

Climate-Informed Investments for Forest Enhancement and Carbon

Information Note #4 - Best Practices for Forest Health

October 31, 2017

Introduction

Preventing significant damage to forest resource values through the application of specific forest management activities is the goal of the forest health program in B.C. Maintaining and enhancing the growing stock of forests will help ensure that carbon capture investments targets are attained. The forest health program monitors and identifies damage resulting from climate change and other causes and recommends actions to minimize this damage. Opportunities to recover fiber killed or damaged by forest health factors can be identified by the program, and activities to recover this volume can mitigate further damage from occurring (for example, remove dead Douglas-fir trees to avoid attracting Douglas-fir beetle).

Purpose

This information sheet provides general guidance on the preference for FES/FCI investments to mutually benefit provincial forest health objectives by using the principles of investing in activities 1) that capture damaged volume that would normally not be salvaged, 2) reduce the potential for forest health agents to cause mortality; and, 3) reduce the potential for growth rate reductions (i.e. improve productivity and carbon sequestration) by reducing the impacts of forest health factors on growing stands.

Objectives

Proposals reflect beneficial practices when they help meet the following objectives:

1. Proposals consider the forest health implications of activities (i.e. prevent mortality or reduce negative impacts on growth rates);
2. Activities identified as benefiting forest health have a clear description of what benefits will be achieved and if they are a priority for the TSA;
3. Such activities make biological sense; and,
4. The activities are supported by regional forest health specialists

Strategic, Operational and Tactical Approaches

Proposals reflect beneficial practices when the following practices are planned:

Strategic Approaches

- Support district/regional forest health strategic objectives.
- Support the investment in Silviculture and Forest Health research

Operational and Tactical Practices

- Salvage of recent blowdown that could result in significant breeding material for bark beetles (i.e., spruce beetle, Douglas-fir beetle);
- Expedited sanitation harvest of beetle infested timber identified by FLNRO that are below economic thresholds; and,
- Salvage of root disease infected timber in stands that are below economic thresholds and remove stumps to reduce the disease inoculum load.
- Identify poorly stocked stands but declared free-growing for forest health or other reasons and carry out fill-planting where feasible to increase site occupancy and maximize carbon capture.

Cumulative Effects and Potential Impacts on Other Values

- Sanitation and salvage harvesting may conflict with wildlife or fisheries objectives.

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