



South Canim Wildfire Management Plan

SFI Project Proposal Draft 1

May 2018

Background:

The main community of the Tsq'escnem'c people (The Canim Lake Band) is IR#1, located near the southwest end of Canim Lake. IR#1 is the main community in the South Canim area. In 2017 the area, and the community at IR#1 were significantly threatened by wildfire. There was a forced evacuation.

This event highlighted that the residents, the homes, infrastructure and the forests in the area are extremely vulnerable to fire. To date there has been little preparation, planning or mitigative measures taken to address these concerns. This plan will be lead and prepared by the Canim Lake Band and will be an integrated and comprehensive plan that focuses on preparedness and risk reduction.

The final plan will guide future forest management, identify prioritized treatment units for operational prescription development and help to operationally prepare the community for a fire event.

Area Under the Plan:

The main area under the plan surrounds IR#1. In addition several small and isolated reserves and parcels will be considered (Lac La Hache, Halfways, Upper Lake and IR#5 North Canim Lake). The formal area under the plan will match the area flown for orthos.

Consultation:

The community of Canim Lake will be fully consulted during the development of this plan. At least two public forums are planned. In addition neighboring residents will be invited to attend and have input. Crown agencies will also be invited to have meaningful consultation regarding the plan.

Risk/Hazard/Consequences

Areas under the plan will be risk assessed at the landscape level using a hazard/consequence approach. This will be a “worst case scenario” model, landscape level fires. This assessment will provide the framework within which risk appropriate treatment guards, breaks and treatment units will be developed.

Plan Elements:

The plan will contain the following elements:

- Landscape level fire guards at appropriate scales Priorized.
- Forest treatment units associated with fuel guards (breaks). Priorized.
- Other forest treatment units, prioritized. I.e. problem types
- An assessment of issues with adjacent private property.
- Assessment of grasslands, internal ignition potential.
- Draft grassland controlled burning plan with guards.
- Assessment of lightning strike potential, internal ignition potential.
- Forest treatment strategies. Deciduous, clearcutting, partial cuts, thinning etc.
- A pre-set back-burning plan, when and how. Landscape level fire response.
- Identification and assessment of specific infrastructure at risk.
- Identification of appropriate water source and supply.
- Plan for access to water, including roads, tenders, bladders etc.
- Pump/hose/manpower configurations to support fire-fighting efforts. Cache and location.
- Building sprinkler plan and equipment list, cache and location.
- A fire access plan, to action fires early.
- Community evacuation routes pre-identified.
- Community safe zones identified and prescribed (some people simply will not leave, may need to do work to make a safe zone)
- Correcting and updating of CFFDRS Fuel typing information to allow for better wildfire modelling, including wildfire threat assessment plots and forest fuel plots (FDRA 001)
- Wildfire modelling based on quantified forest fuels.

Community Action:

- Discussion on jurisdictional issues, Federal, Provincial and Treaty Lands.
- Discussion and analysis on legal, financial and practical implications of community action.
- Community inventory of resources and equipment.
- A discussion and assessment regarding the community's capacity readiness to action a fire and at what scale. Supported by a decision aid matrix.
- A discussion and plan for working with BC Wildfire and other branches of the government should a fire event occur.
- A plan for improving readiness, equipment, training etc.

Legislative Barriers:

- Discussion and assessment of any legislative barriers to fire prevention and readiness. MDWR/OGMA and other landuse constraints.

Low Level Orth photos:

- Also proposed under this project are low level orthophotos. These will support a variety of work, including ongoing forest fuel management, general forest management, Douglas-fir beetle management, recreation and traditional use.
- A quote is currently being developed using a company called Terrasaurus.
- Orthophotos will first be targeted at the areas on which forest fuel management is planned. If there is extra budget then the Canim Lake Band's forest tenure will be photographed as well.
- \$50,000 will be spent on high resolution orthophotos with Terrasaurus. Targetting 39,000 ha at \$1.28/ha. Currently working on defining the final area to be flown.

DRAFT MILESTONES:

Milestone 1 Summary Report:

- Develop a summary report of local and available wildfire information and best practices for wildfire threat reduction. This report will, in general terms, summarize the current situation and where we need to move to. The report will be made publicly available at Canim Lake Band.

Milestone 2 Project Setup:

- Collect and organize all relevant digital data
- Produce base maps
- Setup for GIS based fire modelling
- Review the project plan, elements and deliverables with the staff and Chief and Council of the Canim Lake Band. Several days of interviews/meetings will be needed.
- Finalize project structure.

Milestone 3 Draft 1 of Plan (Paper/Office Plan):

- Collect fire history polygons for local area, quantify and map wildfire threats by fuel type using the 2012 provincial wildfire threat assessment process, complete wildfire modelling based on PSTA data and non-represented fuel types
- Complete a preliminary risk/hazard/consequence assessment based on maps, current data and fire modelling. A paper/computer plan.
- Develop wildfire threat reduction best practices or guidance document(s) for future timber development, road construction and right-of-ways, post-harvest hazard abatement and silviculture standards for the ecosystems present within the study area.
- Produce a draft plan that includes all identified elements. The draft should identify focus areas for future fieldwork.
- Present Draft 1 to the Canim Lake Band community. Take feedback.
- Adjust the plan based on feedback from stakeholders.

Milestone 4 Fieldwork:

- A significant amount of ground truthing is necessary in order to properly identify fuel break opportunities and correct PSTA fuel type data. The current forest inventory is simply not strong enough to justify an office only paper-plan.
- Update and correct the PSTA fuel typing data through focused field plots
- Update the PSTA opening data using Results and field assessments
- Quantify heavy surface fuel loaded areas not represented in the PSTA fuel type data using FRDA 001 fuel plots
- Refine wildfire threats by fuel type using the 2012 provincial wildfire threat assessment process and the new field data
- Collect representative fire weather data to improve local wildfire modeling
- Re-run wildfire modelling based on updated PSTA data and non-represented fuel types
- Clearly identify areas and forest fuels of specific wildfire concern,
- Recognize that the forest ecosystems themselves are of significant value, the plan will identify ways to protect the forest resource through increased stand resilience, biodiversity, climate change minimizing factors, as opposed to other plans that are designed to protect man-made communities and infrastructure.
- Plan to incorporate wildfire threat reduction planning and implementation into the harvesting/silviculture regime.
- Plan to design a wildfire threat reduction process to minimize impacts on the Annual Allowable Cut.

Milestone 5 Draft 2 of the Plan:

- Fly and produce orthophotos in August (after the Douglas-fir beetle flight)

Milestone 6 Draft 2 of the Plan:

- Rewrite plan and incorporate all field work results. Documents and maps.
- Priorize guards/breaks and treatment units.
- Priorize community preparedness, i.e. equipment etc.
- Present the final plan to the community at Canim Lake.
- Finalize the plan based on stakeholder input. Documents and maps.
- Post the completed plan on the Canim Lake Band webpage and begin implementation.