



Spray Lake Sawmills

2020 Open House Information Package

Operating Ground Rules (OGR):

The OGR are the practices used in planning and conducting timber harvesting operations which constitutes the methods used to implement decisions made in the Forest Management Plan and other higher-level plans such as Integrated Resource Plans, within the SLS operating area, the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan. The OGR has recently been updated, the 2020 revision is available on the SLS website: <https://www.spraylakesawmills.com/woodlands/forest-management-planning/operating-ground-rules/>

Open House:

SLS typically holds open houses the first week of May annually to discuss with stakeholders the upcoming harvest schedule. SLS Woodlands staff answer any questions and gather feedback while discussing the harvest plans. This occurs after initial consultation, fieldwork, and in some cases plan submission or approval by Alberta. Regardless of the state of the plan, feedback is incorporated, and changes can be made.

Forest Management Planning:

This information package discusses the Forest Harvest Plan (FHP) and Annual Operating Plan (AOP) portions of our Public Involvement Process, for further information regarding forest management planning, see <https://www.spraylakesawmills.com/woodlands/forest-management-planning/>.

Forest Management Plan (FMP) – A 20-year plan (with 10-year renewal) that identifies sustainable harvest levels, identifies which stands are to be sequenced for harvest, models landscape changes over 200 years, outlines objectives and manner for integrating with other resource values, describes a monitoring and reporting process, and includes a stakeholder involvement process.

General Development Plan (GDP) – A 5-year plan (with annual renewal) that outlines past years production, access developments, and resource management issues and projects the same for the next 5 years.

Forest Harvest Plan (FHP) – a 5-year operational plan, a map and report of harvest boundaries, roads, and water crossings. Report includes adherence to operating ground rules and compliance with FMP objectives. It is imperative that operational plans meet objectives of higher order plans. A harvest block with FHP approval can be operated within the 5-year approval term (ex: FHP_MC2020_2025; an FHP in the McLean Creek compartment with harvest design approval from 2020 until 2025). FHP's are submitted as they are completed and must be approved prior to AOP approval. An FHP typically takes two or more years to develop from initial consultation on design to active operations.

Annual Operating Plan (AOP) – Annual plan with operating schedule, timber production, reforestation program, forest protection, road development, road reclamation, and integration/mitigation strategies. The AOP is made up of FHP approved blocks and approval is harvest authority. The AOP is typically submitted April 1 annually, the COVID-delayed April 7, 2020 submission is currently under Alberta review. The 2020/21 AOP includes operations scheduled from May 1, 2020 - April 30, 2021.



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Typical lifecycle of a harvest cut block:

- Year -2: Initial consultation on design with numerous stakeholders and government to develop the plan for fieldwork to be completed.
- Year -1: Plan development, continued consultation. FHP submission and approval
- Year 0: AOP submission, Alberta review, and approval. Harvest and haul operations. Access control and seasonal deactivation of roads to ensure proper drainage when not in use.
- Year +1: Block scarification to cycle soil nutrients and prepare the planting sites. Re-establish access control and seasonal deactivation of roads if necessary.
- Year +2: Reforestation, manual planting of regionally sourced seedlings. Road and watercourse crossing recontouring and reclamation.
- Year +3 to +14: Surveying and monitoring to ensure meeting regulatory regeneration standards. Should regenerations requirements be met at 14yrs, it is no longer a cut block but a healthy juvenile forest.





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Forest Harvest Plan Overview

Please review the corresponding maps and AOP [table](#) showing which blocks are scheduled for operations in the 2020/2021 operating season. Blocks listed as contingency are scheduled for future operations, however, may be operated if necessary. Schedule of operations in subject to change.





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Wintering Creek (CTLC050008) [Ortho Map](#) [AOP map](#)

- Operations partially completed in 2019/20 season
- Operations are scheduled to commence in the summer of 2020.

Integration with Other Users:

- **TPA Disposition Holders:**
 - SLS notified all applicable trappers regarding proposed harvesting activities. No concerns were raised.
- **Recreation groups:**
 - SLS utilized buffers around several well used camping sites including blocks 3053, 3087 and 1929. SLS will suspend nightshift harvesting operations if the campsites are occupied.
 - SLS will mitigate visual impact of forest harvest by implementing variable retention of trees within cutblocks. Additionally, where possible, SLS will retain visual buffers along roads to decrease line of sight and maintain aesthetic values.
 - Designated ATV trails located within the proposed harvest area will be left debris free and accessible by motorized recreational vehicles.
 - SLS is committed to working cooperatively with various recreation groups and AAF to ensure protection of infrastructure and public safety
- **Grazing Timber Agreements (GTA):**
 - Wintering Creek falls within the Gap Grazing Allotment. A GTA has been signed to ensure that timber and grazing interests are achieved.
- **Historical Resources:**
 - Areas of historical significance were identified, and necessary operational modifications have been made.
- **Other Public Concerns:**
 - SLS is committed to working cooperatively with all stakeholders to ensure public safety. Safety concerns may exist for the public during harvest operations and along the haul route. SLS will post signage at common access points to alert of harvest and haul operations.

Access Management:

- Remaining blocks 1929, 3053 and 3087,3166, 3171 and will be accessed via FRD620013 (Forestry Trunk Road). Block 2928 will be accessed from Maycroft Road.
- Access to harvest area will be controlled via gate installation.
- Temporary roads will undergo routine inspections to ensure proper road function.
- All new constructed road will be reclaimed with 3 years of haul clearance.



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Sensitive Sites:

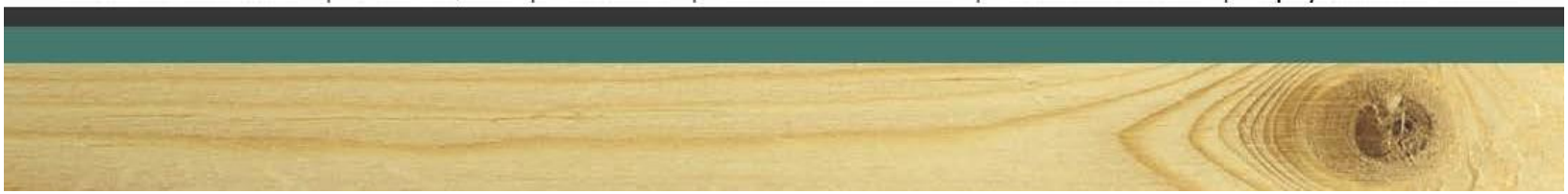
- A detailed analysis was done during the block design phase to mitigate environmental impacts and to minimize operational footprint on the landscape. SLS will make every effort to protect all endangered and nontarget species from harvesting, road building and site preparation activities.
- To minimize line of sight and to preserve aesthetic values, SLS strategically planned the location of buffers of undisturbed vegetation within the proposed cutblocks and areas adjacent to roads.

Wildlife:

- Wildlife zones have a significant impact on operational design and implementation and are consulted when considering changes to the sequenced area.
- All blocks under this FHP are located within the Key Wildlife Biodiversity Zone. Within those areas, SLS intentionally increased the size of riparian reserves to allow for more secure travel corridors and connectivity to large areas of undisturbed forest cover for large mammals. Larger riparian buffers also provide refugia and habitat for various flora and fauna. In addition, SLS utilized variable retention within each cut block including single tree or patch retention to maintain biodiversity.
- Within each block, SLS will retain snags that are often utilized by wildlife species as vital feeding, nesting and shelter sites.

Harvest Design:

- All block locations and status are identified on the map. A detailed analysis was done during the block design phase of this FHP using Lidar in conjunction with the Spatial Harvest Sequence (SHS). Contours, slope classes and canopy height models have been generated from the Lidar Data to help determine the best locations for block boundaries, road access, and creek crossings in order to mitigate environmental impacts as well as help minimize the footprint on the landscape.
- All road locations and status are identified on the map. All proposed roads within this FHP will be built as Class IV roads as per the OGR. SLS will reduce road footprint where possible and all roads will be reclaimed as per the OGR.
- Refer to attached maps for the location of watercourse crossings, type of structure and all stream classifications.
- In order to achieve successful regeneration SLS uses stump-side processing to retain seeds on site, conserve soil moisture and to deflect severe chinook winds. Scarification is used to promote microsites for seedlings and to spread and break up slash.





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West Chain Lakes (CTLC050019) [Ortho Map](#) [AOP Map](#)

- FHP approved 2018
- Operations commenced in 2018/2019/2020
- Operations will continue in 2020/2021

Integration with Other Users:

- **TPA Disposition Holders:**
 - Trapline disposition holder affected by this FHP were notified and no concerns regarding harvesting operations were raised.
- **Recreation groups:**
 - Proposed harvest area overlaps equestrian trails utilized by the Blue Boronna Wilderness Camping Association. Working cooperatively with Blue Boronna, SLS took necessary measures to avoid all equestrian trails and campsites identified by the Association. SLS will ensure all affected trails will be left debris free post forest operations.
 - Several unofficial hiking trails located within the proposed harvest areas will be marked and signed prior to operations. Post forest operations those trails will be left debris free and where necessary re-established.
 - SLS will start harvest operations after September long weekend to avoid conflicts with summer recreational activities.
 - SLS will mitigate visual impact of forest harvest by implementing variable retention of trees within cutblocks. Additionally, where possible, SLS will retain visual buffers along roads to decrease line of sight and maintain aesthetic values.
 - Designated ATV trails located within the proposed harvest area will be left debris free and accessible by motorized recreational vehicles.
 - SLS is committed to working cooperatively with various recreation groups and AAF to ensure protection of infrastructure and public safety
- **Grazing Timber Agreements (GTA):**
 - West Chain Lakes operating area overlaps the Willow Creek, Sheppard-Stimpson and Timber Falls range Allotments. Grazing timber agreements were signed by all involved parties to ensure that timber and grazing interests are addressed.
- **Historical Resources:**
 - Areas of historical significance were identified, and necessary operational modifications have been made.
- **Other Public Concerns:**
 - SLS is committed to working cooperatively with all stakeholders to ensure public safety. Safety concerns may exist for the public during harvest operations and along the haul route. SLS will post signage at common access points to alert of harvest and haul operations.



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Access Management:

- Operating area under this FHP will be accessed via Highway # 532 (FRD 620011).
- Access to harvest area will be controlled through gate installation.
- Temporary roads will undergo routine inspections to ensure proper road function.
- All new constructed road will be reclaimed with 3 years of haul clearance.

Sensitive Sites:

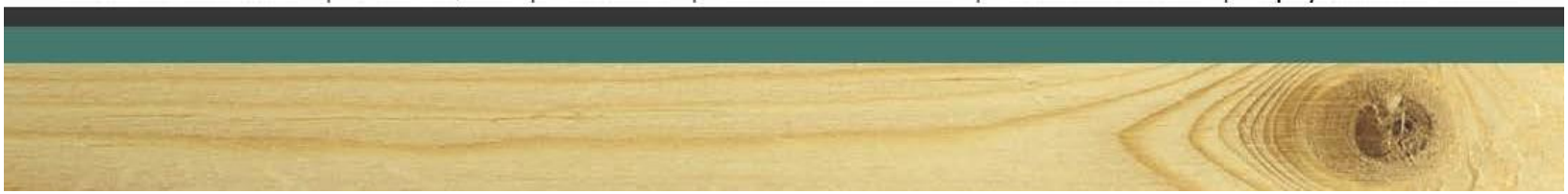
- A detailed analysis was done during the block design phase to mitigate environmental impacts and to minimize operational footprint on the landscape. SLS will make every effort to protect all endangered species, nontarget species as well as sensitive sites, such as watercourse areas, from harvesting, road building and site preparation activities.
- To minimize line of sight and to preserve aesthetic values, SLS strategically planned the location of buffers of undisturbed vegetation within the proposed cutblocks and areas adjacent to roads.

Wildlife:

- Wildlife zones have a significant impact on operational design and implementation and are consulted when considering changes to the sequenced area.
- Several blocks under this FHP are located within the Key Wildlife Biodiversity and Grizzly Bear Zones. Within those areas, SLS intentionally increased the size of riparian reserves to allow for more secure travel corridors and connectivity to large areas of undisturbed forest cover for large mammals. Larger riparian buffers also provide refugia and habitat for various flora and fauna. In addition, SLS utilized variable retention within each cut block including single tree or patch retention to maintain biodiversity.
- Within each cutblock, SLS will retain snags that are often utilized by wildlife species as vital feeding, nesting and shelter sites.

Harvest Design:

- All block locations and status are identified on the map. A detailed analysis was done during the block design phase of this FHP using Lidar in conjunction with the Spatial Harvest Sequence (SHS). Contours, slope classes and canopy height models have been generated from the Lidar Data to help determine the best locations for block boundaries, road access, and creek crossings in order to mitigate environmental impacts as well as help minimize the footprint on the landscape.
- All road locations and status are identified on the map. All proposed roads within this FHP will be built as Class IV roads as per the OGR. SLS will reduce road footprint where possible and all roads will be reclaimed as per the OGR.
- Refer to attached maps for the location of watercourse crossings, type of structure and all stream classifications.
- In order to achieve successful regeneration SLS uses stump-side processing to retain seeds on site, conserve soil moisture and to deflect severe chinook winds. Scarification is used to promote microsites for seedlings and to spread and break up slash.





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Regal Creek (CTLC050004) [Ortho Map](#) [AOP Map](#)

- FHP Approved
- Operations will commence in 2020/2021
- Operations scheduled to be completed in 2021

Integration with Other Users:

- **TPA Disposition Holders:**
 - SLS notified all applicable trappers regarding proposed harvesting activities. No concerns were raised.
- **Recreation groups:**
 - SLS deleted approximately 20 ha of approved sequenced timber, as it overlapped proposed recreational campground.
 - SLS will mitigate visual impact of forest harvest by implementing variable retention of trees within cutblocks. Additionally, where possible, SLS will retain visual buffers along roads to decrease line of sight and maintain aesthetic values.
 - Designated ATV trails located within the proposed harvest area will be left debris free and accessible by motorized recreational vehicles.
 - SLS is committed to working cooperatively with various recreation groups and AAF to ensure protection of infrastructure and public safety
- **Grazing Timber Agreements (GTA):**
 - Regal Creek FHP falls within the Lower Livingstone and the Gap Grazing Allotment. GTAs have been signed to ensure that timber and grazing interests are achieved.
- **Historical Resources:**
 - A historical impact assessment will be conducted prior to the commencement of harvest operations. If areas of historical significance are identified, SLS will make necessary operational modifications to protect those areas.
- **Other Public Concerns:**
 - SLS is committed to working cooperatively with all stakeholders to ensure public safety. Safety concerns may exist for the public during harvest operations and along the haul route. SLS will post signage at common access points to alert of harvest and haul operations.

Access Management:

- Access to Regal Creek harvest area will be via Forestry Trunk Road, and via LOC 0211361.
- Access to the harvest area will be controlled through gate installation of the above LOC.
- Temporary roads will undergo routine inspections to ensure proper road function.
- All new constructed road will be reclaimed with 3 years of haul clearance.





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Sensitive Sites:

- A detailed analysis was done during the block design phase to mitigate environmental impacts and to minimize operational footprint on the landscape. SLS will make every effort to protect all endangered and nontarget species from harvesting, road building and site preparation activities.
- To minimize line of sight and to preserve aesthetic values, SLS strategically planned the location of buffers of undisturbed vegetation within the proposed cutblocks and areas adjacent to roads.

Wildlife:

- Wildlife zones have a significant impact on operational design and implementation and are consulted when considering changes to the sequenced area.
- Proposed blocks under this FHP are located either within the Key Wildlife Biodiversity or Grizzly Bear (core) Zones. Within those areas, SLS intentionally increased the size of riparian reserves to allow for more secure travel corridors and connectivity to large areas of undisturbed forest cover for large mammals. Larger riparian buffers also provide refugia and habitat for various flora and fauna. In addition, SLS utilized variable retention within each cut block including single tree or patch retention to maintain biodiversity.
- Within each cutblock, SLS will retain snags that are often utilized by wildlife species as vital feeding, nesting and shelter sites.

Harvest Design:

- All block locations and status are identified on the map. A detailed analysis was done during the block design phase of this FHP using Lidar in conjunction with the Spatial Harvest Sequence (SHS). Contours, slope classes and canopy height models have been generated from the Lidar Data to help determine the best locations for block boundaries, road access, and creek crossings in order to mitigate environmental impacts as well as help minimize the footprint on the landscape.
- All road locations and status are identified on the map. All proposed roads within this FHP will be built as Class IV roads as per the OGR. SLS will reduce road footprint where possible and all roads will be reclaimed as per the OGR.
- Refer to attached maps for the location of watercourse crossings, type of structure and all stream classifications.
- In order to achieve successful regeneration SLS uses stump-side processing to retain seeds on site, conserve soil moisture and to deflect severe chinook winds. Scarification is used to promote microsites for seedlings and to spread and break up slash.





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PRELIMINARY FOREST HARVEST PLANS (2020 – 2024)

The below listed Coniferous Timber Licenses and associated maps are included in the General Development Plan (2020 – 2024). Schedule of operations is subject to change.

Riley Creek (CTLC050019) [Ortho Map](#)

- Timber development will be completed in the Summer of 2020
- FHP will be submitted in the Fall of 2020
- Operations will commence in the summer 2021

Lower Livingstone (CTLC020025) [Ortho Map](#)

- Timber development will be completed in late 2020
- FHP will be submitted in 2021
- Harvest operation will commence in the winter 2021/2022

North Livingstone (CTLC020025) [Ortho Map](#)

- Timber development will be completed in late 2020
- FHP will be submitted in the beginning of 2021
- Harvest operation will commence in the winter 2021/2022

Coat Creek (CTLC020026) [Ortho Map](#)

- Timber development is in progress, and will be completed in 2021
- FHP will be submitted in the in the fall of 2021
- Harvest operation will commence in the 2021/2022

White Creek (CTLC020025) [Ortho Map](#)

- Planning and timber development activities will begin in the summer 2021
- FHP will be submitted in 2022
- Harvest operation will commence in 2022/2023

Middle Ridges – Upper Oldman (CTLC050007) [Ortho Map](#)

- Planning and timber development activities will begin in the 2022
- FHP will be submitted in 2023
- Harvest operation will commence in 2023/2024

Vicary Creek (CTLC020024) [Ortho Map](#)

- Planning and timber development activities will begin in 2022
- FHP will be submitted in 2023
- Harvest operation will commence in 2023/2024

