

Sullivan Creek Collaborative Planning Session
April 30th, 2015
Summary of Stakeholder Comments and SLS Response

SLS hosted a collaborative planning session to discuss the planned timber harvest in the Sullivan Creek compartment. SLS reviewed the planning hierarchy and government submissions required prior to harvest operations. The group then discussed SLS and stakeholder values in the area, both specific and general.

One Attendee(s):

- Representative of Nature Alberta

Subject: Maximum Block Size

Stakeholder concerns about how maximum block size is tracked. Adjacent blocks, despite being two blocks should be considered one clearing. What is the intent of maximum block size? How is wildlife influenced by maximum block size? How is ESRD regulating maximum block size and adjacency concerns?

SLS Response:

The Pre Industrial Forest Condition (PIC) study concluded that the size of harvest blocks, currently at less than 100 ha, falls within the natural range of variation. However, under PIC burning conditions, less than 20% of fires would have been less than 100 ha. The PIC model indicated mean fire size under a fire suppression regime was established at 537 ha for the Subalpine, 1,454 ha for the Upper Foothills/Montane and 800 ha for the Lower Foothills. Under a PIC fire regime, mean fire size would be expected to be much larger.

In terms of landscape management, SLS is addressing the findings of the fire disturbance research in several ways. SLS is increasing the size of harvest blocks by adjoining blocks while leaving a patchwork of island remnants and preserving travel corridors and shelter for wildlife. SLS is also increasing the amount of patterning of a harvest block to make them more visually appealing, reminiscent of fire boundaries and increasing edge habitat for a variety of species. Larger block sizes are consistent with natural conditions and generally provide higher quality habitat conditions.

Subject: Stream Crossings

Stakeholder concerned about sedimentation into streams through construction and maintenance of watercourse crossings. What are the monitoring requirements to ensure silt fences and cross drains are working as expected? Stakeholder would like to see a section of ditch lines in OGR 11.4.22 to address the impact of waterflow and sedimentation.

SLS Response:

An important component of SLS's water quality protection strategy includes the use of bridges and native timber bridges when crossing most live streams. A box crib stream crossing structure acts

similarly to a bridge, whereby the stream bed and banks are protected and stream flow is unrestricted as compared with a typical culvert installation. Utilizing these structures reduces earthwork and eliminates modifications to stream channels. These structures also support fish passage, minimize alteration of fish habitat and sediment delivery. Please see the OGR Section 11 for SLS requirements for road planning, design, classification, construction, maintenance, reclamation, and watercourse crossings. Roads are monitored throughout operations by SLS staff, contractors, and ESRD staff to ensure OGR's are met. At the completion of SLS operations and generally less than three years from the road construction date, SLS schedules its roads and stream crossing structures for removal.

Request: Concerning the creek crossings into block 3335, can one of the two crossings be eliminated?

SLS Response: SLS will eliminate one of these crossings if possible, based on terrain and creek characteristic restrictions. At the completion of SLS operations and generally less than three years from the road construction date, SLS schedules its roads and stream crossing structures for removal.

Subject: Fisheries and Spawning

Stakeholder provided extensive information regarding the fish-bearing streams in the area and provided great history on the topic. With ongoing concern about protection of spawning areas, no harvest areas were identified as a concern.

SLS Response:

SLS greatly appreciates the information and will continue to follow OGR's regarding watershed protection and habitat management to ensure concerns are addressed.

Additional SLS comments

Supplemental to the Operating Ground Rules, Spray Lake Sawmills has developed a series of resource management objectives designed to measure performance in meeting the stated goals identified in the DFMP. Some of the plan metrics include water quality, road access and reclamation, reforestation program, biodiversity and wildlife habitat supply, soil disturbance, and sustainable timber supply. SLS has consistently met or exceeded all of the stated plan objectives. Please see the SLS Stewardship Report, which summarizes the annual and five-year monitoring deliverables in reference to the planning objectives identified in the DFMP at <http://www.spraylakesawmills.com/woodlands/forest-management-planning/detailed-forest-management-plan/>

SLS would like to thank all those who participated in this year's planning sessions and all of our public consultation; your interest and comments are greatly appreciated.

Please visit our website for more information on all topics discussed: www.spraylakesawmills.com