

Minutes of the 15th Working Woodlot Program Annual General Meeting

April 28, 2007 -Fairway Inn, Sussex

Meeting was brought to order by Gig Keirstead with a welcoming to the members.

The proposed agenda was reviewed and asked if there were any additions to the agenda.

MOTION: To accept the proposed agenda:
Moved: Dan Folkins Seconded: Jim McEwen
Motion Carried

Dwayne Simkins read the minutes of the April 22nd, 2006 WWP AGM.

MOTION: To accept the minutes.
Moved: Clark Phillips Seconded: Cyril Tingley
Motion Carried

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES: None

WWP STATISTICS 2006/07:

Dwayne Simkins reviewed the statistics of the program for the past fiscal year. There were 13 removals from the program resulting from transfers of ownership. This was counteracted with 26 additions. The current total of woodlots in the program is 653, representing 52,786 ha.

NB WOODLOT OWNER FEDERATION:

Ken Hardie presented the report on the issues that the Federation is currently working on. The Main priorities are Market Treatment, Silviculture and Communication/Public Profile.

The representatives of the Federation recently met with Premier Graham and the Minister of Natural Resources. The purpose of this meeting was to express concerns about the Self-Sufficiency Task Force and the lack of a plan to deal with market unfairness towards private wood. The meeting was disappointing despite the encouraging statements earlier.

Ken expressed that the continued funding for private land silviculture is positive. He also commented to the Premier that if the government wants to increase wood supply then additional silviculture funding should also be directed to woodlot owners. A petition against the recommendations from the Self-Sufficiency Task Force on the forest industry will be available for those in attendance to sign.

It was stated that the Forest Products Association's goal is to simply grow more wood to cut more wood. Where will this leave woodlot owners?

Communication has improved over the past year, with the installation of a new assistant manager, Troy Lifford, new pamphlets, monthly newsletter and start-up of the website. Also, "What have you done for me lately?" articles have been produced to inform woodlot owners of the benefits of the federation.

Ken briefly mentioned the other issues the federation are working on. He then showed the new website and the information located on it.

Some discussion followed being mainly centered on the difficulty in getting letters published in the local newspapers.

DEVELOPMENT OF HAZARD RATINGS FOR BALSAM WOOLLY ADELGID

Dr. Dan Quiring presented the research into this topic. The insect has been around for roughly 100 years, being introduced from Europe. There was an outbreak in the 1950's and 1960's and now in the new century. There were many studies previous to this project that had mixed findings. The objectives was to determine the amount of damage attributable in unmanaged and managed stands and whether damage by the adelgid is associated with temperature or other stand characteristics.

The results suggested the damaged is limited to the plant hardiness zone of a mean winter temperature of -11 C. No damage was found north of this line. This was due mainly to mortality in colder winter temperatures. Also, managed (thinned) stands do not appear to exasperate the problem. There will continued studies into the Balsam Woolly Adelgid problem. At question and answer period followed.

NORTHUMBERLAND PELLET PROJECT

After the break, Kevin Forgrave, the manager of the Northumberland Woodlot Owners Association Inc., spoke to the group about the history, methodology and economics of energy from biomass and pellets. He revealed the details of his trip to Scandinavia and Europe. Wood energy is environmentally friendly and cheaper than non-renewable energy (oil and gas). Northumberland wants to take advantage of the increasing demand of the home heating market for wood pellets. This should integrate well with the lack of a market for the low value kraft pulpwood. The plant will produce 120,000 tons annually, with the possibility of more. The additional benefits will be the district heating for the local industrial park and electricity for own use and for sale. Kevin concluded by encouraging cooperatives to use their resources to change their fortunes.

Dwayne Simkins gave instructions on how to receive a free bottle of maple syrup produced by Corey Steeves of Elgin. Mr. Steeves had his woodlot FSC certified and wished to give everyone who attended this years meeting a sample of his product. Also, instructions on the WWP issue prioritizing survey and the woodlot tour were reviewed.

RADIAL GROWTH FORECASTS FOR SIX CONIFERS in SOUTHERN NEW BRUNSWICK:

Ben Phillips from Mount Allison University presented his work over the past summer. This study is a result of the dendrochronology of tree species to predict weather patterns. They wanted to be able to predict the growth patterns of six softwood species as the global climate changes. The species were white pine, red spruce, black spruce, eastern white cedar, eastern hemlock and balsam fir. He explained the methodology of site selection and the climate models used. As the climate warms over the next 100 years or so, the habitat of these species will shift northward. Most species will increase growth in the Maritimes, but will be on the southern edge of the range instead of the present middle. The species that will likely decline is eastern white cedar since it is already on the southern edge of its habitat and the conditions for growth will not be favorable. Balsam fir is one species that is predicted to maintain its current growth, but unknown factors such as budworm outbreaks, will likely influence actual growth.

Ben announced that he is involved in the next project to study eleven more species. He requested help from the group for sites that would qualify. They require trees in excess of 100 years and preferably 150+. The species to be studied are Larch (Tamarack), Red Pine, Jack Pine, White Spruce, Ironwood, Sugar Maple, Red Maple, Yellow Birch, White Birch, Beech and Large-Tooth Aspen.

Gig Keirstead thanked everyone for coming and reminded members to return their survey.

MOTION: To adjourn

Moved: Jim McEwen