

2007

## Hinton Wood Products Ground Rules Addendum for Mountain Pine Beetle Operations<sup>1</sup>

HINTON WOOD PRODUCTS, A DIVISION OF WEST FRASER MILLS LTD.	ALBERTA SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
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### ENDORSEMENTS

The Hinton Wood Products Ground Rules Addendum for Mountain Pine Beetle Operations, having been prepared in accordance with Section 10 (7) of FMA 8800025 O.C. 290/88, and hereby endorsed this 21<sup>st</sup> day of Dec., 2007. This addendum is to be used in conjunction with the Hinton Wood Products Ground Rules, 2002.

HINTON WOOD PRODUCTS

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN in right of  
Alberta as represented by the Minister of  
Sustainable Resource Development

Per:

D. Kollert

Per:

D. A. Sklar

D. Kollert  
(print name)

D A SKLAR  
(print name)

Woods Manager  
(title)

Exec Director, PMIB  
(title)

<sup>1</sup>as referenced in the Interpretive Bulletin for Planning Mountain Pine Beetle Response Operations

**Hinton Wood Products  
(A Division of West Fraser Mills Ltd.)**

**2002 Harvest Planning and Operating Ground Rules  
Mountain Pine Beetle Addendum  
December 14, 2007**

As referenced in both the Mountain Pine Beetle Action Plan for Alberta and Interpretive Bulletin for Planning Mountain Pine Beetle Response Operations, modified operating ground rules are necessary to implement rapid Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) operations. The format below follows the approved 2002 Harvest Planning and Operating Ground Rules for the Hinton Wood Products FMA. Adjustments that are applicable under headings of Beetle Management, Pine Management, and Salvage are described below. If these headings are not mentioned no changes are proposed from the 2002 OGR. All other sections of the 2002 OGR not specifically described in this addendum will also continue to apply.

**1. Introduction**

**1(d) Public Consultation in Operational Planning**

In general HWP will continue to follow the public consultation program.

**Beetle Management and Pine Management** – In situations where there is insufficient time to complete the public notification and consultation process the consultation portion of the process may be shortened or revised (e.g. radio, telephone). This could occur in beetle management and/or pine management situations. HWP will augment other components of the public consultation process to increase public awareness of MPB and the HWP action plan. This will include the HWP Aboriginal consultation process (not part of the 2002 OGR).

**1(f) Application of the Harvest Planning and Operating Ground Rules**

The HWP response to MPB threat is an example of an “unusual or special circumstance” as specified in this section and this document constitutes the HWP request for Alberta to waive the application of the OGR in specific circumstances consistent with the adjustments described in this document. The requirement for “sound forest management” in the Agreement will continue to apply.

**2. Goals**

**3. Planning Administration**

**3(a) Development Plan**

**Beetle Management and Pine Management** – The 1999 FMP did not anticipate MPB presence and a new FMP that incorporates MPB considerations will be submitted in 2009. For the 2007 and subsequent Development Plans HWP will provide a brief explanation of how harvest sequence adjustments may impact the FMP objectives and assumptions until the new FMP is approved.

**3(b) Annual Operating Plan**

**Beetle Management** – HWP requests Alberta cooperation to expedite approvals within 10 days in urgent beetle management situations where the time between awareness of beetle presence and beetle flight is short. In urgent beetle management situations the Field Amendment process will be used to show the proposed harvest design and request AOP approval at the same time.

**3(c) Compartment Operating Plan**

HWP will continue to follow the established process except for the following adjustments:

**Beetle Management** – When beetle eradication is necessary and HWP does not have a PCOP and/or approved block (BLR) HWP may use the Field Amendment process to identify approximate harvest areas and apply for operations approval. In effect HWP will skip the PCOP stage and go directly to a BLR approval request for a compartment or portion of a compartment (one or more blocks). Level II blocks submitted for harvest approval shall have the boundary ribboned out and watercourses, springs, sensitive soils and steep slopes identified.

**Beetle Management and Pine Management** – HWP may suspend our normal practice of completing layout for all blocks in a compartment before submitting a BLR approval request. Instead HWP may layout and request approval for specified blocks. This is to save time and avoid having to redo layout for blocks that may not be attacked by beetle or are lower risk for beetle attack.

#### **4. Harvest Planning**

##### **4(c) Biodiversity Conservation**

HWP will continue to conserve biodiversity by applying the Natural Forest Management approach. Harvest will be re-sequenced to target beetle infestations and susceptible pine. This will have some affect on biodiversity targets but these are generally expected to be minor. The impacts will be explored and balanced in the 2008 FMP.

**Beetle Management** – Alberta shall determine where beetle management will occur in Special Management Areas.

**Pine Management** – Pine management proposals in SMAs will be developed to conserve the appropriate values.

##### **4(d) Registered Fur Management Area Holders**

**Beetle Management and Pine Management** – HWP may need to suspend the written notification process in urgent situations. If this occurs HWP will attempt to contact RFMA holders in person to inform them of pending operations and mitigate if possible. HWP will contact all RFMA holders to make them aware of how the MPB Action Plan may affect the referral process.

##### **4(e) Disposition Holders**

**Beetle Management and Pine Management** – HWP will follow a similar process to that described above for RFMA holders.

##### **4(f) Stand Structure Management**

**Beetle Management** – Only red-attack or grey-attack pine will be considered for stand structure management.

**Pine Management** – HWP will target pine for harvest and use other species for stand structure management in most instances. If these are insufficient to meet HWP targets and where there is a low risk of increased MPB spread HWP will propose to retain pine that doesn't have green-attack for structure. This pine will be located where it can be harvested or otherwise sanitized if beetles attack it.

##### **4(g) Watercourse Conservation**

**Beetle Management and Pine Management** – HWP will continue to follow the established process, requesting approval to change Reserve Zones to Management Zones as per the developing Natural Forest Management Riparian Management process. The only change will be to target pine for harvest and other tree species for retention in Management Zones.

#### **4(h) Historic Resources**

**Beetle Management and Pine Management** – HWP will continue to follow the HRIA process. In urgent beetle or pine management situations HWP may harvest without doing a pre-harvest assessment in High historical resources probability zones. If it is necessary to harvest green-attack pine within known sites HWP will request expedited approval for removal of infested pine. HWP has commenced discussions with our archaeological consultant and Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture to work out protocols.

#### **4(i) Visual and Recreation Resources**

**Beetle Management and Pine Management** – HWP will request approval to remove green-attack trees from visually sensitive and high value recreation areas. Visual assessments may be suspended in beetle management and high priority pine management situations. HWP will continue to mitigate impacts on visual and recreation resources while removing green-attack trees and reducing pine susceptibility.

#### **4(j) Stand Merchantability and Operability**

**Beetle Management** – HWP may request a temporary variance to the merchantable tree and piece standards with the approval application. This will be to allow more green-attack area to be harvested (if appropriate) or to support economic harvest of green-attack stands.

**Pine Management** – Consistent with the Interpretive Bulletin for planning MPB operations, HWP will prioritize harvest of pine stands that have high MPB susceptibility. These are generally pure pine and larger pine. Stands with other species, mixed other species/pine and/or dense small diameter pine will be deferred for future harvest. This strategy will be incorporated into the 2008 FMP.

**Salvage** – HWP may request a temporary variance to the merchantable tree and piece standards with the approval application. This will be to support economic harvest of salvage stands.

#### **4(k) Harvest Design**

**Beetle Management** – HWP will target green-attacked pine for immediate harvest. The strategy will be to harvest the entire stand containing green-attacked trees. HWP will only propose individual green-attack tree harvest in some very limited portions of the contributing landbase where other resource values are very high (e.g. recreation areas, portions of caribou range).

**Beetle Management, Pine Management, and Salvage** – HWP will change from the standard 2-pass harvest design to a 1-pass pine harvest design. Green-up and block size restrictions do not apply for beetle and pine management. This change will be consistent with our NFM approach and conservation of non-timber values detailed in our current DFMP discussions.

#### **4(l) Detailed Block Plans**

**Beetle Management** – HWP will submit a Block map with the AOP approval request.

#### **4(n) Amendments**

HWP will follow the Field Amendment and AOP Revision MOUs for design and schedule changes.

### **5. Harvest Operations**

#### **5(a) Harvesting Operations**

**Beetle Management** – HWP will submit a Block map with the AOP approval request.

## **6. Renewal and Stand Maintenance**

### **6(b) Administration and 6(c) Pre-Harvest Silviculture Planning**

**Beetle Management** – Silviculture strategy and tactic declarations may be delayed in urgent beetle management situations. If this occurs HWP will submit declarations as soon as practical as planning catches up.

HWP will continue to apply for site preparation approval (Silviculture Schedule Amendment) with AOP Amendment requests. The level of information provided will reflect the urgency of the situation, similar to 5(a) above.

## **7. Protection**

No changes.

## **8. Access Planning and Operations**

### **8(a) Access Planning**

**Beetle Management** – Major road corridor plans, Long Term Access Plans, and Compartment Road Plans are not required in urgent beetle management situations. If these occur HWP may request access approval using the AOP road process, and retroactively apply for an LOC in situations where the road should be authorized under an LOC. HWP will apply in advance for LOC on roads that access MPB susceptible stands, to prepare for possible response if beetles enter non-accessed areas.

### **8(b) Watercourse Crossing Design and Construction**

**Beetle Management** – In urgent beetle management situations HWP may request permission for necessary in-stream work outside the normal in-stream work timing windows. Standard isolation and sediment-free practices will still be used.

## **9. Miscellaneous Facilities**

No changes.