

File: 19500-01

October 30, 2001

Major Licensees,
Woodlot Licensees;
Community Forest
Small Business Forest Enterprise Program
Lakes Forest District

Dear Sir/Madam:

Re: Beetle Management within Known Scenic Areas

This letter will serve to further clarify for tenure holders how scenic areas will be addressed when managing for beetles within the Lakes Forest District.

Background

On December 14 1998, I distributed a letter to all licensees identifying the location of known scenic areas in the district and suggested that achieving the recommended VQOs/ rVQCs would ensure that the visual resource is being adequately managed and conserved. On December 21,2000, I sent a follow-up letter providing direction on managing beetle infestations within scenic areas.

Since my last letter the extent of the beetle outbreak and short timeframes for its management has led me to re-evaluate how visual resources will be managed. I have concluded that as the level of the beetle infestation increases, harvest activities will increasingly affect scenic areas. This in turn will reduce the ability to meet the rVQCs previously prescribed.

In consideration of the above points, the new goal for harvesting beetle damaged timber in scenic areas will be to design and carryout salvage operations to minimize the impacts on the visual resource as much as possible.

To assist you in accomplishing this goal, the following guidelines have been developed.

- 1) Minimize the removal of non-infested timber or non-target species.
It is understood that there will be some circumstances where non-infested timber or non-target species may have to be harvested to assist in the removal of infested timber.



Major Licensees

- 2) Use visual landscape design techniques as much as possible to ensure that out of scale proposals fit the landscape. (generally, bark beetle affected blocks coincide with certain forest cover types and so there should be minimal need to salvage damaged timber with geometric straight line configurations).
- 3) Utilize partial cuts, small clearcuts, clearcuts with reserves, and other mitigative measures to minimise the impact of harvesting activities within the scenic area.

It is recognized that in many cases, bark beetle infestations influence the location of blocks, their shape and type of harvest. I have previously provided exemption from the requirement of carrying out visual impact assessments (OPR Section 37 (4)), at the silviculture prescription stage. I will continue providing these exemptions where the tenure holder provides sound rationale for my consideration. This exemption would only apply to the need to carry out a visual assessment; it does not exempt the management of the visual resource values for the scenic area. I would expect that exemptions will be sought at the FDP stage and that licensees will provide a sound strategy for road and block development within scenic areas that are infested with beetles.

Specific mitigative measures should further be rationalized within the silviculture prescription and should include: how the visual resource values will be managed, what the levels of infestation are within the harvest area, and what types of mitigative measure are to be carried out to minimize impact.

After the beetles have moved through an area or when populations subside, scenic areas will be re-inventoried and cut blocks assessed for potential rehabilitation. At that time standard operational practises for the management of visual resource values in scenic areas will be employed.

If you have any questions or concerns about the above direction please contact Alex Bergen or myself at (250)-692-2200.

Yours truly,

R. A. Murray
District Manager
Lakes Forest District

Enclosure

Major Licensees

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.