

Pic Forest Management Unit

Forest Audit: April 1, 2014 to March 31,
2022

Management Unit Action Plan

Pic Forest 2022 Independent Forest Audit

Action Plan Submission Signature Page

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Action Plan Approval Signature Page

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Introduction

The 2022 Pic Forest Independent Forest Audit (IFA) was accepted by the Director of Divisional Support Branch, Regional Operations Division, on March 1, 2023. The audit covered an eight-year period of April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2022 and was conducted by NorthWinds Environmental Services (NWES).

The 2022 Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol (IFAPP) requires a Management Unit Action Plan be prepared in response to the audit findings. A total of twelve findings were noted for the management unit. For each finding, this action plan provides a description of the action required, the entity and position responsible, timelines for each of the action items, as well as the method of tracking progress for each action.

Based on a cause analysis on the 2022 IFA Findings, finding 3 has been assessed at a corporate MNRF level and will be considered as part of the regular corporate planning and policy review cycle. It will not be reported on in this action plan.

Findings

Finding #1:

Wawa District MNRF failed to keep complete records of their discussions with First Nation and Métis communities during the development of the 2019-2021 CP and 2021-2031 FMP, including a lack of a Report on the Protection of identified First Nation and Métis Values and a Summary of First Nation and Métis Involvement.

Action Required:

1. Due to a provincial realignment of MNRF district and regional boundaries, forest management planning responsibilities were transferred to Nipigon-Geraldton (NPGE) District as of April 1, 2023. NPGE District MNRF commits to producing all required documentation as per the Forest Management Planning Manual relating to First Nation and Métis involvement in the Forest Management Plan (FMP).
2. Production of the various stages of the documents (e.g., drafts) will be kept on schedule by the MNRF project lead as communicated in the project's Terms of Reference. This will include sending reminders and discussing related issues with MNRF management, as necessary.

Entity and Position Responsible:

1. District Resource Liaison Specialist to lead with responsibilities to be delegated, as necessary.

2. MNRF project lead as per the project's Terms of Reference, which for an FMP is typically the Regional Planning Forester.

Deadline Date:

1. As per project production schedule as derived from the Forest Management Planning Manual.
2. As per project production schedule as derived from the Forest Management Planning Manual.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Internal and external Forest Management Plan documentation.
2. Internal and external Forest Management Plan documentation.

Finding #2:

Planning Team minutes were inadequate as they pertain to First Nation and Métis engagement.

Action Required:

1. MNRF will ensure planning team minutes taken during FMP development are detailed enough to provide a record of First Nation and Métis engagement during plan development. First Nation and Métis engagement for the 2031-2041 FMP is expected to begin in 2027 in accordance with the requirements of the Forest Management Planning Manual. All meetings related to the development of the new FMP, between MNRF and First Nation and Métis communities, will be documented and tracked in the planning team minutes.

Entity and Position Responsible:

1. MNRF Regional Planning Forester, MNRF District Resource Liaison Specialist, as well as Planning Team Chair.

Deadline Date:

1. Ongoing until FMP plan approval in 2031.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Project Plan (PP) for the development of the next FMP in conjunction with the associated Terms of Reference (ToR) and Planning Team minutes.

Finding #4:

There was an estimated 3,200 ha of regular harvest area depleted prior to plan approval.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will amend pre-identified contingency wood in the 2021-2031 FMP, replacing approved regular harvest depleted prior to plan start.
2. MNRF District/Region will ensure all requirements of amendment are completed in accordance with the FMPM and FIM.

Entity and Position Responsible:

1. NFMC Planning Forester.
2. MNRF District Management Forester, MNRF Regional Planning Forester.

Deadline Date:

1. April 1, 2025.
2. April 1, 2025.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. NRIP Posting of Amendment process, amendment submission and approval documents.
2. NRIP Posting of Amendment process, amendment submission and approval documents.

Finding #5:

The SFL holder is not managing logging debris in accordance with the Forest Management Plans and Contingency Plans during the audit period.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will review and implement a debris management program as defined in the 2021-2031 Forest Management Plan.
2. NFMC will discuss debris management plans with harvesting contractors prior to block start-up.
3. NFMC will report debris management in Annual Reports.

Entity and Position Responsible:

1. NFMC Operations Manager.
2. NFMC Operations Manager.
3. NFMC Planning Forester.

Deadline Date:

1. Ongoing.
2. Block start-up.
3. Annual AR submission by November 15th.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Annual Report submissions/NRIP posting.
2. Block Start up forms.
3. Annual Report submissions/NRIP posting.

Finding #6:

The SFL holder was not in compliance as it pertains to the progressive rehabilitation of Forestry Aggregate Pits.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will review aggregate pit rehabilitation standards in the FMP and FMPM and identify candidate areas that require pit rehabilitation and develop and implement a compliance and training programs.
2. NFMC operational staff will review aggregate pit standards in the FMP and FMPM and will supervise operations with a focus on the pit rehabilitation requirements.
3. Rehabilitated pits will be reported as closed in FOIP reports and reported in subsequent Annual Reports.

Entity and Position Responsible:

1. NFMC Operations Manager, NFMC Forest Operations Technician and NFMC Planning Forester.
2. NFMC Forest Operations Technician, Compliance Inspector, and NFMC planning forester.
3. NFMC Planning Forester and Compliance Inspector.

Deadline Date:

1. Ongoing.
2. Ongoing.
3. Annual AR submission by November 15th and FOIP.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Annual Reports/FOIP.
2. FOIP and Annual Reports.
3. Annual Reports/FOIP.

Finding #7:

The roads and water crossings inventory is incomplete.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will review and update the current inventory to document forest infrastructure, location and condition of all necessary roads and water crossings.
2. NFMC will provide a complete water crossing inventory for the 2031-2041 FMP.

Entity and Position Responsible:

1. NFMC Operations Manager, NFMC Planning Forester, NFMC Forest Operation Technicians.
2. NFMC GIS Technicians.

Deadline Date:

1. Ongoing.
2. Planning phase of the development of the new 10-year FMP, 2031-2041.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. NFMC GIS database, FMP roads and water crossing inventory, AWS and AR, FOIP.
2. NFMC GIS database, FMP roads and water crossing inventory, AWS and AR, FOIP.

Finding #8:

MNRF District does not have an effective compliance monitoring program.

Action Required:

1. Nipigon-Geraldton District staff, including the respective Forester(s), IRM(s), RT3(s), and management will meet on a regular basis (monthly) throughout each year to discuss forest operations compliance. A recurring action item to be discussed at the meetings will be tabulating compliance items that need special attention to be added to the District ACOP. The final list put forward by the group will include no more than 10 priority items.
2. Nipigon-Geraldton District will produce an updated Roles and Responsibilities agreement/MOU with Chapleau-Wawa District for the Pic Forest now that the district boundaries have changed. Production of the agreement stemmed originally from Finding 11 of the 2016 Pic River IFA. The current version of the

agreement was approved on April 25, 2022. The update will include verbiage on Wawa Work Center's contribution to Finding 8, Action 1 above.

Entity and Position Responsible:

1. Nipigon Work Center IRM Technical Specialist to lead meetings.
2. Draft to be produced by Nipigon Work Center Resource Management Coordinator (RMC) and approved by management at both districts.

Deadline Date:

1. June 1, 2023 and as per established schedule thereafter.
2. July 1, 2023 and updated as required.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Compliance tracking spreadsheet.
2. Signed and dated agreement.

Finding #9:

The SFL Annual Compliance Plan has not been developed to effectively assess program compliance and its effectiveness in accordance with the approved Forest Management Plan.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will review the 2018-2019 ACP to assist in the development of the Annual Compliance Plans submitted with Annual Work Schedules and include detail on previous years' issues with a focus on how to reduce operational issues going forward.

Entity and Position Responsible:

1. NFMC Planning Forester, NFMC Operations Manager.

Deadline Date:

1. AWS submissions due by December 31st.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. ACP, NRIP posting of AWS and ARs.

Finding #10:

NFMC's electronic submission of FOIP reports was not in accordance with timelines specified in MNR procedures and the FIM.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will review the reporting requirements prescribed in the Forest Compliance Handbook, the 10 year compliance plan of the current FMP and the ACP to ensure FOIP reports are submitted and approved in accordance with required timelines.

Entity and Position Responsible:

1. NFMC Operations Manager, Compliance Inspector.

Deadline Date:

1. Ongoing and required timelines as per 10-year FMP compliance plan and Forest Compliance Handbook.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. FOIP, AR, ACP.

Finding #11:

The SFL holder reported activities in the 2020/21 Annual Report did not reflect the actual activities.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will complete Annual Reports as per direction in the FMPM (Forest Management Planning Manual) and ensure all FRT funded activities are categorized and reported accurately.

Entity and Position Responsible:

1. NFMC Silviculture Supervisor, NFMC Planning Forester.

Deadline Date:

1. Annual AR by November 15th.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. NRIP posting.

Finding #12:

The Big Pic final year Annual Report does not provide an appropriate assessment of objective achievement for the 2007 FMP, due to plan end values not being determined for certain indicators.

Action Required:

1. NFMC will review FMPM and FIM AR requirements to ensure all text and tables in the Annual Reports are completed as directed.
2. MNRF Northwest Region will review the enhanced AR to ensure all report requirements for the Pic Forest AR submissions are completed in accordance with the FMPM and FIM.

Entity and Position Responsible:

1. NFMC Planning Forester.
2. MNRF Northwest Regional Planning Forester, MNRF District Management Forester.

Deadline Date:

1. Annual AR submission by November 15th.
2. Enhanced AR submission as outlined in the FMPM.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. AR Submission/ NRIP posting.
2. AR submission and Ministry Review /NRIP posting.