

2011 Independent Forest Audit Provincial Status Report

Algoma Forest, Armstrong Forest,
Bancroft-Minden Forest, Black River Forest,
Black Sturgeon Forest, French-Severn Forest,
Lac Seul Forest, Lake Nipigon Forest
Magpie Forest, Nipissing Forest,
Pic River Ojibway Forest, Spruce River Forest,
Sudbury Forest, Temagami Forest

April 1, 2006 – March 31, 2011

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry



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Submission Page

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Endorsement Page

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Introduction

Independent Forest Audits (IFAs) covering the period April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2011 were conducted on the following 14 Forests in Ontario in 2011:

- Algoma Forest
- Armstrong Forest
- Bancroft-Minden Forest
- Black River Forest
- Black Sturgeon Forest
- French Severn Forest
- Lac Seul Forest
- Lake Nipigon Forest
- Magpie Forest
- Nipissing Forest
- Pic River Ojibway Forest
- Spruce River Forest
- Sudbury Forest
- Temagami Forest

The audits were undertaken according to the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol (IFAPP) which meets the requirements of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA) and the conditions of MNR's Class Environmental Assessment for Forest Management in Ontario (2003) as amended. It also meets the requirements of Ontario Regulation 160/04 made under the CFSA (governing Independent Forest Audits).

The status report addresses the 34 recommendations directed at corporate or regional levels of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) in the 2011 IFA's. The information in this status report is organized according to IFAPP principles. The status of each recommendation is reported according to Appendix F of the IFAPP and includes each recommendation and its corresponding required actions (as written in the Provincial Action Plan), associated progress to date and future tracking requirements if applicable.

The IFAPP requires the submission of a provincial status report two years following provincial action plan approval or more frequently as may be required by the action plan or Minister. The 2011 Provincial Action Plan was fully approved April 5, 2013 making the 2011 Provincial Status Report due April 5, 2015.

Following approval, provincial status reports are made available through MNRF's public website.

Since the development of the 2011 provincial action plan, the MNRF has gone through a transformation initiative. Policy Division is being reorganized (effective April 1, 2015), resulting in a new organizational structure and new names for a number of the branches and sections within the division. For the purpose of this status report, the organizational name in effect at the time the action was addressed is used. Where additional work is required to address the action (extending past April 1, 2015), the new organizational name is used.

Recommendations

Principle 2: Public Consultation and Aboriginal Involvement

Black Sturgeon Forest & Spruce River Forest Recommendation #3

Corporate MNRF shall improve the administration of Aboriginal Background Information Reports preparation and Aboriginal Values Collection to ensure that there is no perceived or real risk of inadvertent disclosure of confidential community information. These efforts should include a review of the Partner Funding MOU that currently supports the administration of this area.

Action:

1. Forests Branch will facilitate discussions with appropriate groups (e.g., Aboriginal Policy Branch and Regional Operations Division) regarding the MOUs and data sharing agreements that are currently used in forest management planning to collect Aboriginal values information to ensure there is no risk of disclosing confidential community information.
2. Forests Branch will work with Aboriginal Policy Branch to develop clarification materials to be provided to planning teams to ensure the protection of confidential community information.

Progress to date:

1. Complete – A/Provincial Forest Evaluation and Reporting Forester, Forests Branch, arranged meetings between Forests Branch, Aboriginal Policy Branch, and Regional Operations Division in 2013 to discuss MOUs and data sharing agreements.
2. Complete – a policy bulletin (Aboriginal Policy Branch; Policy Division Policy Bulletin #11: Sensitive Information Received from Aboriginal Communities) was developed and distributed to MNRF Directors in Policy Division, Regional Operations Division, Provincial Services Division, and Forestry Industry Division.

In addition to addressing the recommendation by implementing the action as

outlined above, Crown Forests and Lands Policy Branch is developing best management practices to be delivered to planning teams at forest management planning training sessions.

Nipissing Forest Recommendation #1

Corporate and Regional Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources shall restrict its issue resolution decisions to those that it can make under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act.

Action:

The MNR's Class EA for Timber Management on Crown Lands in Ontario requires that the Forest Management Planning Manual (FMPM) provide a formal issue resolution process. The FMPM outlines the process to resolve issues regarding specific proposed forest management activities in a Forest Management Plan (FMP). Part A, Section 1.1.8 of the FMPM, 2009 outlines the legislation and documents that provide direction and guidance for decision-making during the preparation and approval of a FMP. The CFSA is one of several sources providing direction and guidance for decision-making.

MNRF Forests Branch will provide information to MNRF District Managers and Regional Directors regarding the sources of direction to be considered when making issue resolution decisions and the parameters of the forest management planning process.

Progress to date:

Complete. Memo sent from Director, Forests Branch to all Regional Directors and District Managers clarifying scope of decisions that can be made in the issue resolution process.

Temagami Forest Recommendation #6

Corporate MNRF should advise District MNRF on whether or not Timiskaming First Nation of Quebec should be invited as a full participant in the forest management planning process.

Action:

Aboriginal Policy Branch will lead a dialogue with North Bay District to discuss considerations related to involving the Timiskaming First Nation, situated in the province of Quebec, in the Temagami FMP planning process. The purpose of the dialogue is to confirm that the approach taken by North Bay District in its relations with the Timiskaming First Nation has been appropriate in the circumstances, and/or to advise of other actions the District may take to enhance the approach. The District is looking for reaffirmation that the approach used (enhanced consultation with the Timiskaming First Nation) to develop the 2009 FMP should be continued for Phase 2 planning (2014-19). The dialogue will be supported with a record of the approach that has been taken, to be created by the District, and supplemented with responses and commentary from selected participants, including personnel from the Ministry of

Aboriginal Affairs, Legal Services Branch, Aboriginal Policy Branch, Forest Branch (Forest Management Planning Section), Northeast Region and North Bay District.

Progress to date:

Complete. MNRF's Aboriginal Policy Branch led discussions with staff from the ministry's North Bay District, Regional Operations Division. Staff from the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs were also engaged in the course of these discussions.

Two meetings were convened, on 19 March 2012 and 25 July 2012 respectively, to review the current approach to involving Timiskaming First Nation (TFN) in forest management planning for the Temagami Management Unit, and discuss moving forward on the IFA recommendation for the Temagami Management Unit.

MNRF's current approach was to involve Timiskaming First Nation on an enhanced consultation basis relative to the Phase II schedule (beginning in 2013 at Phase II Stage 3) and including implementation of Phase II forestry operations for the Temagami Management Unit. This approach involves notifying the community and sharing information regarding forest management planning activities for the management unit; providing ongoing opportunities for direct discussions regarding the community's interests in economic opportunities related to forestry; and discussions regarding the potential impacts of and mitigation of forest operations.

To date, Timiskaming First Nation has not expressed interest in full participation (i.e., Forest Management Planning Team involvement) in local forest management planning for the Temagami Management Unit.

In addition to addressing the recommendation by implementing the action as outlined above, the MNRF will continue to assess its approach and the increased involvement of Timiskaming First Nation in forest management activities associated with the Temagami Management Unit, as the unit's planning cycle approaches Phase I of the forest management planning cycle in 2019.

Principle 3: Forest Management Planning

Algoma Forest Recommendation #4

Corporate MNRF shall encourage planning teams to base the planned harvest level on the forecast industrial wood demand and declare the remaining allowable harvest area as surplus.

Action:

Planning teams consider current wood supply commitments, historic utilization, and forecasts of future fibre demand, when identifying desirable levels of available harvest volume in the development of the Long-Term Management Direction (LTMD) for a FMP. The FMPM (2009) directs the setting of targets for each objective to reflect a balancing of objectives and will consider a balance of social, economic, and environmental

considerations. This message is emphasized in FMP training to ensure the achievement of current supply commitments is carefully considered and evaluated with the achievement of long-term wood supply, and non-timber objectives.

The FMPM requires that the planned harvest areas in excess of the projected industrial wood requirements and wood supply commitments to be identified as surplus harvest area and receive full operational planning. This allows for the identification of potential new industrial use opportunities.

The Ontario government completed a wood supply competitive process in 2011. The purpose of the wood supply competition was to put Ontario's unused wood to work by identifying companies who could use the wood. In addition, Ontario is currently modernizing its forest tenure and pricing system. The plan to modernize the forest tenure system aims to open Ontario's forest sector to new opportunities and growth resulting in better utilization of the available harvest area.

Forests Branch will monitor the results of the wood supply competition and forest tenure and pricing system reform and consider this recommendation during the development of the next version of the FMPM.

Progress to date:

Ongoing. The FMPM revision process is currently underway and the recommendation is being considered as part of revisions to the indicators and sustainability analysis.

Future tracking requirements:

The Manager, Forest Legislation and Planning Section, Crown Forests and Lands Policy Branch (CFLPB) will ensure the recommendation is considered as described in the progress to date section above. Method of tracking progress – new FMPM. Target FMPM approval date is fiscal year 2016.

Algoma Forest Recommendation #5

Corporate MNRF shall revise the FMPM to augment Table AR-4 with information that informs readers of the status of the [Forest Renewal Trust] FRT, specifically FRT revenues generated from the harvest, the minimum balance at March 31st and the required minimum balance.

Action:

Forests Branch will investigate the addition of FRT revenues, the required minimum balance as per the SFL document and actual balance on March 31st, as data requirements in Table AR-4. This recommendation will be considered during the production of the next version of the FMPM.

Progress to date:

Ongoing. The FMPM is currently being revised. Additional trust revenue, disbursement and balance information will be considered as additional content for annual report

tables where the information supports analysis of the adequacy of renewal funding and the setting of renewal charges.

Future tracking requirements:

The Manager, Forest Legislation and Planning Section, CFLPB and the Manager, Forest Guides and Silviculture Section, CFLPB will ensure the recommendation is considered. Method of tracking progress – revised regulated manuals. Target approval date for the revised manuals is fiscal year 2016.

Bancroft-Minden Forest Recommendation #5

OMNRF should corporately pursue the use of Section 18 of the Endangered Species Act to allow forest management plans to qualify as instruments of the Act.

Action:

Section 18 provisions of the Endangered Species Act are currently available to the MNRF and can be used in the appropriate circumstances. MNRF will take this recommendation into consideration as it moves forward with the implementation of the Endangered Species Act. No further action required.

Progress to date:

Complete as described in the action section above.

Black Sturgeon Forest Recommendation #14

Corporate MNRF shall revise the FMPM direction for reporting actual harvest results in the Year Ten [annual report] AR so as to enable the reader to clearly distinguish the bridged area in the assessment of accomplishments during the plan period.

Action:

As per the requirements of the FMPM (2009), licensees report on areas of bridging operations planned to be harvested in the Year Ten annual report. This planned bridged area is included with the total area harvested during the current plan, to provide long-term perspective on harvest levels during the planning period. The actual bridging area harvested in year one of the new FMP is reported in the Year One annual report, but is counted against the previous plan's available harvest area. Bridged areas are also identified separately on the operations maps.

Bridging area allows companies to complete harvest operations in blocks they are operating in when the current FMP expires. The FMPM limits the amount of bridging area that can be identified to three months harvest area from the previous FMP and requires the harvest of bridging areas to be completed by March 31, of the first year of the FMP. The limited amount of bridging area will have minimal effect in the assessment of accomplishments during the plan period.

The Black Sturgeon Forest identified and harvested a non-typical high level of bridging area. This is not the normal bridging situation on the majority of forest management units.

The current requirements and process for reporting bridging area are effective, and as such no further changes to FMPM are warranted.

No further action required.

Progress to date:

Complete as described in the action section above.

Black Sturgeon Forest Recommendation #6 & Spruce River Forest #7

Corporate MNRF shall commit to completing and releasing the Boreal Landscape Guide with scientifically defensible approaches to managing caribou habitat post haste.

Action Required:

Proceeding with the Environmental Registry proposal posting notice for the draft guide is being considered in the broader context of moving forward with a number of initiatives related to woodland caribou conservation. At this time, a specific date for the posting does not exist, however it is anticipated to occur in the very near future.

Progress to date:

Complete. The Proposal Notice for the draft Boreal Landscape Guide was posted on the Environmental Registry in September 2013, and the final guide was approved on February 12, 2014. The guide will be used during the preparation of 2017 and subsequent forest management plans; for the Black Spruce Forest (the former Black Sturgeon and Spruce River Forests were amalgamated into the Black Spruce Forest), this is currently scheduled for 2021. Additional direction related to managing caribou habitat specifically, as mentioned in the recommendation, may be required by species at risk policies, some of which are still draft (e.g., the Range Management Policy).

Black Sturgeon Forest Recommendation #7 & Spruce River Forest #8

Corporate MNRF shall develop habitat projection models for songbirds recognized as Species at Risk (SAR) which use forested habitat into forest projection models used in management planning and ensure that those models are used in forest management planning across the species' ranges in Ontario.

Actions Required:

MNRF will evaluate the need and feasibility of refining existing, or developing new habitat models for forest management planning purposes for forest-related songbirds recognized as SAR.

Progress to date:

Ongoing. Organizing spring 2015 workshop for evaluation and review.

Future tracking requirements:

The Manager, Forest Legislation and Planning Section, CFLPB (lead – with support from the other positions listed in the action plan) will ensure the evaluation and review workshop is held in the spring of 2015. Method of tracking progress – evaluation and feasibility review completed.

Black Sturgeon Forest Recommendation #12 & Spruce River Forest #13

Corporate MNRF shall review the means by which silvicultural success is measured and portrayed in annual reports in order to seek improvements to the way in which renewal and forest development is monitored.

Action:

Forest Health & Silviculture Section (FHSS) has commenced a Silviculture Enhancement Initiative with the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of renewal and maintenance efforts and making improvements where required. Through this initiative FHSS will review the measurement and reporting of silviculture success and seek improvements as necessary.

Progress to date:

Ongoing. The SEI project is looking at potential changes to annual reporting requirements. The FMPM revision process will consider the results of the SEI project and revise the annual reporting requirements as appropriate. Options are being explored to improve confidence in assessing the establishment and growth performance of regenerating stands. Further, options are being considered to ensure individual stand performance is consistent with the target stand conditions, and all stands collectively achieve the target forest condition.

Future tracking requirements:

The Manager, Forest Guides and Silviculture Section, CFLPB will put forward the changes for incorporation into the Forest Operations and Silviculture Manual and the Manager, Forest Legislation and Planning Section, CFLPB will propose the changes are made to the FMPM. Method of tracking progress – revised FMPM, FIM, and FOSM. Target FMPM, FIM, and FOSM approval date is fiscal year 2016.

Lac Seul Forest Recommendation #1

Corporate MNRF should provide sufficient resources to conduct additional inventory and monitoring of forest-dependent species at risk to adequately support forest management planning on the Lac Seul Forest.

Action:

During the forest management planning process MNRF employs a “coarse and fine filter” approach to manage for the diversity found in Ontario’s forests. Planning is conducted to ensure the right mix of forest types and conditions are present on the land base (coarse filter) in conjunction with stand and site specific protection of known

values through area of concern (AOC) prescriptions and conditions on regular operations (fine filter).

The Forest Management Guide for Boreal Landscapes provides direction on how to conserve biodiversity through landscape level approaches. It identifies and helps inform goals and targets for forest composition (forest tree species units and age classes) and pattern (arrangement of forest patches across the landscape) in FMPs while recognizing the importance of the natural variability of landscapes.

The Forest Management Guide for Conserving Biodiversity at the Stand and Site Scales provides direction on how to conserve biodiversity at the stand and site level through the application of fine filters to ensure that habitat requirements for forest dependent species are satisfied. Values such as forest structure, functional variability and site-specific features (e.g., stick nests and denning sites) providing wildlife habitat are maintained.

Values information is assembled and updated during the production and implementation of the FMP. Appropriate AOC prescriptions for known values are approved in the FMP and implemented during forest operations. Funding for values collection/confirmation specifically for the purposes of forest management planning is distributed through divisional funding to Regional Operations Division. Funding is allocated through the MNRF Regions to the MNRF Districts subject to the annual budgeting and priority setting process.

In addition, the FMPM and the Forest Information Manual (FIM) outline the requirements for addressing previously unidentified values and incorrectly mapped values.

A number of studies are underway to increase our understanding of habitat requirements for forest-dependent species at risk in Ontario. In the case of woodland caribou, Ontario's Caribou Conservation Plan identifies a commitment to caribou research and a Range Management Approach which both contribute to adaptive management of caribou and their habitat in Ontario. The *Range Assessment Approach* requires an Integrated Range Assessment (IRA) to be conducted periodically.

The caribou research project, through findings from the Pickle Lake study area, will investigate habitat, predators, population dynamics and human activities in a land area largely representative of that found within the Lac Seul Forest. Findings from that research project will inform improvements to all aspects of caribou conservation and management in Ontario.

An IRA for the Churchill Range, which encompasses most of the Lac Seul Forest, was initiated in 2011/12. IRAs provide the primary means for monitoring and assessing the amount of disturbance, habitat condition, and woodland caribou population size and trend within each range. As part of IRA, aerial distribution and recruitment surveys

were conducted in February 2012, 20 female caribou were fitted with GPS satellite collars, and the landscape was assessed for habitat amount and arrangement and cumulative disturbance to habitat. The draft Integrated Range Assessment Report (IRAR) is currently being prepared and will document the distribution, abundance, and habitat use of woodland caribou, current understanding of caribou ecology within the range and provide a determination of overall range condition. Recommendations from the IRAR may be used as guidance to inform objectives for future planning activities and management decisions within the range including forest management planning. A draft IRAR should be completed by Dec 31, 2013.

Progress to date:

Complete. The resources necessary to conduct additional inventory and monitoring of forest-dependent species at risk to adequately support forest management planning on the Lac Seul Forest have been provided.

The Integrated Range Assessment Report (IRAR) for the Churchill Caribou Range was released publicly in December 2014. The Integrated Range Assessment Report involved an evaluation of four quantitative lines of evidence, two relating to caribou population state (size and trend) from data collected during the survey work, and two relating to habitat (disturbance and amount of arrangement of habitat) that inform the determination of range condition. An update to the IRAR is anticipated on completion of the 2015 recruitment survey and integration of the data across the three years of additional surveys.

An aerial winter distribution survey for caribou was conducted during February and March 2012 in which observations of caribou or their signs were recorded. Data collected during the survey work was used to estimate population state metrics and to provide an estimate of calf recruitment. Additional aerial surveys were conducted during late winters 2013 and 2014 and resources are allocated for a winter 2015 survey to complete assessment of calf recruitment in support of estimates of population trend. Wolverine is also a forest dependent species at risk in Ontario that shares many landscape and habitat requirements of the woodland caribou. Like the caribou, wolverine generally exist at a low density across the boreal landscape and are thus a challenge to inventory and monitor. Although the MNRF recently released the wolverine recovery strategy (November 2013), the ensuing government response statement is still pending. A standardized population and distribution monitoring manual for wolverine was published as a joint effort of the MNRF, the Wildlife Conservation Society of Canada, and the Wolverine Society Inc. in 2008 using data collected from a multi-year investigation of the population status (size and distribution) across northwestern Ontario including a significant portion of the Lac Seul Forest north of the lake proper. Records of incidental wolverine catch during the trapping season at local MNRF office(s) will continue.

Ontario's Wildlife Population Monitoring Program (WPMP) is also mandated to collect status and trend information for terrestrial wildlife populations inhabiting Ontario's

managed forests. In addition to the use of partnerships with external organizations to address its mandate, the WPMP has implemented a field-based Multi-Species Inventory and Monitoring (MSIM) approach to acquire population information for terrestrial vertebrate species. The purpose of MSIM is to provide population data (presence and/or relative abundance) and associated habitat condition for a large number of species over a broad scale in both time and space using a consistent set of protocols. Repeated surveys using the MSIM will enable detection of spatial and temporal changes in species occupancy and community composition at the permanent monitoring sites. Although the protocols are not designed specifically for species-at-risk monitoring, a variety of species-at-risk may be encountered during monitoring activities – especially birds. A total of 3 of the 50 monitoring stations associated with the first panel of sampling are to be located in northwestern Ontario on the Lac Seul Forest with the first year of operational monitoring occurring in 2015.

Lac Seul Forest Recommendation #3

Corporate MNRF should place a high priority on the completion of the new Forest Resource Inventory (FRI) for the Lac Seul Forest, so that it will be available for the preparatory work and input to the forest management update in 2016.

Action:

The Lac Seul Forest FRI is currently scheduled in the update process. No other specific action is required as this update is on target for completion. However, inventory schedules can change due to management unit amalgamations and other unforeseen planning circumstances.

Progress to date:

Ongoing. Based on consultation with Forest Legislation and Planning Section, CFLPB, it was determined the Lac Seul Forest FRI could be delayed by one year to balance shifting planning requirements. The Lac Seul FRI project is currently being released to the FRI Vendors of Record through a competitive procurement process. Calibration Plot establishment is scheduled for the summer of 2015.

Based on the schedule described above, photo interpretation will commence in the fall of 2015 with completion scheduled for December 2016. In addition, processes have been developed to update single line water features through improving directional flow and connectivity of stream data. The single line water feature updates will be completed immediately after the photo interpretation process. Expected completion date for all work is May 2017.

Future tracking requirements:

The Coordinator, Forest Resources Inventory Program, Science and Research Branch will ensure the actions are completed as described in the progress to date section above. Method of tracking progress – FRI completion and delivery.

Nipissing Forest Recommendation #2

Corporate MNRF must ensure that a new Forest Resource Inventory is delivered and implemented to replace the current inventory so that future forest management plans are not developed with such aged and inaccurate data.

Action:

The Nipissing Forest FRI is currently scheduled in the update process. No other specific action is required as this update is on target for completion. However, inventory schedules can change due to management unit amalgamations and other unforeseen planning circumstances.

Progress to date:

All FRI calibration plots have been completed for the Nipissing Forest.

Due to delays in establishing the FRI Vendor of Record list, production of the Nipissing FRI has been delayed slightly. The FRI contractor is making excellent progress on air photo interpretation and is planning completion for March 31, 2015. In addition, processes have been developed to update single line water features through improving directional flow and connectivity of stream data. The single line water feature updates will be completed immediately after the photo interpretation process. Expected completion date for all work is June, 2015.

Future tracking requirements:

The Coordinator, Forest Resources Inventory Program, Science and Research Branch will ensure the actions are completed as described in the progress to date section above. Method of tracking progress – FRI completion and delivery.

Nipissing Forest Recommendation #5

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources must ensure that all required alterations to forest management plans requested by the Crown are within the purview and scope of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act.

Action:

Part A, Section 1.1.8 of the FMPM (2009) outlines the legislation and documents that provide direction and guidance for decision-making during the preparation and approval of a FMP. The CFSA is one of many sources that provide direction and guidance when preparing a FMP.

The Draft and Final FMP training session provides direction to MNRF FMP reviewers on what to consider before administering a required alteration to a FMP. The Draft and Final FMP training session specifically states required alterations should be supported by the FMPM, policy, and/or guidelines. Examples of good and bad required alterations are also provided to MNRF reviewers. MNRF Forests Branch will continue to provide training on administering required alterations to MNRF FMP reviewers.

Progress to date:

Complete. Phase I and Phase II Draft and Final FMP training continues to address required alterations.

Spruce River Forest Recommendation #10

Corporate MNRF will review the bridging procedures and requirements specified in the FMPM to ensure that they continue to be seen as appropriate for a wide range of possible circumstances.

Background:

There may be situations where harvest operations from the current approved FMP are not completed before expiry of the plan. Provisions in the FMPM (2009) for bridging operations, allow for harvest of these areas in the new FMP but limits the area to three months of harvest area from the current plan. Limiting the area to three months is necessary to prevent significant over harvesting. In situations where the bridging area exceeds three months, the extra area should be swapped with planned new area to balance the allowable harvest of the new plan. Also by limiting the area, the effect on the harvest area and volume statistics for each plan term will not be as significant.

The purpose of bridging area is to allow for the completion of harvest areas from the current FMP that were being harvested when the plan term expired. The timeframe for completing the harvest of bridging area was extended from three months to one year in the FMPM (2009). The one-year timeframe allows for completion of winter harvest areas and provides flexibility for completing the remaining bridging area. The three months harvest area limits the effect on the Year Ten Annual Report harvest numbers.

For areas managed using the clearcut silvicultural system, harvest may have been planned in two passes. In circumstances where only the first pass is completed before the expiry of the current approved FMP, the areas planned for second-pass harvest are to be identified in the new FMP to allow for completion of harvest operations.

Action:

The provisions in the FMPM (2009) for bridging area and second-pass harvest operations are appropriate for addressing a wide range of circumstances.

No specific action required, however MNRF will continue to monitor the application and use of bridging processes in FMPs.

Progress to date:

Complete. No issues identified for FMPM revision project.

Principle 4: Plan Assessment and Implementation

Armstrong Forest Recommendation #8

Corporate MNRF must conduct a review of the Collins Road project to account for the expenditure of all public funds, and assess the appropriateness of the financial management afforded to this project.

Action:

MNRF Business Development Branch, Forestry Division will lead a review of the costs and activities relating to the Collins Roads project. Both Buchanan Forest Products Limited and Whitesand Forestry will supply all information to support this review as per the Road Construction and Maintenance Agreement.

Progress to date:

Complete. Review finished in July 2012. MNRF continues to annually monitor expenditures on all management units and conducts reviews when warranted.

Armstrong & Lake Nipigon Forest Recommendation #5

Corporate MNRF should investigate the possibility of modifying the current socio-economic analysis requirements of the FMPM to enable it to be used as a decision support tool to assist in the scoping analyses to help determine the LTMD decision.

Action Required:

Forests Branch will review the socio-economic aspects of the LTMD scoping and analysis process that is currently prescribed by the FMPM to guide direction during the development of the next version of the FMPM.

Progress to date:

Ongoing. The FMPM revision process is currently underway and will consider the requirement as part of revisions to indicators and sustainability analysis.

Future tracking requirements:

The Manager, Forest Legislation and Planning Section, CFLPB will ensure the recommendation is considered as described in the progress to date section above. Method of tracking progress – new FMPM. Target FMPM approval date is fiscal year 2016.

Principle 6: Monitoring

French-Severn Forest Recommendation #4

Corporate MNRF should review the process that permits exceptions to guide direction to ensure that forest management plans set out clear objectives in addition to a rationale, that exceptions monitoring programs are rigorous and that the results of implementing exceptions contribute meaningfully to the knowledge base of forestry.

Action Required:

Forests Branch will review the requirements of monitoring programs for exceptions to guide direction during the development of the next version of the FMPM.

Progress to date:

Ongoing. The FMPM revision process is currently underway and will consider exceptions monitoring improvements.

Future tracking requirements:

The Manager, Forest Legislation and Planning Section, CFLPB will ensure the recommendation is considered as described in the progress to date section above. Method of tracking progress – new FMPM. Target FMPM approval date is fiscal year 2016.

Black Sturgeon Forest & Spruce River Forest Recommendation #4

Corporate MNRF shall reinforce the training to planning teams regarding the revised letter response requirements in the FMPM (2009) related to the preparation of written responses during Stage 5 (Phase I) and Stage 3 (Phase II) of the forest management planning process.

Action Required:

MNRF will reinforce the instructions provided to planning teams during training concerning the requirements for the District Manager to provide written responses to any person who has requested a change to the FMP and to any person known to be directly affected. The next training session that will incorporate this message will be for the Draft/Final Stage for the 2009 planning teams preparing their 2014 Phase II planned operations. This training session will take place via WebEx and is scheduled for April, 2013.

Progress to date:

Complete. This message was provided on the final slide of the "Key Messages" presentation during the Draft & Final training session held April 16, 2013.

Nipissing Forest Recommendation #10

Corporate MNRF shall arrange to provide additional training to all individuals involved with the compliance monitoring programs on the Nipissing Forest with regard to the use of the Forest Operations Inspection Program in light of the procedural and policy changes adopted in the Forest Compliance Handbook (2010).

Action Required:

Corporate MNRF provided Forest Compliance Handbook refresher training sessions in various locations across Ontario (Timmins, North Bay, Dryden, Thunder Bay, Bancroft, and Sault Ste. Marie) in March 2012. The refresher training was available to both forest industry and MNRF staff, and covered a wide range of topics including updates to forest operation inspections monitoring and reporting. Specifically, Nipissing Forest SFL and

MNRF staff attended the Forest Compliance Handbook refresher training session in North Bay on March 7, 2012.

Progress to date:

Completed March 7, 2012 as described in the action required section above.

Principle 7: Achievement of Management Objectives and Forest Sustainability

Magpie Forest Recommendation #10

Corporate MNRF must work with the Wawa District and Dubreuil Forest Products Ltd. (DFPL) to find a way to fund the outstanding silviculture treatments. Once funding is made available, DFPL must expediently address the silviculture liabilities on the Magpie Forest.

Action Required:

1. The purpose of the minimum balance is to provide funding for one year of silviculture in the event of bankruptcy of the SFL holder. The SFL surrender extinguishes the requirement to maintain the minimum balance. Funds to address outstanding silviculture treatments are then available from the Forest Renewal Trust account for the forest. A letter outlining these requirements will be issued to the District Manager and Regional Director.
2. MNRF Northeast Region and Wawa District staff will develop a strategy in 2013 to ensure that the silviculture program backlog on the Magpie Forest is addressed (target of 2014-15). Given the sequential nature of the renewal activities, the program may extend beyond 2014-15. The strategy will consider the possibility of a SFL extension and/or transfer.

Progress to date:

1. Complete. A letter was not sent outlining that the SFL surrender extinguishes the requirement to maintain a minimum balance therefore making funds available for silviculture activities. Regional Operations Division staff were however informed through discussions that the minimum balance requirement no longer applies with the SFL surrender.
2. Incomplete. Dubreuil Forest Products (DFPL) filed for bankruptcy in 2011 and is therefore no longer involved with implementation of the silvicultural program. The SFL has been surrendered to the MNRF.

A Silvicultural Obligation Report and a Treatment Implementation Plan were prepared by District staff in February 2013, for the Magpie Forest. The report provides information about the areas that require treatment and has a treatment schedule for implementation.

Future tracking requirements:

2. The short-term intent of the MNRF, is to enter into a Renewal and Maintenance Agreement with a capable Forest Resource License (FRL) holder to implement the Treatment Implementation Plan. With the absence of forest harvesting (i.e., an FRL holder), it has not been possible to negotiate a Renewal and Maintenance Agreement.

District staff are awaiting forest harvesting to commence on the Magpie Forest. Once harvesting operations start, and access is facilitated to the blocks that still require silvicultural work, a Renewal and Maintenance Agreement will be pursued. Responsibility for pursuing the Renewal and Maintenance Agreement is assigned to the Resources Operations Supervisor. Timelines are dependent upon demand for harvesting.

In the interim, the Silvicultural Obligation Report and Treatment Implementation Plan will be reviewed and if necessary updated by District staff in 2015-16. The Management Forester will be responsible for the review.

The long-term plan, is to have the Magpie Forest managed as part of a Sustainable Forest License (SFL). In this case, the reviewed Silvicultural Obligation Report and the Treatment Implementation Plan will be shared with the SFL manager.

Principle 8: Contractual Obligations**Algoma Forest Recommendation #15 & #16**

Recommendation 15: Corporate MNRF shall provide monthly statements of Crown charges account status to Agents of the Crown.

Recommendation 16: Corporate MNRF shall integrate the identification of records in the iTrees and RBC Dexia accounting and reporting systems to facilitate reconciliation of entries in the two systems.

Action:

1. MNRF Operations Branch will undertake a comprehensive review of the current Agent of the Crown, SFL, MNRF, Licensee arrangements in regards to stumpage and renewal. The review will include an examination of the flow of data, communications, reporting, and accounting functions.
2. MNRF will setup a meeting with Clergue Forest Management Inc. to review the current status of stumpage and trust payments for the Algoma Forest.

Progress to date:

1. Partially complete.

- **MNRF has completed a review of 18 of 20 business processes in the current Timber Billing and Receipt practices as of May 2015.**
 - MNRF engaged Internal Audit Division (IAD) to conduct a preliminary review of the Agent for the Crown model. The IAD review was completed in February 2014.
 - A comprehensive review based on IAD recommendations is underway by MNRF Wood Measurement Section with completion targeted for fiscal 2016.
 - MNRF initiated a process in May 2014 to send Agent for the Crown their reconciled worksheets and statements on a monthly basis.
2. Complete.
- MNRF met with Clergue in May 2012 to review the status of the account.
 - MNRF is actively working with Clergue to ensure that the Agent for the Crown electronic data submissions are correct. In the case of incorrect submissions, MNRF is assisting Clergue in making corrections as required.

Future tracking requirements:

The Manager, Forest Economics Section, Forest Tenure and Economics Branch will ensure the completion of the Timber Billing and Receipt Practices Review summary report. Target completion date is fiscal 2015.

The Manager, Wood Measurement Section, Operations Branch will ensure the completion of the Agent for the Crown Review summary report. Target completion date March 2017.

Black Sturgeon Forest Recommendation #16 & Pic River Ojibway Forest #8

Recommendation #16: Corporate MNRF should revise the schedule for submission of the action plans which identify how audit's recommendations are to be addressed. Corporate MNRF should consider a submission due date for action plans of four to six months following submission of the Final Audit Report.

Recommendation #8: Corporate MNRF should engage SFL representatives and review the process associated with IFA Action Plan and Action Plan Status Report development to determine if there are more effective ways to deal with reporting timelines and report development.

Action:

The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario (OAGO) conducted a review of the MNR's Forest Management Program in 2011. The OAGO's report included a recommendation regarding the timely submission of action plans and status reports. In response to the OAGO's recommendation, staff from MNRF Regional Operations Division have begun developing schedules outlining dates and responsibilities required to ensure action plans and status reports are submitted on time. The approach was effective in 2011. Forests Branch will encourage Regional Operations Division to continue with this approach to ensure the timely submission of action plans and status reports.

Progress to date:

Ongoing. The Northwest Region continued to address timelines associated with the submission of action plans and status reports by developing production schedules with dates and responsibilities. The Black Sturgeon and Pic River Ojibway action plans were submitted approximately 2 weeks ahead of schedule.

The Provincial Evaluation and Reporting Forester, Forest Evaluation and Standards Section, Forests Branch communicated the schedule approach for completing action plans and status reports with regional representatives.

As of February 13, 2015, forty-three action plans and status reports were due for submission for the 2011, 2012, and 2013 audits. Submission timelines were met for twenty-four of the action plans/status reports corresponding to 56% being submitted on time and 44% being submitted late.

Year	Forest	MNR Region	Action Plans		Status Report	
			Due	Submitted	Due	Submitted
2011	Algoma	NER	10-Feb-12	05-Mar-12	18-Apr-14	Overdue
2011	Armstrong	NWR	23-Apr-12	27-Mar-12	18-Apr-13	12-Apr-13
					18-Apr-14	10-Mar-14
2011	Bancroft-Minden	SR	17-Apr-12	05-Apr-12	25-May-14	Overdue
2011	Black River	NER	27-Mar-12	09-Mar-12	18-Apr-14	29-Sep-14
2011	Black Sturgeon	NWR	01-Jul-12	18-Jun-12	16-Jul-14	21-Jul-14
2011	French-Severn	SR	02-Jun-12	31-May-12	02-Oct-14	29-Dec-14
2011	Lac Seul	NWR	12-Jan-13	18-Dec-12	29-Jan-15	22-Jan-15
2011	Lake Nipigon	NWR	27-Apr-12	27-Mar-12	18-Apr-13	15-Apr-13
					18-Apr-14	24-Mar-14
2011	Magpie	NER	29-Jul-12	30-Jul-12	02-Nov-14	19-Jan-15
2011	Nipissing	NER	28-Jul-12	13-Jul-12	23-Aug-14	20-Aug-14
2011	Pic River	NER	01-Apr-12	16-Mar-12	18-Apr-14	21-Apr-14
2011	Spruce River	NWR	01-Jul-12	18-Jun-12	16-Jul-14	21-Jul-14
2011	Sudbury	NER	08-Jan-12	30-Jan-12	20-Feb-14	09-Jul-14
2011	Temagami	NER	09-Jan-12	17-Jan-12	20-Feb-14	15-Oct-14
2012	Algonquin	SR	25-Aug-13	21-Aug-13	13-Sep-15	
2012	Crossroute	NWR	26-May-13	22-May-13	27-May-15	
2012	Hearst	NER	18-Jun-13	17-Jun-13	16-Dec-15	
2012	Martel	NER	5-Aug-13	6-Aug-13	26-Aug-15	
2012	Nagagami	NER	5-Aug-13	3-Oct-13	16-Dec-15	
2012	Northshore	NER	20-Apr-13	19-Apr-13	25-Apr-15	
2012	Pineland	NER	25-Aug-13	22-Aug-13	16-Sep-15	
2012	Romeo Malette	NER	25-Aug-13	10-Sep-13	24-Sep-15	
2012	Sapawe	NWR	4-Mar-13	1-Feb-13	01-Feb-15	28-Jan-15
2013	Dryden	NWR	18-Feb-14	03-Jan-14	06-Jan-16	

Year	Forest	MNRF Region	Action Plans		Status Report	
			Due	Submitted	Due	Submitted
2013	Kenora	NWR	18-Feb-14	03-Mar-14	06-Mar-16	
2013	Ottawa Valley	SR	08-Sep-14	11-Sep-14	25-Sep-16	

Future tracking requirements:

On an ongoing basis, Regional Operations Division will monitor action plan and status report preparation and work with their management unit contacts to meet submission timelines identified in the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. Regional Operations Division will continue to implement tools and approaches such as the development of production schedules outlining dates and responsibilities required to ensure action plans and status reports are submitted on time. Responsibility: Regional Planning Foresters (lead) and District Managers.

The method of tracking progress is through actual action plan and status report submission dates.

Lake Nipigon Forest Recommendation #14

Corporate MNRF shall immediately evaluate whether the retention of SFL# 550412 by Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc. (LNFMI) is consistent with the purposes of the CFSA and take appropriate action.

Action:

MNRF will undertake a comprehensive review of LNFMI's performance in regards to undertaking the obligations and responsibilities of the Lake Nipigon SFL, consistent with the principles and purposes of the CFSA. The review will consider specific deficiencies outlined in the 2011 IFA for the Lake Nipigon Forest. The review will support a MNRF recommendation regarding whether the SFL should be retained by LNFMI.

Progress to date:

Complete. MNRF completed a comprehensive review of LNFMI's performance in March 2014. The review concluded that based on the substantive achievements and efforts of LNFMI since the 2011 IFA, in conjunction with an anticipated proposal for the transfer of the SFL to a new company (NewCo) and amendment to include the former Armstrong Forest that is currently being managed by the Crown, the Ministry recommends the retention of the SFL by Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc.

Black Sturgeon Forest Recommendation #18 and Spruce River Forest #15

Corporate MNRF shall develop and implement a schedule, allowing for the company review of draft documents, so that a Sustainable Forest Licence for the Black Spruce Forest can be in place by June 1, 2012.

Action:

Consent has been received from the SFL holder to move forward with the amalgamation of the Black Sturgeon and Spruce River SFLs to form the new Black Spruce SFL. Briefing material will be prepared and forwarded to request the Minister's signature on the Black Sturgeon surrender document and the new Black Spruce SFL.

Progress to date:

Complete. The Spruce River Forest SFL was amended to include the Black Sturgeon SFL and renamed as the Black Spruce Forest SFL. The amendment was signed by the Minister December 19, 2012.

SFL Licenses

Licence Review and Extension

This section describes the licence extension recommendations made by the applicable auditors in 2011. The Temagami Management Unit, Armstrong Forests, and Lac Seul Forests are managed by the Crown and are therefore not included in the list below.

Algoma Forest Recommendation on Licence Extension

The audit team concludes that management of the Algoma Forest was generally in compliance with the legislation, regulations, and policies that were in effect during the term covered by the audit, and the Forest was managed in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Sustainable Forest Licence held by Clergue Forest Management Inc. Forest sustainability is being achieved, as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. The audit team recommends the Minister extend the term of Sustainable Forest Licence #542257 for a further five years.

Actions required:

1. A review will be conducted to ensure the licensee has complied with the terms and conditions of the licence. As part of the review, IFA recommendations will be considered in accordance with Section 9 of the SFL.
2. Results of the review will be evaluated and if satisfactory, will be advanced to the Minister for his consideration.

Progress to date:

1. Partially complete. The review and required aboriginal consultation for the proposed SFL extension are in progress.

Future tracking requirements:

Review and aboriginal consultation to be completed by May 2015. Briefing material forwarded to the Minister if satisfactory within six months of completion. Manager, Wood Allocation and Licensing Section, Operations Branch.

Bancroft-Minden Forest Recommendation on Licence Extension

The audit team concludes that management of the Bancroft-Minden Forest was generally in compliance with the legislation, regulations and policies that were in effect during the term covered by the audit, and the Forest was managed in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Sustainable Forest Licence held by Bancroft-Minden Forest Company. Forest sustainability is being achieved, as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. The audit team recommends the Minister extend the term of Sustainable Forest Licence #542585 for a further five years.

Actions required:

1. A review will be conducted to ensure the licensee has complied with the terms and conditions of the licence. As part of the review, IFA recommendations will be considered in accordance with Section 9 of the SFL.
2. Results of the review will be evaluated and if satisfactory, will be advanced to the Minister for his consideration.

Progress to date:

1. Ongoing. The review and required aboriginal consultation on the proposed extension will be started in 2015.

Future tracking requirements:

Review and aboriginal consultation completed by June 2015. Briefing material forwarded to the Minister if satisfactory within six months of completion. Manager, Wood Allocation and Licensing Section, Operations Branch.

Black River Forest Recommendation on Licence Extension

The audit team concludes that management of the Black River Forest was generally in compliance with the legislation, regulations and policies that were in effect during the term covered by the audit, and the Forest was managed in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Sustainable Forest Licence held by Great West Timber Ltd. Forest sustainability is being achieved, as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. Had the SFL holder not been in receivership, the audit team would have recommended that the Minister extend the term of Sustainable Forest Licence #542002 for a further five years.

Actions required:

1. A review will be conducted to ensure the licensee has complied with the terms and conditions of the licence. As part of the review, IFA recommendations will be considered in accordance with Section 9 of the SFL.

2. Results of the review will be evaluated and if satisfactory, will be advanced to the Minister for his consideration.

Progress to date:

Complete. The Black River Forest SFL was surrendered to the Crown January 31, 2013. It was amalgamated with the Pic River Ojibway Forest to form the Pic River Forest which is also a Crown Forest. The actions have therefore been negated.

French-Severn Forest Recommendation on Licence Extension

The audit team concludes that management of the French-Severn Forest was generally in compliance with the legislation, regulations and policies that were in effect during the term covered by the audit, and the Forest was managed in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Sustainable Forest Licence held by Westwind Forest Management Inc. Forest sustainability is being achieved, as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. The audit team recommends the Minister extend the term of Sustainable Forest Licence #542411 for a further five years.

Actions required:

1. A review will be conducted to ensure the licensee has complied with the terms and conditions of the licence. As part of the review, IFA recommendations will be considered in accordance with Section 9 of the SFL.
2. Results of the review will be evaluated and if satisfactory, will be advanced to the Minister for his consideration.

Progress to date:

1. Partially complete. The review and required aboriginal consultation on the proposed extension are in progress.

Future tracking requirements:

Review and aboriginal consultation completed by March 2015. Briefing material forwarded to the Minister if review and required aboriginal consultation satisfactory within six months of completing review. Manager, Wood Allocation and Licensing Section, Operations Branch.

Lake Nipigon Forest Recommendation on Licence Extension

The audit team concludes that the management of the Lake Nipigon Forest was not in compliance with legislation, regulations and policies that were in effect during the term covered by the audit and the Forest was not managed in compliance with terms and conditions of the Sustainable Forest Licence held by Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc. Long term forest sustainability is potentially at risk as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. Therefore, the audit team recommends the Minister not extend the term of Sustainable Licence #550412 for a further five years, for the following reasons;

- LNFMI has been unable to meet many of its SFL obligations and responsibilities including:
 - The requirement to monitor and report on the status of the forest resource.
 - The requirement to address outstanding silvicultural liabilities.
 - The requirement to ensure adequate funding for forest management planning and silviculture.
 - The requirement to provide adequate compliance oversight of forest operations.
- The audit team further recommends (Recommendation #14¹, Appendix 1) that Corporate MNRF immediately evaluate whether the retention of SFL # 550412 by LNFMI is consistent with the purposes of the CFSA and take appropriate action.

Actions required:

1. A review will be conducted to ensure the licensee has complied with the terms and conditions of the licence. As part of the review, IFA recommendations will be considered in accordance with Section 9 of the SFL.
2. Results of the review will be evaluated and if satisfactory, will be advanced to the Minister for his consideration.

Progress to date:

1. Partially complete. The SFL review is underway, in consideration of the results of the comprehensive review of LNFMI's performance completed March 2014 in response to Recommendation #14 herein, and will furthermore consider recent information related to the payment of Crown dues and other contractual obligations associated with the SFL. Required aboriginal consultation has not yet begun.

Future tracking requirements:

Review and aboriginal consultation completed by April 2015. Briefing material forwarded to the Minister if satisfactory within six months of completion. Manager, Wood Allocation and Licensing Section, Operations Branch.

Magpie Forest Recommendation on Licence Extension

The audit team concludes that, with the critical exception noted below, management of the Magpie Forest was generally in compliance with the legislation, regulations and policies that were in effect during the term covered by the audit, and the Forest was managed in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Sustainable Forest Licence held by Dubreuil Forest Products Limited. Forest sustainability is being achieved, as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. The critical exception is as follows:

¹ Incorrectly stated as Recommendation #13 in the 2011 Provincial Action Plan and the Executive Summary Table 1 of the Lake Nipigon Forest 2011 Independent Forest Audit.

- Planned silvicultural activities remain uncompleted on select sites.

Therefore, the audit team recommends the Minister extend the term of the Sustainable Forest Licence # 542003 for a further five years, only on confirmation that the following conditions have been satisfied:

- Planned silviculture must be completed on outstanding sites by September 15, 2014.

Actions required:

1. A review will be conducted to ensure the licensee has complied with the terms and conditions of the licence. As part of the review, IFA recommendations will be considered in accordance with Section 9 of the SFL.
2. Results of the review will be evaluated and if satisfactory, will be advanced to the Minister for his consideration.

Progress to date:

Complete. The Magpie Forest SFL was surrendered to the Crown on May 14, 2013. The actions required were therefore negated.

Nipissing Forest Recommendation on Licence Extension

The audit team concludes that management of the Nipissing Forest was generally in compliance with the legislation, regulations and policies that were in effect during the term covered by the audit, and the Forest was managed in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Sustainable Forest Licence held by Nipissing Forest Resource Management. Forest sustainability is being achieved, as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. The audit team recommends the Minister extend the term of Sustainable Forest Licence #542053 for a further five years.

Actions required:

1. A review will be conducted to ensure the licensee has complied with the terms and conditions of the licence. As part of the review, IFA recommendations will be considered in accordance with Section 9 of the SFL.
2. Results of the review will be evaluated and if satisfactory, will be advanced to the Minister for his consideration.

Progress to date:

1. Partially complete. The review and required aboriginal consultation on the proposed extension are in progress.

Future tracking requirements:

Review and aboriginal consultation completed by June 2015. Briefing material forwarded to the Minister if satisfactory within six months of completion. Manager, Wood Allocation and Licensing Section, Operations Branch.

Pic River Ojibway Forest Recommendation on Licence Extension

The audit team concludes that management of the Pic River Ojibway Forest was generally in compliance with the legislation, regulations and policies that were in effect during the term covered by the audit, and the Forest was managed in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Sustainable Forest Licence held by Great West Timber Ltd. Forest sustainability is being achieved, as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. Had the SFL holder not been in receivership, the audit team would have recommended that the Minister extend the term of Sustainable Forest Licence #542440 for a further five years.

Actions required:

1. A review will be conducted to ensure the licensee has complied with the terms and conditions of the licence. As part of the review, IFA recommendations will be considered in accordance with Section 9 of the SFL.
2. Results of the review will be evaluated and if satisfactory, will be advanced to the Minister for his consideration.

Progress to date:

Complete. The Pic River Ojibway Forest SFL was surrendered to the Crown January 31, 2013. It was amalgamated with the Black River Forest to form the Pic River Forest which is a Crown Forest. The actions are therefore negated.

Spruce River Forest Recommendation on Licence Extension

The audit team concludes that management of the Spruce River Forest was generally in compliance with the legislation, regulations and policies that were in effect during the term covered by the audit, and the Forest was managed in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Sustainable Forest Licence held by AbiBow Canada Inc. Forest sustainability is being achieved, as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. Because similar positive conclusions were also reached in the concurrent Independent Forest Audit of the Black Sturgeon Forest, the audit team recommends that the new Sustainable Forest Licence being developed for the Black Spruce Forest be issued to AbiBow Canada Inc. with a full term of twenty years.

Actions required:

1. A review will be conducted to ensure the licensee has complied with the terms and conditions of the licence. As part of the review, IFA recommendations will be considered in accordance with Section 9 of the SFL.
2. Results of the review will be evaluated and if satisfactory, will be advanced to the Minister for his consideration.

Progress to date:

1. Ongoing. The review and required aboriginal consultation on the proposed extension of the Black Spruce Forest SFL will be started in 2015.

Future tracking requirements:

Review and aboriginal consultation completed by June 2015. Briefing material forwarded to the Minister if satisfactory within six months of completion. Manager, Wood Allocation and Licensing Section, Operations Branch.

Sudbury Forest Recommendation on Licence Extension

The audit team concludes that management of the Sudbury Forest was generally in compliance with the legislation, regulations and policies that were in effect during the term covered by the audit, and the Forest was managed in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Sustainable Forest Licence held by Vermilion Forest Management. Forest sustainability is being achieved, as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol. The audit team recommends the Minister extend the term of Sustainable Forest Licence #542442 for a further five years.

Actions required:

1. A review will be conducted to ensure the licensee has complied with the terms and conditions of the licence. As part of the review, IFA recommendations will be considered in accordance with Section 9 of the SFL.
2. Results of the review will be evaluated and if satisfactory, will be advanced to the Minister for his consideration.

Progress to date:

1. Partially complete. The review and required aboriginal consultation on the proposed extension are in progress.

Future tracking requirements:

Review and aboriginal consultation completed by May 2015. Briefing material forwarded to the Minister if satisfactory within six months of completion. Manager, Wood Allocation and Licensing Section, Operations Branch.