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RE: Cochrane Open House What We Heard Report

On May 8, 2024, West Fraser hosted an open house community meeting in Cochrane. Over 620 people attended, with the vast majority of the attendees expressing interest in a proposed timber harvest plan that is scheduled for the fall of 2026 in the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas.

We felt that preparing a report summarizing the key feedback themes, actions taken and next steps was the best way to communicate back to the attendees on “what we heard”. We are pleased to provide you with a copy of the report. We will continue working with the local user groups to further refine the plan.

Please contact me at your convenience if you have any questions or would like to discuss the report.

Sincerely,

Tyler Steneker
Woodlands Manager
Spray Lake Sawmills (1980) Ltd., an affiliate of West Fraser Mills Ltd.



WHAT WE HEARD



West Fraser Cochrane
**West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain
Spring 2024 Public Engagement Report**

October 2024



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Report Overview

During West Fraser Cochrane's Spring 2024 engagement period, there was considerable interest and participation in the public engagement for the West Bragg Creek/Moose Mountain planned harvest for 2026/2027.

West Fraser felt it was important to issue this report, *What We Heard: West Bragg Creek/Moose Mountain Spring 2024 Public Engagement*, to demonstrate how public input shapes our forest planning process.

Our report has the following objectives:

- Answer questions about land use, forest management agreements, harvest plans and sustainable forest management
- Share what we heard
- Outline how we are responding and revising our planned harvest for 2026/2027

Revising Our 2026/2027 West Bragg Creek/Moose Mountain Planned Harvest

West Fraser Cochrane's 10-year Forest Management Plan, approved in 2021, contains a preliminary harvest design—known as the spatial harvest sequence—showing a planned harvest area of 880 hectares: 468 hectares in the West Bragg Creek area and 412 hectares in the Moose Mountain area.

As of September 2024, following the public comments collected during the May 2024 Open House, initial field visits with trail user groups and operational assessments, the planned harvest was reduced by 37%, from 880 to 556 hectares: the West Bragg Creek area was reduced from 468 to 268 hectares, and the Moose Mountain area was reduced from 412 to 288 hectares. As a result, five of the 26 current and planned trails in the area will fall within harvest areas.

West Fraser Cochrane looks forward to continuing to work with the trail operators and the Government of Alberta to mitigate wildfire risk and develop harvest and road plans, as well as foster a desirable future for sustainable trails in the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas.

Work will continue to further revise the harvest and road plan until it is submitted to the Government of Alberta in Spring 2026 for an anticipated harvest start date of October 2026.

Introduction

West Fraser's Approach

At West Fraser, we believe in healthy forests for the future. Sustainable forestry is an approach to caring for forests that allows for their environmental, social, cultural and economic value to be maintained. On our managed forest land, we responsibly source timber to produce renewable wood products for new home construction and other uses.

West Fraser is a diversified wood products company with more than 60 facilities in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Europe. In western Canada, we directly manage approximately 8.2 million hectares of public forestland, 100% certified to the voluntary SFI® Forest Management Standard¹. We have been operating in Alberta for 35 years and acquired the lumber and treated lumber facilities in Cochrane, Alberta (West Fraser Cochrane and formerly known as Spray Lake Sawmills) in November 2023.

In Alberta, West Fraser operates on public land, and the Government of Alberta defines the standards for—and approves—all of our forest management activities in the province. The government also sets the priorities for land use through its regional planning process, including the designation of mixed-use areas and the activities within those areas. West Fraser is committed to ensuring that our operations, including our comprehensive forest management practices, meet and surpass rigorous government regulations, as well as certified sustainable forest management standards.

We consider all aspects of forest stewardship, including reforestation; conservation of soil, air and water quality and quantity; climate change adaptation and mitigation; biological diversity; wildlife and aquatic habitats; recreation; traditional; use; and visual quality.

Each year, across all our Forest Management Areas in Alberta, West Fraser harvests less than 1% of the total hectares, which allows long-term sustainable harvest.



¹ SFI marks are registered marks owned by the *Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc.*

The Importance of Public Input

We understand that forests are an important resource for us all and that public involvement plays an important role in managing the wide range of forest values on the public land we operate on in Alberta. We strive to ensure that people who live, work or recreate near our operations have opportunities to give their input on our plans.

When engaging with the public, we are committed to transparency, dialogue and solution-finding, and provide many opportunities for stakeholders and community members to influence the forest management planning process.

We welcome actionable feedback from stakeholders and residents which helps inform our plans with local knowledge as to the values and uses that are important to them, as well as other insights that should be considered and factored into our planning.

Background: Alberta Regulatory Framework

In Alberta, all of West Fraser's forest management activities take place on public land, including forestlands in the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas. The management of those forest areas is guided by provincial requirements as set out under legislation pertaining to land use and the *Forests Act*.

During the public engagement period, the public asked about land use and how land is prioritized for uses such as forestry or recreation. The following section works to answer those questions by providing background on Alberta's land-use framework and how decisions are made to balance environmental, economic and social objectives. Information is also provided on the responsibilities of forest companies such as West Fraser to manage the public forest for a range of uses beyond timber harvesting.

Provincial Land-Use Planning

Forestry, mining, oil and gas, municipal development, infrastructure, recreation and conservation can be competing interests across the land base. This can pose a challenge for the Government of Alberta as it works to achieve and balance the provincial objectives of a healthy economy, healthy environment and healthy communities.

To help achieve balance, the government established a land-use framework for Alberta. Under the framework, the government has created seven land-use regions, each to have its own regional plan. Government is working through that process with two regional plans currently completed, one of which is the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan which includes the land base of West Fraser Cochrane's operations.

Provincial leadership in the planning is provided through the Land Use Secretariat. The Secretariat develops regional plans in conjunction with government departments and Regional Advisory Councils. The final decision on regional plans rests with the Cabinet. Municipalities and provincial government departments are required to comply with regional plans in their decision-making.

Each plan integrates provincial policies at the regional level, sets out regional land-use objectives, provides the context for land-use decision-making within the region, and reflects the priorities of each region including defining areas where key industrial uses or resource development, such as forestry, would be beneficial.

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan

Within the South Saskatchewan Region, West Fraser holds two Forest Management Agreements and a coniferous timber quota. The region also supports two community timber programs and three other coniferous timber quotas in addition to small manufacturing facilities.

The South Saskatchewan Region includes the South Saskatchewan River Basin, the Milk River Basin and the Alberta portion of the Cypress Hills. The South Saskatchewan Region covers 83,764 square kilometres or about 12.6% of the total area of Alberta. About 1.8 million people live in the region, about 44% of the provincial population.²

In July 2014, the Government of Alberta approved the initial [South Saskatchewan Regional Plan](#), amended in May 2018 to incorporate newly established parks and sub-regional plans. Sub-regional plans are a key component of the province's approach to supporting species at risk and other values while maintaining a working landscape and supporting a broad range of land uses and values, including conservation, Indigenous traditional use, recreation and economic development.

On August 22, 2024, the government announced the [10-year review](#) of the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan, providing an opportunity for all interested Albertans to participate in an engagement process to determine the key land use priorities for government to consider as the plan is updated.



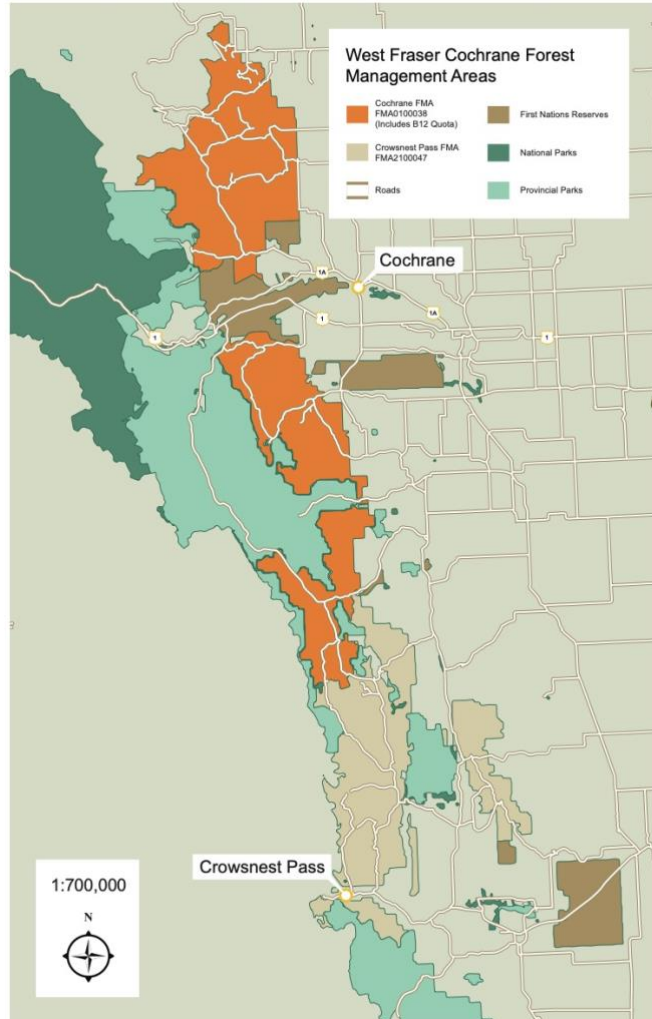
Area included in the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan

Forest Management Agreements

The Government of Alberta allocates timber production on public lands through timber permits, timber quotas and forest management agreements. A forest management agreement is a 20-year renewable, area-based form of forest tenure.

Through the forest management agreement, a company is given certain rights, including the right to establish, grow, harvest and remove Crown timber. These rights are granted in exchange for various responsibilities for sustainable forest management planning and considering a range of social, economic and environmental factors. In addition, the Government of Alberta actively monitors, detects and manages any significant forest health issues that threaten values provided by the forest, including timber and ecological functions.

² [South Saskatchewan Regional Plan 2014-2024 - May 2018.pdf \(alberta.ca\)](#), page 9



West Fraser holds two 20-year renewable Forest Management Agreements:

- **FMA0100038**, which commenced on May 1, 2015. This Forest Management Agreement is a renewal of the 2001 Forest Management Agreement, which itself was a conversion of long-term quotas held by Spray Lake Sawmills (1980) Ltd. The Forest Management Agreement is issued to Spray Lake Sawmills (1980) Ltd., a subsidiary of West Fraser. The FMA0100038 area encompasses much of the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas.
- **FMA2100047**, which commenced on May 1, 2021. The Forest Management Agreement is a conversion of long-term quotas held by Spray Lake Sawmills (1980) Ltd. and Crowsnest Forest Products Ltd. The Forest Management Agreement **is** issued to Crowsnest Forest Products Ltd., a subsidiary of West Fraser. The area is located in Crowsnest Pass.

In summary, the Government of Alberta's responsibilities include determining what public land is designated for sustainable forest management according to government regulations and standards.

West Fraser Cochrane's responsibilities include determining which locations to designate for harvest based on criteria such as watershed protection; maintenance of biodiversity; and maintenance and protection of wildlife habitat.

Forest Management Plans

Forest management agreement holders are required to prepare forest management plans that are approved by the Government of Alberta with input from the public, interest groups and Indigenous communities. Forest management plans are developed using an integrated planning approach which incorporates watershed function, aesthetics, fisheries, wildlife, pest risk and damage, wildfire, recreation and grazing values. The long-term sustainability of a healthy forest is achieved with plans forecasting 200 years into the future. Also incorporated in these forest management plans are specific management objectives and strategies to carry out the required reforestation activities following timber harvest.

Forest management plans are developed on a 10-year cycle and generally take four years to complete. They cover every hectare of the forest management agreement and include an updated forest inventory prior to the planning cycle beginning.

The public input collected during this process is strategic in nature and looks at which regions to harvest. The output of the planning process is a map that sets harvesting areas based on public feedback provided on a range of criteria such as values, objectives, indicators and targets (collectively, VOITS) and specifies the details of where, when and how trees on Crown land in Alberta are sustainably harvested and managed to the Government of Alberta's standards.

West Fraser Cochrane Forest Management Plan: FMA0100038

The current approved Forest Management Plan for FMA0100038 went into effect May 1, 2021, and is in effect until replaced, which is currently scheduled for 2031. The spatial harvest sequence as an output of the Forest Management Plan, including the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas, was prepared for public consultation and Government of Alberta review starting in June 2020.

West Fraser Cochrane Forest Management Plan: FMA2100047

The current approved Forest Management Plan for FMA2100047 went into effect May 1, 2010, and is in effect until replaced. Work is underway to update the Forest Management Plan for this area, and it is scheduled for submission May 1, 2025.

General Development Plan

The General Development Plan provides an overview of our proposed timber operations for the upcoming five years. The General Development Plan provides the operational link to the commitments of the Forest Management Plan and is a tool for communicating where forestry operations will occur.

At this stage, the approved preliminary harvest design is refined to meet operational requirements, and additional details regarding the location of structures and facilities are provided. The General Development Plan is also the stage where integration of timber operations with other timber disposition holders and forest resource users is completed to ensure that issues and concerns are identified and addressed early in the planning process to an appropriate level of detail.

Annual Operating Plans

Annual operating plans describe in detail the harvesting, road building, maintenance and reclamation activities proposed for the current year. Annual operating plans must also include details regarding reforestation and fire mitigation plans. The Annual Operating Plan is the annual authorization West Fraser requires to conduct forest management activities. The Annual Operating Plan for the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain area is scheduled for submission in April 2026.

History of the Cochrane Forest Management Agreement

During the Spring 2024 Public Engagement period, questions were raised by the public regarding the history of the FMA0100038 area. Specifically, questions were asked regarding the mixed-use designation and the harvest history.

A Policy for Resource Management of the Eastern Slopes (1977, revised 1984 and updated 2023) first identified the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain area as mixed-use and identified recreation and timber operations as compatible activities. The mixed-use designation was maintained in The Kananaskis Country Sub-regional Integrated Resource Plan (1986) and the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan 2014-2024 (2014, revised 2018).

Spray Lake Sawmills (1980) Ltd., now a subsidiary of West Fraser following its acquisition in November 2023, held harvesting rights under the timber quota system in the area since 1966 and has held harvesting rights under a Forest Management Agreement since 2001.

The early forest management and harvesting practices bolstered recreational use within the forest management area now owned by West Fraser, demonstrating how timber harvest activities can provide support and opportunities for trail development through consultation with stakeholders and the government.

In the intervening years—particularly in the past five years—the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain area has continued to grow in popularity as a recreation destination. This has led to many volunteers investing their own time and money to improve and expand the trails for public enjoyment.

In addition to supporting recreation, other benefits that sustainable forest management has brought to the local community include:

- Long-term sustainability of forest health
- Forest health risk monitoring, including insect, disease and wildfire
- Watershed function protection
- Wildlife and vegetation biodiversity
- Wildlife habitat monitoring and management
- Employment opportunities

Forest Health Conditions

In 2012, following an assessment of the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas, the Government of Alberta indicated the areas were at risk for wildfire and worked with Spray Lake Sawmills, residents and local stakeholders, including fire services, to develop the Greater Bragg Creek Wildfire Mitigation Strategy (2012).

In the strategy, the area was described as having high to extreme wildfire behaviour potential, and a number of FireSmart practices to reduce this risk were outlined and implemented.

Through the 2021 Forest Management Plan development, the Government of Alberta continued to view the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas as posing a high fire risk. The 2026/2027 harvest plan will also be evaluated for achieving wildfire hazard reduction objectives.

Preventative measures play an important role in minimizing wildfires. This begins with sustainable forest management practices, such as tree thinning, fuel load reduction, wildfire breaks and carefully planned harvesting, which remove debris that can fuel a wildfire.

Through fuel removal and reduction, the planned 2026/2027 harvest would help mitigate wildfire risk while supporting forest resilience over the long term, helping ensure that the area will continue to be an important resource for its many users.

Reforestation and FireSmart Practices

The planned 2026/2027 harvest will mitigate wildfire risks, but it is not designated as a FireSmart Plan. This means that the harvest plan includes reforestation requirements.

We have heard concerns about the lack of reforestation following the 2012-2014 FireSmart harvest. The 2012/2013 and a portion of the 2014 harvest plans were based on government directives, designed to create a series of firebreaks in an area where forest conditions posed a risk for extreme wildfire behaviour. With this risk in mind, the Government of Alberta's strategy included significantly reduced reforestation goals for the cutblocks under the FireSmart program.

Unless otherwise directed by government, forest management agreement holders are legally required to reforest in all areas where timber has been harvested, and reforestation activities must be completed within a mandated time period.

Sustainable forest management typically includes site preparation techniques designed to create good growing conditions for regenerating forests, such as creating conditions similar to natural disturbances. We will then reforest harvested areas with a similar mix of native tree species by planting seedlings, supporting natural regeneration or directly seeding the area. Once the new forest is established, we will monitor it following Alberta survey standards and steward it to grow a new forest that replicates the one that was harvested.

Forest Roads

The Government of Alberta's Alberta Timber Harvest Planning and Operating Ground Rules provide the procedures for planning and working within areas where temporary forest roads are needed. Unless otherwise approved, temporary roads will be operated and reclaimed in accordance with these Ground Rules.

Harvesting Methods

Our Approach

When we harvest timber, we select a harvesting method appropriate for the regeneration of the stand to meet forest management objectives, including biodiversity, recreation and more.

When determining the harvest method(s) most suitable for the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas, we consider factors such as the biological needs of the tree species planned for harvesting and regeneration and the specific growing conditions of the harvest site, including light, moisture, wind and frost exposure, which can all affect successful reforestation. The goal is to ensure each area harvested can be successfully regenerated so that new forests can grow and thrive.

Harvest Methods

Long-term timber and non-timber values are integrated into all aspects of sustainable forest management. Considerations of selecting a harvest method include:

- Biodiversity
- Forest health and damaging agents
- Fuel reduction and fire safety
- Merchantability and timber condition
- Mimicking natural disturbances
- Other forest users
- Protection of aquatic and riparian areas
- Reforestation
- Retention and understory management
- Soil stability and integrity
- Wildlife habitat and species of management concern
- Visual quality

To mitigate the impact to these often-conflicting values, the harvest method incorporates many strategies, including but not limited to:

- Blowdown risk management
- Debris and slash management
- Retention patches
- Trail buffers and trail crossing agreements
- Understory protection
- Variable harvest intensity
- Visualization modelling
- Watercourse, waterbody and wetland buffers
- Wildlife corridors

A variety of harvesting methods will be used, informed by assessing the values and strategies listed above as well as engaging with the public. Two harvest methods in discussion for this area include clearcutting and selective harvesting.

Typically, misconceptions around clearcutting as a harvesting practice are characterized by two core inaccuracies, which are that clearcutting results in:

- An indiscriminate harvest of large areas of forest and/or
- A harvest with negative environmental and ecological outcomes

Where West Fraser Cochrane's proposed 2026/2027 harvest plan has identified clearcutting, with retention, as the harvest method, the harvest plan is designed to:

- Systematically harvest small patches
 - The current average cutblock size is 19 ha
- Minimize environmental impacts
- Promote forest health by reducing susceptibility to insects, disease and forest fire
- Accommodate individual species' growth requirements to achieve a healthy future forest
 - For example, lodgepole pine (West Fraser Cochrane's primary tree species) is a fire-adapted species requiring higher-intensity light and heat to grow
- Retain individual trees and small clumps of trees to maintain wildlife cover requirements and aesthetic values

Selective harvesting is a harvest method used to maintain aesthetic values while also reducing blowdown and fire hazards. This is the primary harvest method planned when operating near designated trails.

Opportunities to Engage and Comment

West Fraser understands that forests are an important resource for us all and that public involvement plays an important role in managing the wide range of forest values. We strive to ensure that people who live, work or recreate near our operations have opportunities to give their input on our forest management plans and our annual operating plans.

We regularly engage with Albertans on our operations across the province. This includes West Fraser Cochrane's engagement each Spring as part of our requirements for our Annual Operating Plans, under our two Forest Management Agreements and one timber quota held with the Government of Alberta.

Between April 15 and May 20, 2024, the public was invited to engage and comment on areas scheduled for harvesting in 2024/2025. Public comment was also invited on a 2026/2027 harvest plan under development for the West Bragg Creek/Moose Mountain areas. A full listing of areas included in our Spring 2024 engagement is available in **Appendix A**.

We are continuing our feedback and engagement with stakeholder groups throughout the fall and winter as we work to revise a planned harvest area for our next public engagement session in May 2025. The harvest operations are currently scheduled to commence in late October 2026.

West Bragg Creek/Moose Mountain Engagement Activities

Early Engagement

The initial communications and community engagement phase was completed between June and September 2023 with West Fraser meeting with stakeholder groups on the preliminary harvest map. The preliminary harvest map, showing a planned harvest area of 880 hectares for the West Bragg Creek/Moose Mountain areas, was included in West Fraser Cochrane's 10-year Forest Management Plan approved by the Government of Alberta in 2021.

Meetings included:

- June 21, 2023: Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society
- July 14, 2023: Bragg Creek Trails
- July 19, 2023: Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance
- August 28, 2023: Bike Cochrane
- November 9, 2023: Bragg Creek Trails
- March 14, 2024: Bragg Creek Trails
- March 20, 2024: Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society

The early engagement provided an opportunity to understand interests, values and concerns; identify key commitments; and reflect actionable feedback into our planning.

Based on that ongoing work, and thanks to the input received, we were able to modify our harvest boundaries and plans to reduce impacts on the trails frequented by recreational users to 738 hectares.

Spring 2024 Engagement Activities

During the Spring 2024 engagement period, West Fraser received approximately 350 written submissions (letters, emails, and Open House comment forms) and had approximately 700 people attend our two Open Houses on May 8 and 9. Additionally, there was some media interest and coverage.

West Fraser Cochrane's Spring 2024 public engagement activities included:

- Website
 - On April 15, we began sharing updated public information materials, including detailed plans and maps on our website, in advance of the Open Houses
- Initial Stakeholder Engagement
 - We conducted ongoing stakeholder engagement, including outreach to ensure awareness of the Open House and information posted to the West Fraser website
 - Emailed stakeholder groups directly to notify them of the Open House
 - Committed to continuing engagement with trail operator leadership, specifically Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society and Bragg Creek Trails, which hold the trail maintenance agreements with the Province
- Open Houses on May 8 and 9, 2024
 - The May 8 Open House (Cochrane) and the May 9 Open House (Blairmore, Crowsnest Pass) were advertised through print and digital placements in the local community papers: the Cochrane Eagle and the Crowsnest Pass Herald
 - Approximately 700 community members and stakeholders attended an Open House over the two days, with the vast majority attending the May 8 Open House in Cochrane with the remainder attending the following night in Blairmore
 - 150 attendees indicated they had completed comment cards, while other attendees indicated they had sent an email to West Fraser and/or to government
 - West Fraser scribes were stationed throughout the Open House venues to record input from attendees
 - Materials provided at the events included take-home copies of a one-pager outlining the scope of engagement and West Fraser Cochrane's two Forest Management Plans; this one-pager can be found in **Appendix B**

In addition to company-generated activities, West Fraser listened to public comments expressed in media coverage and a third-party online petition.

- Media Coverage
 - In addition to public comment, there was media interest during the Spring engagement period

- Primarily, the media coverage during this time focused on several key themes, including trail and recreation impacts; the local economy surrounding the proposed harvest area; and confusion around the designated Forest Management Agreement area versus the purpose of the Government of Alberta's Kananaskis Conservation Pass (K-Pass)
- Coverage may have helped generate attention and bring people out to the Open Houses
- Online Petition
 - We are aware of an online petition organized by Grow Kananaskis containing comments sharing concerns over the planned harvest in West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain. The petition has approximately 20,000 signatures.

Summer/Fall 2024 Engagement

West Fraser has continued to engage with key stakeholders following the Open Houses, including local recreation groups. This includes trail operator leadership, specifically Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society and West Bragg Creek Trails, which hold trail maintenance agreements with the Province.

This engagement is extremely important to West Fraser, and many of the concerns raised in these conversations and field days are echoed here in this report. We have already taken steps to address actionable feedback from these groups.

We have reviewed all letters, comment forms and Open House feedback and incorporated actionable feedback into our planning. Over the summer months, we have also continued to engage stakeholders in the office and field. Specifically, Bragg Creek Trails and Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society, including field days with these groups in the area to see the concerns and identify opportunities for us to put input into action on the land base.

These meetings have included:

- May 10, 2024: Kananaskis Trails Advisory Group
 - Harvest Plan Presentation and Q&A
- May 29, 2024: Bragg Creek Trails & Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society
 - Open House debrief and discussion of next steps
- May 29, 2024: Alberta Hiking Association
 - Harvest Plan Presentation and Q&A
- June 18, 2024: Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society
 - Field Day: Race of Spades
- June 19, 2024: Bragg Creek Trails
 - Field Day: Fullerton Loop
- June 26, 2024: Bragg Creek Trails
 - Field Day: Elbow, Strange Brew, Sugar Daddy
- July 3, 2024: Bragg Creek Trails
 - Field Day: Ranger Summit, Snowy Owl

- July 4, 2024: Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society
 - Field Day: ROS Uptrack, Pneuma, Race of Spades
- July 10, 2024: Bragg Creek Trails
 - Field Day: Ranger Summit, Bobcat, Sugar Pony, Sugar Momma
- July 12, 2024: Bragg Creek Trails
 - Field Day: Special Spades, Special K Connector
- July 26, 2024: Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society
 - Field Day: 7-27
- July 31, 2024: Bragg Creek Trails
 - Field Day: Portion of Snowy Owl & New Trail #14
- August 19 & 26, 2024
 - West Fraser staff participated in two trail-building days with Bragg Creek Trails. West Fraser staff gained an appreciation of the effort to build a trail and look forward to participating in more in the summer of 2025.

What We Heard

Public Input Themes

Throughout the engagement process, we have heard a number of questions and comments on values, interests and concerns raised by members of the public and stakeholders. From the approximate 350 submissions received, recreation was a theme mentioned by nearly all respondents and was the primary focus of the May 8, 2024, Open House in Cochrane.

West Fraser received comments on a variety of themes, with the majority falling into the following four categories:

1. Impacts on Recreation

Recreation and forestry have coexisted in the multi-use area of West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain due to the company's early forest management and harvesting practices, which bolstered the recreational use of the areas.

These areas host an extensive trail network for hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing and horseback riding. The area is well-used by locals and is also a short drive from Calgary, serving as a recreation destination for Calgarians and visitors from around the world.

The use and popularity of West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain have increased rapidly over the past five years. We have heard from many respondents that during COVID, the area provided access to opportunities for physical activity, mental health, community connections and economic benefits to small businesses that serve the region. As a result, this period saw a rapid expansion in the trail network, supported by investment by government and users, with many volunteers investing their time and money to improve and expand the trails for public enjoyment.

In speaking with government since the open house, we have also heard concerns about the increasing occurrence and severity of wildfires, particularly since the tragic fire in Jasper this summer. In 2012, the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas were described as having high to extreme wildfire behaviour potential. This assessment was again confirmed in the 2021 Forest Management Plan development, which includes targets to reduce areas with high, very high and extreme wildfire fire behaviour ratings. The government expects us to achieve these targets through implementation of the Forest Management Plan.

We are listening. We are actively working to understand the interaction of the trail system and our harvest plan under development to reduce and mitigate impact where possible, such as building buffers and exploring opportunities to enhance the forest health of the region.

Sample comments on recreation impacts include:

- "The West Bragg Creek trail network represents the best area for X-country skiing within an hour's drive from Calgary. I would suggest prioritizing other areas for logging."
- "This is a well-loved, well-used area close to a major centre that needs to remain intact for all of our mental health. This is a summer/winter/fall recreation area for heaven's sake. Many organizations have spent countless hours maintaining and upgrading these trails over the years."

2. Nature of the Harvest (Concerns over Clearcutting)

Clearcutting as a harvest method was expressed frequently as a concern in written feedback as well as at the May 8 Open House. Comments provided shared that users were worried that this popular recreation area for Albertans would experience devastation, preventing its use for a generation.

A variety of harvesting methods will be used, informed by assessing the values and strategies listed above as well as engaging with the public. Two harvest methods in discussion for this area include clearcutting and selective harvesting.

Where West Fraser Cochrane's proposed 2026/2027 harvest plan has identified clearcutting, with retention, as the harvest method, the harvest plan is designed to:

- Systematically harvest small patches
 - The current average cutblock size is 19 ha
- Minimize environmental impacts
- Promote forest health by reducing susceptibility to insects, disease and forest fire
- Accommodate individual species' growth requirements to achieve a healthy future forest
 - For example, lodgepole pine (West Fraser Cochrane's primary tree species) is a fire-adapted species requiring higher-intensity light and heat to grow
- Retain individual trees and small clumps of trees to maintain wildlife cover requirements and aesthetic values

Selective harvesting is a harvest method used to maintain aesthetic values while also reducing blowdown and fire hazards. This is the primary harvest method planned when operating near designated trails. Several areas have been identified for selective harvesting, as shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2 on pages 23 and 24.

Sample comments on harvesting concerns include:

- "These trails are my home. I grew up here. Please be mindful which areas you clear cut. Moose Mountain is my riding area and I love it for the trees. They make the trails. Please don't disturb the peace. The trees matter!"
- "The planned clearcut logging would be devastating to this recreational area and have a devastating impact to myself and the other users of this area within the Kananaskis County."

3. Conservation

Our Forest Management Agreement area runs along much of the length of Alberta's Rocky Mountain Foothills. The mountains and forest lands in this region are something Albertans and the rest of the world see as a precious resource. West Fraser takes its role as forest stewards very seriously with long-term forest and environmental conservation the highest priority across all operations to ensure a healthy forest for future generations.

Comments calling for conservation often expressed support for forestry, but not in the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain area. Reducing or eliminating harvesting was requested for a variety of reasons, including maintaining visual quality and concerns for water courses, biodiversity and recreation.

We understand that forests are an important resource for all of us. That is why we listen and consider all aspects of forest stewardship—including reforestation; conservation of soil, air and water quality and quantity; climate change adaptation and mitigation; biological diversity, wildlife and aquatic habitats; and recreation, traditional use and visual quality—while ensuring that our operations meet or exceed the government's standards.

Sample comments on conservation include:

- "I urge you to take immediate action to halt the logging activities in the West Bragg Creek area and to prioritize the conservation and protection of this irreplaceable natural asset. Minor adjustments to the logging plans are insufficient; what is needed is a comprehensive commitment to safeguarding the entire area from irreversible harm. While I recognize the importance of responsible resource development, I firmly believe that there are alternative locations for logging that do not pose a threat to the unique recreational and ecological value of West Bragg Creek."
- "Please reconsider your plans to log Moose/Bragg. There have got to be tons of other places you can log that don't involve wrecking the forest we enjoy all year long...."

4. Confusion About the Status of the Lands

During the engagement, comment was also provided in the form of letters, jointly addressed to elected officials with the Government of Alberta and West Fraser. The letters often touched on recreation and the Kananaskis Conservation Pass (K-Pass).

Specifically, there was some confusion as to whether West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain would be conserved rather than available for harvesting. These Albertans had paid the \$90 annual fee that they thought was going to conserve the area and—as the K-Pass website notes—"keep this special part of Alberta beautiful and protected for generations to come." This statement is in line with forest management principles to achieve a healthy forest for future generations.

These writers see the proposed harvest within the Forest Management Agreement area in direct conflict with their expectations based on the K-Pass fee.

Sample comments on the K-Pass include:

- “As you know, today anyone that would like to enjoy the area needs to pay with a conservation pass. I’d like to understand the rationale behind the pass if we are simply allowing industry to come in and DESTROY the areas that bolster community and promotes a healthy, positive and outdoor lifestyle.”
- “This is an area that has high utilization by a wide range of users, all of who were promised, YES I SAID IT, PROMISED, that areas like this would be set aside and kept wild using the fees collected from conservation passes. This was the Alberta Government promise to us as users. So we went along with the usage fees. We were told that the fees were instituted to offset the loss in revenue by the government since they were not going to allow logging on this scale in these areas.”

Our Response: 2026/27 Annual Operating Plan

The following section outlines key aspects of the planned 2026/27 harvest for the West Bragg Creek and Mouse Mountain areas.

Harvest Size

West Fraser Cochrane's 10-year Forest Management Plan, approved in 2021, contains a preliminary harvest design known as the Spatial Harvest Sequence, showing a planned harvest area of 880 hectares: 468 hectares in the West Bragg Creek area and 412 hectares in the Moose Mountain area.

Public engagement on this 2026/2027 preliminary harvest plan began in June 2023 with initial stakeholder engagement with a number of recreation groups. Insights gained through this process resulted in the preliminary plan being revised to 738 hectares: 362 hectares in the West Bragg Creek area and 376 hectares in the Moose Mountain area. This was the information presented at the May 8 and 9, 2024 Open Houses.

As of September 27, 2024, following the Open House and after initial field visits, the planned harvest was reduced to 556 hectares: 268 hectares in the West Bragg Creek area and 288 hectares in the Moose Mountain area. Work to continue to refine the harvest plan is still underway.

Figure 1. West Bragg Creek Trail Integration Map

This map outlines the planned 268 hectares harvest for West Bragg Creek. The area reduced from the original 468-hectare planned area is included for reference.

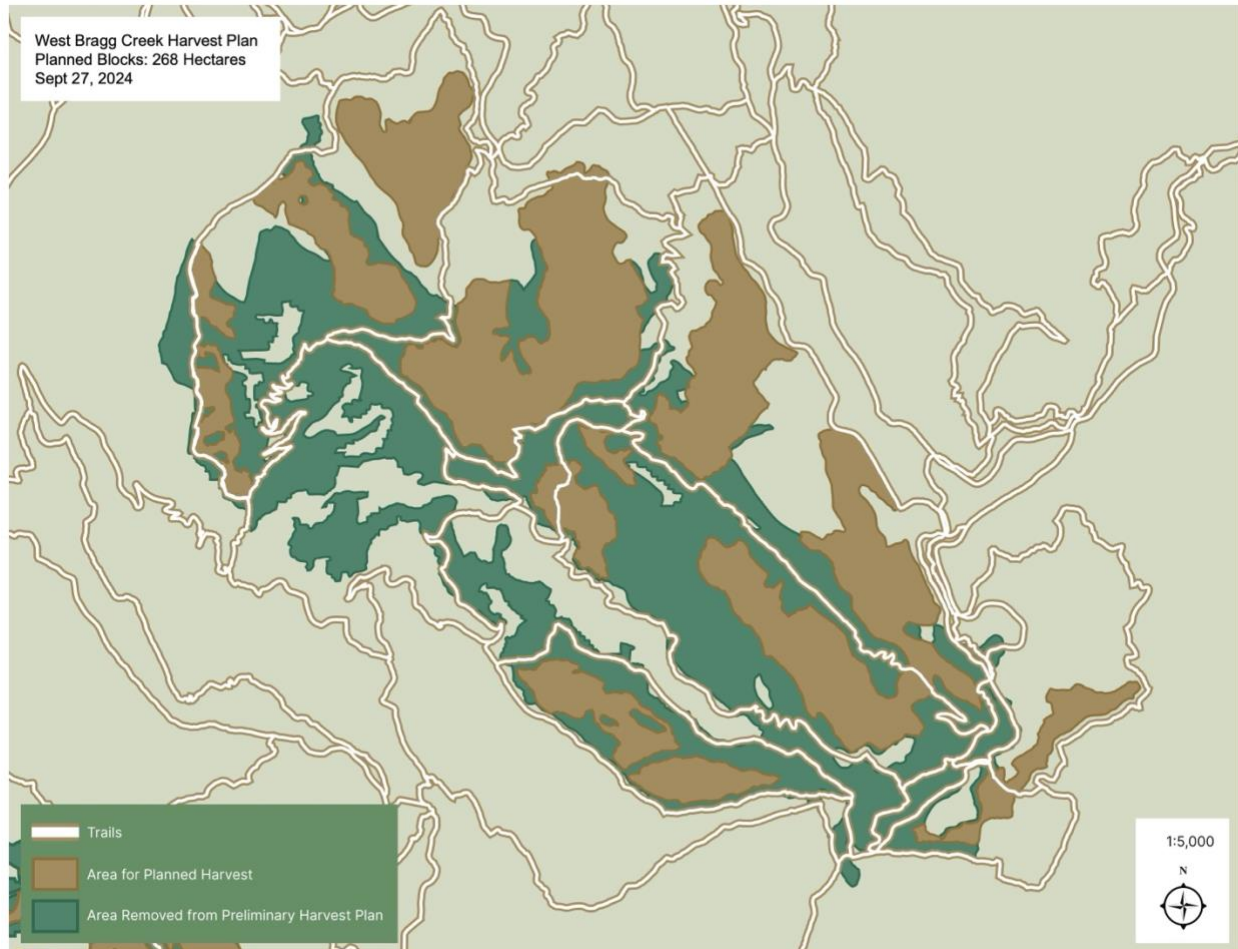


Figure 2. Moose Mountain Trail Integration Map

This map outlines the planned 288 hectares harvest for Moose Mountain. The area reduced from the original 412-hectare planned area is included for reference.

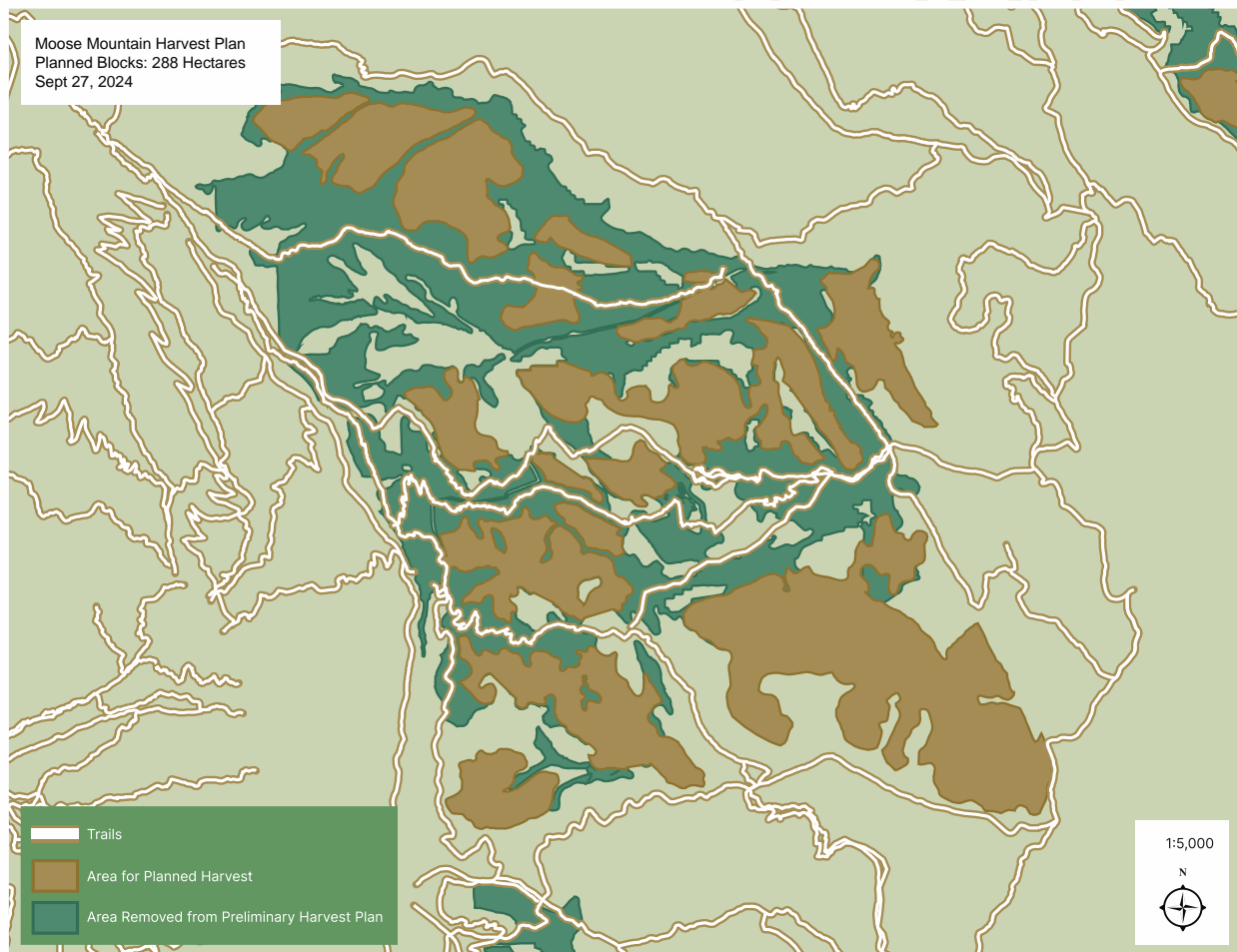
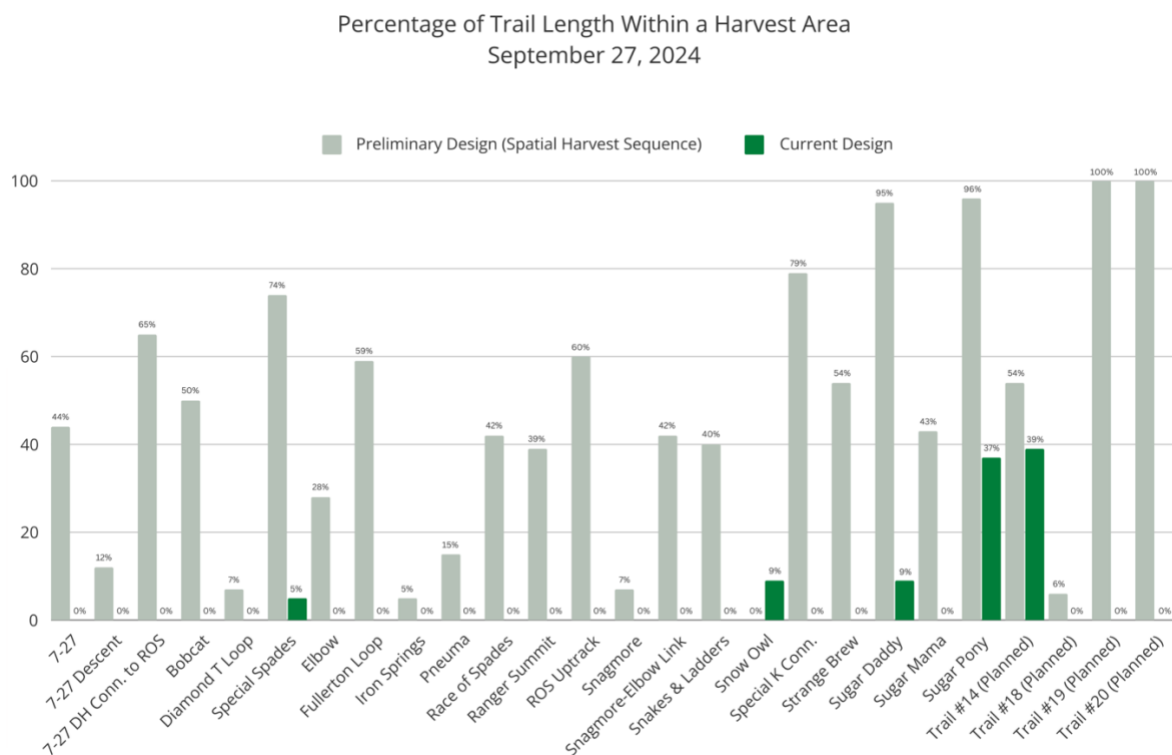


Table 1. Trails Within a Planned Harvest Area

The chart below indicates the portion of a designated trail within a planned harvest area, described as a percentage of total trail length. Two bars are graphed, one showing the preliminary harvest design in grey and the other showing the current harvest design as of September 2024 in green. Of the 26 current and planned trails in the area, five trails are now planned to fall within harvest areas. For example, 7-27 had an initial 44% trail length within a cutblock, and as of September 2024, there is 0% trail length within a cutblock.

Trail Overlap with Harvest Area

1%: Trail length within harvest areas
17%: Trail length within 50 metres of harvest areas



Sample Trail-specific comments:

- Elbow
 - There is no portion of trail length currently planned within a cutblock. However, as seen in Appendix C, a portion of the trail is currently planned to be used as a forestry road to limit new disturbance in the area and provide an opportunity to upgrade this portion of trail.

- Trail #14 (Planned)
 - 39% of the trail length is currently planned within a cutblock. As seen in Appendix C, this equals 971 metres (over four sections). A portion of the trail is currently planned to be used as a forestry road to limit new disturbance in the area and to provide an opportunity to construct this portion of trail. This trail is planned for construction during forestry activities, with West Fraser assisting Bragg Creek Trails with construction.
- Trail #18
 - There is no portion of trail length currently planned within a cutblock. However, as seen in Appendix C, a portion of the trail is currently planned to be used as a forestry road to limit new disturbance in the area and to provide an opportunity to construct this portion of trail. This trail is planned for construction during forestry activities, with West Fraser assisting Bragg Creek Trails with construction.

West Fraser Cochrane looks forward to continuing work with the trail operators and the Government of Alberta to develop harvest and road plans, as well as foster a desirable future for sustainable trails in the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas.

Ongoing Actions and Next Steps

Since our Spring 2024 engagement, West Fraser has undertaken the work to analyze and summarize public feedback. We have continued stakeholder discussions to inform our work in revising the planned 2026/2027 harvest for the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas. We expect these discussions to continue over the next two years until our harvest plan for West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain is submitted to the Government of Alberta in Spring 2026, with anticipated harvest commencement in October 2026.

Throughout this process, West Fraser is committed to transparency and engaging with the public; having dialogue and finding solutions; and land stewardship that supports key sustainable forest management values, including recreation and reforestation.

Our specific actions to date include:

1. Incorporating feedback into the development of our harvest plan which will be submitted to the Government of Alberta in Spring 2026.

- We have reviewed all letters, comment forms and Open House feedback and incorporated actionable feedback into our planning. Over the summer months, we have also continued to engage stakeholders in the office and field. Specifically, Bragg Creek Trails and Moose Mountain Bike Trail Society, including field days with these groups in the area to see the concerns and identify opportunities for us to put input into action on the land base.
- We will host another Open House in Cochrane in May 2025 and again in May 2026. Based on the high degree of public interest and the resulting volume of input, we will be exploring methods for collecting input that will allow us to gain a deeper understanding.

2. Reducing the volume of the planned harvest in order to better protect some community values. This work is ongoing throughout our public engagement process until the plan is submitted to government.

- As of September 2024, following the public comments collected during the May 2024 Open House, initial field visits with trail user groups and operational assessments, the planned harvest was reduced by 37%, from 880 to 556 hectares: 268 hectares in the West Bragg Creek area and 288 hectares in the Moose Mountain area.
- We are continuing to adjust our harvest plan to incorporate comments and concerns; complete trail integration into the harvest plan; and develop visualization modelling as a planning and communication tool. As mentioned in this plan, based on ongoing engagement and fieldwork, we are continuing to refine the harvest plan, which includes increased buffering and trail impact mitigation.

3. Adapting harvesting methods in certain areas to reduce the amount of clearcut blocks.

- A variety of harvesting methods will be used, informed by engagement with the public.
- When determining the harvest method(s) most suitable for the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas, we also consider factors such as the biological needs of the tree species planned for harvesting and regeneration and the specific growing conditions of the harvest site, including light, moisture, wind and frost exposure, which can all affect successful reforestation. The goal is to ensure each area harvested can be successfully regenerated so that new forests can grow and thrive.

4. Ensuring our plans meet the government's expectations regarding managing fire risk in the areas.

- In speaking with government since the open house, we have also heard concerns about the increasing occurrence and severity of wildfires, particularly since the tragic fire in Jasper earlier this summer. In 2012, the West Bragg Creek and Moose Mountain areas were described as having high to extreme wildfire behaviour potential. This assessment was again confirmed in the 2021 Forest Management Plan development, which includes targets to reduce areas with high, very high and extreme wildfire behaviour ratings. The government expects us to achieve these targets through implementation of the Forest Management Plan.
- With the provincial government, we are also discussing ways to reduce wildfire risk. This begins with preventative measures, including sustainable forest management practices, such as tree thinning, fuel load reduction, wildfire breaks and carefully planned harvesting, which remove debris that can fuel a wildfire. Through fuel removal and reduction, the planned 2026/2027 harvest would help mitigate wildfire risk while supporting forest resilience over the long term.

5. Determining with government if there are alternative, unallocated harvest areas to make up for lost volume and ensure the continued viability of West Fraser Cochrane.

- We continue to have conversations with the provincial government to discuss the Forest Management Agreement area, addressing public concerns and our understanding that public perception has evolved from viewing the area as multi-use to one focused on recreation. Indications to date are that identifying alternate areas available for allocation would be difficult.

Appendix A: May 2024 Open House Information

Open House Information

- [2024 General Development Plan Information Package](#)
- [Planning Hierarchy](#)
- [2024 General Development Plan Map](#)
- [2024 Open House Annual Operating Plan List](#)
- [2024 General Development Plan FMA0100038, FMA2100047, CTQB120001](#)
- [West Bragg Creek & Moose Mountain Consultation and Operational Plan Overview](#)
- [West Bragg Creek Harvest Plan Trail Integration](#)
- [Moose Mountain Harvest Plan Trail Integration](#)

Cochrane, FMA0100038

- [Atkinson Creek Map](#)
- [Atkinson Creek Topographic Map](#)
- [B9 Quota Map](#)
- [B9 Quota Topographic Map](#)
- [Burnt Timber Creek Map](#)
- [Burnt Timber Creek Topographic Map](#)
- [Grease Creek Map](#)
- [Grease Creek Topographic Map](#)
- [Highwood River Map](#)
- [Highwood River Topographic Map](#)
- [Jumpingpound Map](#)
- [Jumpingpound Topographic Map](#)
- [McLean Creek Map](#)
- [McLean Creek Topographic Map](#)
- [B9 Quota Coalcamp Grease Creek Map](#)
- [B9 Quota Coalcamp Grease Creek Topographic Map](#)

Crowsnest Pass, FMA2100047

- [Dutch Creek Map](#)
- [Dutch Creek Topographic Map](#)
- [Daisy & Vicary Creeks Map](#)
- [Daisy & Vicary Creeks Topographic Map](#)
- [Lower Livingstone River Map](#)
- [Lower Livingstone River Topographic Map](#)
- [Upper Livingstone River Map](#)
- [Upper Livingstone River Topographic Map](#)
- [Pelletier Creek Map](#)
- [Pelletier Creek Topographic Map](#)

Appendix B: Open House Take-Home Materials



FOREST MANAGEMENT OPEN HOUSE

Thank you for attending West Fraser Cochrane's Open House to learn about our 2024 and future harvesting plans and provide actionable feedback that can be factored into our plans.

At West Fraser, we believe that sustainable forest management is the approach to planning and caring for forests that allows their environmental, social and economic value to be maintained, over generations.

The Government of Alberta defines the standards for, and approves, all of our forest management activities on public land in the province. West Fraser is committed to ensuring that our operations meet or exceed the government's standards.

As part of this commitment, we work to ensure that people who live, work, or recreate near our operations have opportunities to give their input on our plans. We consider all aspects of the forest like water sources, wildlife habitat, cultural values, recreation, wildfire risks while responsibly sourcing timber to produce renewable wood products for new home construction and other uses.

Public Engagement Underway

Our annual harvest plan covers areas allocated and approved by the Government of Alberta for sustainable forest management. We develop both long-term and short-term plans to achieve sustainable forest management outcomes.

Through our Open House, we are collecting actional input on the 2024 Harvest Plan and Future Harvest Plans focusing on the West Bragg Creek/ Moose Mountain Plan.

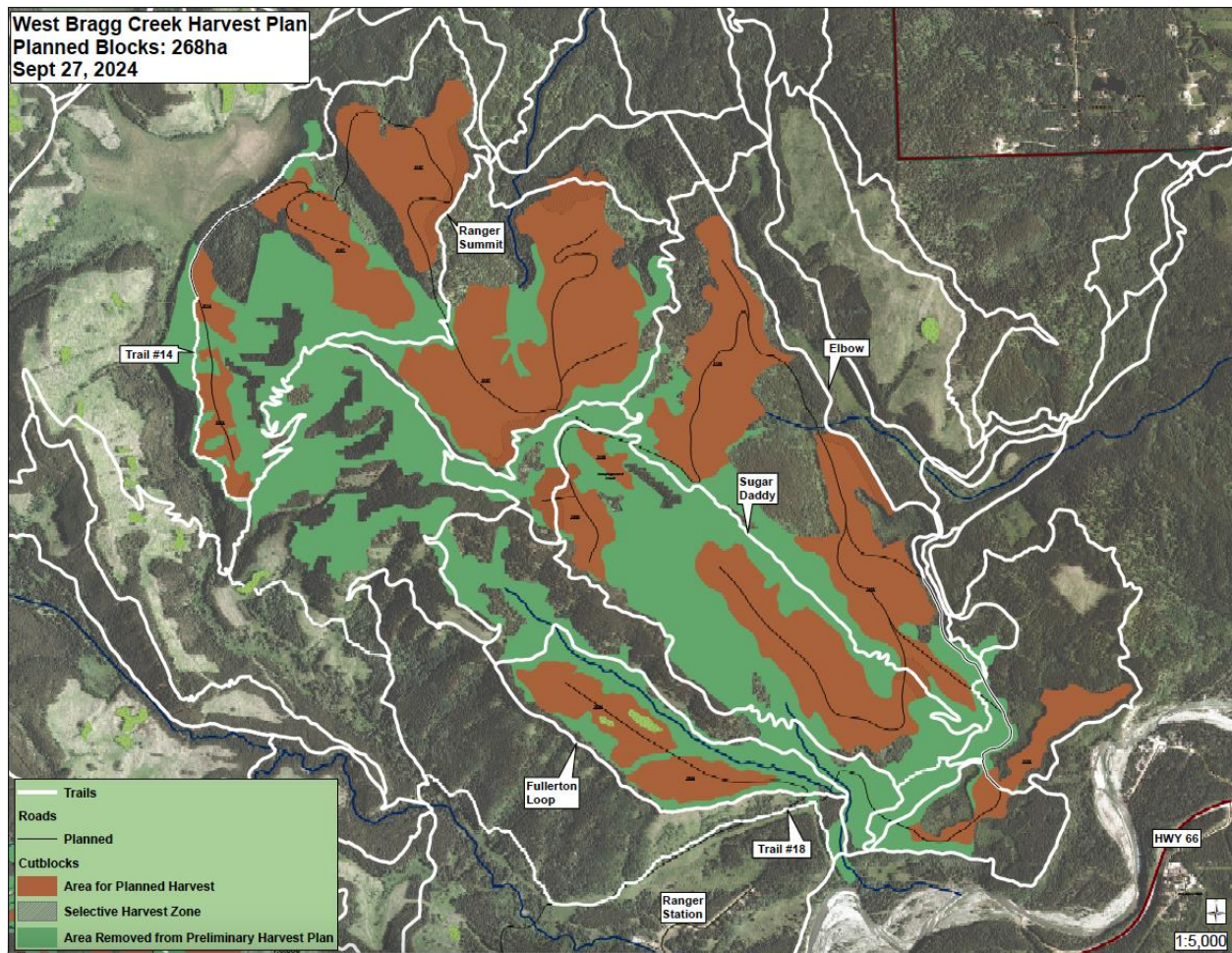
2024 Harvest Plan and Future Harvest Plans	How to Participate
This describes in detail the plans for the harvesting and road building activities proposed for the year 2024 (summer 2024 - spring 2025) and planned for future years. All harvest plans are submitted to the Government of Alberta for approval prior to operations.	To learn more about this plan, visit the easels and maps around the room and speak to our team members. There are feedback forms available to you or feedback can be provided up to May 20, 2024, COSWoodsNews@westfraser.com.
West Bragg Creek / Moose Mountain Plan	How to Participate
In June 2023, we began consultation with stakeholder groups in the West Bragg Creek / Moose Mountain area. Over the past year, thanks to input received, we have been able to modify our harvest boundaries and plans to reduce impact with the trails frequented by recreational users. Over the next two years, we will continue to refine our plans to reflect input provided. We expect to submit a harvest plan to the Government of Alberta in Spring 2026 for an anticipated harvest date of October 2026.	To learn more about these plans and to view maps, head to the tables at the back of the room to speak to our team members. There are feedback forms available to you or feedback can be provided up to May 20, 2024, at COSWoodsNews@westfraser.com.

For more information on West Fraser Cochrane's Forest Management Plans, visit: bit.ly/4b4GSJI or scan the QR code >



Appendix C: Detailed Maps

West Bragg Creek Harvest Plan Planned Blocks



Moose Mountain Harvest Plan Planned Blocks

