakness. Consequently, these respondents were not taking the exercise very seriously and resulted in their absence at numerous meetings. Seven respondents (28%) reiterated throughout the interviews that one of the weaknesses of their respective committees was the groups' inability to influence decisions. The anger and frustration of respondents emanated during the interviews.

I was not impressed with what was happening. It was just token involvement. There was no real effect made by the committee on...if there was opposition to an issue shown, it made no difference from what the company was going to do and their strategies (Respondent # 19).

I think most decisions are made before they are brought up for review at SAC meetings. There are so many people involved. I think they put the government and the company at the top...there is a whole bunch of layers they go through before they get to us, and by the time they get to us the decisions are 99% made (Respondent # 9).



First of all, decisions about LP's operations are not made at the SAC. We may make suggestions or question decisions that LP has made. The only decisions that I have seen made by the committee are decisions relating to letters of support that the committee itself will produce in support of something LP is doing. As far as LP's management decisions, they are made by LP staff as far as I can see and we are informed of those decisions and we are able to question what went into those decisions, but we have not had much affect in changing those decisions (Respondent # 17).

The success might only come in the fact that the committee members are only being educated. In terms of influencing, directing or recommending to the company on how they do things I do not think...if that was the goal of the committee, I do not think it has gotten that far – I do not think it has been successful. But the people on the committee being educated I believe that has happened – I consider that successful (Respondent # 23).

Our issues and concerns are not getting addressed. Our issues are being heard and certain parts of what we say are being utilized, but they are hand picked by the company and it is not really what the FRAC said. There are so many more important things that the company gets to choose; I just see it as manipulation (Respondent # 24).

Another example of how a committee was unable to influence its sponsor's decisions was found in Tolko's minutes. The FRAC was reviewing Tolko's Environmental Licence for its 1997-2009 Forest Management Plan. The company wanted to appeal a clause in the licence because it restricted winter access to an area and the company wanted all-weather access. The committee indicated its displeasure with the company in wanting to appeal the clause. Several reasons were provided and substantiated by committee members. For example, the committee member representing the community where the proposed activities were to take place indicated that, "The people of Waterhen do not want year-round access and hence, I cannot not support Tolko's appeal." The Manitoba Wildlife Federation representative noted that, "The reintroduction of the bison herd by the Waterhen people is impressive, and on behalf of the Manitoba Wildlife Federation, I cannot support this appeal." A representative of the



Manitoba Trappers' Association also opposed the appeal for the following reason: "There is already enough all-weather access in the north and I will not support all-weather access." Despite all the concerns of committee members, the company appealed the clause. However, it was only after a member asked at a subsequent meeting that the company openly told the committee that it still appealed the clause.

If the companies are not responsive to the concerns of their respective committees and willing to compromise, individuals will not participate and will likely perceive this form of involvement as no different than other forms they have participated in that have produced meager results. One respondent on Tolko's committee noted that because the company did not adequately address his concerns, he had not attended a committee meeting in the last two years.

I certainly wanted to bring the concerns of the wildrice industry to them and I think we did that for the most part, but they did not do anything. Even with the buffer zones of 300 meters it still affects our area. I was bringing the concerns from people in our industry and a lot of it was environmental and spraying, and I could have sat there and argued, and in fact at one point I had drawn up a letter by the organic inspectors actually saying if Tolko continued to spray these chemicals in this manner we would not be eligible for certification, but it didn't make any difference – Tolko is still spraying (Respondent # 19).

There were two possible reasons for respondents feeling they were not affecting decisions, or being unable to provide specific examples. First, the companies were not actually responsive to the concerns of committee members and, therefore, did not consider the committees' input. Second, the companies were not indicating to their committees how they used and considered their input. This would have helped show the utility of the committees. When respondents were asked if their sponsors indicated how



committees' input was considered and used, many respondents could not provide an example of when that had happened.

At certain times yes, but very rare, but it does not stand out. We still go there scratching our heads and saying I wonder what advice they are going to use from me. It is always a surprise, we do not know what they are using and what they are not, it is just a way to say [the company] is consulting with the stakeholders and we are using their information, but the company is not. The only way it will be properly used is when the committee has a say in planning and decision-making (Respondent # 24).

A company staff member on one of the committees commented that neither the company nor the facilitator ever indicated to the group how its input was considered and used.

I cannot think of an example where that has happened, so no we haven't and I am thinking if it had happened maybe I would not do as good a job of it. That is a good things to keep in mind for the future (Respondent # 1).

The facilitator of Tembec's committee mentioned that it has to be done more often on the committee; otherwise, people start to feel that the exercise is just token involvement.

Not as much as I would like the company to. That is an important part of the process in my mind, just to keep going back to some of the important topics i.e., road management, riparian management, natural disturbance, public involvement, these are topics that have come up at previous meetings and the company certainly got some good input and perspectives from the advisory committee. I know some of it has definitely been considered, but now we have to take the loop and come back and say, what is happening, what are the status of things in regard to this type of stuff (Respondent # 2).

While issues relating to participation in decision-making applied to all three committees, LP had taken some steps to show the group how its input was being considered and used in decision-making. Committee members appreciated this information because it allowed them to see how they were affecting the decisions of



their sponsor. Some of the responses by LP's committee members included:

The company does its ground work and they lay out the maps and they bring it to our meetings as "this is what we found and this is what we are proposing and planning" "do you see problems with it?" "do you see things that are not going to work that we are not seeing from our side?" Then it is a matter of everybody with their perspective in the thing taking a look at it. So it is basically them presenting a plan and the group all takes a look at it from their own focus and says what is good and what is not good, and they have taken the plan back and forth five to six times before everybody is happy with it. They are accommodating a lot of things, some of those things probably they would not want to accommodate if they had their way, but they have to keep everybody happy. It certainly impacts the company's plan a lot, a lot of changes take place from the beginning of the plan till it goes in the end. The decision-making process never really comes down to a...can we accept this or that. If there is any one major voice against it then they go back and figure out ways to get around it and make it work (Respondent # 15).

It comes out in the company's plans; here are next years plans and we are going around that...or this is what someone from the SAC indicated was a problem and this is what we did to solve the problem (Respondent # 14).

4.4.9 Issues surrounding time

Several dimensions of time were established as outcome weaknesses on all committees in this study. Elements of time included: 1) time to review documents; 2) the timing and length of committee meetings; 3) timing of the dispersal of information in relation to decision-making; and 4) timing of involvement. For example, all committees were involved with the review of AOPs, in particular, reviewing proposed cutblocks. The intentions of the companies were to expedite the review process, and to indicate to government that they were indeed consulting local stakeholders. However, the timelines government imposed on the companies in regard to submitting their plans, the time and effort required to review completed plans, and the timing and length of committee



meetings made it very difficult for members to adequately review and provide informed input on the plans. A respondent on LP's committee commented:

The annual plan; we preview the annual plan, we preview the proposed cut blocks, I think we go too quick because we are volunteers and there is a meal and then a meeting. I think we should spend more time. Sometimes we get to our evaluations a little quickly and perhaps they are not as accurate (Respondent # 11).

One member of Tembec's committee specifically mentioned that he took an AOP home to see whether the proposed cutblocks were going to affect his and other fellow trappers' traplines. The respondent commented that it would take him a least a year to thoroughly review the document. A few other comments relating to dimensions of time that respondents felt were troublesome included:

A lot of it is time factors, we have to have this thing done by this date, and it doesn't give you adequate time to get everyone together and have a talk about them (Respondent # 3).

There is never enough time because you would get into an issue and it would take...I remember the famous water crossing on the Manigotagan River; I think we spent an hour on that water crossing and this was one water crossing out of 50 (Respondent # 5).

One respondent on Tembec's committee commented that the meetings, which lasted between three to four hours, were insufficient with such a large amount of material to review. Often this resulted in issues being placed on future agendas but were rarely addressed.



People's concerns can get lost. We have a short time for a meeting and issues are brought up and sometimes we do not have enough time to deal with the issues and they keep on getting pushed back. You can bring on issue after issue after issue, is it necessarily going to be completed? I know we talked about buffers a long time ago; did they forget about them, what happened, so we talked for nothing. All this stuff has to be written down saying here are the issues, this is what we have done so far, we have rectified the problem. It is just like doing business, you have this and that to do and when you are finished a task it has to be marked down (Respondent # 6).

Timing of involvement was also established as a weakness on all the committees. The impetus for Smith (1982) writing about timing of involvement was due to the uncertainty surrounding the extent to which participation should occur and the role it should play in planning and decision-making. The committees in this study were plagued with the same problems. The role of the committees and their level of involvement in planning and decision-making were unclear to both committee members and company staff. The following quotes indicate the conflicting feelings of committee members with respect to the level of involvement that they felt their committees should be involved in, and also committee members' understanding of the level of involvement they thought their committees were to be participating in. The first quote comes from a company representative who was frustrated because of the limited input his company had received from the committee when attempting to engage the group at normative and, more so, strategic levels of planning. The company representative suggested that if the committee was involved in operational levels of planning and decision-making, the company might receive more meaningful input from its committee.



When you look through all the minutes, there is very little input into the plan itself because most people do not have the expertise to look at a plan and say why did you do this. Maybe what their job really is...is input into something site-specific. For example, we are a Canoe Association and we are concerned about this river, and you are going to be operating close to this river, and maybe that is what their job is. It is probably too much to expect people to understand really what is going on because it is not their job...that is my job and the government's job, so their job is to have input into it (Respondent # 1).

Contrary to the above perspective, a member on Tembec's SFMAC commented that he felt that his committee should not be involved in site-specific levels of planning and decision-making such as deciding the placement of roads and determining buffer widths, but should look at the "bigger picture" (normative) issues. The respondent felt that although members were part of the informed lay public, he felt that the members did not have the expertise to participate meaningfully in the site-specific aspects of forestry.

Again forestry is a four year bachelor program and two years for a masters, so you are not going to turn out a professional forester, but maybe in that kind of time you could turn out a knowledgeable and informed member of the lay public who could then move to a different level in the process. Maybe it is a question of the SAC doing the wrong thing; maybe we should not be looking at annual cutting plans or whatever. Maybe that is for the company to go to all the individual communities and say this is what we are proposing to do in your backyard, and then the whole evening could be spent at Hollow Water or Manigotagan or somewhere. From thirty miles north to thirty miles east this is what we are doing around here. Would you like us to do it differently? What kind of impact is this going to have on you? And the SAC would look at bigger issues. This is a question that has not been asked yet. And if it was we would be told within the terms of the annual allowable cut, so that is a technical question not a should question. Maybe the SAC should be looking at some of the normative issues so that would be a different type of education (Respondent # 5).

On Tolko's committee, one member was furious that the FRAC was not involved in plan development, but simply reviewing completed plans with little ability to incorporate his and others' concerns, views and ideas into the plan. The respondent



claimed that his understanding of when he agreed to participate on the committee was that the FRAC would be an integral part of Tolko's planning process, not just reviewing completed plans.

I thought my representation there was to share or highlight...be part of the planning, that is what I thought I was going to be doing. I am familiar with planning, management, and sustainability. On top of that I have a lot of experience with tradition and the land itself, and I thought that would be utilized in the planning and I could share this information with them. What I am seeing is here is Tolko's 13 year plan and I am saying, okay, that is fine, when does our plan come into your plan and how can we share your plan with our plan and combine it and work together. Whenever I try to bring our ideas, plans, and concerns it is only applied verbally to the 13 year plan and it does not go anywhere. The reason being is because I am already told that we already have the licence to cut, it is our FMLA, legally. I think the FRAC is a loophole for the company to say yes we are consulting, yes we are working with the public, but we are not in the planning stage (Respondent # 24).

It was also clear that all committees had the problem of too much information for the time allotted at each meeting. The problem might also be the result in part of another problem identified by respondents, i.e., timing of the dispersal of information in relation to decision-making. During the interviews it became apparent that most of the information was dispersed and presented during committee meetings, often resulting in information overload. One government regulator who participated on Tembec's committee identified timing of the provision of information as a significant problem.

I am a little more fortunate because I work with this on a daily basis, so I have a lot of information. I think this could be one of the flaws, and I do not necessarily have the answers. When you have a person living in Winnipeg and he comes out for a three hour meeting every three months and all he gets is what is given to him at the time, I would say there is no way that you would have adequate information to make a meaningful response (Respondent # 3).

It was clear from the interviews that dispersing material at the time of committee meetings had negatively affected many aspects of the committees and their members,



including: 1) committee members' ability to learn the material, which therefore precluded members from thinking critically about the issues; 2) the level of involvement of committee members during meetings; and 3) the quality of committee members' input.

One respondent on Tolko's committee felt that the company withholding information until the time of meetings was a tactical maneuver to keep the committee ignorant.

I like to get my information well in advance. If I would have had some of the information from the presentations in advance with the agenda, it would have been fine, I would have been able to form some opinions and done some readings and pulled out some information from the Manitoba Forestry Association and make a few phone calls. I would call up Ron, who was the former mill manager, and say what does this mean. And I would have had some good information going into the meeting. Now I can ask you a question and not look like a donut (Respondent # 21).



CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

It was evident throughout the interviews that there was a lot of excitement and renewed interest in public involvement through advisory committee processes. A clear majority (72%) of respondents viewed the advisory committee approach as an effective method of public involvement in forest management and planning. Respondents provided two main reasons for feeling this way: 1) advisory committees can allow diverse interests to discuss and solve forest management and planning problems collectively; and 2) advisory committees can afford participants high levels of involvement as opposed to conventional forms of public involvement. The latter point deserves some discussion.

The second reason is not that surprising given that many conventional forms of public involvement used in forest management and planning have been passive and have produced meager results (Table 1). Respondents commented about their experiences with public involvement methods such as open houses and public hearings and, in their opinion, these methods did not allow for meaningful involvement. Members were excited and welcoming of new approaches that allowed them to be more engaged, with at least potential opportunities to shape and influence decisions. Despite this renewed interest in public involvement through advisory committees, there was ample evidence to suggest that the committees in this study were having difficulty making participation meaningful. Such weaknesses, as well as successes of the advisory committee approach,



are discussed in this chapter.

5.2 Key process and outcome strengths

5.2.1 Good facilitation

One of the most important components of any public involvement exercise is to ensure that a trained facilitator is leading the exercise. Researchers that have evaluated advisory committee processes argue that a necessary condition is to ensure that a neutral third party is facilitating committee meetings (Creighton 1993; Lynn and Busenberg 1995). A recent study conducted on a public advisory group (PAG) in B.C. in the forestry sector concluded that not having a neutral individual leading the committee meetings limited the success of the exercise (Jabbour and Balsillie 2003). The interviews highlighted just how important it is to have adequate facilitation.

One of the committees in this study supported the assertion that a neutral facilitator is preferred to lead meetings. Prior to an independent facilitator taking over the chairing responsibilities of Tembec's committee, there was discord within the group with little progress being made on issues addressed. One member of Tembec's SFMAC, who is now an active member, commented that he was ready to stop participating due to the inability of company staff to adequately chair the meetings. The company individual who facilitated the committee articulated many times throughout his interview the difficulty he had in trying to appear impartial when chairing meetings, and realized the skills that were required when acting in such a capacity. When a neutral third party began to facilitate Tembec's committee meetings, respondents saw a significant



improvement in how meetings were chaired, how issues were addressed and, consequently, attendance improved.

LP's committee showed, however, that it is possible for a company individual to facilitate the meetings and satisfy its members. Further research revealed that the company individual who facilitated LP's SAC had extensive training in dispute resolution and facilitation from a previous employer, which he claimed helped in his ability to lead an open and transparent process while still being able to represent the company's interests. Despite LP's respondents feeling that meetings were adequately facilitated, members did identify areas where there could be improvement with facilitation. For example, a few members felt more time could be spent on reviewing cutblocks prior to providing the company with recommendations. And other respondents felt that more pre-meeting information could be provided so members could attend meetings already being informed about the issues.

Overall, there is room for improvement on all the committees with regard to facilitation. While having company staff facilitate meetings was somewhat effective on LP's committee, Tolko's FRAC members distrust of the company, and their frustration with how meetings were led, warranted the need for an independent facilitator as suggested in the literature. The FRAC had asked for independent facilitation in past years, but the company was not responsive to its demand. Facilitation would also be greatly improved on the SACs if the facilitators, committee members, and the sponsors were clear on the roles of their respective committees. This would provide some well-needed direction to the facilitators, so they could develop exercises consistent with the goals of their respective committees.



5.2.2 Effective conflict management

The literature establishes that public involvement can aid in the resolution of disputes among competing resource users (Mitchell 1997; Diduck 1999). Respondents felt that ability to manage conflict was a factor that contributed to the success of the SACs. There was evidence to suggest that the committees in this study were somewhat effective tools for managing conflict. For example, a First Nations attendee at the SFMAC field trip indicated that a trapper in his community lost traps due to logging activities. It was brought to the attention of the SAC that the company did not consult with this individual prior to harvesting timber in the area. Based on this information, the company intended to compensate him with new traps. This new information heightened awareness of the problem among company personnel, and safeguards were put in place to avoid such problems in the future.

A major reason for establishing these types of committees, in my opinion, is to proactively channel conflict into candid discussions to come to mutually agreed upon solutions. Moreover, since advisory committees can be used to reflect public opinion, prior input to decisions can be used to determine potential areas of conflict and develop ways to avoid it. Vari's (1989) supports this feeling, and claims that the advisory committee approach promotes conflict resolution possibilities because it is a reconciliatory approach (i.e., aimed at finding in an interactive group setting a mutually acceptable solution using group decision support).

The problem still remains, however, that the sponsor must be responsive to a mutually agreed upon concern or recommendation by the group, and must ask for the



group's advice before decisions are made. If this is not done, there is a high possibility for frustration and conflict escalation. This did occur a few times on all the committees. These issues were problematic for the SACs studied in that decisions had been made that did not heed the committees' best advice (e.g., Tolko's all-weather road appeal and input to cutting plans was late in planning stages).

In addition to the above problems, conflicts that matured quickly at meetings also proved very difficult to resolve and were poorly managed by the facilitators. For example, a First Nations respondent that participated on Tolko's committee indicated that he felt marginalized from the group on occasion, and claimed members had verbally abused him at meetings. He commented that at one meeting a situation became very heated with verbal jousting taking place. He commented that the facilitator had difficulty managing the conflict. Even the facilitator of LP's committee, who had some training in facilitation, suggested that he has led meetings where a group of individuals had "ganged up" on First Nations regarding issues such as unregulated hunting, and he claimed that it detracted from the meeting and is a situation that is difficult to handle.

While the conflict management opportunities provided by this form of public involvement were apparent through the course of this research, the committees' full potential in acting in such a capacity had not been fully realized. The main factor that precluded the committees from effectively managing conflict was that the SACs were often being informed of existing decisions or activities of their sponsors, rather than having the opportunity to be aware and comment on activities and decisions before they were implemented. This very problem not only limited the opportunity of the committees to resolve conflict, but on occasion escalated conflict. If the committees address the



concerns and issues of the members prior to decisions being implemented, it would greatly improve the conflict management abilities of the committees.

5.2.3 Appropriate involvement techniques

As identified in chapter four, a process strength of the committees was the involvement techniques employed. The most commonly used methods of involvement on the committees were: site-visits; maps; power-point presentations; minutes of meetings; handouts (AOPs); and discussions (facilitated through questions and answers). The methods preferred by respondents were visual in nature, namely site-visits and maps. One problem with site-visits, however, was that they only occurred a maximum of twice a year for each committee. The coordination, cost and time required to have site-visits limited their frequency.

Weaknesses on all committees relating to involvement techniques were: 1) the limited number of involvement techniques employed; and 2) the methods used were largely passive in nature focusing on the provision of information from the companies to the committees (information-out). Table 2 in chapter 2 provides a comprehensive list of involvement techniques available to public involvement practitioners. The sponsors used only a handful of techniques that were available to them. While the advisory committee format itself, according to Praxis (1988), can facilitate extended levels of involvement, one must also consider the involvement techniques used within the advisory committee process. Simply having a multi-stakeholder process with diverse individuals around the table does not necessarily mean that there will be active two-way dialogue and group



interaction. This problem of focusing on information-out techniques is commonly noted in the literature. In an environmental assessment context, for example, Sinclair and Diduck (2001) conclude that the use of active involvement mechanisms in provincial environmental assessment processes across Canada is very limited. This problem existed on the three committees in this study. There was plenty of information from the sponsors to their respective committees, but little opportunity for members to present information and to articulate their concerns.

Respondents felt that their sponsors would receive better and more useful input from the SACs if they used more problem-solving and small-group processes that focused on collaboration, idea-generation, and that facilitated critical reflection, as opposed to information provision. One committee member, who also participated on the Manitoba Model Forest, found the use of small-group exercises to be an excellent method to generate ideas and solve forestry issues related to the Model Forest. The respondent was disappointed that his committee rarely employed such techniques. On occasion, however, small-group processes were used. For example, the SFMAC participated in a values exercise that was to be incorporated into Tembec's ten-year forest plan. Members noted the usefulness of such an activity.

It became apparent through the interviews and participant observation, that the involvement techniques used on the committees were consistent with the goals of the companies – provision of company information to their committee. The companies were fixated on keeping their committees up to date about their activities and used techniques that were consistent with these goals. Unfortunately, only having the committees listen to updates of their sponsors provided little opportunity for interaction among committee



members to solve forestry problems and generate ideas that could assist the sponsors. Employing involvement techniques consistent with the goal of information provision was also counterproductive to the reason the SACs were established – to provide advice and recommendations to the companies on their activities prior to decisions being made, and to aid the sponsors in developing alternatives to current practices. Improved exercises are needed to foster critical-thinking and collaboration among committee members, rather than strictly listening to presentations. The only interaction that occurred at formal meetings was through questions and answers, which marginalized the ability of the groups to influence any forest management and planning decisions.

5.2.4 Learning

It is established in the literature that learning is an important outcome of public involvement (Sinclair and Diduck 1995). Some argue that public involvement in itself has educational value (Pateman 1970; Gibson 1975). The reason for focusing on learning in this study was due to a gap in the literature regarding learning opportunities through advisory committee processes. The type of learning focused upon in this study was informal learning, or what Merriam and Caffarella (1991) characterize as non-formal, adult education (i.e., learning that occurs outside of educational institutions). Only one study was found that examined learning through an advisory committee process. Howell et al. (1987) conducted a study on the educational value of a CAC created to consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of a hydropower development proposal in the United States. The authors compared the knowledge of committee members and non-



members in the community where the proposed hydro project was to occur using a questionnaire. The results showed that those residents who participated on the committee had twice the level of knowledge about hydro development relative to the respondents who did not participate on the committee (Howell et al. 1987).

These findings are not surprising considering SACs were conceived as a technique that could facilitate learning at more intense levels, thus affording members the opportunity to provide better and more informed input to their sponsors. The data in this study provided additional evidence that advisory committees are conducive to learning, and on many different levels. The two dominant learning themes established in chapter 4 that were consistent with all the committees were: 1) learning about forest management and planning; and 2) learning the concerns, perspectives, values and local knowledge of committee members. These two learning themes are discussed in the ensuing paragraphs.

There was a lot of excitement on all the committees with regard to learning about the scientific and technical aspects of forest management and planning. Table 7 in chapter 4 indicates the variety of issues covered and learned during committee meetings. It came as no surprise that the members who truly benefited from learning about the technical aspects of forestry were those who had relatively little knowledge about forestry. For example, one member on LP's committee commented that there was a lot of concern at the public hearings for LP's operation in Swan River, Manitoba, about how fast hardwood tree species regenerate considering they were the desired tree species. The respondent noted that this was a topic at one of the committee meetings, and he was amazed at how fast hardwood trees regenerate and was comforted by the fact that there would be trees to harvest in the future if managed sustainably.



Furthermore, many members appeared to be skeptical when they first joined their committees about the activities of their sponsors. However, through learning about forest management and planning, committee members now have an appreciation for the complexity of their sponsors' activities, and understand the regulatory controls that govern the companies' activities. For example, on one committee, a fisheries group was concerned with the impacts of forestry on fish habitat and spawning grounds. Once the member was informed about what the Department of Fisheries and Oceans required for stream crossings and the company's policy on buffers, he was relieved that the activities of the company were being regulated and considered.

In terms of learning about and from others, this study showed that it was those who were already knowledgeable about forestry that were most keen to learn from and about other members' concerns, perspectives, values and local knowledge. As the literature suggests, one of the benefits to employing an advisory committee process is that it facilitates learning about and from other participants (Landre and Knuth 1993; Jabbour and Balsillie 2003). The main involvement technique that facilitated learning about other members was discussions. The result was an improvement in understanding about others' views, and a realization among members that each other's goals were not necessarily incompatible. Learning about fellow members' concerns contributed to more holistic thinking about the issues and not just a focus on how the activities of the sponsors affected members own interests. According to one participatory democracy theorist, the benefit of direct participation is that participants "...learn to take into account wider matters than his own immediate private interests" (Pateman 1970). The new knowledge and mutual understanding created cohesiveness within the group, and the result was



greater willingness by committee members to compromise and integrate the interests of others when decisions were made.

Focusing on the individual as opposed to the committees as a whole, the results from this study also confirmed participatory democracy theorists' assertions that participation contributes to personal growth and development (Pateman 1970; Gibson 1975). While chapter 4 outlines examples the above. A poignant case was the member on Tembec's committee who indicated that the exercise aided in all aspects of his life. This is one example of an individual, who because of his participation in such an exercise, had improved his life in a profound way. These are important points that should be goals of all public involvement exercises that are often overlooked.

Weaknesses in learning were also evident, however. An obvious example was the limited scope of what was learned. Emphasis was placed largely on learning about the forest management and planning activities of the sponsors and not exploring broader issues relating to forest sustainability. For example, while each company advocated practicing SFM, many of the components that constitute SFM were never discussed at committee meetings. A member on Tolko's committee was conducting some work on Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP), and he wanted to expose the FRAC to other benefits (products) derived from the forest other than harvesting trees for building materials. The individual was upset because he claimed the company was not supportive of exploring with the committee NTFP and how they were diversifying many economies in the north. He suggested that although the company claimed to respect the many benefits derived from the forest, it was not willing to educate the committee about anything that did not relate directly to its forestry activities.



The use of forestry jargon and language was also identified as a major problem that affected members' ability to understand the material. One member mentioned that not everyone on the committee was university-educated, and sometimes he was having difficulty following discussions and providing input because he did not understand the words. This is a common problem noted in the literature that affects participant's ability to participate meaningfully. Gallagher and Patrick-Riley (1989) concluded that land management plans proved difficult for some members of the public to understand, and that the documents were not written for individuals with an average reading ability. With such a diversity of individuals on the committees with different levels of education, the language and documents must be kept as simple as possible so everyone understands. The forestry concepts and science alone proved difficult enough without the use of complex language.

Another flaw of committee process that affected learning was the limited use of SAC members' knowledge. There is plenty of local knowledge around each of the tables that is not being utilized because company staff are monopolizing meeting time. A First Nations individual, for example, mentioned that he would like to expose fellow members to an indigenous knowledge system of the landscape through the teachings of traditional ecological knowledge. Exposing members to traditional ecological knowledge might be a great opportunity for the committee to develop ways to integrate it into forest management and planning. The individual offered to conduct a workshop at one of the meetings, but the company had not taken him up on his offer. Committee members have plenty of knowledge and experience to offer their respective committees, but are not



provided the opportunity to share their wealth of knowledge. It would thus be highly advantageous for members to play a more active role on the committees.

In addition to recognizing issues that precluded learning on the committees, respondents were encouraged to consider how learning could be improved on SACs (Table 9). Respondents noted that improvements relating to process such as ensuring information is provided to members before meetings and encouraging more debate on contentious issues would improve learning on the committees.

Table 9: Ways to improve learning on advisory committees

Methods
Better documentation of issues; too short of meetings contributed to issues getting pushed backed on future agendas but not adequately addressed.
People learn when motivated: committee members should learn about things of interest to them and what they value from the forest.
Reduce time between meetings – ensure continuity of participation; otherwise people forget.
Learn material from somebody other than the company's representatives.
Use more field trips and potentially a field-tour training session for new members.
More pre-meeting information should be provided so committee members can come with an informed opinion on the matters to be discussed and with questions to ask.
The companies should encourage more debate on contentious issues to stimulate dialogue.
Have SAC members chair meetings; it will only be through good leadership and guidance that members will learn.
Have SAC meetings open to the public so the group can learn the general public's concerns, and not just other committee members and the company's concerns
Have SAC members do a small homework exercise between meetings to keep them up to speed on the material.
Have the SACs of the FPCs operating in the province get together every few years to discuss and solve problems that are burdening the industry. Also, the forum could be used to discuss what is working and not working on each SAC, and explore opportunities for collaboration.



5.3 Key process and outcome weaknesses

Participants identified many process weaknesses that were both barriers to involvement and learning, including: 1) poor attendance; 2) membership changes; 3) infrequent meetings; and 4) insufficient breadth of involvement. The major outcome weaknesses of the committees were timing of involvement and inadequate involvement in forest management and planning decisions.

5.3.1 *Poor attendance*

A problem spanning all three committees was poor attendance. As established in chapter 4, only 50 per cent of members attended meetings consistently. Considering that the SACs on average only met four to six times a year, attendance was a serious problem. Poor attendance resulted in a lack of diversity of interests at committee meetings and, therefore, affected the quality of meetings, quality of input, and the learning experience for all participants. Respondents identified three possible reasons that precluded members from being able to fully dedicate themselves to their committees. First, members noted that the great distance that some members had to travel to attend meetings could be a possible factor contributing to poor attendance. Second, respondents commented that many of the members have busy lives and that this limited their ability to attend meetings. This is a common problem that is noted in the literature (Mitchell 1997; Duinker 1998). Third, a few members suggested that since they were not affecting the decisions of their respective sponsors, they were not attending meetings as frequently.



One way to improve attendance at committee meetings, as suggested by some representatives, is to ensure members have alternates chosen. While the facilitator of each committee noted that all members were to have alternates, it became apparent during the interviews that not all members had an alternate, and that not all members represented an organization. The issue surrounding alternates should be addressed periodically to improve attendance at meetings.

5.3.2 Membership changes

A process weakness of the committees was the constant change of members and the lack of proper integration of new members. New members had considerable difficulty understanding the material, resulting in their interests not being adequately represented at meetings. Moreover, respondents asserted that the constant change of members slowed committee progress. During a few of the interviews, a discussion ensued about how difficult it was for new members to understand the content of the discussions. This was especially the case for new members who had little, if any, background in basic ecology and science. Interview respondents identified a variety of ways that new members might be more appropriately integrated such as a forestry primer and all-day introductory workshops.

5.3.3 Infrequent meetings

Continuity of participation was problematic on all of the committees. Respondents noted that the infrequent and sporadic nature of meetings affected their



ability to learn material and, more importantly, retain information. For individuals who did not work with the issues on a regular basis, this was a substantive problem. It is clear that all of the committees would benefit from more regular meetings or perhaps engagement through other techniques such as conference calls or interactive advisory committee webpages with on-line chat capabilities.

5.3.4 Insufficient breadth of involvement

While most empirical research has focused on advisory committees as a form of public involvement, it was also important to establish whether the committees attempted to facilitate broader public involvement, and identify whether advisory committees could function in such a capacity.

As established in chapter 4, the three committees were largely being used as a form of public involvement in and of themselves and rarely attempted to facilitate broader involvement. However, committee members were afforded the opportunity to participate in their sponsors' activities such as open houses and road management planning efforts. One of the guidelines in establishing advisory committees that facilitates broader involvement is to ensure that all members engage in regular communication with their constituents. (Creighton 1993; Petts 1999; Smith 2000). This is a problem of representation that has not been thoroughly explored in the literature. Members must take the concerns of their respective committees back to their constituents, and take the concerns of their constituents back to the committees. This was not occurring on the committees and concerned many members. Only members who felt



it was a responsibility of their job or who were directly affected by the activities of the companies felt it was important to communicate to their co-workers and superiors the topics discussed at SAC meetings.

Although this issue was raised on each committee, there was never a discussion on any of the SACs as to whether representatives were bringing the concerns of their organizations to the committees, or whether they needed help in communicating the information from the committees to their organizations. On Tembec's SFMAC, one company representative articulated clearly during his interview that he did not understand why representatives had not asked him to come and present information addressed by the committee to members' organizations. However, when asked if he informed the committee that he would be available to do so, he claimed that he had not. A presentation by company staff to members' organizations might be useful on occasion to help convey information, and to inform organizations about the role of their respective representatives on the SACs.

Even more disturbing than committee members not being vigilant in conversing with constituents, was the discovery that some members did not even know if the organizations they represent were aware that there was someone speaking on their behalf. This problem could be easily rectified, and LP's committee addressed this very issue by mailing letters to members' organizations to inform them that they needed to select a representative for the SAC. Furthermore, respondents indicated that the company was in contact with their organizations to ensure that the individuals on the SAC were indeed chosen to represent the organizations. It is essential for mechanisms to be in place to ensure that there is two-way communication between SAC representatives and their



organizations, and from the organizations through their representatives to the committees for the SACs to operate effectively.

Overall, the whole concept of facilitating broader involvement through the committees was problematic for many members. Some simply felt that advisory committees should not act in such a capacity. As noted, Tolko's committee was the most vigilant in trying to facilitate broader involvement through its committee, and the FRAC had considerable success that the other committees could learn from such as holding meetings in different locations of the FMLA, developing a committee newsletter that was distributed throughout the FMLA, and developing a communications sub-committee. Respondents provided a variety of thoughts on how broader involvement through the committees might be achieved (Table 8).

5.3.5 New methods of public involvement in forest management and planning

While most respondents were supportive of the advisory committee approach, respondents were asked to consider what other involvement techniques FPCs should use to attract more interest (Table 11). The rationale for the line of questioning was due to the continued reliance by FPCs on traditional involvement methods that respondents recognized as attracting little attention and having low degrees of involvement such as open houses and community meetings. Table 10 clearly indicates the poor attendance levels at Tembec's open houses for its 2003 AOP, but remains one of the company's, as well as the other FPCs operating in the province, key public involvement mechanisms for soliciting input from the public at large regarding AOPs.



**Table 10: Tembec's 2003 annual operating plan open house
summary**

Date	Location	Attendance
September 26	Bissett – Community Trapping Meeting	2
October 9	Bissett	9
November 20	Sagkeeng	5
November 21	Lac Du Bonnet	15
November 26	Winnipeg	14
November 27	Peguis	11
November 28	Hollow Water	5
December 2	Winnipeg – Environmental Groups	7
Total		68

Respondents commented that they would like to see a variety of passive and active involvement techniques employed by FPCs. For passive techniques, respondents felt FPCs could write articles in local newspapers, use local television stations showing forestry activities, and have websites where individuals could access operating plans with the opportunity to comment. Some respondents also argued that more informal communication between FPCs and the communities where the companies operate was needed. For example, a few respondents felt that FPCs need to be more active in the schools and should sponsor forestry and environmental education events in the community where the companies operate.



Table 11: Nonconventional methods of public involvement in forest management and planning

Methods
Provide potentially affected aboriginal communities with maps and GIS overlays of where cutting may interfere with traditional areas.
Have FPCs take a more active role in the schools. Educate students about the activities of the company in the community where the companies operates.
FPCs should advertise and have periodic field tours for the public to educate them about forest management and planning.
Have the company staff attend local community council meetings and make presentations so communities understand what is happening on the landscape.
Use local TV stations and radio stations – show a day of a forester, give the public an opportunity to discuss their concerns over the radio with company personnel, and educate the public through these mediums about the forest management and planning activities and how the company impacts the community.
Use of local press – Write short articles in newspapers indicating what the company is doing, why they are doing it, what they do, where the products go, how they harvest, what is the advisory committee, who is on it, importance of industry to the community, etc.
Make presentations to interested and affected communities in the FMLA regarding the activities of the forest company, and involve the communities early in planning processes.
FPCs should meet with ENGOs and other local organizations that are not represented on the advisory committee and, more importantly, meet with those ENGOs and organizations that are opposed to the company and its operations in order to develop mutual understanding and start building working relationships.
Environmental and forestry education events – have the company sponsor workshops its forest management and planning activities, and inform the public about means to participate in the activities of the company.
Have the company make presentations to member organizations that sit on the advisory committee, and to those organizations that are affected by the activities of the company.
Company staff should become involved in service clubs and organizations like the Kinsmen or Lions Club in order to get to know people on a personal level. This would put a face on the company and would foster trust. Furthermore, these activities take place in an environment that is not intimidating like public or community meetings.
Website – have companies put their annual operating plans on the web in order to receive feedback from the public at large.



5.3.6 Timing of involvement

To help determine the level of involvement of the committees in planning and decision-making, the application of Smith's (1982) framework was employed. As described by Smith (1982), involvement can occur at three different levels: normative, strategic, and operational levels. Most involvement has occurred at operational levels, which in Smith's (1982) opinion inhibits meaningful involvement. He claims that the earlier involvement occurs in planning and decision-making processes, the more opportunity that is available for participants to influence key normative decisions such as goal and objective-setting. Smith (1982) made specific reference to advisory committees in his work, postulating that such committees are a form of public involvement that can facilitate normative involvement. The ensuing discussion about timing of involvement is centered on a quote from a regulator of the industry who clearly demonstrated its importance.

If it has been done properly where no plan has been made, and the SAC is involved right from the beginning... that has been a criticism of any planning and the SAC, what do you review, if you review a final product you are not having input to the product, but if you can be involved right from stage one where there is no plan and your concerns and ideas are expressed and incorporated into the plan that is the way it should be done. (Respondent # 3).

The respondent clearly understands the importance of having early involvement in planning and decision-making and notes that this was a problem on his committee. Despite this problem, positive steps were taken to engage all the committees in site-specific decisions such as influencing cutblock and bridge locations. In the context of planning, however, the above respondent noted that his committee was not involved in plan development, but was only afforded the opportunity to comment on completed plans



(operational involvement). This problem was encountered on all three committees in this study. As the respondent noted, the problem of late involvement is that many of the concerns and ideas that committee members have are not incorporated into the plans. The committees were not involved at strategic or normative levels of planning and decision-making where broader issues relating to forest sustainability could be discussed and alternatives examined. Early involvement is imperative in order to provide the committees the opportunity to influence "big-picture" decisions that often have large and long-term implications. It appears, based on the findings in chapter 4, that confusion about the roles of the committees in planning and decision-making and how to best utilized committee members' input were partly responsible for involvement occurring largely at operational levels. This very issue needs to be addressed on each committee in order to make involvement more meaningful. While the companies failed to facilitate normative involvement on their respective committees, there is the opportunity to do so through this form of involvement, which shows promise of this approach.

5.3.7 Inadequate involvement in forest management and planning decisions

It was of paramount importance to explore the involvement of the committees in decision-making given that if participants did not feel they were influencing the processes and outcomes of decision-making, they would likely perceive the exercise as token involvement, which could result in low levels of involvement and satisfaction with the exercise. 30 per cent of respondents felt that a key outcome weakness of their respective committees was the inability of the SACs to influence decisions. The literature on multi-



stakeholder and advisory committee processes suggests that a common weakness of these types of processes is participants' inability to share in and influence the decisions of the sponsor(s) of the activity (Plumlee et al. 1985; Carr et al. 1998;).

Using Arnstein's (1969) typology, the committees' involvement in decision-making fell in the middle to lower rungs on the ladder. At the bottom rungs (manipulation/informing), the goal of the sponsor is to "educate" or "cure" participants (i.e., attempt to shape opinions). The activities of all committees in this study were guilty of falling into the bottom rungs. Company staff often relegated the committees to largely an exercise of information dissemination and, on occasion, manipulation. Company staff noted their frustration during interviews about how their committees' lack of knowledge about forestry science resulted in the groups not understanding why the companies were conducting certain activities. The result was that some felt their sponsors were attempting to educate their committees to see their points of view and trying to legitimize decisions that had already been made. The example described in chapter 4 regarding the discussion on a field tour about the safety of the herbicide (Vision), clearly demonstrates this.

The committees' work can be mostly characterized, however, by the middle rungs on Arnstein's ladder (degrees of tokenism), which includes informing (one-way information flows from the sponsors to participants), consultation and placation. According to Arnstein (1969), participants do have the opportunity to express their concerns, but those concerns and interests are not necessarily listened to or taken into consideration when the sponsor is making decisions. The problem of one-way information flows between a SAC its sponsor was highlighted in a study that evaluated an



advisory committee in the B.C. forestry sector. "79 per cent [of respondents felt] that the process could have facilitated more opportunities for participants to present information rather than just receive" (Jabbour and Balsillie 2003). This finding suggests that participants were not satisfied with the reciprocal exchange of information.

In this study, the companies' fixation on educating and informing the committees about their activities often resulted in one-way information flows from the companies to their committees with little opportunity for the SACs to present information or participate in forest management and planning decision-making. There were many reasons for the committees having trouble participating in and influencing the decisions of their sponsors. First, most of the informing and learning that occurred took the form of a cursory overview. Clearly, the fact that the SACs only met four to five times a year resulted in the companies speeding through material. The effect was that little time was provided to discuss issues beyond the operational level.

An example of this can be found in what was supposed to be the committees' main role, reviewing operating plans. After reviewing the minutes of the SACs and attending meetings, it became apparent that the committees did not thoroughly review entire plans. Reviewing operating plans involved one or a combination of the following methods: reviewing cutblocks to see if harvesting areas would affect members' interests; asking questions to company staff after they provided a brief verbal overview of the plans; or reviewing the comments of government regulators and individuals who attended open houses regarding the plans. The result was committee members were insufficiently knowledgeable about the plans to really influence or shape the plans. I find this disconcerting because advisory committees were conceived as a form of involvement that



could facilitate learning at deeper levels and, consequently, afford participants the knowledge to provide informed input.

The second factor that limited the ability of the committees to influence the decisions of their respective sponsors related to issues surrounding time. As identified in chapter 4, a major weakness on all the committees was that most information provided to the committees to learn and review was presented at the time of meetings. The impacts of this were substantial, including: it limited committee members' ability to learn the material and, therefore, precluded members from thinking critically about the issues; it affected the level of involvement of members during meetings; and it affected the quality of input that could influence decisions. A few committee members felt that the companies withholding information until the time of the meetings was a tactic to keep the committees ignorant so they could not influence plans or decisions.

The other dimension of time that inhibited the ability of the committees to participate in and influence decisions beyond the operational level related to timing of involvement. In the case of Tolko and Tembec's committees, members were given completed AOPs to review at the time the plans were to be discussed. This resulted in limited influence at operational levels and no opportunity to participate in plan development. LP appears to afford its committee more involvement in its planning activities; however, involvement is still at operational and strategic levels (Appendix 10). LP's SAC members are the most pleased with the operation of their committee, and the members appear to attribute the success of their SAC to early and on-going involvement in forest management and planning decision-making. The earlier a committee is involved with the activities of its sponsor, the more individuals will understand the material, thus



providing more opportunities to influence decisions.

In addition to the preceding analysis, it seems clear that the low level of involvement of the committees in planning and management activities was the result in part of another problem commonly noted in the literature regarding advisory committee processes – the lack of a well-defined purpose and role of the committees. Creighton (1993) postulates that “the major cause of failure with advisory groups is the lack of a well-defined purpose for the groups.” It appears that not enough time was taken to critically think about the purpose, role and capacity of the committees. The result was confusion that permeated into other aspects of the committees such as their involvement in forest management and planning decision-making. The problem of determining the roles of the committees were compounded further by the fact that there was a layered system of public involvement within all the FPCs (Table 12).

Table 12: Hierarchy of public involvement in forest management and planning

Levels of involvement	Methods of involvement	Purpose of methods
1) Broad public involvement	Open houses; Clean Environment Commission hearings; community meetings	Solicit input from the public at large regarding the FPCs activities, specifically AOPs
2) Selective public involvement	SACs	Not defined
3) Specific public involvement	Individual meetings	Resolve problems with directly affected individuals

In the first level of public involvement, broad public involvement, the objective of the companies is to solicit feedback from the general public on their activities, specifically its annual and long-term plans. The most common methods for this are open



houses and community meetings. Despite poor attendance, these methods are still employed by each of the FPCs operating in the province.

At the third level of public involvement, specific public involvement, the companies are meeting with directly affected individuals. For example, company representatives frequently meet with trappers to ensure that timber harvesting does not interfere with traplines. The objectives of these informal meetings are to quickly rectify problems, and to identify areas of concern with those who are directly affected by activities of the companies.

In the second level of involvement, selective public involvement, the companies are employing SACs. Unfortunately, their purpose and role are unclear. For example, when trying to determine how decision-making was structured on the committees, there were a variety of responses. Some respondents felt that no decisions were to be made at committee meetings or by the committees. Others felt that the process of decision-making was unclear. Some felt that decision-making was done through consensus. Yet others felt that the whole process was to share information with the hope that the input would be in some way reflected in the decisions of their sponsors.

The same ambiguous responses were provided by committee members when trying to determine what their level of involvement was to be in planning. Some committee members understood that they were to be active participants in developing plans (normative level of involvement). Others members, including a few company employees, felt that their respective committees did not have the expertise to be involved in plan development, and as a result they thought the members' input could be better



utilized reviewing completed plans and focusing on site-specific aspects of forestry such as determining cutblock and bridge locations.

The companies appeared unsure about what capacity their respective committees should be acting in because specific issues were being dealt with on a one-on-one basis with directly affected individuals, and the general public's concerns were being dealt with through broader public involvement mechanisms. Where then does the SACs fit into the public involvement activities of the companies? As a result of this ambiguity, committee meetings were largely information sharing exercises, and largely information-out from the companies informing and providing updates and reports about their activities. The committees were not being used to their full potential due to their marginal role in management and planning activities.

The committees paralleled, in my opinion, many conventional forms of involvement in which decisions were made before meetings, and participants were made aware of what those decisions were (i.e., decide-announce-defend). The sponsors were stuck in the mode of treating the committees like conventional forms of involvement because that is the way that requires the least amount of effort and is comfortable. There were times, however, when the committees had been involved in normative planning, but there was still no indication about how their involvement influenced decisions. For example, the Ipsos-Reid Group, a global marketing and public opinion research company, was commissioned by Tembec to conduct a qualitative study regarding committee members' values of the forest. Several qualitative research techniques were used to elicit values such as a thought-bubble exercise (designed to encourage independent creative thinking about values) and small-group processes. The findings were to contribute to the



development of Tembec's ten-year plan. This was one example of an exercise that facilitated normative level involvement; however, in terms of decision-making, there was no indication as to how the results from the exercise were incorporated into Tembec's ten-year plan.

One other potential reason why the committees were marginalized to some degree in the activities of their sponsors was due to their lack of autonomy. This very issue has been explored in the literature regarding advisory committee processes, and it is worth noting the findings. The literature suggests that those committees that operate relatively independent from their sponsors (i.e., develop their own recommendations free from influence, contribute to decision-making, are adequately funded, develop their operating procedures, obtain information and support from a variety of different sources, etc.) are considered to be more successful by respondents than those that are more dependent on their sponsors (Hannah and Lewis 1982; Houghton 1988; Scrimgeour and Hanson 1993). Some respondents in this study did indicate that they would prefer their respective committees to operate in an arms-length fashion. They felt that this would allow their SACs to operate more effectively and would foster a more objective process. I argue the need for having the SACs in this study more independent from their sponsors for the same reasons that a study on the public advisory groups (PAGs) in the forest industry in Alberta suggests:

Company representatives are often the gatekeepers of information provided within formal group meetings and they appear to maintain a degree of control over who can supply knowledge to group deliberations and what range of forest management alternatives are given access and legitimacy within the discursive arena (Parkins 2002).



This was a problem on Tolko's committee that respondents noted. Some felt the company was withholding information and providing information late in the process as a tactical maneuver so the committee could not question with any authority the company's actions. This issue could be resolved if the FRAC had more internal control over the process. The advisory committees formed pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act in the United States have had greater success than the advisory committees in Canada due to their independence from their sponsors. These committees are often well-funded, independently facilitated, and are provided opportunities to hire external experts to assist them in developing recommendations. I think the issue of autonomy is worth exploring further, and I strongly feel that if the committees in this study were well-funded and operated independent from their respective sponsors, that the SACs would have had greater internal control of their committees, thus allowing them to be more active participants in forest management and planning efforts.

Overall, the companies' difficulty in fitting their committees into their public participation frameworks, coupled with the many process and outcome weaknesses, resulted in the committees being marginalized to involvement at the operational level with little opportunity to influence and participate in forest management and planning decision-making. The committees had affected such decisions as road placement and cutblock locations, but as far as influencing normative decisions such as strategic direction or broader value-laden issues, the committees were not involved. Some respondents were actually content with being engaged at operational levels. However, until the committees and their sponsors can come to some understanding of where the committees fits within a public involvement framework, the companies will relegate the



committees to a level of involvement that is easiest and most comfortable for them – operational level involvement with little ability to influence substantive decisions.



CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Overview

The purpose of this study was to improve understanding of the contribution that advisory committees make to public involvement in forest management and planning including SFM. The specific objectives were to: 1) establish the degree of overall success of SACs in forest management and planning in Manitoba; 2) determine the involvement techniques used in the advisory committee processes and identify the preferred techniques; 3) consider whether informal learning occurred among the participants on the committees; 4) determine what barriers exist to involvement on the committees; and 5) provide recommendations on how to improve the public involvement capabilities of SACs in SFM. The objectives were addressed through the research process using several techniques, including: 1) document review (i.e., literature review and reviewing the minutes of meetings of each committee); 2) standardized open-ended interviews; and 3) participant observation. This chapter highlights the conclusions and provides recommendations for improving SAC processes.

6.2 Committee process strengths and weaknesses

This study used a process and outcomes approach to evaluate the advisory committees. The literature suggests that evaluating a public involvement activity only by the outcomes it achieves is inadequate. It is equally important to assess the process,



because a good process often contributes to good outcomes. It is for this reason that the process strengths and weaknesses and outcome strengths and weaknesses of the committees were assessed.

The results regarding process were not surprising. Many of the generic process problems, as well as process strengths, were found in this study. The process strengths of the committees included: 1) appropriate involvement techniques; 2) good facilitation; 3) openness; and 4) effective conflict management. These process strengths support the literature regarding what is required to have a good process. For example, openness and facilitation are commonly noted as being essential to having successful public involvement. The results from this study support this assertion, and it was no surprise that LP's SAC, that felt its committee meetings were open, transparent and facilitated adequately, was also the most pleased of the three committees with the process and outcomes of the exercise.

Another important process strength of the SACs related to the involvement techniques used by the committees. Respondents found visual techniques the most useful in that these methods helped them learn the material. Site-visits and maps were the preferred visual techniques. Despite overwhelming support for visual methods of information dissemination, weaknesses were identified by participants with the methods. Prime among these were constraints that limited the frequency of site-visits such as time to coordinate the tours and the cost associated with such an activity. It was also clear that a limited number of involvement techniques were employed by the committees. The SACs only used a handful of techniques that were available to them. Moreover, the techniques used were passive in nature focusing on providing companies' information to



the committees (information-out). Rarely did the committees employ participatory involvement techniques that focused on collaboration, idea generation, or problem-solving to truly involve the committees in discussion and debate about the sponsors' activities. Implementing a broader range of techniques would allow for more meaningful involvement, and may allow the committees to increase their contribution to SFM. Overall, there is room for improvement on all of the SACs with respect to process strengths. The committees should place emphasis on ensuring that the advisory committee process is open, transparent and well facilitated, due to the multiple benefits these characteristics had on other aspects of the committees.

Respondents identified seven process-related weaknesses of the committees:

1) insufficient breadth of involvement; 2) lack of Aboriginal involvement; 3) poor attendance; 4) representation problems; 5) membership changes; 6) complexity of language (terminology); and 7) infrequent meetings. Many of the above weaknesses are common process-related problems that are found in other forms of public involvement. For example, the use of technical language and poor attendance are problems that most public involvement activities encounter, including the committees in this study. Also, a common problem identified in the literature is that conventional involvement techniques have been known to inhibit First Nations' involvement. As identified in this study, the advisory committee structure itself precluded involvement of First Nations and was identified as a process weakness of the committees. The reason for First Nations' reluctance to participate on the committees was mainly due to First Nations perceiving themselves as unique governments and not stakeholders. The effect was that First Nations organizations/communities wanted to be dealt with independently from the



committees. The fact that many Aboriginals do not want to participate in such a forum is problematic because many of the stereotypes and misunderstanding regarding their culture, knowledge and attachment to the land will likely be perpetuated.

Two other important process-related weaknesses identified by respondents were membership changes and too few meetings. Respondents asserted that continual member changes slowed the progress of their committees, introduced a steep learning curve for new members to catch up on issues that had been discussed, and limited new members' abilities to adequately represent their interests. The limited number of meetings during the year was also problematic. With so much information to cover at each meeting, the material was often reviewed in a cursory fashion providing little in the way of substance for the committees to influence, and as a result also affected members' ability to learn the specifics of forest management and planning.

One other important barrier to involvement was facilitating broader involvement through the committees. In terms of committee process, it was clear that more needed to be done to ensure members were working with their constituents. An important guideline to conducting advisory committee processes that facilitates broader involvement is to ensure that members keep in regular contact with their constituents. Most members were not engaging in regular contact with their organizations, and many respondents noted inadequate representation as a significant weakness of their committee. Some members did not even know whether the organization they represent knew that there was someone speaking on their behalf. Although respondents did realize the importance of informing their constituents, some members noted that they needed help to disseminate committee information to their respective organizations.



In terms of a broader public involvement role for the committees, many respondents felt this would be problematic. Only one committee in this study (Tolko) had attempted any broader involvement. Tolko's committee employed three mechanisms to facilitate broader involvement: 1) developed a newsletter that was distributed throughout its FMLA; 2) held meetings in different communities in its FMLA; and 3) developed a communications sub-committee to assist the company with its public involvement initiatives and also ensured communication on the FRAC was adequate. For the most part, however, attempts to facilitate broader involvement through the SACs took the form of sending minutes to local newspapers and inviting the public on field tours.

It was disconcerting to see the types of process problems discussed above still persist considering there are ways to rectify these problems that are well documented, and that there are public involvement practitioners available to assist in avoiding these common pitfalls. The following recommendations would improve weaknesses and help to fortify the strengths.

It is recommended that:

- 1. Each committee should ensure that SAC meetings are properly facilitated so meetings operate in an effective and efficient manner.*
- 2. Help should be provided to committee members to take the issues back to their constituents, and to ensure that the issues of their constituents are being brought to committee meetings.*
- 3. A meeting of the three forestry advisory committees should be conducted every few years to share ideas about implementing SFM and to collectively solve problems that burden the FPCs in the province.*



4. *First Nations should be encouraged to participate on the committees, and facilitators and members must be sensitive to the cultural differences. If First Nations are reluctant to participate, a separate First Nations committee should be developed with linkages between the committees, or have Aboriginals who are not part of the committee share their knowledge, perspectives and concerns about forestry.*
5. *To allow new members to participate meaningfully shortly after joining a committee, an advisory committee manual should be provided to new members to expedite the learning of issues. The following information should be addressed in such a manual: why and how the committee evolved; purpose and role of the committee (Terms of Reference); an introduction of the interests/organizations that committee members represent and their concerns regarding forestry; a list of important forestry terminology and concepts (i.e., SFM, ecosystem-based management, natural disturbance); list of main species of trees in the boreal forest with information regarding the environmental conditions required for each species; and an overview of wildlife and fishery issues as they relate to forestry. Where possible pictures should be used.*
6. *To expedite the time required to review documents, condensed laypersons versions of important documents for the committee to review such as AOPs should be developed. Such documents would reduce the time required to review the plans and would be in a language that members would understand. This would allow members to become more involved in the exercise and provide more meaningful input to their sponsor. These documents should be developed with the aid of the committee and should be provided well in advance of meetings.*
7. *More participatory involvement and problem-solving techniques should be used in conjunction with broader SFM issues. Techniques such as workshops, brainstorming sessions, fishbowl planning (a planning process in which all parties can express their support or opposition to an alternative before it is adopted, thereby bringing about a restructuring of the plan to the point where it is acceptable to all) and simulation games (primary focus is on experimenting in a risk-free environment with various alternatives (policies, programs, plans) to determine their impacts in a simulated environment) should be considered. Field tours should also be more frequent considering the multiple benefits members noted with this technique.*
8. *The considerable time lag between meetings needs to be addressed. This could be done in at least four ways: 1) more regular meetings throughout the year; 2) conference calls between meetings; 3) a committee interactive webpage; and 4) provision of a small take home exercises to be addressed at a following meeting.*
9. *The committees should be better funded and operate more independently in order for the SACs to have more internal control of the process.*



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10. *Complete information should be provided to members well in advance of meetings so members can come prepared to meetings with questions and informed opinions about the issues.*

6.3 Committee outcome strengths and weaknesses

There were four outcomes strengths of the committees that respondents identified:

1) learning; 2) committee members' optimism about advisory committee processes; 3) relationship-building; and 4) ability to influence site-specific forest management and planning decisions. A process-related strength that was largely responsible for many of the outcome successes was openness (i.e., the companies' willingness to disclose information; the companies and members' willingness to listen to the concerns of others, and the companies' acceptance of criticism). For example, an important dimension of openness that facilitated relationship-building and that allowed the committees to influence site-specific forest management and planning decisions, was through candid discussions about forest practices and the sponsors' acceptance of criticism. Moreover, the advisory committee process, that continually brings the same individuals in contact to openly discuss forestry issues, facilitated understanding and learning about both forest management and the concerns, perspectives, and values of other members. One of the major outcome strengths of the committees was the amount of learning that occurred as a result of participation. While members who had relatively little knowledge about forest management and planning were fascinated with the site-specific aspects of forestry, members who were already knowledgeable about forestry were keen to learn about members' values and concerns. All three FPCs in this study found the local knowledge



that members possessed regarding the landscape to be very useful.

A number of impediments to learning became evident during this study, however. Respondents asserted that language (i.e., forestry jargon) was a problem that made the material difficult to comprehend. Some members also felt marginalized from the group during meetings because of the sophistication of discussions. Language was identified as a large barrier that limited some members' ability to learn material and, therefore, limited their ability to participate meaningfully in discussions.

Through the interviews carried out for this research, it also became apparent that the companies viewed their respective committees largely as an opportunity to educate the members about their activities, and not as an opportunity for the companies to learn from SAC members. Company staff were identified and observed as being fixated on keeping their SAC up to date about the companies' activities and attempting to legitimize their actions. The effect was that meetings largely consisted of information provision from the companies to the SACs with little opportunity for the companies to learn from SAC members. Committee members have a wealth of knowledge to share, but members were not being afforded sufficient opportunity to share their knowledge because company staff were monopolizing the time at meetings.

It also became clear through the interview process that, although respondents did learn a variety of things related to forestry, the scope of what was learned was limited. By design, learning focused largely on the activities of the sponsors and did not explore other important elements of SFM such as NTFP, economics of forestry, and incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge into forestry.



There were two major outcome weaknesses of the committees in this study: 1) the inability of the SACs to participate in and influence, in particular, broader decisions relating to forest management and planning; and 2) issues surrounding time (i.e., timing of involvement, timing of the dispersal of information in relation to decision-making, timing and length of meetings, and time to review documents). Both of these issues plague many forms of public involvement, but they can be rectified. The lack of committee input to a broader range of forest management and planning decisions might have been due to two reasons: 1) a lack of clarity in the direction given to the FPCs in the licences that created each committee; and 2) inadequate time taken by the committees and their sponsors to discuss and explore the committees' role and how to best utilize members' knowledge. The later reason was evident based on the ambiguity surrounding both the involvement of the committees in planning and decision-making. It became apparent through the interview process that both SAC members and company staff were confused about how to best involve the committees. The effect was that the SACs were only afforded the opportunity to influence forestry problems at the operational level.

The most important dimension of time that limited the scope of what the SACs could participate in and influence was timing of involvement. Members recognized that their advice was sought only after plans were developed. They were not involved in more strategic level activities such as participating in the development of annual and long-term plans or developing ways to make forestry more sustainable. All committees were to play an important role in reviewing annual operating plans. LP engaged their SAC much earlier and continually throughout plan development, affording its committee more influence on management and planning decisions. LP's members attributed the



success of their committee to such high levels of involvement with the opportunity to influence substantive decisions, although still largely at operational and strategic levels. It is imperative that both timing of involvement and involvement of the committees in broader forest management and planning decisions-making are addressed in order to make involvement more meaningful. The following recommendations are ways to rectify the outcome weaknesses associated with the committees.

It is recommended that:

- 1. Adequate time should be provided for presenting and discussing each topic addressed at meetings, even if it requires more frequent meetings.*
- 2. The wealth of knowledge that committee members possess should be better utilized by encouraging members to present at committee meetings. For example, have First Nations members expose the committee to traditional ecological knowledge.*
- 3. It should be reiterated at meetings that the forum is not only for members to learn the concerns of their sponsor, but is a forum for the company to learn from the members, and that such learning goes beyond influencing cutblock locations.*
- 4. Questionnaires used by Tolko to identify strengths and weaknesses of its committee and how to improve the exercise should be conducted by the other two committees plus repeated regularly by Tolko (Appendix 11).*
- 5. The sponsors' should indicate to their respective committees how their input is being considered and used in the decisions – this would show the utility of the committees, and members would realize the importance of their input, possibly resulting in better attendance at meetings.*
- 6. The advisory committees should facilitate an open and transparent process due to the multiple benefits it has on other aspects of the committees.*
- 7. The scope of what is being considered at committees should be broadened to incorporate more aspects of SFM considering the companies' activities are guided by the principles of SFM.*



8. *Since there is ambiguity surrounding both committee involvement in forest management and planning decision-making and how committee input could best be used, a meeting should be dedicated to discussing the above issues.*
9. *The committees should be engaged in both operational and normative levels of forest management and planning as opposed to strictly operational level involvement. This would allow for more meaningful involvement with better input provided by members.*
10. *The FPCs need to consider developing public participation programs. The SACs should be integrated and an integral part of each company's public participation program. To date, the FPCs are only employing public involvement techniques on an issue-by-issue basis. If any of the FPCs are considering certification through the Canadian Standards Association, the standard requires FPCs to have a public involvement program.*

6.4 Concluding remarks

The advisory committee approach in a forestry context shows promise.

Respondents valued such an approach because it allowed for active and on-going participation not usually afforded through other conventional forms of involvement.

Despite this sentiment, the committees have not reached their full potential, especially in regard to forestry planning activities. While the committees participated in and affected site-specific decisions such as buffer widths and location of cutblocks, they were never part of plan or project development.

LP's committee was the most mature of the three committees. It was also the committee whose members were most pleased with the processes and outcomes of the exercise. There were numerous reasons for this such as the committee's level and timing of involvement with the activities of its sponsor, good facilitation, the company's willingness to incorporate SAC concerns into its decisions, and the company indicating to



the committee how its input was being considered and used. These are valuable approaches to involvement at the operational level that could easily be expanded.



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Appendix 1

Interview Schedule for Advisory Committee Members

Background

1. What is your place of work and occupation?
2. How long have you been participating on the SAC?
3. How frequently do you attend SAC meetings? - percentage
4. How did you become aware of the opportunity to participate on the SAC?
5. Why did you agree to participate on the SAC?
6. What interest(s) do you represent on the SAC?
7. What is the nature of your group's interest in forest management?
8. Do you feel the SAC is representative of all interested and potentially affected individuals?

___ Yes ___ No

If no, what other interests should be included?

Decision-Making

1. What is the SACs central mandate?
2. Was your role on the SAC explained to you? – If yes, how and what is it
3. Do you and fellow SAC members have the opportunity to set the objectives of SAC meetings?
4. How is decision-making structure on the committee? – strengths/weaknesses of this process?
5. How does the group decide, for example, what the forest company needs input on, how the information should be provided – what the group wants to provide input on?



6. Do you feel the committee influences the company's forest management and planning decisions? – explain
7. Does the company demonstrate how SAC input is considered and used in their decision-making? - explain
8. What are the main issues the SAC have discussed and provided input on?
9. Do you feel you have sufficient information on which to base your input?
10. Was the information that was presented to you to review and provide input on easy to understand? - explain
11. How is the information presented to the SAC (slide shows, site-visits, etc.) which of these methods do you prefer and why?
12. Was sufficient time provided for you to formulate your opinions and to discuss the issues being dealt with on the SAC? - explain
13. Has your participation in the process contributed to an increased feeling of trust toward the company? - explain
14. Do you and fellow SAC members have the opportunity to participate and voice your concerns during SAC meetings – how is this facilitated?
15. What were you hoping would be accomplished by participating on the SAC? Were your expectations met? Why, why not?
16. Do you communicate to the people/organization you represent about the progress and concerns of the SAC? If yes, how often and what is discussed?

Public Involvement

1. Do you view the concept of a SAC as an effective method of public involvement in forest management and planning? - explain
2. Do you consider your SAC successful as a method of involvement?
If yes, why is it successful? If no, why is it not successful?
3. What do you see as the barriers to involvement on the SAC?



4. Does the SAC participate in any other public involvement activities outside of the SAC? - explain
5. How might the SAC engage the broader public with its activities?
6. What other public involvement activities would you encourage forest products companies to use other than SACs and why?
7. What recommendations would you provide to improve public involvement in forest management and planning through SACs?

Learning

1. What is the single most important thing you learned from your participation on the SAC?
2. What other types of things did you learn from your participation?
3. How did this learning occur?
4. Are there topics you felt you should have learned more about before decisions were taken? - explain
5. Were there improvements in understanding among SAC members of the forest issues being dealt with by the SAC? Were committee members accepting of fellow members opinions, concerns, and values?
6. Did your participation change the way you thought of any of the SAC members?
7. How might learning occur more effectively on the SAC?



Appendix 2

Interview Schedule for Facilitators

Background

1. What is your place of work and occupation?
2. How long have you facilitated the SAC?
3. Do you have any formal training in facilitation/conflict resolution – if so, what, has it been useful when facilitating advisory committee meetings? - explain
4. How is the recruitment of SAC members facilitated - do you participate?
5. Are alternates required for SAC members?
6. Is there any problem with attendance at SAC meetings?
7. Do you feel the SAC is representative of all interested and potentially affected individuals?

___ Yes ___ No

If no, what other interests should be included?

Decision-Making

1. What is the SACs central mandate?
2. How is decision-making structured on the committee? – strength/weaknesses of this process
3. How does the group decide, for example, what the forest company needs input on; how the information should be provided – what the group wants to provide input on?
4. Do you feel the committee influences the company's forest management and planning decisions? - explain
5. Does the company demonstrate how SAC input is considered and used in their decision-making? - explain



6. What were you hoping would be accomplished through the use of the SAC?
Were your expectations met? Why, why not

Learning

1. What was taught during advisory committee meetings?
2. What do you think advisory committee members should have learned?
3. What public involvement techniques do you and others use to try facilitate learning? (i.e., site visits, lectures)
4. Why were these methods chosen?
5. Has there been any improvement in understanding among SAC members of the forest issues being dealt with by the SAC? Were committee members accepting of fellow members opinions, concerns, and values?

Public Involvement

1. Do you view the concept of a SAC as an effective method of public involvement in forest management and planning? - explain
2. Do you consider your SAC successful as a method of involvement?
If yes, why is it successful? If no, why is it not successful?
3. What do you see as the barriers to involvement on the SAC?
4. Has the SAC participated in any other public involvement activities outside the SAC? If yes, explain.
5. Is the general public allowed to sit in and participate in advisory committee meetings, If yes, is it advertised? do people come? If no, why not
6. Is the information provided to SAC members available to the general public? If no, is there any reason why not?
7. How might the SAC engage the broader public with its activities?



8. What other public involvement techniques would you encourage forest products to use other than SACs and why?
9. What recommendations would you provide to improve public involvement in forest management and planning through SACs?
10. What SAC members do you feel would be willing to participate in an in-depth interview for the purpose of this study.



Appendix 3

The research project being undertaken is a Sustainable Forest Management Network (SFMN) project and is part of a larger study being conducted by Dr. John Sinclair, Natural Resources Institute, and Dr. Peter Miller, Centre for Forest Interdisciplinary Research (C-FIR). The project will be focusing on public involvement in forest management and planning through the use of Stakeholder Advisory Committees (SACs). In addition to analyzing ____ SAC, the SACs of the two other forest products companies that operate in the province, _____ and _____, will also be examined. The specific study objectives of the project are to: 1) establish the overall success of SACs in forest management and planning in Manitoba; 2) determine the involvement techniques used in the advisory committee process and identify the preferred techniques; 3) consider whether informal learning occurred among the participants on the committees; 4) determine what barriers exist to involvement on the committees; and 6) provide recommendations on how to improve the public involvement capabilities of SACs in SFM.

The research methodology I plan to employ will include in-depth interviews and observing committee meetings. Interviews will be carried out with selected SAC members and facilitators. Interviews will be conducted during site-visits to the location where each SAC operates: Pine Falls, Swan River, and The Pas.

I look forward to hearing from you, and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Brett McGurk
M.N.R.M. Candidate
Natural Resources Institute
303-70 Dysart Rd.
R3T 2N2
(204) -----



Appendix 4

Introductory Statement

My name is Brett McGurk, and I am a graduate student at the Natural Resources Institute (NRI), University of Manitoba.

The research project being undertaken is a Sustainable Forest Management Network (SFMN) project and is part of a larger study being conducted by Dr. John Sinclair, NRI, and Dr. Peter Miller, Center for Forest Interdisciplinary Research (C-FIR). The purpose of the study is to improve understanding of the contribution that advisory committees make to public involvement in forest management and planning, including SFM. The specific study objectives were to: 1) establish the overall success of SACs in forest management and planning in Manitoba; 2) determine the involvement techniques used in the advisory committee process and identify the preferred techniques; 3) consider whether informal learning occurred among the participants on the committees; 4) determine what barriers exist to involvement on the committees; and 6) provide recommendations on how to improve the public involvement capabilities of SACs in SFM.

The interview will take approximately one hour and will cover a range of topics regarding your experience on _____ SAC. You are under no obligation to participate in the interview. Through the course of the interview, please feel free to engage in discussion as much as you would like. You can, at any time, end the interview or refuse to answer individual questions. In the event that you do not wish to answer a specific question, simply respond "no comment". Your responses will be held in strict confidence, and the results of the study will be aggregated with no reference made to specific participants.

The University of Manitoba Joint Faculty Ethics Review Board has approved this proposal. If you have any questions or concerns related to this matter, please contact Ms. Margaret Bowman, Ethics Committee Secretariat at (204) 474-7122 or Dr. Emdad Haque, Director, NRI at (204) 474-8373.

Brett McGurk
M.N.R.M. Candidate
Natural Resources Institute
University of Manitoba
(204)



Appendix 5

Participant observation guide

Physical setting

1. Describe the physical environment where the meetings take place
2. What objects are in the room (educational and resource technologies)
3. How are the people in the space arranged or organized

Participants

1. Who is present – how many, what organizations do they represent, approx. age, gender
2. Who is not present but should be
3. What are the obvious characteristics of the participants
4. What is the power dynamic
5. Does the facilitator try draw out quiet participants - what methods are used
6. In what capacity does the facilitator act – does he appear neutral
7. Overall impression of participants with regard to the meeting

Discourse

1. What is the content of the conversation
2. Who speaks, who listens, who is spoken to
3. Who speaks the most at meetings, who does not

Subtle factors

1. Activities – informal and planned
2. Nonverbal communication such as dress, gestures, etc.
3. What does not happen, especially if it was planned

Researcher(s) affect on the environment

1. How has my role affected the context
2. What are my feelings as to “what is going on”
3. Observer comments: feelings, reactions, hunches, and initial interpretations



Activities and interactions

1. What were the learning activities (what were the activities)
2. What is going on
3. What are the norms or rules that structure the activity
4. How long is the activity
5. Does the forum rely on problem-solving or simply information provision
6. Does the workshop promote action or passivity



TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Pine Falls Paper Company Limited (PFPC)
Sustainable Forest Management Advisory Committee (SFMAC)**

SCOPE

The SFMAC will serve as one level of public involvement in PFPC's forest management activities on Forest Management Licence 01 (FML 01). Other levels of public consultation may include broad general public consultation, individual consultation with First Nation communities and individual consultation with affected forest users on a site specific basis.

The SFMAC will advise in the preparation of Annual Operating and Renewal Plans and the Ten Year Development Plans. They will also advise in the implementation of a Sustainable Forest Management System and an Ecosystem Based Management approach or any other relevant philosophy which may develop in the future.

PURPOSE

The SFMAC is established, as per the PFPC Environment Act Licence for their forestry operations, to provide organized and regular public input and advice into PFPC's forest management planning and operations. The SFMAC is established to select issues, consider and recommend actions and policies to PFPC. It acts in an advisory capacity only and PFPC is not obligated to accept the recommendations, however, PFPC will formally respond to every issue raised with documented reasons for acceptance, modification or rejection. PFPC expects to hold open and meaningful consultation with the SFMAC during the preparation of annual and long term forest management plans and in any other relevant areas or emerging philosophies of forest management, including all of the aspects of the forest. The SFMAC is expected to share their knowledge of the forest and to provide advice to PFPC.

OBJECTIVES

1. To provide an opportunity for the sharing of interests, values and concerns of all Committee members as they pertain to forestry activities on the FML 01.

2. To provide a forum representing a broad cross section of interests to discuss and provide input to PFPC's forestry activities, environmental practices and public involvement initiatives.
3. To advise PFPC in the development of forestry plans that implement the principles of Ecosystem Based Management.
4. To identify individuals who may be impacted by proposed forestry activities to allow for further consultation by PFPC on a site specific basis.
5. To communicate Committee activities to interested individuals, groups, organizations or communities.

OPERATION OF THE SFMAC

Members of the SFMAC must be committed to participate in a fair and honest sharing of views and at all times demonstrate respect for all committee members and guests. The Committee will work towards reaching a consensus realizing that, with the divergent nature of the groups, compromise rather than consensus may be required. The Committee will remain flexible and adaptive as dictated by societal and scientific changes and discoveries.

- The SFMAC will be chaired by PFPC; however, the Committee may request an independent facilitator to chair identified sessions or meetings.
- PFPC will pay mileage, meal and accommodation (if required) expenses of members who are not covered by their employer.
- Individual SFMAC members will not be requested to represent any position advanced by the Committee or other individuals. However, they must be prepared to consider opinions and differing positions advanced by others.

- In the interest of continuity, a commitment by SFMAC members to attend all meetings is expected. An alternate should be identified for each member organization to ensure representation at meetings. Alternates will be encouraged to attend certain meetings/field trips that are deemed by the Chairman to be a prerequisite to committee function.
- The SFMAC will meet at least four times per year with the frequency of meetings decided by the SFMAC or at the request of the Chairman.
- Minutes of the meetings will be taken by a local person hired by PFPC and will be distributed within two weeks of each meeting to each member.
- Consensus will be strived for in the operation of the Committee. Any dissent will be recorded in the minutes. A Committee vote will be used if the Committee feels it is desirable and necessary.
- Information required by the Committee will be provided in a timely manner. Information made available by individuals or organizations must be forwarded to the Chairman for distribution. Information of a confidential nature should be presented as such, with any use by PFPC respecting this confidentiality. Information or opinions should be substantiated by acceptable references wherever possible.
- Some areas of discussion may require the assistance of outside experts or resource persons. As these areas become apparent, PFPC will arrange to have these individuals present at a subsequent meeting.
- Individuals wishing to make a formal presentation will be required to notify the Chair in advance that they wish to make a presentation to the SFMAC.
- SFMAC members will decide if open public meetings are required to solicit opinions or suggestions on forest management activities on the FML 01.

- Identified issues will be recorded and maintained on a continuously updated list and will not be removed until resolved. The status of resolved issues will be reported back to the Committee if applicable.

Appendix 7
**TOLKO MANITOBA FOREST RESOURCE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FRAC)**

Background

As a component of on-going public involvement in Tolko Manitoba's forest management activities, a Forest Resource Advisory Committee (FRAC) for the Tolko Manitoba Forest Management License (FML) Area has been established.

Purpose

The FRAC will serve as an on-going forum where representatives from a broad cross-section of interests can share knowledge, interests, views, values and concerns with respect to forest management activities that are to be conducted in the Tolko FML Area. This forum is intended to allow for open, fair and orderly discussion of these matters.

Objectives

The objectives of the FRAC include:

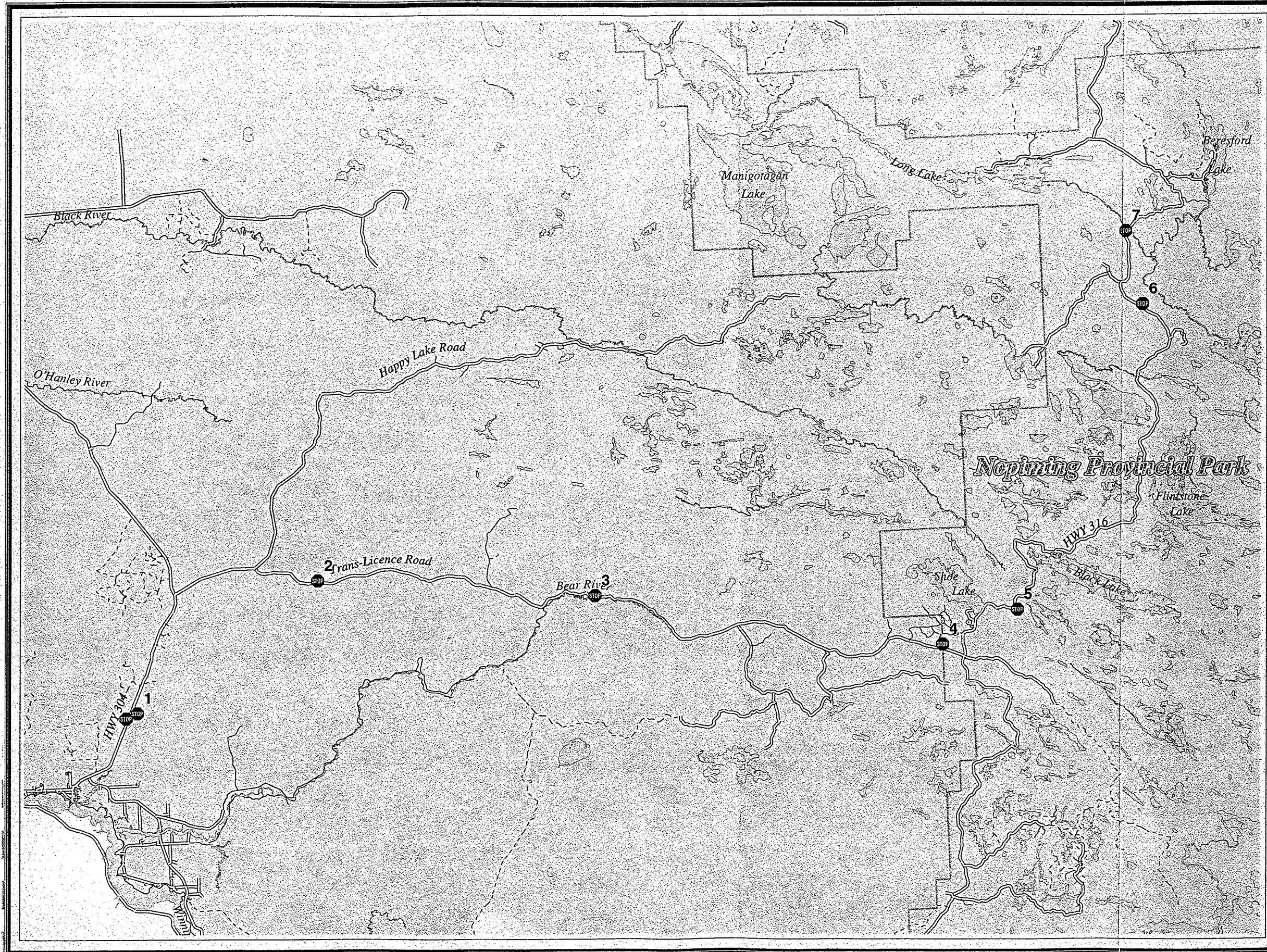
- to provide an opportunity for diverse interests to discuss forest management activities proposed for the Tolko FML Area.*
- to provide an opportunity for Tolko Manitoba Inc. to learn about interests, values, and concerns of Committee members as they pertain to forest management activities in the FML Area.*
- to contribute to and comment on Company forest management plans and environmental practices.*
- to provide a forum where the public can present issues, interest and concerns regarding forest management planning and operations within the Tolko FML Area.*
- to provide a forum representing a broad cross-section of interests which can be consulted with respect to matters to be addressed in the approval processes for Tolko Manitoba's Forest Management Plans.*

Operation of the FRAC

The following are proposed as preliminary "ground rules" for the FRAC to conduct its meetings. Once the FRAC is established, it is expected the Committee will wish to review this suggested approach and finalize how it is to function.

- *The FRAC will be chaired by a representative from Tolko Manitoba.*
- *Individual FRAC members will not be requested to present any position advanced by the Committee or other individuals. However, they must be prepared to consider opinions and differing positions advanced by others.*
- *In the interest of continuity, a commitment by FRAC members to attend all meetings is expected. When this is not possible, an alternate may participate.*
- *The FRAC will meet as necessary with the frequency of meetings decided by the FRAC.*
- *Minutes of the meetings will be taken by Tolko Manitoba and will be distributed within one week of each meeting to each member.*
- *Information required by the Committee will be provided in a timely manner. Information made available by individuals or organizations must be forwarded to the Chairman for distribution. Information of a confidential nature should be presented as such. Information or opinions must be substantiated with acceptable references.*
- *Some areas of discussion may require the assistance of outside experts or resource persons. As these areas become apparent, Tolko Manitoba will arrange to have these individuals present at a subsequent meeting.*
- *Some FRAC meetings, or portions of meetings, will be open to the public to provide an opportunity for non-members to express their opinions or suggestions related to the various forest management activities.*
- *Individuals wishing to make a formal presentation to the FRAC will be required to notify the Chair or one of the FRAC members in advance that they wish to make a presentation to the FRAC.*

March 3, 1999



**Forest
Management
Licence 01**

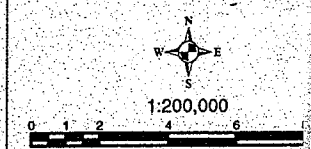


Area of Interest

**Sustainable Forest
Advisory Committee**

TOUR
October 5, 200

- Stop 1 - Competition Effect on Planted Seedling
- Stop 2 - Natural Regeneration
- Stop 3 - Plantation Tending
- Stop 4 - Two-Pass Harvest
- Stop 5 - Planting & Road Decommissioning
- Stop 6 - Bridge Removal & Road Decommissioning
- Stop 7 - Manigotagan River



❖FRAC Newsletter❖

TOLKO
INDUSTRIES LTD.

Forest Resource Advisory Committee

Manitoba Woodlands, Tolko Industries Ltd.

Volume 1 Issue 1

Fall, 1999

Who is FRAC?

Background:

As a component of on-going public involvement in Tolko's forest management activities, a Forest Resource Advisory Committee (FRAC) for Tolko's Forest Management Licence (FML) Area was established in 1996. The FRAC serves as an on going forum where representatives from a broad cross-section of interests can share interests, knowledge, views, values and concerns with respect to forest management activities that are to be conducted on the Tolko FML Area. This forum is intended to allow for open, fair and orderly discussion of these matters.

The objectives of the FRAC include:

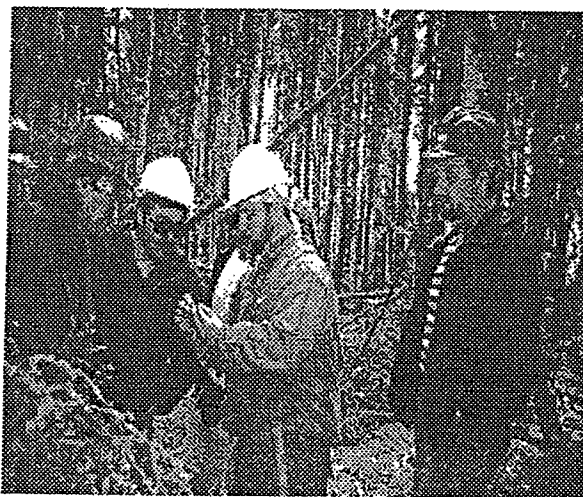
- ~ to provide an opportunity for diverse interests to discuss forest management activities proposed for the Tolko FML area.

- ~ to provide an opportunity for Tolko to learn about interests, values and concerns of Committee members as they pertain to forest management activities on the FML Area.

- ~ to contribute to and comment on Tolko's forest management plans and environmental practices.

- ~ to provide a forum where the public can present issues, interests and concerns regarding forest management planning and operations within Tolko FML area

- ~ to provide a forum representing a broad cross-section of interests which can be consulted, with respect to matters to be addressed in the approval process for Tolko's Forest Management plans.



A field trip taken by FRAC committee members to see the sights.

Did you know?

- ~ The first sawmill was built in 1877 in Prince Albert.

- ~ That The Pas Band operated their first sawmill located in Devon in 1905.

- ~ That Finger Lumber's first mill in 1910 was 208 feet long and 64 feet wide built of B.C. fir.

- ~ That the Town of The Pas was incorporated in 1912 and that Herman Finger became the first mayor.

- ~ That the Finger Lumber Co. was sold to the Winton brothers of Wisconsin, U.S.A. and became The Pas Lumber Co. in 1919.

FRAC's First: "News letter"

The FRAC is committed to improving communications, both internally and externally. A communications Sub-Committee recommended the development of the FRAC news letter. Thanks to the assistance of NORMAN Regional Development Corporation staff volunteered by FRAC member and NORMAN General Manager Roger Guy, you are now reading the FIRST EDITION of our newsletter.



Inside This Issue

Regional Question and Answers	Page 2
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June '99' Meeting	Page 3
The Natural Resources Management Technology Program (NRMT)	Page 4

Please feel free to copy and distribute Newsletter to colleagues and friends.

Manitoba Forestry Association

The Manitoba Forestry Association is an organization dedicated to working with governments with a vision to understanding, enhancing and promoting the beneficial nature of our Manitoba forests. The Association works with the federal and provincial governments in tree planting and conservation activities, emphasizing education and public information. Through education we can create better understanding of the role that renewable natural resources (forests, soil, water, wildlife) play in our lives and the need for their wise use and management. Association activities include: Conservation Classes in schools; Sandilands, Interlake, Duck Mountain, and Atikameg Forest Centers; participation in Wildlife and Forest Weeks; operation of a Forest Museum; an annual school poster contest; promotion of tree planting for reforestation and as farm shelter belts and production of Conservation Kits for use by teachers. The Manitoba Forestry Association commends Tolko for seeking advice from the Forestry Resource Advisory Committee. The Manitoba Forest Association also commends Tolko for its support of the Atikameg Forest Center. Without the support of Tolko and the forest industry, Atikameg, an important resource and facility, would not operate. If you need more information, pamphlets, etc. please call Diane Beaven, Executive Director at 453-3182 in Winnipeg or Karen Scheffers in The Pas at 623-3983.



Regional Trivia

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Where has western Canada's oldest winter festival been held since 1916?</p> <p>2) What famous Manitoban statue was designed by American cartoonist, Al Capp, of L'il Abner fame?</p> <p>3) What is Manitoba's highest waterfall accessible by road?</p> <p>4) What is the lowest point in Manitoba?</p> <p>5) What Manitoba community is home to the Gypsy Bakery which has a 100 seat restaurant and hopes shortly to resume a fly-in bread-and-bun service to outlying Eastern Arctic communities?</p> | <p>6) Name the first trading post established in Manitoba.</p> <p>7) Internationally known rock star Tom Cochrane originally came from what Manitoba town?</p> <p>8) What metal led to the founding of Thompson?</p> <p>9) The shoreline of Hudson Bay is a natural breeding ground for what animal?</p> <p>10) Ken Baumgartner with the Toronto Maple Leafs is from what northern Manitoba town?</p> |
|--|---|

Answers on Pg. 4

Frac Members

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>D&C Sangster &
J&S Lorden</p> <p>Jack Forsyth
Doug Northcott
William Trowell
Derrick Wainio
Trent Hreno
W.E. Jonas
Rick Hubbs
Dennis Lamb
Wilf Palaniuk
Fred Hobbs</p> | <p>Ron Spence
Judy Kolada
Reg Meade
Dave Buck
Denis Beaudry
Wes Jeske
Maria Moore
E.B. Johanson
Cecil Asmus
Bert Lagimodiere
Dan Soprovich
Gary Kozar
Lloyd Easter
Ward Perchuk</p> |
|---|---|

June '99' Meeting

The June FRAC meeting was well attended by members. Some of the meeting highlights include:

- ~ an update on Tolko's operations in Manitoba

- ~ a presentation on Tolko's Forest Management Planning and Operating Practices Operators Guide- a field guide to the Best Management Practices.

- ~ an overview of the 2000 Annual Harvest and Renewal Plan and response to questions

- ~ a presentation on Tolko's consultations regarding priorities for baseline monitoring and ecosystem research.

The dates for meetings in 1999-2000 have been set as follows: September 28; January 18; and May 19. These dates were set in response to requests from FRAC members for more advance notice of meetings. It is hoped that this advanced scheduling will make it easier for more members to be able to attend meetings.

Welcome new members:

We are pleased to welcome two new FRAC members. Derrick Wainio replaces Al Yaskiw as a representative of Kelsey School Division and Bert Lagimodiere replaces Gary Hopper as the Town of The Pas representative. Our thanks go to Gary and Al for their contributions to the FRAC.

**White Spruce
Manitoba's Official Tree**

White Spruce is well suited to be Manitoba's provincial tree. It has been used extensively by early and modern cultures, it is found virtually throughout the province and it is esthetically pleasing.

The White Spruce is a dense evergreen tree with pyramidal crown composed of horizontal branches; often the lower branches having upturned tips.

- * bark: thin, gray to brown scales which flake off readily on older trees; inner bark cinnamon to light silverish-white.

- * twigs: irregular whorled, yellowish-brown, becoming darker with age, covered with small elongated, spirally arranged leaf bases making twigs and branches rough. Buds 1 cm. long with many overlapping brown scales.

- * leaves: single sharp-pointed, needle-like, stiff, foursided whitened along sides, up to 2 cm. long; more numerous on upper side of twig.

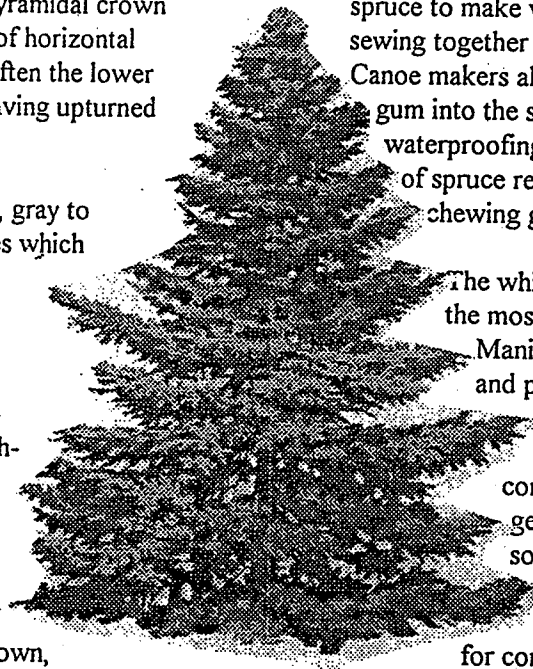
- * flowers: appear in May solitary on preceding year's twig, red yellow, oval.

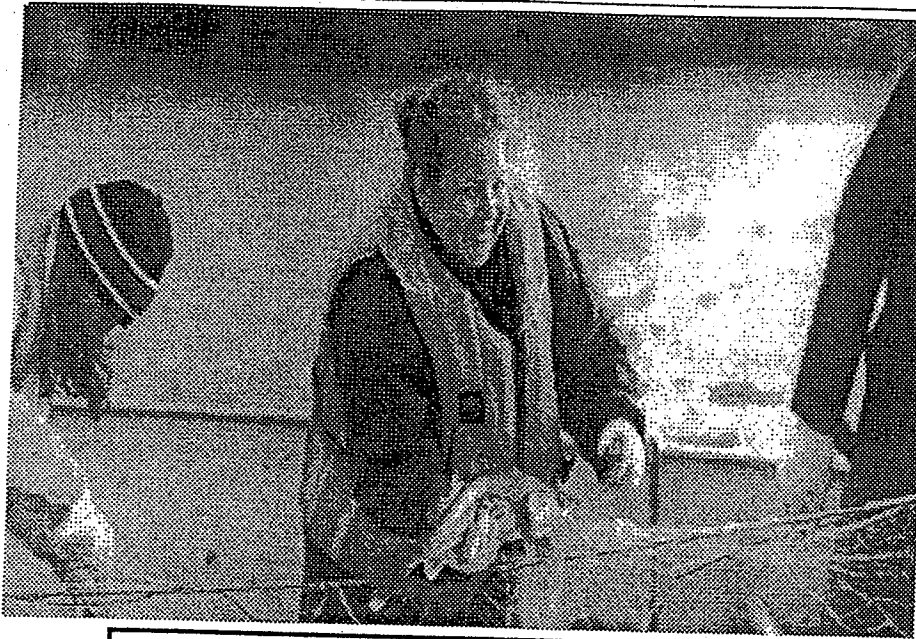
- * fruit: cones that usually drop in one year but some often persist scattered about the crown; cigar shaped, 3 to 5 cm. long; scales brown, thin.

Early cultures boiled and chewed the long surface roots of white spruce to make watap- a cord for sewing together birch bark canoes. Canoe makers also worked spruce gum into the seams for waterproofing, possibly chewing of spruce resin (a natural chewing gum).

The white spruce is one of the most important trees in Manitoba for lumber and pulpwood. The lumber is used in building construction, for general millwork, sounding boards for musical instruments, and for construction plywood. The wood is widely used for containers, particularly for food because it is almost odorless and tasteless.

White spruce grows in most climatic and environmental conditions in Manitoba providing food and shelter for a variety of wildlife species.





The Natural Resource Management Technology students on a field trip.

The Natural Resources Management Technology Program (NRMT)

Keewatin Community College has offered the two-year diploma program in Natural Resources Management Technology since September 1984. The college accepts 25 to 35 students per year and graduate 12 or 13 students annually.

The program is technician-oriented, with equal emphasis on skills associated with fisheries, wildlife, water resources and forest management. Students receive approximately 1876 hours of instruction, roughly half of which is comprised of fieldwork or laboratory activities.

The program is academically demanding, and emphasizes commonly used methodologies to gather field and laboratory data, the use of associated equipment, the statistical analysis of data, and report writing using computer applications. For more information on this course call Keewatin Community College at (204)627-8529.



Visit the Tolko web site at WWW.TOLKO.COM

Manitoba's Protected Areas Initiative

There are a number of areas of special interest (protected areas) being proposed in Northern Manitoba by the provincial government. There is concern throughout the region regarding the proposed areas and what effect it will have on our resource based industries. Many are one industry communities and the effects could adversely effect their economy. For more information in this initiative or to find out about Community Public hearings contact Manitoba Natural Resources or Norman RDC at 1-800-665-4774.

Answers: from Pg. 2

- 1) The Pas, it includes the World Championship Dog Sled Races.
- 2) "Flinty" the statue of Josiah Fintabbatey Flontain, which guards the entrance to the city of Flin Flon and stands 24 feet tall.
- 3) Piscew Falls, about half-way between Wabowden and Thompson
- 4) The lowest point is the shore of Hudson Bay.
- 5) Churchill
- 6) Fort York in 1612
- 7) Lynn Lake
- 8) Nickel
- 9) The Polar Bear
- 10) Flin Flon

Turn in Poachers 1-800-782-0076 Report Forest Fires

If you have any stories you would like to share in our next issue of the FRAC Newsletter contact Norman Regional Development Corp. in Thompson at (204)778-8155, Toll free 1-800-665-4774 or fax to (204)778-4192.
Tolko Ind.
623-5220
R9A 151
Fax (204) 623-4560

F R A C Newsletter

Tolko Forest Resource Advisory Committee

Volume 1 Issue 3

Summer 2000

Tolko 2001 Annual Harvest and Renewal Plan Community Consultations

As in previous years, Tolko will be holding open houses in a number of communities throughout northern Manitoba and in Winnipeg, to obtain public feedback relative to its 2001 Annual Harvest and Renewal Plan. Dates, times and locations are as follows:

<u>Community</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Pikwitonei	June 19	1 p.m.	Community Hall
Wabowden	June 20	7 p.m.	Community Hall
Moose Lake	June 20	7 p.m.	Community Council Office
Norway House	June 21	1 p.m.	Fort Island Arena
Grand Rapids	June 21	7 p.m.	Roman Catholic Hall
Sherridon	June 21	7 p.m.	Community Council Office
Nelson House	June 22	1 p.m.	Gilbert McDonald Arena
Easterville	June 22	7 p.m.	Community Hall
Cormorant	June 22	7 p.m.	Community Hall
Thompson	June 26	7 p.m.	Tolko Office, 3-20 Berens Road
The Pas	June 26	7 p.m.	Tolko Woodlands Office
Cranberry Portage	June 27	7 p.m.	Legion Hall
Thicket Portage	June 27	1 p.m.	Community Hall
Flin Flon	June 28	7 p.m.	Library
Lynn Lake	June 28	7 p.m.	Legion Hall
Snow Lake	June 29	7 p.m.	To be announced
Cross Lake	To be announced		
Pukatawagan	To be announced		
Winnipeg	July 5	7 p.m.	International Inn

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Bill Jonas Receives CARE Award

It's a given today that forest products companies replace the trees they harvest. But before 1984 in Manitoba, a company-directed reforestation program was a novel concept. It was largely through the initiative of Bill Jonas, a long-time employee with Tolko's predecessor companies in Manitoba, that such a program became a reality.

Jonas recently received the Dr. Alan Beaven CARE Award in recognition of his pioneering work.

(see JONAS p. 6)

Tolko FRAC Members

Carpenter's Clearwater Lake
Lodge/ Grass River Corridor
Tourism Association/ IWA
Canada, Local 1-324/
Keewatin Community
College/ Kelsey School
Division No. 45/ Manitoba
Conservation Environmental
Approvals/ Manitoba
Forestry Association/
Manitoba Conservation, NW
Region/ Manitoba Lodges
and Outfitters Association/
Mountain Quota Holders
Association/ Moose Lake
Logging (1992) Ltd./
Manitoba Trappers
Association/ Manitoba
Wildlife Federation/ Nelson
House First Nation Trust
Office/ Norman Regional
Development Corporation/
Northern Association of
Community Councils/ NW
Wild Rice Growers Coop
Ltd./ RM of Kelsey/ RM of
Mountain/ Setting Lake
Cottage Owners Association/
Swampy Cree Tribal Council/
The Pas History & Heritage
Society/ The Pas Regional
Metis Cultural Centre Inc./
Town of The Pas/ TREE

Anglers take note ...

At Athapapuskow Lake, all
walleye between 55 cm
(22 in.) and 70 cm (28 in.)
must be released.

At Clearwater Lake, all pike
over 75 cm (30 in.)
must be released.

For more information on
limits and closures on
these and other Manitoba
lakes, consult the Manitoba
Anglers' Guide 2000,
or call (204) 945-6784
or 1-800-214-6497.

PRE-HARVEST FOREST INVESTIGATION (PHFI) SURVEYS

When Julie Walt heads off to work, she doesn't just pack a lunch. She's got to make sure she's got her compass, hip chain box, diameter tape, plot cord, increment bore, soil auger and clinometer. Altogether that's about 20 to 30 pounds of gear, all tucked away in various spots on a vest that she wears.

Then there's the three litres of drinking water, the first aid kit, insect repellent ...

Obviously, you've got to be in shape if you're going to spend up to ten hours in the bush toting all that stuff. Walt is used to it. As a Pre-Harvest Forest Investigation (PHFI) surveyor, the gear that she carries all relates to her main task; gathering the data needed to make decisions about when and where to harvest trees.

PHFI surveys are used to collect a wide range of information relating to proposed cutblocks. Information gathered includes data relating to tree age, height and diameter (the clinometer is the instrument used to measure height), soils, stand health, wildlife, resource users and regeneration status. This information is used primarily by Tolko's planners in planning harvest operations, and by Tolko's silviculture forester in planning reforestation activities.

Walt is one of six PHFI surveyors with Tolko. Operating in teams of two, one team works in the Nelson River forest section, and one each in the Saskatchewan River and Highrock forest sections.

All Tolko's PHFI surveyors have degrees or diplomas in forestry. At the start of the field season they also get a solid two weeks of training specific both to the job and to bush savvy: courses in first aid and CPR; truck and boat operation and safety; and mobile radio operation.

Walt is used to bears, too, and knows what to do in the event of a bear encounter. So far this season, they haven't been a problem. "One of our crews last week ran into a mother bear and her cubs by their truck," Walt said recently. "The crew just walked away. They don't usually bother us."

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*Do you have some story ideas for the next
FRAC Newsletter? Contact the newsletter coordinator,
Derrick Wainio, at the Kelsey School Division.
Fax: (204) 623-7704 or e-mail: dwainio@mbnet.mb.ca*

Planting The New Forest

The secret to tree planting is getting into a rhythm, says Todd Martin, and he should know. As a veteran planter with Waugh's Woods Ltd., one of the companies Tolko contracts for its planting program (others are based out of Moose Lake, Cross Lake and Thicket Portage), Martin routinely plugs about 4,000 seedlings into the soil each working day during tree plant season.



Above: Todd Martin plants another seedling.
(photo by P. Chapman)

Yes, four thousand a day. And that's nowhere near his personal best, a milestone he logged two years ago. "As far as I know, I hold the record with Waugh — sixty-four hundred and change," says Martin, a lanky and personable university student. Of course, Martin has been at it for six years. Rookies generally manage 500 to 600 seedlings per day. But they catch on fast, and they generally know what they're getting into before they start.

And just what is it they're getting into? Backbreaking work, that's for sure. A solitary shift with only the weather gods and bugs for company during the day, and a "mad frenzy of social bonding" (in Martin's words) in the evenings. And at Waugh's camp, some of the best cooking ever to grace a griddle.

Waugh's camp on this day in early June is set up near what Tolko calls the Spider Lake operating area, in the Porcupine Mountains about 210 kilometres southeast of The Pas. It's a highly mobile setup that goes up within four hours, stays for about six to eight days, and is then taken down and moved to the next location. About 48 planters, together with planting foremen, regeneration surveyors, regen foreman, cook and cook's assistant—somewhere around 60 people—call this camp home.

It's also the base for two helicopter pilots employed with Custom Helicopters Ltd. on contract to Tolko. Helicopter is the only way to get into many of the cutblocks here. During late February and early March, the thousands of seedlings to be planted were trucked in as far as possible on winter roads, and then snow cached – buried under a protective layer of snow which was then covered with sawdust. There they've stayed, snug and insulated, until needed.

Now the helicopters—a Bell Jet Ranger and Bell Long Ranger—are ferrying those seedlings and the planters in to the remote reaches of the cutblocks where the actual planting takes place.

Martin and six other planters are working in cutblock SL17, which covers about 34 hectares. Approximately 1,800 seedlings are being planted per hectare. The planting sites here were prepared with a ripper tooth plow and D8 bulldozer, resulting in relatively evenly spaced furrows that allow the planters to quickly plant the seedlings in the organic layer where the majority of nutrients lie. For a planter such furrows are a pleasure, as they help the work go quickly. And if the work goes quickly, that's more money in the pocket. Says Todd Martin: "If you have straight trenches, even if the land goes a little up and down, it still results in lucrative planting. That, and a well trained, hard-working and willing foreman. That's what we find here."

SL17 sits as a representative microcosm of Tolko's planting program in 2000. Altogether, the company will be planting 8½ million seedlings on cutblocks across its forest management license area this year. Eight-and-a-half million seedlings. That means eight-and-a-half million digs of the shovel, eight-and-a-half million movements of hands reaching for the planting bag slung on the hip, pulling out the seedling, sticking it in the soil, covering it and tamping the soil around. Yes, the work is repetitive, but for Martin and the other planters the work is as mentally challenging as you want to make it.

Marlin Rempel, a student who's working toward a B.Sc. in Geography, exemplifies this attitude. "When I'm out here I think a lot, about what I'm doing, figuring out the

good places to plant, always thinking ahead," he explains. "Right here, the sections are unscarified, so you have to think a lot more about the spacing of the trees."

Another very focused tree planter is Michelle McDonald. An Environmental Science student at the University of Manitoba, this is McDonald's sixth year with Waugh's Woods. When asked if she could answer a few questions, she glances up and smiles, keeps moving and says, "Can we talk while I plant?"

For McDonald, there are many things to recommend the tree plant life. "The freedom, I guess. Being outside. No stress. Camp life. The lake. Going swimming. I like the physical part. There's lots to like." She adds: "You really bond out here. You have each other to lean on." Many special friendships are forged while walking the furrows. Martin, for example, became a good buddy with a couple of planters from Saskatchewan last year. A shared interest in music has led to the writing of their own work songs, resulting in a new twist on a traditional folk music genre.

When the planting's over for the day, it's usually lights out no later than 9 p.m. – no surprise, when you consider that everyone's up by 5 in the morning, with the first crew heading out to the site by 6:30 at the latest. Andrew Forward, who supervises the regeneration survey contract as well as being the all-around logistics guy, describes the extracurricular life of the camp this way: "There is a social life, but it's not a party life."

Today, the crew on SL17 has closed up, meaning they've finished the plant on that block and will be moving on to a new spot tomorrow. Up here in the Porcupine Mountains, there were no bugs. The planters may not be so lucky where they're going tomorrow.

But for these tough and independent young people, a few mosquitoes—or even swarms of them—are hardly going to make a dent in their day.

Students Get a Taste of Old-time Forestry in The Pas

There were beans on the stove, but it was the ham served up in the log driver's tent near the former Finger Lumber Company site during National Forest Week that visiting students liked best.

The 'ham' was supplied by Clem Jones, Ron Scott and Rob Penner, who entertainingly played the roles of sawyer, log driver and teamster of 80 years ago to about 250 Grade 3 students from Joe A. Ross, Kelsey and Mary Duncan Schools.

"The guys in the tent – the kids believed they were real!" said Joe A. Ross teacher Michelle Oliver of the convincing performance put on by Jones, a local volunteer, and Scott and Penner, Ecotourism program instructors with KCC. "We had to clear that up for them."

The classes also all participated in a ten-minute swede sawing competition.

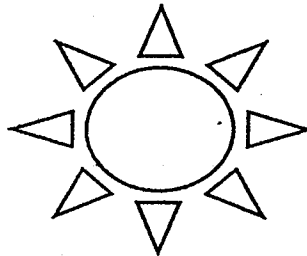
"We had talked about the logging industry in The Pas, but it really hit home for the kids seeing where Finger Lumber was. It put it into perspective," Oliver added. The former lumber company site is immediately east of Doern Park on First Street.

Also on hand was Bill Jonas, representing the

Manitoba Forestry Association. Using a log forwarder brought to the site by Ian Munro Transport Ltd., Jonas explained the important role of the forwarder in bringing cut logs out from the bush to be loaded onto trucks.

Patty Armstrong, a Grade 3 teacher at Kelsey, agreed that the field trip "was really worthwhile. It's right where we're studying in the curriculum, so the timing was perfect."

Forester Karen Scheffers, program coordinator with the Atikameg Forest Centre, organized the National Forest Week activities. The Centre offers outdoors education in partnership with Tolko, Keewatin Community College and the Manitoba Forestry Association.



2001: Planning for the Future

Tolko's 2001 Annual Harvest and Renewal Plan dominated the agenda at the May 9, 2000 Forest Resource Advisory Committee (FRAC) meeting. The meeting was held at Tolko's Woodlands Office in The Pas.

Community consultations with respect to the plan will take place in most communities throughout Tolko's forest management license area during the last two weeks in June (see schedule on page 1). Consultations will include discussion of proposed road closures within the license area. It was noted at the FRAC meeting that any feedback on proposed road closures received during the community consultations would be included in determining the timing and methods of road closures. Further, any decisions on any closures would also be made in conjunction with Manitoba Conservation.

Don Aikman, North Area Planner, provided an overview of harvest planning for the Nelson River forest section. Aikman listed the various contractors expected to be operating in the area, together with anticipated harvest volumes. It was noted that construction of a rail spur into the Buckingham area is on the books for sometime this year.

Doug Taylor, South Area Planner, provided an overview of harvest planning for the Saskatchewan River and Highrock forest sections. Tolko also does the planning for quota holders in the two forest sections. Future construction of the Okaw Road and the Lamb Lake Road was noted.

(continued on p. 6)

JONAS

(continued from p. 1)

What made the reforestation program truly innovative was the idea of setting aside the stumpage fees a company normally pays to the provincial government for harvesting trees into a trust fund for reforestation. In the 16 years since the program was established, it has grown to the point where 8½ million seedlings are being planted on Tolko's forest management license area this year.

Jonas is well known throughout the northern Manitoba forestry community. He joined Tolko predecessor company Churchill Forest Industries (CFI) as Operations Forester in 1969, and stayed with the company through its evolution from CFI to Manfor and then to Repap Manitoba. He was Woodlands Manager at The Pas operation for 20 years until his retirement from Repap in 1992.

The CARE Award also acknowledges Jonas' efforts in incorporating non-timber values into forest management planning, and his role in opening up contract logging opportunities to aboriginal entrepreneurs at Repap, now Tolko. The CARE Award (Conservation Awareness and Reforestation Efforts) is presented annually by the Manitoba Forestry Association. §

2001: Planning for the Future (continued from p. 5)

Julie Walt, Pre-Harvest Forest Investigation (PHFI) surveyor, explained the purpose and basic methodology of PHFI surveys (see story on p. 2).

Consultation with stakeholders within the license area to identify research priorities to be undertaken by Tolko has taken place over the past year. It was noted that a final report summarizing stakeholder consultations relative to research priorities would likely be completed this fall.

It was noted that since the 1997-2009 Forest Management Plan (FMP) had been approved, the need had arisen to provide summer-accessible operating areas for Nelson House Forest Industries. Approval for an alteration to the 1997-2009 FMP to accommodate these changes was sought with support from Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, and received from Manitoba Conservation.

Next FRAC meeting: September 19, 2000;
9:00 a.m.; Tolko Woodlands Office.

Below: Bill Jonas (right) receiving Dr. Alan Beaven CARE Award from Dave Rannard, President of the Manitoba Forestry Association. (photo courtesy of the Manitoba Forestry Association)



Appendix 10

2.0 PLANNING PROCESS

Forests are a renewable resource, however, great care must be taken to ensure they are managed sustainably. Planning is the cornerstone of sustainable forest management. Forest harvesting may affect different stakeholders in both the short and the long term. To address these issues, the Company utilizes an open planning process that allows input by all stakeholders to ensure concerns are mitigated before harvesting begins. The Louisiana-Pacific Canada Ltd. 10 Year Forest Management Plan addressed our long-term objectives while our Annual Operating Plans (AOP) focus on current plans in the context of those long-term goals.

Currently our short term planning process is at least a three year procedure. Initially an area is identified from aerial photographs and the Manitoba Forest Resource Inventory maps. The area is then field inspected and preliminary access routes planned. This harvest area or block will then be added to our AOP as part of the three year projection. It then follows the approval process illustrated by Figure 2.1 including internal LP staff, review by the Stakeholders Advisory Committee and Manitoba Natural Resources. If approved, it will be integrated into the following year's AOP and subsequently reviewed through the same process. Following a second approval, a Pre-Harvest Survey and if necessary, stream crossing assessments will be completed on this area to yield site specific data (see section on Pre-harvest Silvicultural Prescriptions for details) which will be used to make any final modifications. The harvest area or block will be reviewed for a third time. If approved in the AOP, a work permit for the harvest block will be submitted to the local Integrated Resource Management Team of Manitoba Natural Resources for final approval.

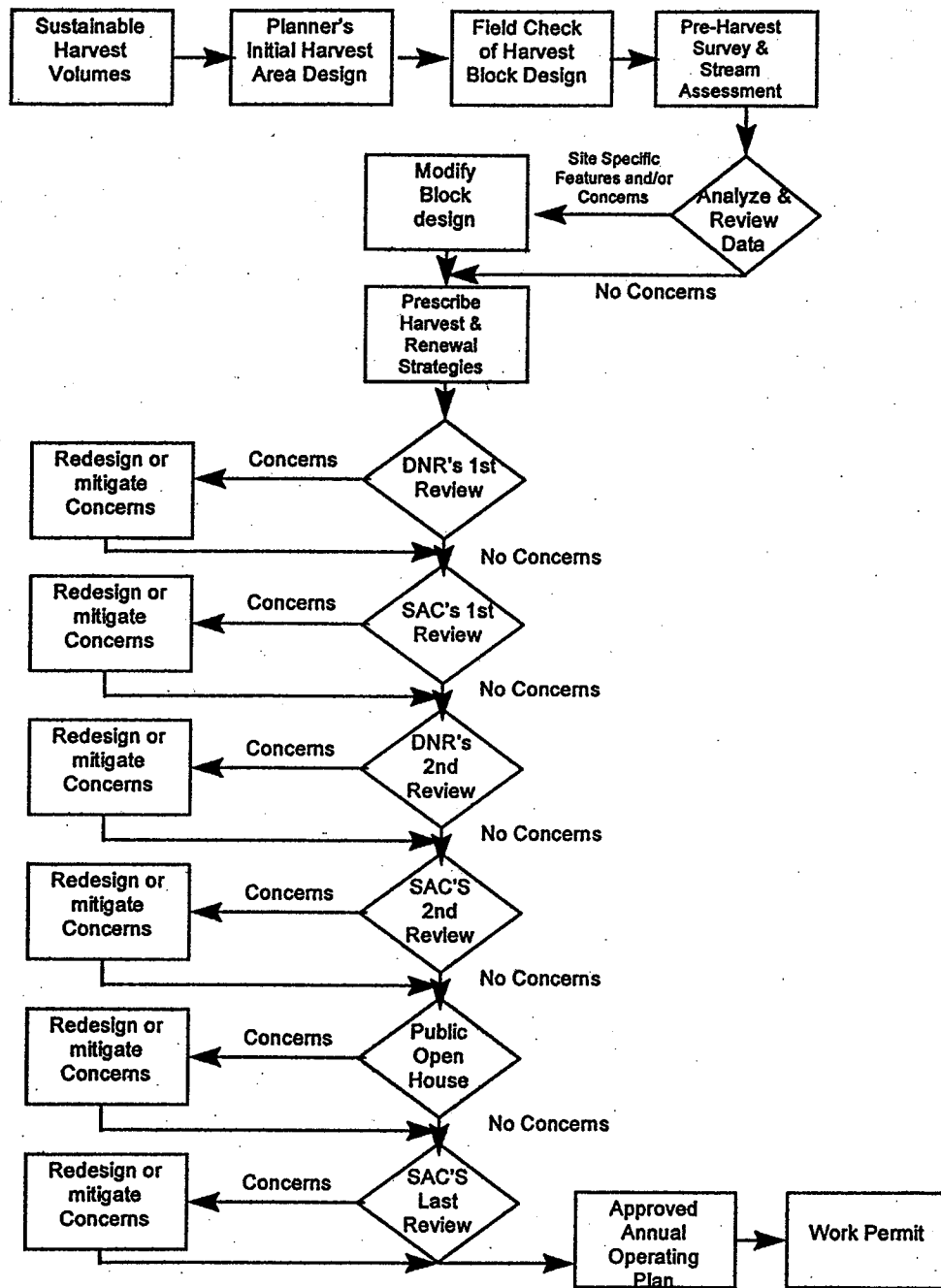


Figure 2.1 Harvest Planning Process

Appendix 11



FOREST RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FRAC)

QUESTIONNAIRE

In May 1996, Repap Manitoba established the Forest Resource Advisory Committee (FRAC) to provide an additional opportunity for ongoing public involvement in the Company's forest management activities in FML Area No. 2.

1. Do you feel that the membership represents a good cross section of individuals from organizations that show an interest in forest management activities in FML Area No. 2?

Yes () No ()

Comment:

2. Are there any additional organizations or individuals who you feel should be represented on the FRAC.
-
-

3. The intent of the FRAC meetings is to provide a forum to discuss issues, interests and concerns with respect to the forest management in the Repap FML area. Do you feel that the current FRAC format is suitable?

Yes () No ()

Comment:

4. To date meetings have focused on presenting information on the various aspects of forest management. The following topics have been presented to the FRAC. Please indicate you found these presentations valuable.

- General introduction to Repap Forest Management License Agreement, forest management activities including road development, harvesting, forest renewal, forest protection, planning and approval process and integrated resources management (June 17, 1996)

Yes () No ()

Comments:

- Long range Forest Management Plan and Environmental Impact Assessment (Sept. 26, 1996)

Yes () No ()

Comment:

- Review of the 1997 Annual Harvest and Renewal Plan (Nov. 27, 1996)

Yes () No ()

Comment:

- Forest management activities including forest inventory, enhances forest inventory, forest renewal, stand monitoring and stand tending (January 29, 1997)

Yes () No ()

Comment:

5. Are the topics presented in a fashion that is easy to understand?

Y () N ()

Comment:

6. Do you find the handouts which are distributed at the meetings to be helpful?

Y () N ()

Comment:

7. The following are some additional topics which could be discussed at future FRAC meetings. In order to determine which topics are of most interest to the FRAC, please check off which topics are of interest to you.

- () Sustainable Forest Management (Forest Certification) - What is it?
- () Logging systems
- () Caribou studies
- () Road management - Pros and cons
- () Repaps Forest Management Planning and Operating Practices (i.e. operating "ground rules")
- () Ecosystem Based Management - What is it?
- () Planning for non-timber resource values - What's important?
- () Clearcutting in the boreal forest - Why?
- () Fire Protection
- () GIS
- () Forest Research

8. Are there any specific topics that you would like to see discussed/presented at future FRAC meetings? This could include topics which could be presented by people/organizations from outside the FRAC.

9. Currently meetings are held about every 2 months. How do you feel about the frequency of the FRAC meetings?

About right () Need more () Need Less ()

10. Repap Manitoba currently chairs the FRAC meetings. Is this acceptable or do you feel the committee should vote on another chair?

Yes () No ()

If no, do you have any suggestions as to how the FRAC should be chaired?

11. Do you have any suggestions that may improve the objectives of the FRAC?

12. Do you have any ideas to improve the attendance at FRAC meetings?

13. Overall has the FRAC met your expectations?

Yes () No ()

Comments:
