



SECTION SEVEN
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

DFMP

DETAILED FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

TEXT REPORT



BLUE RIDGE LUMBER INC.
A SUBSIDIARY OF WEST FRASER MILLS LTD.

7 Implementation of the DFMP

This DFMP is the hierarchy document that provides guidance and direction for the development of Annual Operating Plans (harvesting and silviculture) and other plans, and the development of Timber Harvest Planning and Operating Guidelines.

Operating Ground Rules are the methods used to implement decisions made in the higher-order plans such as approved Detailed Forest Management Plans or integrated resource management plans.

In accordance with the Forest Management Agreement paragraph 11 (1) and (2) “the Company shall conduct its timber harvesting and reforestation operations in accordance with the approved ground rules developed jointly by Blue Ridge Lumber Ltd. and by the predecessor of the Minister until such time as they are replaced by a new set of operating ground rules. Within six months following the approval of the Detailed Forest Management Plan the Minister and the Company shall jointly develop a new set of ground rules consistent with the Detailed Forest Management Plan objectives, for the preparation of operating plans and to guide harvesting and reforestation operations. This new set of ground rules upon approval by the Minister shall replace the existing set of ground rules.”

7.1 Timber Harvest Planning and Operating Guidelines

Timber Harvest Planning and Operating Guidelines are used by the Company and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development staff as an administrative tool to guide the planning and conduct of harvesting and reforestation operations on the FMA area. Cut block size, harvesting standards, utilization standards, stream-crossing requirements, and road construction standards are well defined to protect the environment.

Blue Ridge Lumber worked with SRD and other forest industry stakeholders in the development of a more consistent set of “Whitecourt/Yellowhead Operating Ground Rules.” This process commenced in October 2000 with representatives from SRD, ANC Timber Ltd., Blue Ridge Lumber Inc., Millar Western Forest Products Ltd., Mostowich Lumber Ltd., and Weyerhaeuser Ltd. (Edson). SRD represents the interests of the Community Timber Programs (CTP) of Cold Creek, Edson, Fort Assiniboine and Whitecourt. These ground rules were developed in recognition of the need for ground rules with two basic applications:

- Core ground rules which apply to all FMA's and FMU's in the Woodlands/Yellowhead Ground Rules Zone, and

- Company-specific ground rules that apply specifically to the objectives of the FMA.

The development of a common “core set” of ground rules for the Woodlands/Yellowhead Ground Rules Zone provided a practical solution in which quota holders conduct forest operations within FMA area. With a common set of core ground rules, the planning processes and rules for operational practices are applied fairly and with less confusion than if each FMA area had drastically different rules. There are, however, specific aspects of each of the Forest Management Agreements and their respective Detailed Forest Management Plans (DFMP’s) which are unique, and require Company-specific ground rules.

The Committee for Ground Rule Development, which has comprised all of the forest industry stakeholders within the Woodlands/Yellowhead area, received the Bronze Award Category for the 2002 Premier’s Award of Excellence for this initiative on June 20, 2002

BRL accepted the Woodlands/Yellowhead core ground rules until the BRL DFMP was approved in October 25, 2004. The approval of the BRL DFMP prompted discussions with representatives from SRD, ANC Timber Ltd., Blue Ridge Lumber Inc., Millar Western Forest Products Ltd., Mostowich Lumber Ltd., and Weyerhaeuser Ltd. (Edson) to update the Woodlands/Yellowhead core ground rules and to develop BRL company specific ground rules. Discussions were completed on June 1, 2005 and the Operating Ground Rules Document was signed by BRL on August 9, 2005.

Operating Ground Rules are available at the following website:
<http://www3.gov.ab.ca/srd/forest/fmd/manuals/index.html>.

There are also a number of other forest management directives, guidelines and manuals that are available to guide field operations in the Province. A copy of the forest management directives, guideline and manuals can be found on the website at:

<http://www.gov.ab.ca/srd/forests/fmd/directive/index.html> or in the Blue Ridge Lumber Woodlands library.

7.2 Annual Operating Plans

Blue Ridge Lumber holds annual open house meetings and invites the general public to review the plans which include road access, preliminary harvest layout, harvesting operations, fire protection, silviculture operations, planting, regeneration surveys, cone collection, site preparation, spacing and cleaning, and vegetation management. Open house meetings are held annually, usually in the month of May in Whitecourt, Swan Hills, Fox Creek, Fort Assiniboine and Niton Junction. The times and locations of the open house meetings are advertised for two weeks in all of the local newspapers.

7.2.1 General Development Plan

A five-year General Development Plan (GDP), which is updated annually in the AOP, describes the areas to be harvested during the next five years. The primary purpose of the general development plan is to identify access routes and major planning considerations for areas planned for harvesting five years in advance of operations. The early identification of access routes and special planning considerations are critical to the timely resolution of potential problems. The General Development Plan requirements are identified in the BRL Operating Ground Rules.

7.2.2 Annual Harvesting Plan

The annual harvesting plan describes in detail the areas and volumes to be harvested, mill requirements, record of actual production for the past 5 years, operating procedures, access, roads and bridges to be constructed and maintained. Each annual harvesting plan includes current year operations, contingency wood, and operations for the upcoming two years. The annual harvesting plan requirements are identified in the BRL Operating Ground Rules.

Blue Ridge Lumber contacts affected trappers to obtain their input prior to designing the harvest plan for each operating unit. The Company also sends each trapper a copy of the approved preliminary plan and explains to the trapper how the Company plans to proceed with operations

through the operating unit. Finally the Company annually contacts the trappers by registered letter to explain current year operations with a map showing trapline boundaries, blocks harvested to date, and blocks planned for harvesting within the next 5 years with existing roads and proposed access routes. Any traditional trapline access that is identified during the planning period is left accessible.

Outfitters and Guides that are within the FMA area which are affected by harvesting operations are also sent a letter and a copy of the five year General Development Plan.

7.2.3 Annual Silviculture Plan

The annual silviculture planning and reporting requirements are identified in the Timber Management Regulations and the August 21, 1992 R11 Forestry Circular. The annual silviculture plan includes the silviculture system, and the silviculture strategy and tactics for all new cutblocks. This plan describes in detail the silviculture activities to be conducted in the current year and includes the methods for site preparation, artificial or natural regeneration and all tending activities (manual spacing, cleaning and herbicide). The annual silviculture plan also describes other silviculture programs to be undertaken during the year such as tree improvement, seedling orders, cone collection, prescribed burning and regeneration surveys.

An annual report of all silviculture treatments for each cutblock by operating unit and year of cut is also submitted to Alberta Sustainable Resource Development so that the provincial silviculture records can be updated.

The annual silviculture plan and the annual report have been traditionally submitted to Alberta Sustainable Resource Development for approval by January 1. Blue Ridge Lumber is now working toward a submission date of March 1 to make this process more effective and efficient.

7.3 Fire Control Agreement

Fire protection, detection, and suppression on the FMA area is mainly the responsibility of Alberta Environment, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development. The Company supplements the efforts of the Alberta Sustainable Resource Development by entering into a separate Fire Control Agreement, and submitting an Annual Fire Protection Plan prior to March 1. A Fire Control Agreement describes the respective responsibilities of an FMA Holder and the Province of Alberta for fire detection, fire suppression, training, manpower and equipment to be maintained on hand. The current Fire Control Agreement was signed on October 7, 1991.

Blue Ridge Lumber also pays an annual holding and protection fee. Effective in 1999, holding and protection charges have been changed from the 1995 rate of \$34.02 /sq. km rate to a lump

sum rate of \$212,617 both indexed to the rate of government current expenditures for goods and services. The fixed rate will be adjusted whenever the FMA area increases or decreases by more than 2%. The holding and protection charges payable by Blue Ridge Lumber may be reduced by eligible expenditures made by the Company in carrying out approved forest protection plans in accordance with the March 2000 Holding and Protection Charges Task Force Recommendations.

7.4 Fire Protection Plan

Blue Ridge Lumber supplements the fire protection efforts of the Alberta Environmental Protection Alberta Sustainable Resource Development by submitting a separate Annual Fire Protection Plan in accordance with the Fire Control Agreement and the BRL Operating Ground Rules, June 2005. The Annual Fire Protection Plan is submitted prior to March 1 of each year for timber operations during the fire season, usually April 1 to October 31. The Annual Fire Protection Plan describes specific fire fighting equipment on hand, training and manning schedules, Company organization, operating areas, personnel, mobile radio communication systems, and other fire protection initiatives of the Company.

The Company fire protection objective is to have no “man caused” fires as a result of Company operation’s on the FMA area, and to ensure that employees and contractors have the equipment, training and experience to provide initial attack on any fire, with the goal of limiting the size of all fires to one tenth of a hectare.

The Company cooperates with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development to protect the timber resource within and around the FMA area through prudent deployment of Company resources.

7.5 Woodlands Organization

Blue Ridge Lumber has a competent staff of professional and technical resource managers who have developed substantial expertise and are dedicated to the management of the forest resources. It is the responsibility of the Woodlands department of Blue Ridge Lumber to develop and implement the management plans required to properly manage the FMA Area. Please refer to Appendix 11 for the BRL Woodlands Department Organization chart.

7.6 Geographic Information System

Blue Ridge Lumber has developed a geographic information system (GIS) with appropriate software, hardware and technical expertise. GIS is an important tool to store and analyze information and to assist forest managers with the development of various plans. The following is a brief explanation of the GIS.



A GIS is a computer-assisted information management system containing geographically referenced data. It is made up of two closely integrated databases: one spatial (location) and the other attribute (statistical). The spatial database contains information in the form of digital coordinates, usually from maps or from remote sensing devices such as satellites. These data can be points, lines, or polygons. The attribute database contains information about the characteristics or qualities of the spatial features, for example, Alberta Vegetation Inventory (AVI), watercourse classifications, road classifications, habitat characteristics etc. Different definitions have evolved through the years, however, GIS is most often viewed as a set of tools for managing and analyzing spatial data for decision support.

GIS works by:

- Relating information from different sources
- Capturing data in several different forms
- Linking and integrating data
- Creating maps through projection and registration
- Establishing common data structures

The following is a list of data information, and models that have been developed by and are being used by Blue Ridge Lumber for planning purposes. This landscape information will assist in preparing maps required for compartment assessment and harvest design for operations. This information is continually being updated and revised.

Ecological Information

- Alberta Vegetation Inventory (AVI 2.1)
- Conifer Understorey Inventory
- FMA Boundary
- Operating Districts and Units
- Cutovers and HPSIS information (Harvest Planning and Silviculture Information System)
- Watershed classification (streams and lakes)
- Code of Practice for Watercourse Crossings in the Edson and Whitecourt Area,
- Elevation and contours (Digital Elevation Model)
- Soil Modeling and Classification

- Surficial geology

Natural sub-regions

- Fish inventory for the Swan Hills Integrated Resource Area (non spatial)
- CFS fire prediction model
- SRD Fire Crown Susceptibility model
- Visual Assessment
- Insect and Disease Information (Information is maintained and available from SRD)

Social Economic Information

- Roads, LOC's, trails, stream crossings, gate control locations
- Land use (Wellsites, pipelines, powerlines, seismic, gravel pits, mining, industrial facilities etc.)
- Private land
- Grazing Dispositions
- Protected areas, PSP's, PNT's, DRS's etc.
- Recreation – Provincial parks, campsites, snowmobile trails, natural areas etc.
- Traplines
- Outfitting and Guiding
- Cultural (snowmobile trails, Klondike Trail, trapper cabins, fire towers, airstrips, helipads, etc.)
- Cultural Heritage Assessment study and model