File: 19300-20/Elephant Hill

August 9, 2018

VIA EMAIL

To: Forest licensees operating in the Kamloops and 100 Mile House TSAs

Re: Silviculture and Reforestation Principles for Elephant Hill Wildfire

As you know, since October 2017, the Province has been working collaboratively with the Indigenous Communities impacted by the Elephant Hill wildfire, through the Elephant Hill Wildfire Joint Leadership Council on various issues related to post-wildfire recovery.

To support reforestation work, the Elephant Hill Wildfire Joint Leadership Council has endorsed a set of specific silviculture principles to guide silviculture and reforestation planning for the Elephant Hill fire (attached).

The Elephant Hill wildfire significantly impacted multiple forest values. Cultural interests, timber supply, carbon stocks, wildlife habitat and riparian ecosystems are priority values for recovery, and are influenced by forest structure and composition. The development of a post wildfire recovery strategy, including the Silviculture and Reforestation Principles will assist us to have a common vision for how impacted values can be "built (grown) back better".

The Silviculture and Reforestation Principles, *Post-Natural Disturbance Forest Retention Guidance*[1], as well as guidance developed for other land based values, will guide silviculture and reforestation in the Elephant Hill wildfire area for all parties. In order to support these principles some changes and or additions to higher level plan stocking standards may be necessary for areas with legal obligations.

We recognize that these principles do not form legal direction. However, these principles represent a consensus by Ministry staff and First Nations about how to best recover values on the land base. They also represent a way that First Nations rights and interests can be addressed during post-wildfire reforestation activities.

[1] https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/forestry/2017_fire_report_revised.pdf

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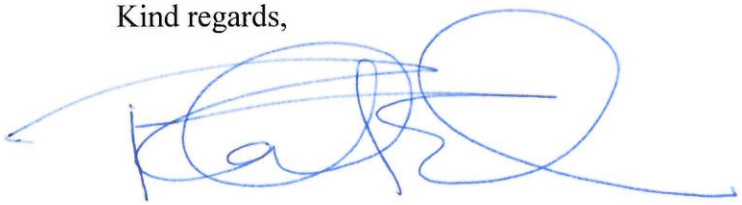
These principles are intended to be dynamic and may be revised or improved upon as land based recovery activities progress. To support implementation, we have begun working with your silviculture staff and have invited them to and information meeting on August 10, 2018, as well as, a joint field session with First Nations on August 16, 2018.

Please be reminded that we have established an FTP site[2] where technical information related to Elephant Hill recovery will be stored. We will put a copy of this document on the site.

Kind regards,



Rachael Pollard
District Manager,
Thompson Rivers Forest District

and on behalf of

Pat Byrne
District Manager,
100 Mile House Forest District

[2] https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/DHW/external/!publish/Fires_2017/

Elephant Hill Wildfire Recovery Joint Leadership Council
Principles for Silviculture and Reforestation in Elephant Hill

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The 2017 Wildfire season has been the most damaging and challenging wildfire season in the Province's history. The Elephant Hill wildfire complex has had severe impacts to the landscape. The recovery of the land and its ecosystems will be guided by the strategic and collaboratively developed recovery plans.

To support silviculture and reforestation, the *Joint Technical Committee*, under the guidance of the *Elephant Hill Wildfire Recovery Joint Leadership Council*, has developed principles for silviculture and reforestation within the Elephant Hill wildfire:

1. *Safety is an overarching principle that may influence treatment decisions*
2. *Reforestation strategies and standards shall consider facilitation of natural succession pathways in consideration of climate change: species, genetic diversity, densities and areas to not reforest (grasslands, natural reforestation)*
3. *Facilitate natural succession pathways with ecologically appropriate species*
4. *Deciduous will be maintained within Elephant Hill*
   a) Consider deciduous as beneficial (non-deleterious) within Elephant Hill perimeter
5. *Post fire salvage harvested stands have to be on the trajectory to pre salvage species composition*
6. *Reforestation in fire damaged plantations – riparian planting consists of riparian tree species*
7. *Reforestation strategies that consider variable densities and/or structures across the landscape*
8. *If trees harvested for safety reasons debris will be left on site and may be piled and stubbing should occur*
9. *Browse species and culturally important plants should be protected in silviculture activities*
10. *Stand tending activities will consider variable densities that create landscape diversity for multiple values*
11. *Wait until salvage complete before doing evaluation of areas of non-salvage forests for recovery except where it can be incorporated into existing work or research*
12. *Prevent ecological damage*
    b) No unauthorized off road vehicle use (all vehicles restricted to the roads and fire guards)
13. *These Silviculture principles apply to all reforestation including on rehabilitated roads. Principles and guidance for road/linear disturbance rehabilitation will be provided by the Elephant Hill Wildfire Joint Leadership Council in the near future.*

These principles are dynamic and may be improved upon as land based recovery activities progress. The Elephant Hill Wildfire Recovery Joint Leadership Council will work to reach consensus and may modify these principles as needed.

These principles have been endorsed by the Elephant Hill Wildfire Recovery Joint Leadership Council members on July 13, 2018.