

Climate-Informed Investments for Forest Enhancement and Carbon

Information Note #9 Best Practices for Utilization

October 26, 2017

Introduction

When logging takes place in BC, a variable amount of the stored forest carbon is left behind on site. Burning of slash piles contributes a huge fraction of total emissions in BC: in fact about 30% of all of BC's emissions is due to the burning of logging residue in piles. This creates a compelling opportunity to reduce emissions from the forest sector, while reducing waste and adding economic value.

Purpose

This Best Practices information note is designed to assist FES proponents to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by increasing utilization, reducing the volume of material burned, and reducing the proportion of gases with high climate forcing characteristics (e.g. nitrous oxide).

Objectives

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

1. Reduce burning of slash piles and associated emissions of greenhouse gases;
2. Improve recovery of fiber, especially for long-lived wood products; and,
3. Generate jobs and economic benefits.

Strategic, Operational and Tactical Approaches

Proposals reflect beneficial practices when the following practices are planned.

Strategic Approaches

- Improve utilization standards so that more wood is taken out of the bush and converted to long-lived forest products;
- Consider silvicultural and harvesting systems that reduce waste wood in piles;
- Increase opportunities for salvage;
- Work with the FFT program to avoid competing for the same fibre;
- Find mechanisms to reduce fire hazard without burning; and,
- Properly assess the fire hazard prior to abating it by burning slash piles.

Operational and Tactical Practices

- When harvesting, maximize utilization of fiber for an array of products rather than pile and burn: convert timber into chips, pulp, pellets or biofuels when not sawlog grade;
- Separate white wood from hog fuel to improve product-specific recovery;

- Use an on-site chipper and blow unusable residue back onto the block; and,
- Minimize the amount of waste wood burned on site.

The BC Fibre Action Plan provides further guidance, tools and resources to support the increased utilization of residual fibre.

Cumulative Effects and Potential Impacts on Other Values

- For a fiber utilization project, make sure some coarse woody debris (CWD) is left on site (consider discussion with ecosystems staff to better understand CWD uses and its appropriate distribution);
- Check to see which red- and blue-listed species occurring in the area make use of log piles for hiding and rearing cover. Make smaller piles and avoid burning in these areas; and,
- Undertake all burning in accordance with ventilation index. Before burning, always call 1-888-281-2992 (Ministry of Environment) to confirm a good ventilation index.

Contact

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Resources:

- BC Fibre Action Plan
<https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hth/timber-tenures/forest-fibre-action-plan.htm>
- Fibre Recovery Tenures
<https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hth/timber-tenures/fibre-recovery.htm>