

Appendix A Terms of Reference & Extension Letters



File: 06322 – 010

April 8, 2010

Mr. Richard Briand
Management Forester
Hinton Wood Products
756 Switzer Drive
Hinton, Alberta
T7V 0A2

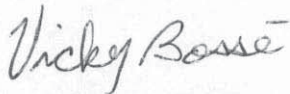
Dear Mr. Briand:

**Subject: Agreement-in-Principle: Hinton Wood Products
2009 Mountain Pine Beetle Forest Management Plan
Amendment Net Land Base and Yield Curve Submissions**

The Department has completed its review of the submissions entitled 2009 Mountain Pine Beetle Forest Management Plan Amendment, "Technical Report #1 – Landbase Classification" and "Technical Report #2 – Yield Projections". Agreement-in-Principle is granted on these two documents, subject to the conditions outlined in the attached table. Please note the deadline for completing each condition.

If you have any questions, please contact Frazer Butt at (780) 422-4815.

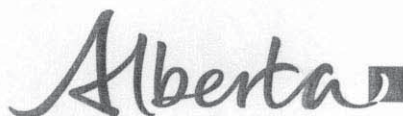
Yours truly,



Vicky Bossé, RPF
Acting Senior Manager

Enclosed

cc: Bill Tinge, Forestry Program Manager, Foothills Area
Kevin Vanderhaeghe, Senior Forester, Foothills Area



Hinton Wood Products 2009 Mountain Pine Beetle Forest Management Plan Amendment –
Net Land Base and Yield Curve Review

HWP Document	Condition	Action Required	Deadline for Completion
Yield Curves 2009 MPB Plan	A minimum log length of 3.66m was implied by GYPSY forecast yields. This minimum length was used in compilations of volume for GYPSY merchantable yield model development. There is an incorrect statement related to this on page 29. The tables on page 21 also give indication that GYPSY yields have no minimum log length.	Please correct Technical Report #2 – Yield Projections.	Please include with the 2010 Mountain Pine Beetle Forest Management Plan (FMP) Amendment.
Yield Curves 2009 MPB Plan	The ARS MAI targets provided in table 5-2 does not appear to be adjusted for regeneration lag. ARS MAI targets are to be based on the gross merchantable regeneration lagged yields.	Please clarify and correct Technical Report #2 – Yield Projections.	Please include with the 2010 Mountain Pine Beetle FMP Amendment.
Yield Curves 2009 MPB Plan	The hardcopy yield curve documentation provided on February 19th, 2010 included a number of typos. These errors were noted by Glenn Buckmaster on February 26, 2010.	Please correct Technical Report #2 – Yield Projections.	Please include with the 2010 Mountain Pine Beetle FMP Amendment.
Yield Curves 2009 MPB Plan	The yield tables for yield strata 21, 22, 23, and 24 for coniferous UT3 (i.e. the cut to length 15/13 conifer) were not included in the data submission.	Please submit.	Please include with the 2010 Mountain Pine Beetle FMP Amendment.
Yield Curves 2014 FMP	FMP Yield Strata 15 and 16 (E_UN_DM and E_UN_CX) represent a significant amount of area on the landbase. These strata contain a wide range of species attribute characteristics and it is anticipated that the yield variation in these types is just as diverse. A more biologically realistic approach for these strata should be pursued in the 2014 FMP.	Please work with SRD staff during the development of the 2014 FMP Yield Projections.	2014 FMP
Yield Curves 2014 FMP	The compilation of performance survey data differed in a number of ways	Please conform to	2014 FMP

**Hinton Wood Products 2009 Mountain Pine Beetle Forest Management Plan Amendment –
Net Land Base and Yield Curve Review**

	from the standardized compilation procedures used in ARS.	compilation procedures used in ARS when compiling data for the 2014 FMP.	
Yield Curves 2014 FMP	The empirical modeling of the various utilization standards were not constrained to ensure the results were logical across all age classes. There are a number of instances where 15/13 yields (tree length and cut to length) are estimated to be larger than 15/11 yields. The same occurs when comparing deciduous yields to the different utilization standards in a number of the yield strata.	Please develop / correct for the 2014 FMP Yield Curve submission.	2014 FMP
Net Land Base 2014 FMP	The requirement to include location information (FMU) for every record has not been met (Section 3.8.i of Annex 1).	Please include information in 2014 FMP.	2014 FMP
Net Land Base 2014 FMP	The shapefile developed by Land Data Technologies to delineate the location of watercourses and water bodies across the FMA did not capture the requirement for buffers on a number of small permanent streams.	Please correct for the 2014 FMP.	2014 FMP
Net Land Base	Each operator with harvested areas on Hinton Wood Products FMA is required to ensure their records in the Alberta Regeneration Information System (ARIS) are consistent with the information contained in the landbase for each harvested area.	Please complete.	90 days following approval of Hinton Wood Products 2010 Mountain Pine Beetle FMP Amendment.

File: 06322 – 010

March 22, 2010

Mr. Richard Briand
Management Forester
Hinton Wood Products
756 Switzer Drive
Hinton, Alberta
T7V 0A2

Dear Mr. Briand:

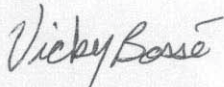
**Subject: APPROVAL - HINTON WOOD PRODUCTS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN FOR
THE 2010 FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE AMENDMENT**

The Communications Plan for the Hinton Wood Products 2010 Forest Management Plan Mountain Beetle Amendment, dated July 31, 2009 is approved.

Public consultation is important during the development of your Mountain Pine Beetle Forest Management Plan amendment and its implementation. Therefore, it is critical that this Communications Plan continue to address the needs of all those involved throughout the remainder of the planning process (as outlined in section 4 of the Communications Plan).

If you have any questions, please contact Frazer Butt at (780) 422-4815.

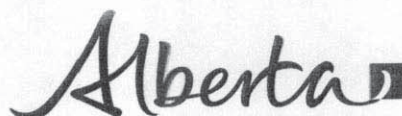
Yours truly,



Vicky Bossé, RPF
Acting Senior Manager

cc: Bill Tinge, Forestry Program Manager, Foothills Area
Kevin Vanderhaeghe, Senior Forester, Foothills Area

AS
DR



Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

File: FMA8800025
06322-010

February 9, 2010

Mr. Dan Rollert, RPF
Woodlands Manager
Hinton Wood Products
756 Switzer Drive
Hinton, Alberta T7V 0A2

Dear Mr. Rollert:


Subject: RECONCILIATION VOLUME REQUEST – FMA 8800025 (2003-2008)

I have reviewed your letter regarding the under produced volume from the 2003-2008 quadrant for the Hinton Wood Products Forest Management Agreement (FMA). The request for the unused coniferous (229,398 m³) and deciduous (79,434 m³) volumes in the FMA are approved under the following condition:

- The under produced volumes noted above must be incorporated into the new Timber Supply Analysis (TSA) for the Hinton Wood Products 2010 (FMP) Mountain Pine Beetle Amendment. If a review of the TSA concludes that the under produced volume allocation does not significantly affect the attainment of the current FMP stated objectives for the FMA, the allocation will be granted.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact Vicky Bossé, Acting Senior Manager, Forest Planning Section at (780) 427-4707.

Yours truly,



Robert W. Stokes, RPF
Acting Executive Director

cc: Brent Schleppe, Area Manager, Foothills Area
Jan Schilf, Tenure Forester, Forest Economics Branch

Alberta ■

File: 06322-010

January 19, 2010

Mr. Dan Rollert
Woodlands Manager
Hinton Wood Products
760 Switzer Drive
Hinton, Alberta T7V 1V7

Dear Mr. Rollert:

**Subject: APPROVAL – HINTON WOOD PRODUCTS (HWP)
FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN DUE DATE EXTENSION**

The department has reviewed Hinton Wood Products' (HWP) November 30, 2009 request for a due date extension for the Hinton Wood Products Forest Management Plan (FMP) from September 30, 2010 to September 30, 2014.

The department approves the request subject to the following:

- Plans for operations and Riparian Zone Management shall be consistent with the approved *HWP Timber Harvest Planning and Operating Ground Rules* dated October 1, 2009. I understand HWP may document its proposed alternate approach for Plan Development Team (PDT) consideration for the 2014 FMP.
- HWP has agreed to provide the Area Office with current versions of long-term access plans and associated spatial data. Please provide this information by February 24, 2010.
- Retained Structure to meet the target shall be comprised of merchantable timber and be representative of the forest type on the harvest area. Structure that contributes to the 1% volume target shall be located within the harvest area and tracked through the life of the harvest area. The attached document provides further details on the department's expectations. We look forward to your May 1, 2010 submission.
- Spatial harvest sequence variance tracking shall be completed per the approved *HWP Timber Harvest Planning and Operating Ground Rules* dated October 1, 2009.
- The department recognizes the efforts of HWP in developing species conservation strategies. The 2014 FMP will be greatly enhanced by this work. A schedule for completion of this interim task (species conservation strategies) shall be developed by June 15, 2010.

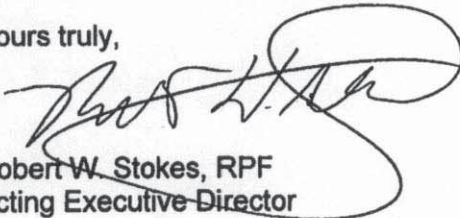
MARCH 4 / 10

Alberta ■

- The Caribou Recovery Plan and the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan, once approved by the department, will provide direction to be implemented in the FMP. These recovery plans will replace any previous strategies.
- The department will assist to review the status of dispositions for net landbase determination.
- Interim reporting requirements shall be defined by June 15, 2010.
- An updated forest inventory is required for development of the 2024 FMP.

Department staff will continue to work with you to complete interim tasks and the development of the 2014 FMP. If you have any questions, please contact Vicky Bossé - Acting Senior Manager, Forest Planning Section at (780) 427-4707.

Yours truly,



Robert W. Stokes, RPF
Acting Executive Director

Enclosure (1)

cc: Bill Tinge, Forestry Program Manager, Foothills Area



Structure Retention Within Harvested Areas

Standing structure that is taller than 2 m within a harvested area. Areas buffered for sensitive ecological or wildlife habitat may be included for residuals. Required buffers for lakes and small and large permanent streams are not included. This includes non-merchantable trees and shrubs, live merchantable trees, snags and stubs. (Forest Management Planning Standard, 2006)

Objectives of Structure Retention

- To emulate patterns of Natural Disturbance events
- Residual live trees used to create some old forest attributes in young regenerating harvest areas
- Snag recruitment in the short-term, and in the long-term as some of these trees will die throughout the rotation.
- Temporary Refuge and habitat for some biota associated with naturally disturbed habitat
- Wildlife Thermal, Hiding, and Line of Sight cover in harvested areas

Criteria

- Patches/clumps are generally better than single stems
- Targets may vary based on ecological conditions, and must be set at a sub-unit and total planning area level.
- Separate targets are set for merchantable and non-merchantable retention.
- Placement of structure should take into account natural features (e.g. wildlife features, mineral licks)
- Structure left should be representative of the stand pre-harvest condition. This usually evolves to a merchantable volume discussion.
- Areas left adjacent to stand boundaries/attached to forest matrix will not be considered as structure retention, however these areas are ecologically important and can/will contribute to seral and covertime targets.
- Structure retention will be maintained for at least one rotation
- Structure retention can include non-merchantable volumes/areas, but will not include mandatory deletions (e.g. Buffers)
- Retention strategies should favour pre-harvest assessment and design rather than leaving to contractors to decide.
- Retention should consider block size and distribution of block size frequencies.
- Must have an approved monitoring protocol. Volumes/area must be reported. Where reductions to AAC have not been made or are exceeded, volumes must be charged as timber production.
- Structure Retention areas are tracked as spatial harvest sequence variance. Structure retained as per an approved structure retention strategy will be determined acceptable by the department, retention inconsistent with approved strategies will not.

File: 06322-010

December 17, 2009

Dan Rollert
Woodlands Manager
Hinton Wood Products
760 Switzer Drive
Hinton, Alberta T7V 1V7

Dear Mr. Rollert:

**Subject: APPROVAL – EXTENSION TO HINTON WOOD PRODUCTS
FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE AMENDMENT**

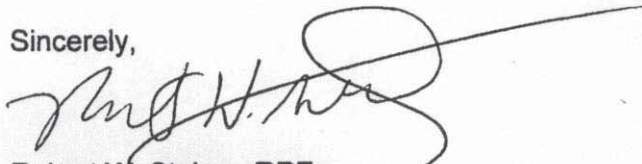
Thank you for your letter dated December 17, 2009 requesting an extension to the due date for the Hinton Wood Products Forest Management Plan (FMP) Mountain Pine Beetle Amendment from December 31, 2009 to April 30, 2010.

The department approves your request. We look forward to receiving your FMP amendment submission by that date and our staff will continue to work with you through the development of the plan.

The Department will complete the Grizzly Bear non-timber analysis as agreed to earlier this year. Please be advised that timing of this analysis may be impacted by competing requests from the Land Use Secretariat. If this occurs, we will communicate with you to arrange an agreeable alternate timeline.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact Vicky Bossé, Acting Senior Manager, Forest Planning Section at (780) 427-4707.

Sincerely,



Robert W. Stokes, RPF
Acting Executive Director

cc: Bill Tinge, Forestry Program Manager, Foothills Area

Alberta ■



Hinton Wood Products

A Division of West Fraser Mills Ltd.

Main Office

99 West River Road
Hinton, AB T7V 1Y7

Telephone: (780) 865-8900
Fax: (780) 865-8901

Woodlands

760 Switzer Drive
Hinton, AB T7V 1V7

Telephone: (780) 865-8553
Fax: (780) 865-8165

December 17, 2009

Mr. Robert Stokes
Acting Executive Director, Forest Management Branch
Forest Management Branch
Sustainable Resource Development
7th fl Great West Life Building
9920 - 108 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 2M4

Re: Hinton Wood Products MPB FMP Amendment submission timeline

Dear Mr. Stokes,

As per discussions in recent weeks with Vicky Bossé, Acting Senior Manager – Forest Planning Section, we are requesting an extension to the mountain pine beetle forest management plan amendment submission timeline. The current timeline calls for submission by December 31, 2009. Upon review of the current status of the development of the plan, we are requesting that the timeline be extended to April 16, 2010.

Following are anticipated timelines for major tasks:

- December 18, 2009 – submit landbase classification for agreement-in-principle
- January 15, 2010 – submit yield curves for agreement-in-principle
- February 28, 2010 – complete spatial harvest sequence
- March 2010 – complete public & aboriginal engagement, complete submission document
- April 16, 2010 – submit MPB FMP Amendment for approval

We would be pleased to discuss this request with you in more detail, should that be required I can be reached at 780-865-8181.

Best Regards,

Richard Briand, RPF
Management Forester
Hinton Wood Products

cc: Dan Rollert – Woodlands Manager, HWP
Jim LeLacheur – Chief Forester (Alberta), West Fraser Mills Ltd.
Vicky Bossé – Acting Senior Manager, Forest Planning Section



Hinton Wood Products

A Division of West Fraser Mills Ltd.

Main Office
99 West River Road
Hinton, AB T7V 1Y7

Telephone: (780) 865-8900
Fax: (780) 865-8901

Woodlands
760 Switzer Drive
Hinton, AB T7V 1V7

Telephone: (780) 865-8553
Fax: (780) 865-8165

November 30, 2009

Mr. Robert Stokes
Acting Executive Director, Forest Management Branch
Forest Management Branch
Sustainable Resource Development
7th fl Great West Life Building
9920 - 108 Street
Edmonton, AB T5K 2M4

Re: Hinton Wood Products FMP Extension

Dear Mr. Stokes,

HWP is currently working on an amendment to the existing forest management plan to address the immediate risk posed by the mountain pine beetle (MPB) outbreak in Alberta (hereafter referred to as the MPB FMP amendment). A meeting was held on September 11, 2009 between Hinton Wood Products (HWP) and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) to discuss the timing of the submission of the Hinton Forest Management Plan. On October 27, 2009, HWP and SRD representatives met to discuss interim tasks that SRD would like HWP to complete between now and the new 2014 FMP submission timeline. We propose the following in response to that discussion:

1. Riparian Zone Management

HWP believes that the current GoA policy regarding the management of vegetation along stream corridors is not consistent with the natural disturbance paradigm. Our current approach to maintaining values in riparian areas is to leave variable width buffers, guided heavily by landform near watercourses. Our long-term goal is to maintain the values in riparian areas by introducing disturbance in a manner consistent with what natural disturbance agents would do. We have expended significant resources to the objective study and understanding of these concepts. As this work continues, we will share the findings with SRD with a view to aligning policy with the science. It is our desire to maintain our current approach while the studies are underway. We would be willing to discuss with SRD any studies that we could complete to demonstrate that the variable buffer width method is a conservative interim approach.

HWP will document our proposed approach to incorporating natural disturbance science into the management of the FMA. We believe it is already closely linked with many of the requirements of the planning standard. A short (no more than 5 page) document will be prepared and submitted to SRD by May 1, 2010 outlining our intended approach in concept. This will include both riparian and upland ND approaches.

2. Long-term access plans

HWP sees great value in completing these plans. They serve to facilitate discussions with the energy sector regarding access development and will also guide road deactivation/reclamation plans when appropriate. However, given that these plans are not a legislated requirement, we believe that we should have the flexibility to complete them on a schedule that meets our needs. Given the economic times we are in, and the time required to develop new harvest plans in response to the MPB situation on our FMA, we have very limited resources to apply to this important exercise. We will provide any spatial data that we have so far to SRD, with the caveat that they are draft, incomplete and not fully documented.

3. Structure retention

HWP agrees to develop a structure retention monitoring and reporting program. HWP is currently working on a study which will guide the selection of a retention target for the 2014 FMP. This target is intended to be aligned with the natural disturbance strategy on which the next FMP will be based. In the interim, HWP agrees to use 1% of scheduled spatial harvest sequence (SHS) area as an interim target. HWP will submit a program to SRD by May 1, 2010 for approval and implementation in the 2010/11 timber year.

4. Variance tracking

As per the new Operating Ground Rules (OGR), HWP will initiate the SHS variance tracking process upon approval of the MPB FMP amendment.

5. Species conservation strategies

The following is a clarification of the current status of these voluntary strategies:

Threatened Species

- Trumpeter swans - HWP will follow the OGR requirements until an updated species conservation strategy is developed and endorsed by the Integrated Resource Management Steering Committee (IRMSC).
- Woodland caribou – see item #6 (below) of this letter.

Species of concern

- Pinto Creek mountain goats - the new conservation strategy was signed by SRD and HWP on October 27, 2009.
- Grizzly bear – see item #7 (below) of this letter
- Long-toed salamander – a species conservation strategy was submitted as part of the 1999 FMP, but it was not formally endorsed by IRMSC. SRD is currently working on a management plan for this species. HWP has provided comments on a previous draft of the management plan. Upon completion of the species management plan, HWP may elect to update the species conservation strategy, which would then be reviewed and endorsed by IRMSC.

- Black throated green warbler – a species conservation strategy was submitted as part of the 1999 FMP, but it was not formally endorsed by IRMSC. HWP may elect to update the species conservation strategy, which would then be reviewed and endorsed by IRMSC.
- Columbia spotted frog – a species conservation strategy was submitted as part of the 1999 FMP, but it was not formally endorsed by IRMSC. HWP may elect to update the species conservation strategy, which would then be reviewed and endorsed by IRMSC.
- Northern long-eared bat – a species conservation strategy was submitted as part of the 1999 FMP, but it was not formally endorsed by IRMSC. HWP may elect to update the species conservation strategy, which would then be reviewed and endorsed by IRMSC.
- Wolverine – a species conservation strategy was submitted as part of the 1999 FMP, but it was not formally endorsed by IRMSC. HWP may elect to update the species conservation strategy, which would then be reviewed and endorsed by IRMSC.

Since their original versions most of the above have been revised several times, with dialogue between HWP and SRD incorporated into each revision. It is our intent to continue this process as a mutual initiative.

6. Woodland caribou

HWP will not schedule any stands in the current deferral area for the term of the MPB FMP amendment SHS. Given that the extension of the FMP will be to 2014, HWP will submit a 10-year spatial harvest sequence (May 1, 2008- April 30, 2017) in the MPB FMP amendment. However, operations in the caribou deferral area may be initiated, upon request by SRD, to address forest health issues or caribou recovery strategies.

A species conservation strategy was submitted for caribou and approved as part of the 1999 FMP. The strategy document will be updated upon the release of the West Central Caribou Landscape Plan, which is an implementation component of the caribou recovery plan. The strategy document would then be reviewed and endorsed by IRMSC.

7. Grizzly bear

SRD has agreed to complete any required grizzly bear modeling work associated with compartment level planning. SRD has also agreed to complete this modeling work for the MPB FMP amendment.

For the record, a species conservation strategy was submitted as part of the 1999 FMP, but it was not formally endorsed by IRMSC. The strategy document will be updated upon the release of implementation direction by SRD in relation to the grizzly bear recovery plan. The strategy document would then be reviewed and endorsed by IRMSC.

8. Monitoring

SRD indicated that interim reporting on some VOITs was desired. HWP agrees to develop a mutually agreeable list of VOITs for reporting.

9. Dispositions

As part of developing the landbase for the MPB FMP amendment, HWP worked with SRD to identify dispositions that are FMA deletions. During the process of evaluating the FMA landbase it became very clear that the GoA (particularly SRD) has several old dispositions on the FMA which are deletions from the current landbase. Many of these dispositions appear to be obsolete or were introduced without consultation (and potentially some without appropriate authority). As previously requested, we will need SRD's assistance to work through these dispositions to determine which can be deleted so that an accurate landbase can be developed for the 2014 FMP.

10. Forest inventory

As per a follow-up discussion between Richard Briand and yourself, we understand that SRD will not require a new forest inventory for the 2014 FMP. The currently approved inventory, based on 2001 aerial photography, is acceptable for use.

11. Next FMP

Again, as per a follow-up discussion between Richard Briand and yourself, we understand that after the 2014 FMP is complete, HWP will be on a new ten-year cycle and will be required to submit a new forest management plan in 2024.

Assuming that the above is agreeable, we understand that the Forest Management Plan submission timeline will be amended to September 30, 2014. We would be pleased to discuss these items with you in more detail, should that be required I can be reached at 780-865-8171.

Best Regards,



Dan Rollert, RPF
Woodlands Manager
Hinton Wood Products

cc: Richard Briand – Management Forester, HWP
Jim LeLacheur – Chief Forester (Alberta), West Fraser Mills Ltd.