



Coast Region FRPA Implementation Team (CRIT)

Date: February 6, 2013

To: Sharon Hadway, Coast OIF Co-Chair
Kerry McGourlick, Coast OIF Co-Chair

From: Chuck Rowan, CRIT Co-Chair
Joe LeBlanc, CRIT Co-Chair

Re: Executive Summary Response to Cedar Discussion Paper - OIF Request to CRIT

In response to Otto Schulte's July 8, 2011 email request, CRIT's Resource Planning Working Group (RPWG) chaired by Harry Barrett has completed Part 1 of the *Cedar Management Strategy Work Plan Proposal – RPWG 002* dated November 3, 2012. This work has been reviewed and endorsed by CRIT and is now forwarded to the Coast OIF for consideration. Below is an executive summary describing the work completed, recommendations for the Coast OIF's consideration and request for acceptance of the work as completion (in part) of the Coast OIF request.

Executive Summary

Following a review of the March, 2011 *Summary of Cedar Management Considerations for Coastal British Columbia Discussion Draft* document (draft document) the Coast Operational Issues Forum (Coast OIF) mandated the Coast Region FRPA Implementation Team (CRIT) the task of assessing and identifying options specific to three of the recommendations in the draft document (recommendations 1, 2, 4).¹ CRIT subsequently assigned the task to the Resource Planning Working Group (RPWG), a sub group of CRIT.

The three recommendations from the draft document are:

- 1) The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNR)² "...and licensees should jointly develop cedar management strategies for coastal Timber Supply Areas (TSAs) which identify objectives for cedar resources and a plan of action to achieve the objectives. The strategies should address the following factors:
 - a. stand structure targets, including timber grade and species profiles;
 - b. First Nation needs for cedar for cultural and traditional uses;
 - c. appropriate application of harvesting methods and silviculture treatments; and
 - d. distribution of cedar resources among TSA chart areas."
- 2) FLNR including Forest Practices Branch and Regions³ "...and licensees should jointly develop and apply a protocol to monitor and assess harvest profiles for TSAs and Tree Farm Licences (TFLs). The protocol should ensure that the most appropriate information is used in a consistent manner."

¹ Recommendation #3 from the draft document is for Chief Forester, licensee and Ministry staff consideration and was not included as part of the work plan.

² Previously the Ministry of Natural Resource Operations (MNRO) and Ministry of Forests Mines and Lands (MFML)

³ Previously Forest Analysis and Inventory Branch, Forest Practices and Investment Branch and MNRO West Coast Region

- 3) FLNR "...should conduct research to improve understanding with respect to the following topics:
- a. the application of prescribed fire as a silviculture tool to enhance and favour cedar regeneration in Coastal British Columbia;
 - b. additional research on the fertilization of cedar;
 - c. the operational effectiveness of browse resistant cedar stock; and
 - d. the extent and impact of yellow cedar decline to improve understanding of the risks to ecosystems and future timber supplies."

The RPWG assessed the task and provided the advice that it would be appropriate to address the recommendations in two parts. The first part would deal with recommendation # 2 (development of an assessment protocol). The remaining two recommendations would be revisited under Part 2 once the protocol was developed and applied to various management units or other administrative units. The RPWG developed a work plan which was endorsed by the OIF in November 2011⁴.

The work plan included the following main tasks:

- a) Determine the Management Units (MU's) of relevance to the issue identified in the March 2011 document.
- b) Determine the extent of the issue within the MU's.
- c) Develop a protocol to analyze and monitor species harvest in relation to inventory, projected timber supply and allowable annual cut (AAC).
- d) Develop summaries of analysis and recommendations for vetting through CRIT and endorsement by OIF before proceeding to Part 2.

Determine the MU's of Relevance

The RPWG recognized the Mid Coast, Kingcome and North Coast TSAs as MU's that had a high amount of western redcedar and yellow-cedar as a percentage the total Timber Harvesting Land Base (THLB) inventory. The Mid Coast was selected as the MU for the initial analysis and protocol development on the basis of having updated Timber Supply Review (TSR) data, being subject to a consistent Land Use Plan regime, i.e. Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) over the entire TSA and being administered through the West Coast Region.

Determine the extent of the issue within the MU's.

In addressing this issue the group believed it appropriate to look at long term trends in harvest profile in relation to timber supply, inventories and AAC's. As well, it was determined to be relevant to assess the harvest by different methods of measure: scale, cut by inventory, cruise volume depletion. The grouping of western redcedar and yellow-cedar (referred to hereafter as "Cedar/Cypress") was applied in the March 2011 draft document. The RPWG believed it to be appropriate to maintain consistency with earlier draft document.

Development of Protocol to Analyse and Monitor Timber Harvest

The objective of the protocol is to provide a clearly defined set of procedures for monitoring, compiling and reporting information about the profile of timber harvest, and for comparing the timber harvest profile to the harvest assumptions used in Timber Supply Review (TSR) base case modeling for designated MU's.

Initial work on the protocol was developed through a case study of harvest in the Mid Coast TSA. Harvest history was reviewed back to 1985 with a detailed examination and analysis for the 1999 to 2010 period. Information was obtained from four principle sources: timber scale data from the Harvest Billing System (HBS), forest inventory data for the TSA, cruise data from the Electronic Commerce Appraisals System (ECAS), cutblock boundaries, and information provided in current and previous TSR's. The data was assembled in a manner that allowed examination and comparison of harvest rates by species. The Cedar/Cypress harvest profile for three measures of harvest profile (HBS

⁴ Cedar Management Strategy Work Plan Proposal – RPWG 002 (Nov 3, 2011)

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volume, cutblock inventory volume and cruised volume) were presented in contrast to the Cedar/Cypress volume outputs from both TSR 2 and TSR3 base cases.

As protocol development progressed there was an interest in examining whether the same trends would occur in other MU's as was being found in the Mid Coast TSA. The draft analysis protocol was applied to the Kingcome TSA. At the same time, for contract efficiency reasons, region staff applied the analysis protocol to the Strathcona, Haida Gwaii and North Coast TSA's.

As a result of the work described above, the RPWG produced the *Coastal Timber Harvest Monitoring Protocol - January 2013*. The protocol document provides the framework, methods and procedures necessary to complete the analysis and includes an example application of the protocol (*Appendix I - Mid Coast TSA Case Study*) and additional technical supporting information (*Appendix II - Technical Supplement to the Coastal Timber Harvest Monitoring Protocol*).

Summaries of Analysis, Observations and Conclusions

- 1) The protocol provides an effective and consistent process to monitor the profile of timber harvest within a MU and may be applied to assessment of any species, timber type, tenure, administrative unit or geographic area.
- 2) Both the HBS scale and cutblock inventory provide meaningful measures of harvest profile. Decisions or conclusions with respect to species harvest levels should be in consideration of both measures.
- 3) The comparison of actual harvest profiles over many years to the assumptions used in the TSR base case modeling contributes to a reasonable and appropriate assessment of resource sustainability.
- 4) The amount or level of un-harvested AAC should be recognized when reviewing trends in harvest profile for a MU.
- 5) As a general trend Cedar/Cypress HBS volumes exceed cutblock inventory volume while western hemlock and amabilis fir HBS volumes are less than cutblock inventory volumes. Additional investigation on this issue is warranted to determine the reason or reasons for this trend.
- 6) The Mid Coast case study indicates a significant portion of the harvest has occurred from outside of the THLB (both for TSR2 and TSR3).
- 7) The protocol provides for analysis by age class. This may be an appropriate analysis in support of developing recommendation #1 from the March 2011 draft document.

Recommendations

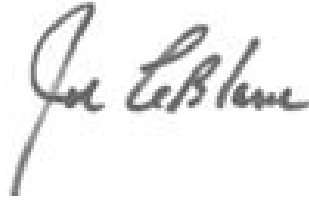
- 1) To ensure consistent application, the *Coastal Timber Harvest Monitoring Protocol* should be applied to monitor and assess harvest profile for the purpose of determining the scope and scale of various timber management issues.
- 2) The Coast OIF should provide direction supporting the use of the *Coastal Timber Harvest Monitoring Protocol* as a quantitative means of assessing harvest profile and timber management questions.
- 3) The Coast OIF re-examine the March 2011 recommendations 1 and 4 in light of findings to date, learning's and current needs, to determine the aspects that need to be addressed in Part 2, if any. Should further work be required, the Coast OIF should identify the persons or groups to be charged with addressing Part 2 needs and provide detail direction related to the task.

Conclusion

On behalf of the RPWG, CRIT requests that the OIF accept the executive summary and the associated *Coastal Timber Harvest Monitoring Protocol* document as completion of Part 1 of the *Cedar Management Strategy Work Plan Proposal – RPWG 002 dated November 3, 2012*.



Chuck Rowan, CRIT Co-Chair



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