



File: 19500, 19510-20/All Licenses

September 11, 2017

All Forest Licenses
Cariboo Region

Dear Licensee:

RE: Post-Wildfire Salvage guidance to Licensees

The unprecedented fire season of 2017 is impacting thousands of hectares of merchantable timber and there is an urgent need to identify salvage priorities throughout the Cariboo Region. In addition to the extreme fire situation, the Cariboo Region is also in the midst of both Douglas fir and spruce bark beetle outbreaks, creating an extremely difficult forest management planning environment. Maintenance of future timber supply and associated forest and range values of the Cariboo Region will require thoughtful planning and careful harvesting of fire damaged and beetle-susceptible stands in the immediate future.

Objectives for salvage:

- Recover burnt timber within the shortest amount of time to maximize timber value
- Provide fibre supply to mills and other manufacturers
- Ensure safety for workers and the public
- Reduce the spread of insect infestations
- Mitigate further impact to non-timber values
- Maximize potential for recovery of and reforestation of damaged stands

In an effort to meet these objectives, Cariboo Region's management team will be working with staff, other agencies and licensees to create short and long term recovery strategies. Major Licensees operating within the Cariboo Region should consider delaying application or harvest of some live undamaged cutting permits in order to utilize harvesting and milling capacity for fire salvage. Major Licensee fire salvage efforts will be monitored and I may use legislative or contractual options if this effort is insufficient. It is important that licensees work closely with forest district staff to avoid any pitfalls associated with delaying cutting permit application or harvest.

There have been concerns raised regarding expectations within Mule Deer Winter Range (MDWR), Old Growth Management Areas (OGMA's) and other land use designations that are within the fire perimeters.

Page 1 of 3

Over the next few weeks we will be providing updated MDWR salvage guidance in order to streamline the recovery process in these sensitive habitats. In the short term, there is no change to the existing MDWR and other land use designation guidance. The Land Use Order (LUO) and related biodiversity updates provide direction and legal requirements for sanitation activities within OGMA's related to significant forest health threats.

The LUO also provides allowable salvage criteria for Transition and Permanent-Rotating OGMA (there is no salvage opportunity within Permanent-Static OGMA). Update #14 outlines the principles for management given the accepted regional management approach of managing OGMA's in fixed locations.

Current information regarding MDWR and OGMA management is available at the following locations:

- Guidance for Fire-damaged stands in MDWR:
https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/tasb/slrp/lrmp/williamslake/cariboo_chilcotin/plan/biodiv/2014_June_Final_Information_Note1.pdf
- CCLUP Biodiversity Conservations Strategy and Updates:
- <https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/tasb/SLRP/plan104.html>

Effective recovery and prevention of further widespread losses due to beetle will require a concerted effort for the next 3-5 years. The anticipated progression is as follows:

Year 1: Intensive salvage of severely burnt and high-priority salvage areas to maximize immediate benefits. Planning sanitation for year two, including baiting to attract beetle into planned harvest areas.

Year 2: Continued salvage of severely burnt areas, with maximum emphasis on sanitation of beetle infestations.

Years 3-5: Sanitation of beetle infested areas and salvage of remaining burnt trees.

Short term planning should prioritize harvesting in the following areas:

1. Salvage for safety, especially along roadways and fence lines hydro/telephone lines, rail lines etc.
2. Salvage within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) with the objective of improving wildfire resilience and improving the safety immediately adjacent to communities
3. Recovery of any trap trees and spillover throughout the region
4. Sanitation of fire-damaged Douglas-fir and spruce in non-constrained areas to prevent further beetle infestation.
5. Priority areas for reforestation where immediate action will assist in the establishment of a new forest (ex. areas prone to brush, frost, or drought)
6. Salvage of "Primary Fuel Breaks" identified through the Landscape Fire Management Planning Process/Treatment Opportunity Documents.

Harvesting should be planned carefully, and in consideration of current forest health risks and the preferred future forest conditions. Douglas-fir beetle is at epidemic levels throughout the Cariboo and all harvesting in Douglas-fir types should be planned to reduce the risk of beetle infestation. Similarly, spruce beetle is also increasing, and careful consideration must be given to preventing further spread of the beetle. Douglas-fir regeneration should be prioritized in fir types in consideration of future timber supply and general habitat values.

First Nations values and participation in recovery is of utmost importance, their involvement in the planning through the consultation process as well as any opportunity to be operationally involved is considered to be critical in the post wildfire salvage.

Thompson Rivers Natural Resource District has also been significantly impacted by major wildfire events. We are working closely with staff there to ensure alignment and coordination, and you will be receiving similar direction from the District Manager in the coming weeks

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your local district office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Pedersen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Michael Pedersen
Regional Executive Director
Cariboo Region

ec:

