



Some Suggestions for a Strategic Approach to Post Wildfire Activities on Woodlot Licences

After the wildfire is under control and you know where the fire boundary is on your WL...

- **Determine the location of all fireguards and landings.**
 - BC Wildfire Services (BCWS) should have a map of all fireguards and landings.
 - BCWS must prepare a rehabilitation plan and is responsible for rehabilitating areas disturbed by fire suppression efforts. You will want to have input and review this plan as it relates to your WL.
 - You should consider which, if any, of the fireguards you will want to use as industrial roads in the future; keeping in mind that some guards or portions of guards may be in poor locations. You will then need to work with the ministry (BCWS and the district) regarding their rehabilitation obligations on fireguards destined to become WL roads; e.g. erosion control, invasive plant measures, ditching, culverts, mitigating a natural range barrier that was breached, etc.

Tips Concerning Timber from Fireguards

- ✓ *A WL licensee has exclusive right to the timber on a WL, and therefore should be offered the right of first refusal on merchantable wood cut from fireguards. If you accept the wood, then a timber mark will be needed and the volume will be charged against the licence's AAC for purposes of cut control. If the fireguard volume will exceed remaining authorized volume in the cut control period, a cut control limit exemption (CCLE) or AAC uplift will be needed.*
- ✓ *The timber mark from a variety of authorities may be used; e.g. 1 Cutting Permit, Road Permit, Cutting Permit, Salvage Permit or Blanket Salvage Permit.*
- ✓ *Depending on the authority, you will want to ensure that the other obligations associated with the permit are addressed and exemptions are obtained and/or responsibilities for meeting obligations are clearly defined. For example, if the wood will be moved under a road permit mark for expediency, but the fireguard will not become a road, written confirmation should be obtained from the District Manager that road maintenance and deactivation obligations will not apply. The responsibility for carrying out waste assessments, waste disposal and disturbance reporting should also be clearly addressed. Logically, if you didn't harvest the wood, you should not be responsible for waste.*

- **Overlay the Fire Boundary on the WL Inventory**
 - Use the timber type information to identify the areas you think can be salvage logged.
 - Use the average volume per hectare for each polygon to estimate the total salvage volume.
 - Check the total salvage volume against your licence's cut control situation.
 - If it looks as if you will not have enough regular harvest volume to address the salvage situation, apply for a Cut Control Limit Exemption (CCLE) or AAC uplift.

CCLE or AAC Uplift

A CCLE is recommended. Ideally, you will have a CCLE approved and in hand before commencing salvage operations. That way, you will be able to market all the salvage wood at one time, and will not risk getting into an overcut situation or having your operations interrupted waiting for an exemption to be approved. A CCLE may contain conditions, which means the DDM may specify that the volume under the exemption may only be used against burned timber, wood from fireguards, etc.

Before commencing any road or harvesting operations, you should check on the status of...

- **Fire Maps & Imagery**
 - Request a copy of all fire related maps and imagery from the ministry (BCWS &/or district); e.g. aerial photographs, satellite images, drone videos or photos, fire intensity maps, fireguard locations, etc.
 - If possible, get GPS information and/or digital files.

- In addition to being useful information to help you make decisions, it may save you time and money later when it comes time to amending plans, applying for permits or reporting disturbances.
- **Higher Level Plans (HLP), Orders & General Wildlife Measures (GWM):**
The wildfires may have destroyed the attributes for which a HLP objective, order or GWM was established; e.g. the GWMs for a burned over ungulate winter range may no longer be reasonable or achievable. If that's the case, and the HLP, Order or GWM hasn't been rescinded or amended, then you may want to request an exemption.
- **Woodlot Licence Plan:**
The wildfires may necessitate an amendment to your approved Woodlot Licence Plan (WLP). The alternative performance requirements in section 13 of the WLPPR lists things to consider – stocking standards, implications to the wildlife tree strategy, etc. Other things to consider;
 - Do the invasive plant measures make sense now that the area has been burned?
 - Did the fires destroyed any natural range barriers?
 - Was the wildlife tree retention strategy impacted?
 - Did the fire, fire suppression and post-fire salvage operations cause soil disturbance? Are the soil disturbance limits reasonable?
 - Other practice requirements that are no longer applicable and for which an exemption may be granted.
 The point is to make sure the requirements and commitments in your WLP are still applicable and achievable post fire.
- **Reforestation:**
If planting is going to be required, will you be able to acquire seedlings? Is there enough suitable seed and nursery capacity available?
- **Harvesting & Roads:**
Like always, make sure you have the proper authorizations in place. The 1 Cutting Permit is ideal because it authorizes road construction and use and timber harvesting, which facilitates a prompt response to burned areas.

Knowing what your obligations are with respect to burned over areas is important when determining if its economically feasible to salvage log. It's also critical to plan carefully so that you do not end up accepting legal obligations that are not realistically achievable.