

Bancroft-Minden Forest

April 1st, 2017 – March 31st, 2025

Management Unit Action Plan

Bancroft-Minden Forest 2025 Independent Forest Audit

Action Plan Submission Signature Page

Prepared By:

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Planning Forester

Insert Bancroft-Minden Forest Management Company

Date: July 30, 2026

Original Signed by: *Dimitrii Boyko R.P.F.*

Management Forester

MNR Peterborough-Bancroft District

Date: July 29, 2026

Original Signed by: *Hassan Mohamed R.P.F.*

Regional Forest Operations Specialist

MNR Southern Region

Date: July 30, 2026

Reviewed By:

Original Signed by: *Jeff Muzzi*

General Manager

Bancroft-Minden Forest Management Company

Date: August 25, 2026

Submitted By:

Original Signed by: *Tracy Adams*

District Manager

MNR Peterborough-Bancroft District

Date: August 21, 2026

**Bancroft-Minden Forest 2025 Independent Forest Audit Action Plan Approval
Signature Page**

Approved By:

Original Signed by: *Trevor Griffin*
Regional Director
Southern Region
Date: August 25, 2026

Introduction

In October 2025 an Independent Forest Audit (IFA) was conducted on the Bancroft-Minden Forest for the period April 1, 2017, to March 31, 2025. The Director, Divisional Support Branch, accepted the final audit report on March 6, 2026. Upon review of the audit report, it has been determined that a Management Unit Action Plan is needed to address its findings.

The final audit report for the Bancroft-Minden Forest included findings and a conclusion to extend the licence. A total of 12 findings were noted for the management unit. For each management unit audit finding, the action plan outlines the actions required, responsibility, timelines, and method of tracking progress of actions. Based on the cause analysis on the 2026 IFA findings, findings #4.1 and #12 have been assessed to be the responsibility of Corporate Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) level and will be considered as part of the regular corporate work planning and policy review cycle.

The audit team concluded that, with critical exceptions noted below, 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 the Bancroft-Minden Forest Company Inc. (License #542585). The forest is being managed consistently with the principles of sustainable forest management, as assessed through the Independent Forest Audit Process and Protocol.

The critical exceptions are as follows:

- Improvements are needed to refine the current approach in implementing the Irregular Shelterwood System at the planning, prescription and monitoring phases.
- White Pine management on the Bancroft-Minden Forest requires further attention to meet crown closure and basal area residual requirements stipulated in the prescribed silviculture ground rules. Greater attention is needed in meeting planned artificial renewal targets of White Pine.
- Hardwood management on the Bancroft-Minden Forest requires further attention to meet minimum basal area targets within the selection silvicultural system and minimum regeneration standards within the shelterwood and uniform shelterwood silvicultural systems.

Findings

Finding #1:

The Local Citizens Committee (LCC) is not meeting the Forest Management Planning Manual (FMPM) criteria for its purpose, membership, and organization.

Action Required:

1. LCC membership list will be refreshed and renewed annually.
2. LCC members will be provided training resources to support their participation in LCC matters
3. LCC Terms of Reference will be revised to include all applicable requirements from the 2024 FMPM

Organization and Position Responsible:

1-3 MNR Peterborough-Bancroft District Manager.

Deadline Date:

1-3 March 31, 2027, and annually.

Method of Tracking Progress:

- 1-2 LCC meeting agendas and minutes.
- 3 LCC Terms of Reference.

Finding #2:

The Irregular Shelterwood System Working Group has not reached the stated Objectives and Performance Measures, completion date, and has not been active within the audit period since 2023. The issue arising from the schedule for plan production has not been comprehensively addressed, and the planned terms of reference within the planning schedule and associated checkpoint milestones have not been implemented.

Action Required:

1. The project charter will be revised and updated to better align the scope, governance and deliverables with the requirements of the Bancroft-Minden FMP. Including clearly defined roles and responsibilities. (Details on project milestones and associated actions are outlined under finding #8).

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. BMFC – Silviculture Forester and MNR Peterborough-Bancroft District Management Forester.

Deadline Date:

1. September 1, 2026.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Signed project charter. Meeting minutes will document the number of meetings and overview of discussions as they relate to the project charter.

Finding #3:

Access planning in the 2021-2031 Forest Management Plan was not fulfilled as per the requirements of the FMPM and the committed timelines stated within the Forest Management Plan.

Action Required:

1. BMFC will submit required amendments to address reassessment of roads as determined by the task team.
2. BMFC will update the Existing Roads Use (ERU) as per the requirements of the FMPM prior to the next round of planning.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. BMFC – Planning Forester
2. BMFC – Planning Forester

BMFC – Planning Forester Deadline Date:

1. September 30, 2026
2. September 30, 2027

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Amendment Approval process through Natural Resources Information Portal (NRIP)
2. Amendment Approval process through NRIP

Finding #4.2:

Applied Silvicultural Ground Rules should reflect the original management intent rather than a realized outcome after silviculture treatments have been applied as shelterwood regimes are implemented.

Action Required:

1. BMFC will include information in the Forest Operations Prescription (FOP) where previous harvest information is available to ensure management intent remains consistent.
2. BMFC will artificially regenerate red and white pine stands where the original intention was to manage for pine. If there are factors limiting the ability to

artificially regenerate red or white pine stands, BMFC will provide alternatives to MNR for review and endorsement prior to implementation.

3. FOP documents will be provided to the MNR Management Forester and will include pre-harvest data, including pre-harvest basal area by size class, species composition, and quantitative understory condition (species composition, stocking, and average height).
4. Free-to-grow information will be submitted according to Forest Information Manual (FIM) technical specifications into NRIP within annual reports for 2021 FMP allocations.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. BMFC – Office Manager
2. BMFC – Planning Forester/Silviculture Forester
3. BMFC – Silviculture Forester
4. BMFC – Planning Forester/Silviculture Forester

Deadline Date:

1. November 30, 2026
2. November 15, annually.
3. November 15, 2026
4. November 15, annually.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. FOP documentation is shared with MNR through start up notifications.
2. Annual Report.
3. FOP documentation is shared with MNR through start up notifications.
4. Annual Report.

Finding #4.3:

Silvicultural Ground Rules with multiple silvicultural systems do not follow policy.

Action Required:

1. BMFC will update and revise Silviculture Ground Rules (SGRs) to exclude Clearcut with Seed Tree as an acceptable alternative treatment option from the PWU-PWU SGR and include a PWU-CC-PWU.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. BMFC – Planning Forester/Silviculture Forester.

Deadline Date:

1. September 15, 2026.

Method of Tracking Progress

1. Amendment Approval process through NRIP.

Finding #5:

White Pine Shelterwood silvicultural ground rule standards for minimum crown closure and residual basal area are not being met.

Action Required:

1. BMFC will update SGR to include a PWU CC treatment for low-stocked stands (4 to 12 m²/ha BA of dominant-codominant white pine and other crop species) with limited advanced PW regeneration. The most common treatment is clearcut with seed tree retention (15–35 seed trees/ha), followed by mechanical site preparation and planting. Exception monitoring will apply where natural regeneration is prescribed.
2. BMFC will provide FOP to the MNR Management Forester which will include pre-harvest stand conditions including basal area, species composition, and understory conditions. This will also include previous harvest information where available to ensure management intent.
3. BMFC will ensure that prescriptions and tree marking audit results confirm a residual BA that conform with SGR requirements and FOP direction.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. BMFC – Planning Forester/Silviculture Forester
2. BMFC – Silviculture Forester
3. BMFC – Operations Staff

Deadline Date:

1. September 15, 2026
2. November 15, 2026
3. November 15, 2026

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Amendment Approval through NRIP.
2. FOP documentation is shared with MNR through start up notifications.
3. A table will be included in the Annual Report outlining the Tree Marking audit outcomes for White Pine areas.

Finding #6:

Within the Hardwood Uniform Shelterwood and Hardwood Shelterwood forest units, final cut and irregular treatments fail to meet Silvicultural Ground Rule direction and regeneration standards.

Action Required:

1. BMFC will submit free-to-grow information for all last-cut and irregular harvests <5 years post harvest for 2021 FMP allocations according to the FIM technical specifications within annual reports. These will be documented in the IFA findings portion of the Annual report.
2. BMFC will assess and quantify regeneration during FOP development and verify regeneration stocking levels through tree-marking audits. A final removal harvest will only be conducted where regeneration meets the applicable forest management guide standards.
3. BMFC will ensure compliance with SGR direction by avoiding one cut shelterwood treatments; provide clear documentation supporting silvicultural decisions; complete post harvest monitoring to confirm regeneration success; exclude small sawlogs from advanced regeneration counts; and ensure FOPs include comprehensive stand inventory data (structure, species composition, and quality), not solely regeneration metrics.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. BMFC – Planning Forester/Silviculture Forester
2. BMFC – Silviculture Forester/Operations Staff
3. BMFC – Planning Forester/Silviculture Forester

Deadline Date:

1. November 15, Annually.
2. November 15, 2026.
3. November 15, Annually.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Annual Report.
2. Regeneration information will be documented in FOPs and tree marking audits.
3. A table of free-to-grow information will be provided in the Annual Reports for final removals.

Finding #7:

Within the hardwood selection silviculture program, the residual basal areas are being left below the Forest Operation Prescription and Silvicultural Ground Rules targets.

Action Required:

1. BMFC will update the HDS-HDS SGR to allow a 10% variance in the residual basal area target of 18 m²/ha. Where pre-harvest basal area exceeds 25 m²/ha, the removal rate will remain at one-third of the basal area as per the Tree Marking Guide. Additional details will be provided in the FOPs.
2. BMFC will provide ongoing tree marker training to ensure prescription standards are met.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. BMFC – Planning Forester/Silviculture Forester.
2. BMFC – Operations Staff.

Deadline Date:

1. September 15, 2026.
2. May 30, 2028

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Amendment Approval process through NRIP.
2. Records for training will be kept by BMFC.

Finding #8:

The implementation of the hardwood irregular shelterwood silviculture program needs improvements in site planning and mapping, Forest Operation Prescription development, monitoring and follow-up treatments.

Action Required:

1. MNR and SFL will implement the deliverables as outlined in the revised project charter. BMFC will develop a decision key to determine if ISS should be prescribed on a given site.
2. BMFC will include quantified regeneration data in FOP documents.
3. BMFC will include pre-harvest stand data within the FOP documents.
4. BMFC and MNR will create an agreed upon Silviculture Effectiveness Monitoring (SEM) pathway
5. BMFC will ensure FOP maps include group opening locations within irregular shelterwood harvest areas.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. BMFC Silviculture Forester and MNR Peterborough-Bancroft District Management Forester.
2. BMFC – Silviculture Forester
3. BMFC – Silviculture Forester
4. BMFC & MNR – Silviculture Forester and MNR Peterborough-Bancroft District Management Forester.
5. BMFC - Silviculture Forester

Deadline Date:

1. November 30, 2026
2. November 15, 2026
3. November 15, 2026
4. November 30, 2026
5. November 15, 2026

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Meeting minutes will document the agreement of the working group to the decision key.
2. FOP documentation is shared with MNR through start up notifications
3. FOP documentation is shared with MNR through start up notifications
4. Meeting minutes will outline the agreement of the working group to the SEM monitoring pathway.
5. FOP documentation is shared with MNR through start up notifications.

Finding #9:

Renewal effort conducted in White Pine Shelterwood stands during the audit term underachieved planned levels.

Action Required:

1. BMFC will employ various strategies, including stand improvement, slash alignment, mechanical site preparation, and chemical site preparation to facilitate the artificial regeneration of 70% of all white pine harvest areas for the remainder of the 2021 plan, to achieve planned renewal targets.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. BMFC – Silviculture Forester.

Deadline Date:

1. November 30, 2027.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Annual Report will outline renewal activities completed for white pine

Finding #10:

The district's compliance monitoring program lacked sufficient planning rigor and sampling intensity throughout the audit period.

Action Required:

1. MNR district will prepare an annual compliance plan (ACOP) for forestry that aligns with the compliance handbook, clarifies roles and responsibilities and meets divisional inspection targets
2. MNR district staff will follow timelines on compliance assessment reporting
3. MNR district compliance staff will be trained on their roles and responsibilities
4. MNR district will increase the number of staff certified in forestry compliance and improve mentoring opportunities.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. MNR Peterborough-Bancroft District; District Supervisor, Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist, Resource Management Tech, supported by Management Forester.
2. MNR Peterborough-Bancroft District; District Supervisor, Integrated Resource Management Technical Specialist, Resource Management Tech.
3. MNR Peterborough-Bancroft District; District Supervisor.
4. MNR Peterborough-Bancroft District; District Manager, District Supervisor.

Deadline Date:

All Actions: March 31, 2027, and annually.

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Annual approved ACOP document and key performance indicator (KPI) reporting for inspection targets
2. District Forestry Meeting Minutes
3. District Forestry Meeting Minutes
4. Individual Staff Learning Plans) and MNR certification records.

Finding #11:

Bancroft-Minden Forest Management Company is not meeting the submission timelines for Forest Operations Information Program (FOIP) report for most of its compliance inspections.

Action Required:

1. BMFC will update the procedure for submitting FOIP reports to ensure timelines are in line with the Forest Compliance Handbook.

Organization and Position Responsible:

1. BMFC – Operations Staff

Deadline Date:

1. November 15, 2026

Method of Tracking Progress:

1. Annual Report tracking of timelines based on Days from Inspection to Submission