

Climate-Informed Investments for Forest Enhancement and Carbon

Information Note #5

Best Practices to meet landscape level objectives and non-timber values

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Introduction

BC's diverse landscapes provide an array of values to the citizens of the province. Many of these values are managed or protected through legislation or through a variety of planning instruments at broad spatial scales, such as whole watersheds (landscapes). Broad scales such the landscape-scale are associated with the natural history of certain species (e.g., species that migrate, species with large home ranges). Landscape scales are also pertinent to understanding the potential for contagion and spread of forest disturbances (e.g., fire, bark beetles). Taking a landscape-level perspective of tree species composition and structure, age class distribution, and the spatial characteristics of harvest openings increases the likelihood of achieving the objectives for values that are linked to landscape-level processes.

Purpose

This best practices info sheet is designed to assist FES proponents to plan sound projects that align with landscape level objectives and protect the non-timber values that may be affected by their operations.

Criteria to Consider

- First Nations rights and title on the proposed treatment area;
- The values that have been identified through a higher level plan, GAR order, etc.; along with their spatial location and extent, and measures associated with these values;
- Landscape-level wildfire mitigation strategies;
- Existing and predicted climate change; and,
- Increasing landscape-level ecological resilience (i.e., the capacity of the landscape to recover from disturbance).

Objectives

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

1. FES project is consistent with and integrates objectives identified for other values;
2. FES project contributes to landscape resilience;
3. FES project addresses climate change.

Strategic, Operational and Tactical Approaches

Proposals reflect beneficial practices when the following practices are planned:

Strategic approaches

- Consider the impact of the project on other values by referring to objectives set by government, [GAR orders](#), [species at risk](#), and higher level plans; use the landscape scale to

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resolve potentially competing objectives;

- Landscape-level connectivity, seral stage distribution, and diversity in opening size and shape are spatial approaches to enhancing landscape-level resilience;
- Between-stand diversity in tree genetics, tree species, and planting density contribute to landscape resilience, and should be integrated with other landscape objectives; and,
- Stand-level decisions can be used to meet landscape level objectives. For example, climate adapted tree species selection can be used to minimize the landscape-level abundance of tree species associated with a particular disturbance agent in a landscape (e.g., considering suitable species for climate adaptation, such as Douglas-fir, in landscapes where rusts are prevalent on lodgepole pine).¹

Operational and Tactical Practices

Work with the landscape-level presence of stand elements to enhance their effectiveness in landscape-level objectives; for example:

- Retain biological legacies and microclimate refugia at the stand level for sources of propagules, particularly where stand structural elements (e.g., old trees) are infrequent in the landscape, and where multiple objectives can be addressed (e.g., retention and protection of culturally important species together with structural elements); and,
- Anchor wildfire mitigation strategies such as discontinuity in fuel loads, to natural areas of low flammability, such as talus slopes.

Cumulative Effects and Potential Impacts on Other Values

- Multiple objectives within a landscape can result in conflicts in land management planning; a landscape level approach provides the opportunity to integrate management strategies to meet all objectives.

Information sources

- [Species and Ecosystems at Risk](#)
- [GAR Orders](#)
- [Identified Wildlife Management Strategy](#)
- [Strategic Land and Resource Planning](#)
- [Community Watersheds in BC](#)
- [Established Visual Quality Objectives for BC](#)
- [BC First Nations - Maps](#)
- [FLNRO Region and District](#) contact information

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¹ Also see Best Practices Information Note # 1 Best Practices for Climate Adapted Tree Species Selection