

IS THIS A FEAR MONGERING EXERCISE:

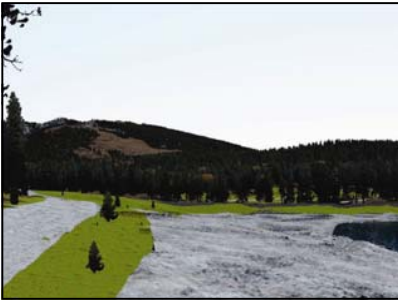
B.C.'s experience over the last ten years has played a large part in driving Alberta's action plan for the beetle. B.C.'s lodgepole pine forests have been devastated by the Mountain Pine Beetle. A proactive pre-emptive response in dealing with the advancing beetle is felt to be a better alternative than doing nothing and risk the chance of seeing the same outcome as B.C.

WHY THE RUSH, THIS HASN'T GONE THROUGH A PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS:

Harvest planning for the Jumping Pound Creek and West Ghost areas is undergoing a compressed process compared to the traditional process. The beetle is on our doorstep creating a heightened degree of urgency to implement a beetle control plan. That said, SLS is developing a public involvement program

Known stakeholders have been identified and are being contacted. Open houses will follow once harvest plans have been put together for viewing.

VISUALIZATION MODELING MAP:

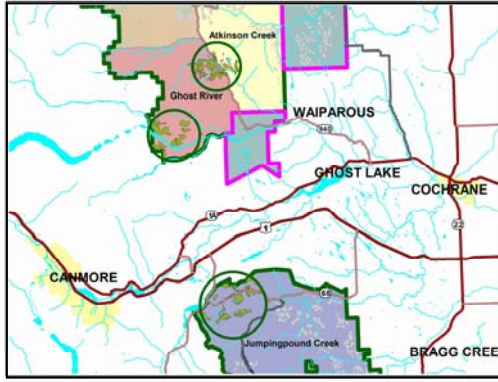


MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE:



*Photo by Dion Manastyrski
Ministry of Forests, southern Interior Forest Region*

MAP OF THE AREA



STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONS JUMPING POUND CREEK / EAST AND WEST GHOST HARVEST ACTIVITY

In response to the advancement of the mountain pine beetle Spray Lake Sawmills has undertaken a modeling exercise to assess forest stand susceptibility to the beetle. The modeling outputs together with consultation with Sustainable Resource Development, has shown Jumping Pound Creek, the West Ghost and East Ghost to be the highest priority areas for the development of pine beetle harvest plans.

Plans are currently being prepared with harvest activity anticipated to commence in the summer of 2007. The urgency of the beetle epidemic has required a condensed timeline for plan development. Once prepared, harvest plans will be made available for public review and comment.

This brochure has tried to anticipate questions that may arise and provides a response to help frame the rationale and direction being taken within the planning process.



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WHY CAN'T SLS DO SINGLE TREE TREATMENTS LIKE THE GOVERNMENT:

While both FMA and Alberta Community Development lands share the same objective in trying to curtail the beetle infestation they have differing overall land management mandates and corresponding management tools. Single tree treatments will be subject to levels of beetle infestation and budget availability. This is an approach to the beetles presence when at low levels. Stand level of treatments on the FMA lands represent a proactive approach in response to a growing beetle population.



WHY CAN'T SLS LEAVE A VISUAL SCREEN OR BUFFER TO HIDE THE LOGGING:

Efforts will be made to work with spruce, fir and aspen components of the stands to incorporate aesthetic objectives. Retention of beetle susceptible lodgepole pine would be counter productive to meeting the beetle management objectives.

In the Jumping Pound Creek area, natural features such as rock outcrops, steep slopes, gullies and riparian buffers will break up the larger openings. Trees on these sites will remain due to inoperability of the features, thereby contributing to the visual landscape. Ridges and hummocks dominate the topography of the area and will aid in reducing opening visibility.

WHY DOESN'T SLS LET MOTHER NATURE TAKE ITS COURSE:

The current mountain pine beetle population levels are not a natural occurrence within recorded time periods. Cold winter weather, which naturally curtailed beetle populations, has not occurred for a number of years now.

Fire suppression over the last 50 years has also created an older age class of susceptible pine forest across the landscape that needs to be dealt with.

In B.C.'s experience the impact of letting nature take its course was devastating to all forest values (biodiversity, wildlife, soil stability, water quality, etc)

HOW WILL MOTORIZED AND NON-MOTORIZED RECREATIONAL USE BE IMPACTED:

Efforts will be made to keep existing recreation trails open after harvesting and reforestation activities are complete although there may be some temporary closures during active operations to ensure public safety. FLUZ and other land use regulations will remain unchanged.

DO THE OPENINGS HAVE TO BE BIG AND WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE CLEAR-CUT:

The block size is governed by the current size of the susceptible pine stands. Leaving susceptible trees within a harvest area would be counterproductive to the beetle management objectives.

WILL LOG TRUCK SAFETY BE AN ISSUE:

Spray Lake Sawmills has an extensive log truck monitoring, control and safety program. Available on request.

Highway #40 and #68 have traditionally been used as a seasonal log haul route without incident.

WHAT ABOUT SAFETY IF SLS IS LOGGING CLOSE TO TIM HORTON'S CAMP:

Spray Lake Sawmills has an extensive safety program for its harvest operations. Available on request.

On going communications and coordination will be held with representatives from the Tim Horton's Camp.

WHAT ABOUT THE RESEARCH PLOTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE KANANASKIS FIELD STATION:

Communications will be held with the Kananaskis Field Station to determine where their areas of interest are.

WHAT ABOUT COMPENSATION TO BUSINESSES IN THE AREA:

The impacts of an uncontrolled landscape level beetle infestation can be quite large and will impact all businesses, industry and recreational sectors. A lesser cost alternative is to implement a proactive control program.

Rather than asking about compensation a better question would be to ask, "what can I do to help?"

WILL THERE BE FLOODING IN THE AREA FROM CLEARCUTTING:

Currently proposed harvest levels have been shown through history and through modeling exercises to have a negligible effect on flow rates. In BC, landscape level die-off of a forest landscape from MPB has shown significant increase in the watertable and surface flooding.

HOW WILL THIS IMPACT WILDLIFE:

As part of the company's DFMP planning process wildlife habitat suitability modeling was conducted to ensure appropriate levels of suitable habitat would be maintained over time.

We are aware of the impacts of access development on the grizzly bear. Steps will be taken to implement access controls as needed.

ARE THERE ANY ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES THAT NEED PROTECTION:

Archeological assessments are routinely conducted through both a modeling exercise and a ground level verification by certified archeologists.

WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO WATER QUALITY IN THE SURROUNDING RIVERS:

The provincial Timber Harvest Planning and Operating Ground Rules provides guidelines for the company to follow in defining best management practices to ensure water quality is maintained.

Historical water quality monitoring conducted by the company has shown no negative impact as a consequence of logging.

IS THIS A TIMBER GRAB:

The areas being proposed for harvest are within Spray Lake Sawmills forest management agreement area and would have been scheduled for harvest at some point regardless of the beetle. The current beetle infestation has merely caused a re-sequencing of the high risk stands and will require a modification to the ground level application of harvest practices.

Volumes planned for harvest are within sustainable levels as projected through the DFMP timber supply analysis.

IS THE AREA GOING TO BE REFORESTED, AND IF SO, WITH WHAT SPECIES:

All areas planned for harvest will also be reforested and will be subject to the same provincial standards as any other area.

Stands will be stratified according to their species composition with a generalized target of reforestation to the same species mix as was harvested.

Research has shown young regenerated pine stands to have a low level of susceptibility to the pine beetle. The broader age class mosaic of stands created as a result of harvesting should reduce the overall landscape susceptibility to the beetle.

Reforestation and reclamation activities will be completed within two years of harvesting

ARE THERE ANY GUARANTEES THIS STRATEGY WILL BE SUCCESSFUL:

There are no guarantees. The best we can do is to do our homework, learn from the B.C. experience and implement a timely proactive plan. The potential negative consequences of inactivity are too high.