

Peer Review as a requirement under FSC Criteria and Indicator 6.4

Hearst Forest

Hearst Forest Management Company

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Gap Analysis Report

General Comments

After having reviewed the Gap Analysis Report forwarded to me by Brad Ekstrom R.P.F., Silviculture and Planning Forester with Heart Forest Management Inc., and based on the information available to me, I find that overall, the report is consistent with the FSC requirements under indicator 6.4.

The report shows that the author based his selection of Candidate Protection Areas, in part, on the Gaptool outputs. However, other considerations were also taken into account including but not limited to underrepresented areas, local values, connectivity, and the Caribou Conservation Plan (CCP).

Based on the report, the OMNRs minimum requirement of protecting 1% of the total area of a land form and vegetation (L/V) type association has been met in 3 of the 5 ecodistricts located within the Hearst Forest. The author's explanation for the underrepresentation of L/V types in 2 of the ecodistricts clearly indicates that although no additional protected areas are identified, the likelihood of these areas disappearing from the landscape are remote.

There is one area in which the report seems lacking, perhaps because it was an oversight and was not included in this version of the report. Criteria 6.4.3 indicates that *"The manager shall engage and cooperate with interested parties (e.g. ENGOs, Aboriginal communities) and qualified experts in carrying out the gap analysis and identifying candidate protected areas"*. There is no mention in the report of any cooperation with "interested parties", Aboriginal communities in particular. When it comes to Area 6 there is an assumption that "any attempt to harvest the forest in and around the ski trails would be met with fierce opposition...", but there is no indication of communication with this group. There may have been consultations or discussions throughout the process, and since this is a requirement under Criteria 6.4 a summary of consultations should be included in the Gap Analysis Report.

Section	Comment	Explanation	Recommended
1.0 Introduction	Requirement under FSC criteria & indicators should be clarified in terms of analysis tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can managers use either one of the available tools or is there a specific requirement under FSC to use a preferred tool? • Is it necessary to mention WWF tool if was not used? 	Clarify statement regarding gap analysis criteria and tools used (paragraphs 2 &3)
2.0 Approach to Protection	Section is not clearly explained and does not seem consistent with the approach taken in selecting candidate protection areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria for selection seems to be (not in order of importance): minimise impact on wood supply, consistent with DCHS, marten habitat, improve connectivity, Gaptool locations, consistent with areas identified in Land for Life, protect local values (ski trail), focus on sites where a number of gaps can be filled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review this section of the report
3.0 The Landbase	Description of L/V types in each ecodistrict is not consistent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the areas identified in paragraph 2 the result of the gap analysis tool GAPtool in Appendix 1? • Area identified in 3E-1 (877,064 ha) but no area included in description of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference Appendix 1 in paragraph 2 • Make description of L/V types in each ecodistrict consistent • Present required protection of L/V in table form

		other ecodistricts	ie. L/V Type Protection Area Req (ha) Protection Requi. – A or N A= Adequate N= Not Adequate -add explanation for N
4.0 Current Protected Areas	Modify Figure 1 to be consistent with paragraph 1, i.e. show both parks and conservation reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Figure 1 only shows Park Area in the legend while the text indicates that the Hearst Forest includes both parks and conservation reserves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modify legend to show Existing Protected Area with subheadings of <i>Parks</i> and <i>Conservation Reserves</i> Could also be included on Maps of Candidate Protected Areas Section 5.0
5.0 New Candidate Areas		<p>Question:</p> <p>Is it feasible to add a Total column to add Area Protected + Area Under Represented L/V Type Protected, in order to show the additional area being protected as a result of the Gap analysis?</p>	
5.1 Description of Candidate Protected Areas	Change roads designation in Legends of Candidate Protected areas to reflect the road designation as per the FMPM for Ontario's Crown Forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modify legends to change Primary, Secondary and Tertiary to Primary, Branch and Operational. 	
	Remain consistent when describing each Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where it is located (northwest etc...), description, total area, contribution to protection goal. 	

6.0 Conclusion	There is no <u>clear statement</u> that indicates whether or not the goal of protecting 1% of the total area of the different land forms and vegetation types has been achieved resulting from the gap analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The gap analysis has a specific objective in mind as stated in the introduction. It is essential to address, in the conclusion, whether or not the candidate protected areas achieve the goal identified at the outset. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarise results located in Appendix 1 in table form (see below)
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Ecodistrict	# of L/V Associations			Area of L/V Associations (ha)					Overall % Increase/Decrease
	Required	Before	After	Required	Achieved				
					Before	%	After	%	
3E-1 Claybelt	199	90	102	39,228	35,166	89.6	35,805	91.3	1.7
3E-2 Hornpayne	198	82	89	22,724	18,071	79.5	18,796	82.7	3.2
2E-4 Lower Kenogami River	58	18	24	23,377	21,104	90.3	21,673	92.7	2.4
Total	455	190	215	85,329	74,341	87.1	76,274	89.4	2.3