



West Fraser

2026/27 Plain Language GDP
and Vegetation Management
Information Package

Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber



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1 Introduction

This information package provides a plain language overview of the General Development Plan (GDP) and Vegetation Management Plan being prepared by Hinton Lumber (previously identified as Hinton Wood Products) and Edson Lumber (previously identified as Edson Forest Products), divisions of West Fraser Mills Ltd., for submission to the Government of Alberta (GoA) in 2026. The two plans can be summarized as follows:

1. The 2026/27 General Development Plan (GDP) – The GDP outlines the locations of permanent road construction and planned reclamation, planting camps, remote decking sites, gravel pits, and the general locations of harvesting activities over the next five years, with more detail around the upcoming year. The plan is revised and consulted every year.
2. The 2026/27 Vegetation Management Plan – This plan shows previously harvested cutblocks proposed for mechanical and chemical stand tending treatments in the next operating year (May 2026 to April 2027, a timber year).

The GDP is expected to be approved by the next timber year. Effective 2026, Hinton Wood Products (HWP) will be known as Hinton Lumber, and Edson Forest Products (EFP) will be referred to as Edson Lumber.

2 Details About the Proposed Project

Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber are consulting on their 2026/27 GDP and Vegetation Management Plan. This information Package provides an easy-to-understand overview of the harvesting, road construction, planned reclamation, vegetation management, and other related activities being proposed by Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber and provides an opportunity for the public and other stakeholders to give feedback to Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber before any harvesting, road construction/reclamation, or other activities take place.

2.1 Purpose

The Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber Forest Management Agreements (FMAs) are divided into geographic areas called compartments. The GDP provides a five-year projection of the compartments that Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber may be harvesting in, as well as any proposed permanent road construction and reclamation, tree planting camps, gravel pits, or remote decking sites – this information is highlighted in the map attached to this document ([Appendix I](#) - Hinton Lumber and [Appendix II](#) - Edson Lumber).

The Vegetation Management Plan shows the location of blocks proposed for chemical or manual standing tending treatment. Please note that although the entire block will be shown on the map, only a portion of it may be treated. These blocks are also shown on the maps in [Appendix I](#) and [Appendix II](#).

The GDP, produced annually, links the higher-level Forest Management Plan (FMP) and the lower-level Annual Operating Plan (AOP). See [Figure 1](#) for a more detailed overview of the planning process in Alberta and how the GDP fits in with existing and future plans. The Vegetation Management plan is part of the AOP.

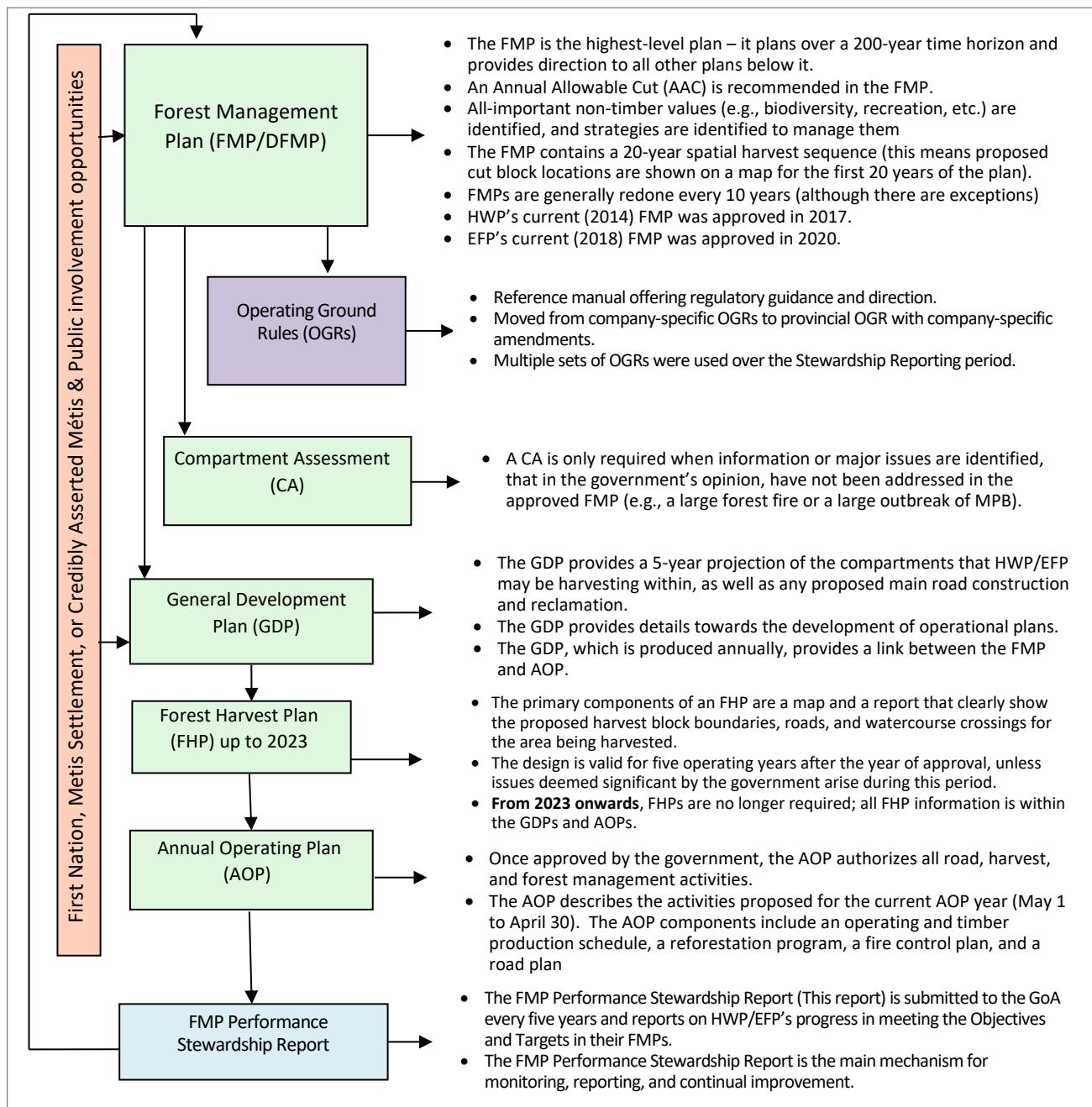


Figure 1. An overview of the planning process in Alberta.

2.2 Proposed Activities

Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber seek public and stakeholder input on our General Development Plan (GDP). The GDP shows the compartments Hinton Lumber or Edson Lumber may operate within the next five years. Areas within compartments that are shaded gray on the attached map indicate that the Company (West Fraser) may plan to harvest within the shaded areas of these compartments in the next five years.

Although not a requirement of GDP, Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber have also indicated on the maps in this document ([Appendix I](#) and [Appendix II](#)) the specific location of cutblocks that are either currently approved by the government, have been submitted to the government for approval, or may be submitted to the government for approval in the upcoming year. These blocks may be harvested within the next 1-2 years. The exact location of these blocks may change, but they have been included in this document to allow Stakeholders to provide West Fraser with more accurate feedback on any potential impacts our harvesting activities may have. There may also be other cutblocks harvested within the FMA that are not shown on this map. Any change to a block shown on this map, or to additional cutblocks not shown on this map, will not be re-consulted.

The map and associated legend on the attached map accompanying this document show:

- The operating areas (compartments) where Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber plan to operate for the next five years.
- Planned road development with a lifespan greater than three years to be constructed within the next five years.
- The specific locations of blocks that are currently approved by the government, that have been submitted to the government for approval, or that might be submitted to the government for approval in the next 1-2 years.
- Previously harvested blocks that are planned for a mechanical or chemical stand tending treatment in the next operating year (May 1, 2026, to April 30, 2027).
- Planting/logging camps.
- Potential gravel pit locations and future rock quarry developments.
- Multi-year use of remote decking sites (where logs are decked and later hauled to the mill).

This Information Package also outlines other important information that provides Stakeholders with some background regarding forest management activities, such as:

- An overview of the mountain pine beetle status and salvage plans ([Section 3.1](#)).
- A description of how Hinton Lumber/Edson Lumber is informed by science to manage forests ([Section 3.2](#)).
- An explanation of the vegetation management process, including the difference between chemical and mechanical stand tending ([Section 3.3](#)).
- Current practices around Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Critical Habitat ([Section 3.4](#)).
- An overview of the 2023 wildfires ([Section 3.5](#)).
- Plans to address several important non-timber values such as grizzly bear, trumpeter swan, Athabasca rainbow trout and bull trout, common nighthawk, woodland caribou, barred owl, pileated woodpecker, riparian areas, indigenous people, and climate change ([Section 3.7](#)).

2.3 Anticipated Life of the Plan/Project

Once the GDP is approved, it will provide direction for which compartments the Company will conduct harvesting operations over the next year. The approved GDP will also show the proposed location of permanent road construction and planned reclamation, planting, and logging camps, potential gravel pit operations, and remote decking sites. The GDP is a five-year plan developed and submitted to the GoA for approval each year.

The information package also contains information on proposed vegetation management operations for the next year (i.e., May 1, 2025, to April 30, 2026). This includes activities such as aerial and ground herbicide applications to control grass and shrubs and mechanical tending operations (e.g., the removal of competing vegetation with brush saws).

2.4 Location of the Proposed Plan/Project

Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber are developing the GDP and Vegetation Management Plan for their respective Forest Management Agreement (FMA) areas. The Hinton Lumber FMA area covers approximately 1,000,000 hectares (ha) in west-central Alberta, which is designated provincially as Forest Management Unit E14 and contained in Hinton Lumber's Forest Management Agreement 8800025. The landbase is centered near Hinton, Alberta. The Hinton Lumber FMA area (FMU E14) is managed as a single sustained yield unit. For planning purposes, the FMA is divided into five “working circles” – the Athabasca, Berland, Embarras, Marlboro, and McLeod Working Circles. These Working Circles are further divided into 134 compartments (see [Figure 2](#)).

The Edson Lumber FMA area covers approximately 265,000 hectares in west-central Alberta, designated provincially as Forest Management Unit R13 and contained in Edson Lumber's Forest Management Agreement 9700032. The landbase is divided into two main operating areas – the Erith Operating Area in the north and the Elk River Operating Area in the south. The FMA area boundary is shown in [Figure 3](#) below. A larger map is available in [Appendix II](#). The Erith Operating Area is located just south and west of Edson, while the Elk River Operating Area is located approximately 70 kilometers south of Edson and contains portions of the Pembina, Elk, and Brazeau River drainages.

If you need more details for your review, you can request larger printouts of the maps in [Appendix I](#) and [Appendix II](#).

2.5 Regulatory Approval Being Sought

Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber are seeking approval of their General Development Plans, a requirement of their Forest Management Agreement, from Alberta Forestry and Parks. While blocks are shown on this map to provide additional information to Stakeholders, the focus should be on the working circles and the compartments where future harvesting may occur, as well as the blocks.

Hinton Lumber will also be seeking approval for the other dispositions highlighted on the map in [Appendix I](#), which would include the following:

- Proposed permanent roads (roads with a lifespan greater than three years)
- Proposed reclamation of permanent roads
- Proposed planting/logging camps
- Proposed gravel pit and rock quarry locations
- Proposed remote decking sites (where logs are decked and later hauled to the mill)

Alberta Forestry and Parks also grants approval of the herbicide proposal within the vegetation management plan. Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber's applications and practices are guided by the Forest Management

Herbicide Reference Manual (revised April 2023) and the Environmental Code of Practice for Pesticide Applications.

2.6 Quota Holders

Precision Forest Industries Ltd. (Precision) is the sole Quota holder on the Edson Forest Management Unit R13, and small volumes are allocated to local use and the Community Timber Permit Program (CTPP).

The sole Quota holder, Precision, has a small annual volume allocation (1,920 m³/yr). The CCTP program has 5,048 m³ coniferous volume and 4,693 m³ deciduous volume allocated per year. These volumes could be on the entire Edson FMA; however, they are typically allocated closer to the town of Edson. Therefore, the Quota holder, CCTP, and other permits are not reflected on the maps. The volumes were also adjusted in 2024 to reflect the 2023 wildfire impacts within the Forest Management Unit R13 (Edson FMA).

The entire Hinton Forest Management Unit (E14) Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) is allocated to Hinton Wood Products except for a very small amount of timber (up to 8,500 m³/year conifer and 1,500 m³/year deciduous), which is available for allocation as commercial timber permits/local use.

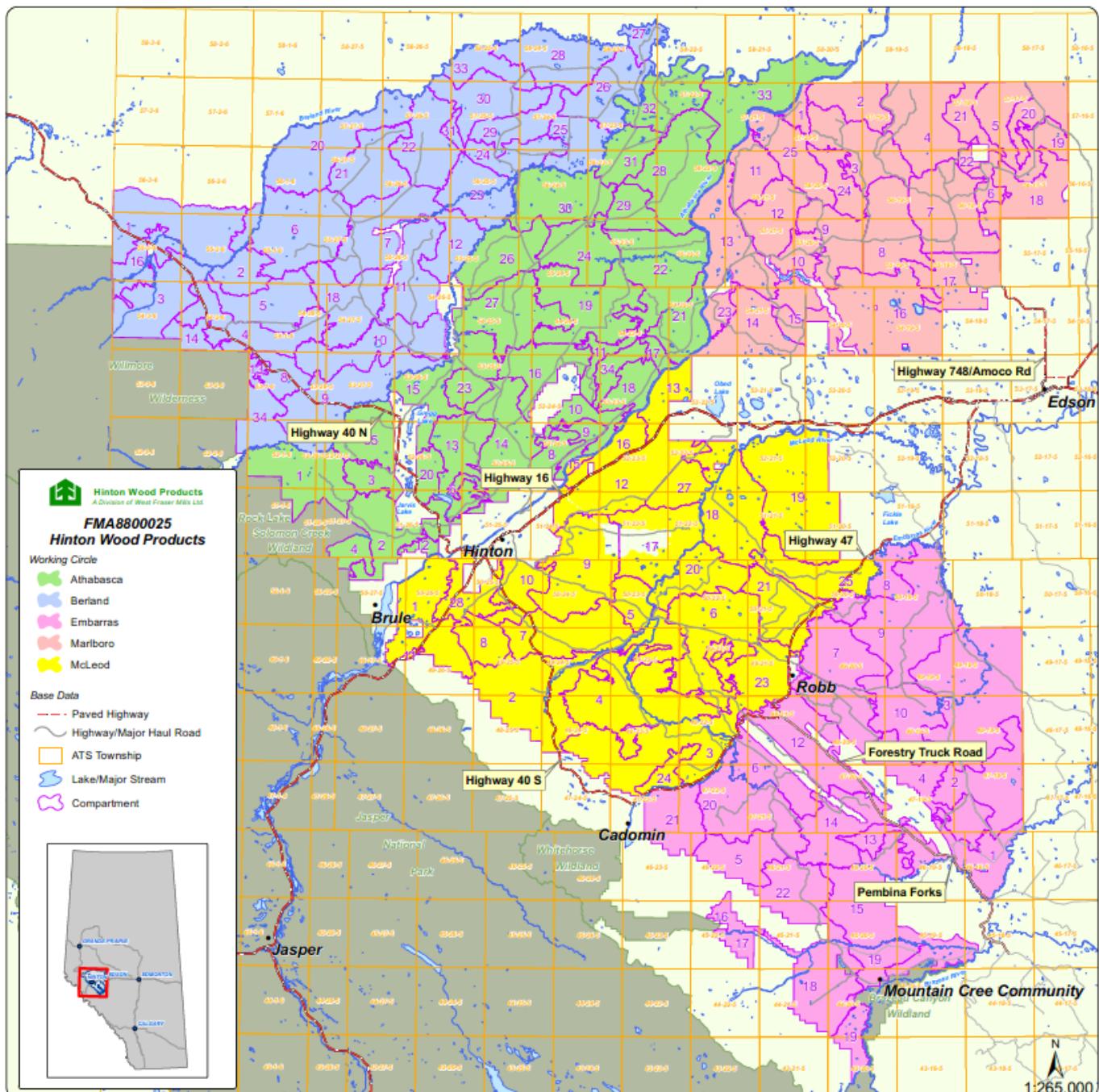


Figure 2. The Hinton Lumber FMA Area.

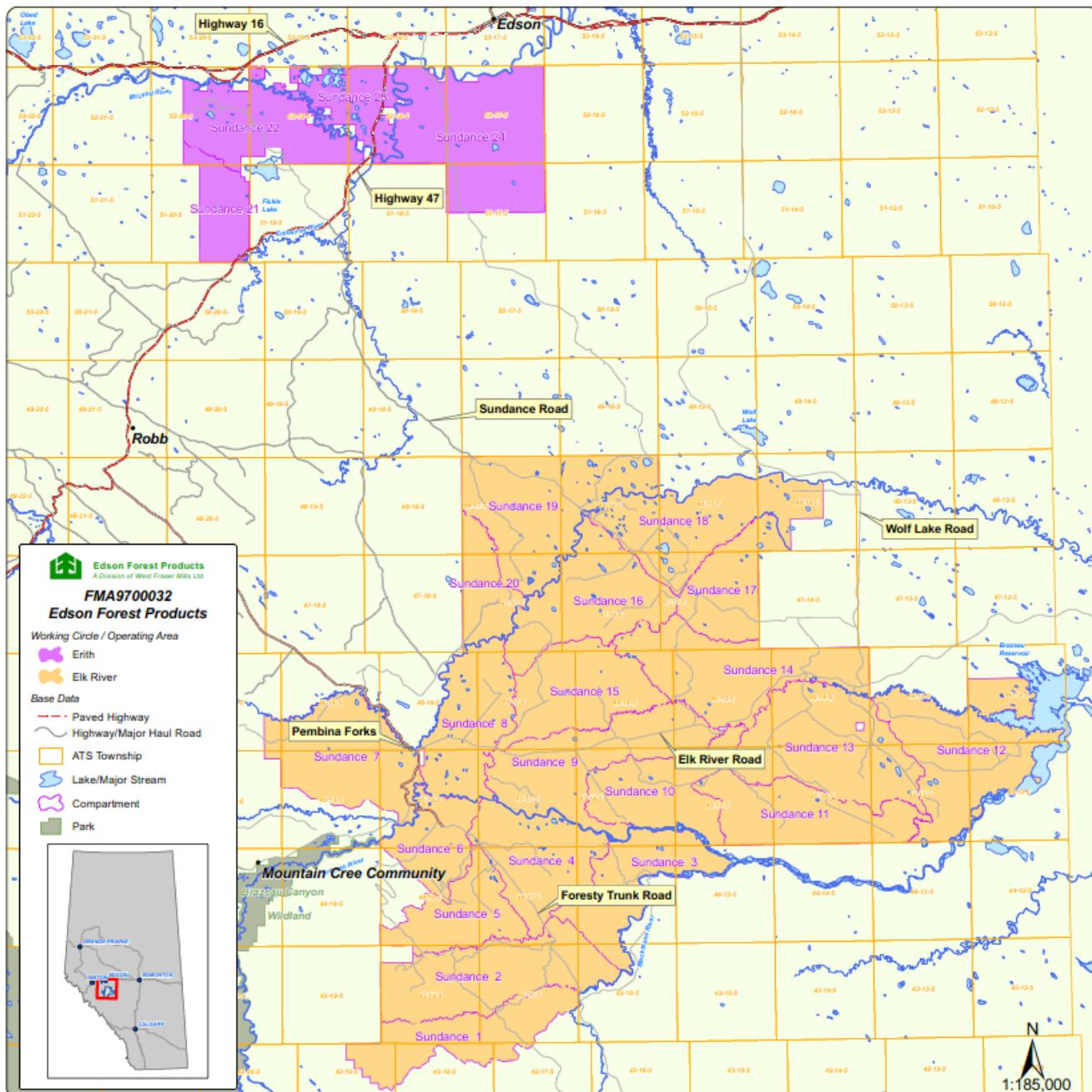


Figure 3. The Edson Lumber FMA Area.

3 Other Important Information

The following sections provide additional information about forest management practices and issues that may provide some background information to Indigenous communities, registered fur area managers, the public, and other stakeholders relevant to Hinton Lumber and/or Edson Lumber's General Development Plan and Vegetation Management Plan.

3.1 Mountain Pine Beetle

There was a significant increase in mountain pine beetles (MPB) in the Edson/Hinton area because of a large beetle flight in 2018. Due to cold weather events in recent years, MPB numbers declined significantly overall, and current populations after the 2023 and 2024 surveys show an endemic or declining population. Significant cold weather in 2019 and 2020, combined with aggressive yearly control efforts, contributed to substantial population reductions for MPB provincially. The Edson/Hinton area transitioned from an epidemic to an endemic stage and is at a status where the beetles will likely persist in low numbers.

Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber's forest management plans were developed to address the arrival of MPB on the FMAs. These plans sequenced the harvest of pine stands most vulnerable to beetle attack, while deferring stands with healthy spruce and spruce understory. These plans supported a strong provincial strategy as MPB increased presence within the province. Now that endemic MPB populations are present in the area, Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber are still focused on implementing the spatial harvest sequence of the forest management plan to meet the long-term FMP strategies, while also targeting areas of higher MPB infestation and salvaging stands most impacted by MPB.

Harvest schedule changes are not expected to adversely affect non-timber resource values when salvage of MPB stands occurs. Some areas shown in this GDP are scheduled for the salvage of MPB infested stands where a large component of the pine is dead, and the goal will be to utilize this fibre while it is still viable and reforest with a new generation of seedlings. While planning efforts were significantly adjusted and focused on infested pine stands for harvest in 2017, 2018, and 2019, the current planning focus will be towards salvage harvesting of MPB gray attack forest and implementation of the spatial harvest sequence from the FMP in areas not as heavily impacted by MPB. The vast majority (i.e., >90%) of the pine leading stands on Hinton Lumber's FMA area have been attacked by MPB, with presence in nearly every square kilometer of the FMA, and the FMP strategies continue to be the best way to manage the forest management areas.

[Figure 4](#) is a map showing the 2019 to 2023 helicopter-surveyed locations of red-attacked MPB trees in the province, identifying the decline in MPB populations (survey area of approximately seven million hectares). MPB populations have declined across the majority of the MPB range, and MPB is no longer considered a province-wide emergency. Due to more suitable climate positions of southern Alberta's Forests (Calgary Forest Areas), the GoA will focus its control efforts in these areas in the immediate term, while the remainder of the province will be under a monitoring and assessment area.

It should be noted when reviewing [Figure 4](#) that when the red trees were being surveyed, red attack trees were from beetles that flew and killed the tree the previous year. That is, red trees from the 2022 survey are from beetles that flew into them in 2021 – a red tree no longer has live MPB in it – the beetles emerge from the tree the summer following the attack and fly to other trees to attack. Most stands in the Edson/Hinton region now contain gray attack, as the needles have fallen off and no longer appear red. Efforts to minimize the impact of MPB on pine forests on the FMA will remain an objective, with activities outlined in the 2026/27 GDP and future forest management plans.

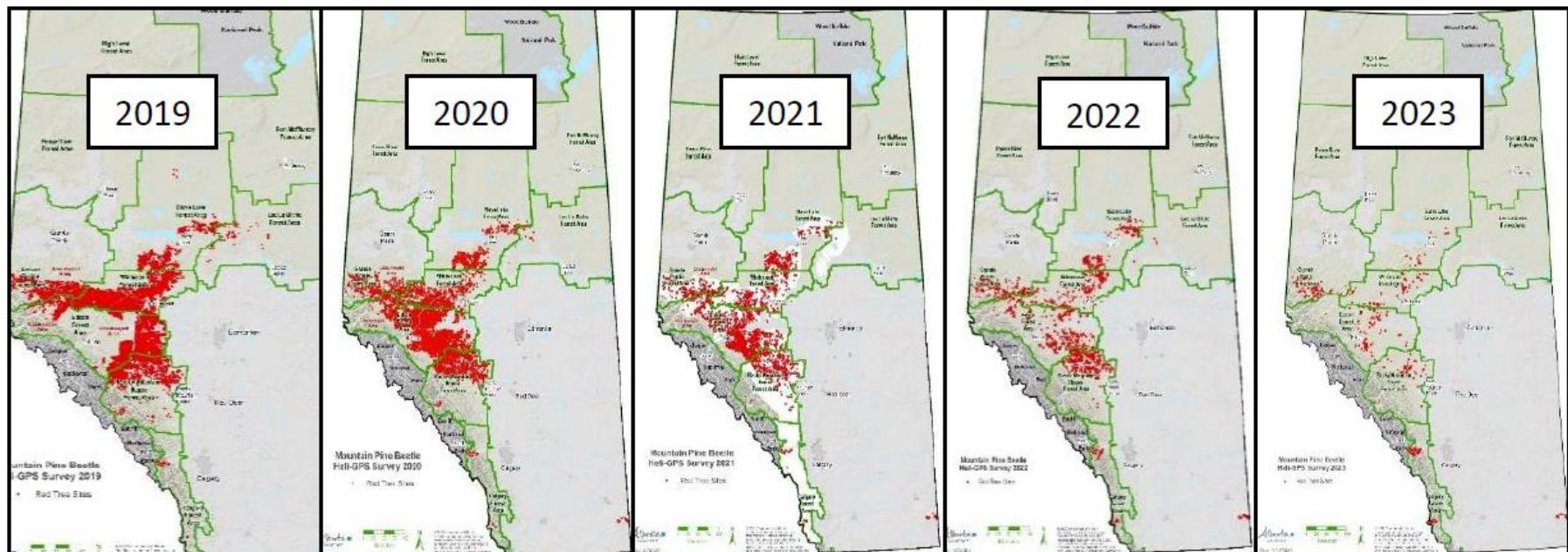


Figure 4. Maps from 2019 to 2023 show a decline in the density and distribution of red trees GPS'ed in helicopter surveys. Data obtained from GoA surveys.

3.2 Forest Management Informed by Science

Forests are complex ecosystems composed of a wide diversity of plants and animals that are impacted by several factors, including fires, insects, wind, other weather events, and diseases, which are collectively referred to as natural disturbances. Our understanding of forested landscapes and how they develop is continually evolving thanks to scientific research combined with West Fraser's on-the-ground experience and monitoring programs. West Fraser recognizes the importance of using science to inform our practices and strives to use science as the basis of our forest management plans.

West Fraser supports and invests in research with several collaborating partners to help advance scientific knowledge about our forests. We work to incorporate the findings into our operations. Some of the organizations that West Fraser works with are fRI Research, the University of Alberta, the NAIT Center for Boreal Research, and the Canadian Forest Service.

fRI Research has been a leader in applied forestry research since it began operating as the Foothills Model Forest in the 1990s. West Fraser has been a partner since its inception and has benefitted from the work conducted through many fRI programs. The Healthy Landscapes Program has been critical in promoting understanding of ecosystem-based management and providing practical guidance on how knowledge about historical patterns of fire and other natural disturbances can be used to manage for biodiversity at the landscape level. Both the Grizzly Bear and the Caribou Program have provided valuable insights into these important wildlife species, with the Grizzly Bear Program, in particular, leading to the development of tools used in forest management planning. West Fraser funds research at the University of Alberta on a range of subjects, notably through sponsoring the establishment of research chairs in tree improvement, growth and yield, and ecosystem-based management.

Tree improvement looks for ways to create more robust and faster growing stands through selective breeding (not genetic engineering!) and is one avenue being investigated to address adaptation to climate change. Growth and yield research gives us a better understanding of how trees grow on different sites and in response to different silviculture treatments, which enables us to tailor our practices to maximize reforestation success and make more accurate predictions of long-term wood supply. Ecosystem-based management research at the university complements the fRI Research Healthy Landscapes program and enhances our ability to manage the forest to support multiple non-timber values such as wildlife and biological diversity conservation.

The Canadian Forest Service (CFS) has been conducting forestry research in Alberta for nearly a century, and West Fraser has been supporting their network of long-term pine silviculture trials for nearly 25 years. These silviculture trials provide valuable information about response to a range of thinning treatments in fire-origin stands that can be incorporated into on-the-ground management practices as well as improve growth and yield projections. More recently, West Fraser began supporting work at CFS to understand the cause of aspen dieback and to determine how to minimize its impact. The work West Fraser has supported through the NAIT Center for Boreal Research has focused on thinning treatments in post-harvest stands, which complements the work by CFS in fire-origin stands.

The results of the research programs mentioned above, along with other projects that West Fraser sponsors at these and other universities, are an important input to our forest management plans. We use them to help set forest management targets, and they inform the species conservation strategies that describe how we conduct our forest operations to conserve key wildlife species. An important aspect of the development of each new forest management plan is to evaluate the new information that has become available since the completion of the last FMP and determine how it can be incorporated not only to improve our estimates of the AAC but also to help better address the range of non-timber values that are important to stakeholders.

West Fraser recognizes that Indigenous communities have a wealth of traditional knowledge about ecological processes and will consider opportunities to incorporate this knowledge into forest management planning.

Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber, managing the landscape based on natural disturbance principles, means the following:

- Harvest patterns, block sizes, stand structure retention, and forest age classes will be managed based on natural disturbance research, with the primary goal being to maintain these attributes within the range that they would vary naturally (i.e., in the absence of fire suppression).
- Approximating the variability of natural forest patterns is critical, but this strategy must be balanced with societal values, economic constraints, changing expectations, and scientific knowledge. Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber will seek to strike a balance that is scientifically sound, affordable, and acceptable to society.

3.3 Vegetation Management

In Alberta, prompt reforestation is the law and takes place through two mechanisms – natural regeneration and planting. Our foresters decide which reforestation method is best suited for each harvested area.

Once a new crop of trees has been established, Hinton Lumber/Edson Lumber's forestry personnel must periodically check these trees to see that they continue to survive, are healthy, put on adequate growth, and are free of competing vegetation – they do this by conducting field surveys.

If the surveys show that some trees and/or competing vegetation need to be removed, then our foresters evaluate alternate methods of accomplishing this task. Hinton and Edson Lumber uses both mechanical and chemical methods to remove competing vegetation and is careful to ensure that vegetation and habitat types are maintained throughout the larger forest landscape over time. At this time, the only herbicide we use is glyphosate, commonly called VisionMax™ or Timberline Herbicide.

The map attached to this document highlights blocks that may be treated using mechanical and chemical tending in the 2026/2027 operating season. Please note that a block being identified for tending does not imply the whole area will be treated. In addition, in the course of carrying out mechanical and/or chemical tending activities, Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber will leave buffers for watercourse protection, as well as dead trees (snags) and live trees for wildlife habitat. All herbicide use is confined to a very short time period – typically between early August to the middle of September.

3.4 DFO Critical Habitat

Critical habitat is defined in the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) as “the habitat necessary for the survival or recovery of a listed wildlife species, and that is identified as the species’ critical habitat in the recovery strategy or in an action plan for the species.” SARA further defines aquatic habitat as “meeting the needs for spawning grounds, nursery, rearing, food supply, migration, and any other area on which aquatic species depend directly and indirectly (for example, riparian areas) in order to carry out their life processes and areas where populations of the species.”

West Fraser’s Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber FMA’s contain watercourses that are mapped by the bounding box as critical habitat for Bull Trout, Saskatchewan-Nelson River populations, an aquatic species at risk listed as Threatened under the Species at Risk Act, as well as Rainbow Trout, Athabasca River populations, listed as Endangered under the Species at Risk Act. Should a review of West Fraser’s proposed works, undertakings, or activities within the GDP be determined by DFO (Department of Fisheries and Oceans/Fisheries and Oceans Canada) to cause the death of fish and/or harmful alteration, disruption, or destruction of fish habitat, likely result in:

- the death of fish by means other than fishing and the harmful alteration, disruption, or destruction of fish habitat, which are prohibited under subsections 34.4(1) and 35(1) of the *Fisheries Act*; and/or
- effects to listed aquatic species at risk, any part of their critical habitat, or the residences of their individuals in a manner which is prohibited under sections 32, 33, and subsection 58(1) of the *Species at Risk Act*.

DFO applies the fish and fish habitat protection provisions of the *Fisheries Act*, in combination with the relevant provisions of the *Species at Risk Act* and the Aquatic Invasive Species Regulations, to regulate works, undertakings, or activities that could result in harmful impacts to fish and fish habitat, aquatic species at risk, their residences, and their critical habitat. DFO strives to have proponents first avoid causing harmful impacts to fish and fish habitat through the appropriate design of their project and then use mitigation measures where impacts to fish and fish habitat cannot be avoided. However, when there are potential harmful residual impacts from a project that cannot be avoided or mitigated, DFO may consider issuing West Fraser’s proposed works, undertakings, or activities may require a *Fisheries Act* authorization (or a *Fisheries Act* authorization, also acting as a *Species at Risk Act* permit) in order to proceed. In this case, offsetting to counterbalance any impacts of the project, as well as monitoring any impacts to fish and fish habitat resulting from the project, will be required.

In relation to an authorization decision, under section 2.4 of the *Fisheries Act*, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada must consider any adverse effects that the decision may have on the rights of Indigenous peoples of Canada recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

When designing our harvest blocks and deciding on road and crossing locations, our current procedures include:

- Identifying and verifying critical habitat through on-the-ground field assessments.
- Avoid crossings when possible when critical habitat has been identified.
- Using appropriate buffers for protection measures.
- Avoiding in-stream work.

West Fraser can mitigate impacts to aquatic critical habitat with the use of clear-span bridges, narrowing road right-of-way clearing at the crossing location, using sediment and erosion controls, and reclamation strategies after crossings and roads are no longer required.

[Figure 5](#) shows an example of a GRS (Geotextile Reinforced Soil) Arch Culvert used by our operations over a Critical Habitat. [Figures 6](#) and [Figure 7](#) highlight critical habitat within the Hinton and Edson FMAs.



Figure 5. A Clear-span arch culvert is used to mitigate impacts to the aquatic critical habitat.

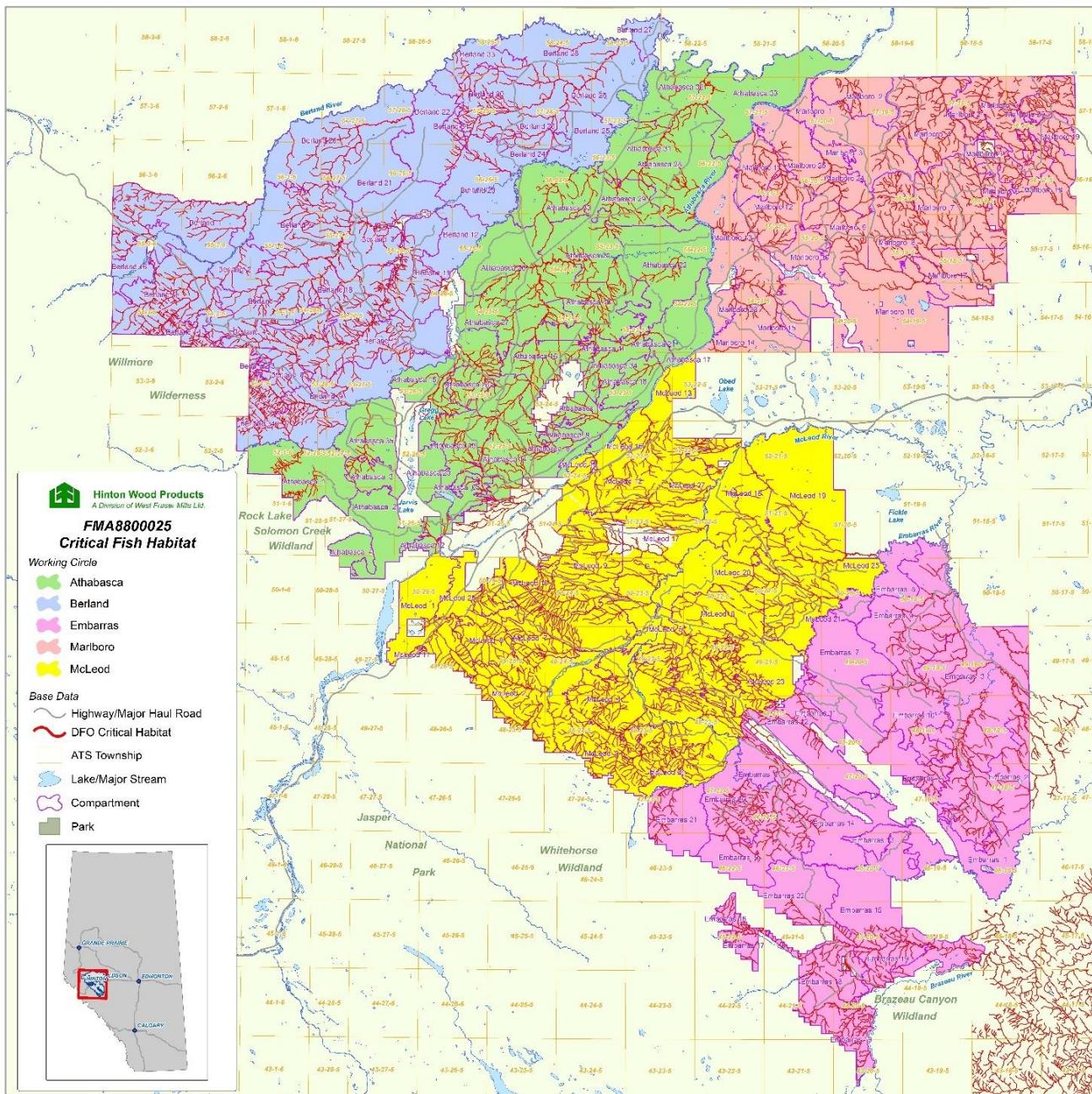


Figure 6. Critical habitat within the Hinton Lumber FMA area.

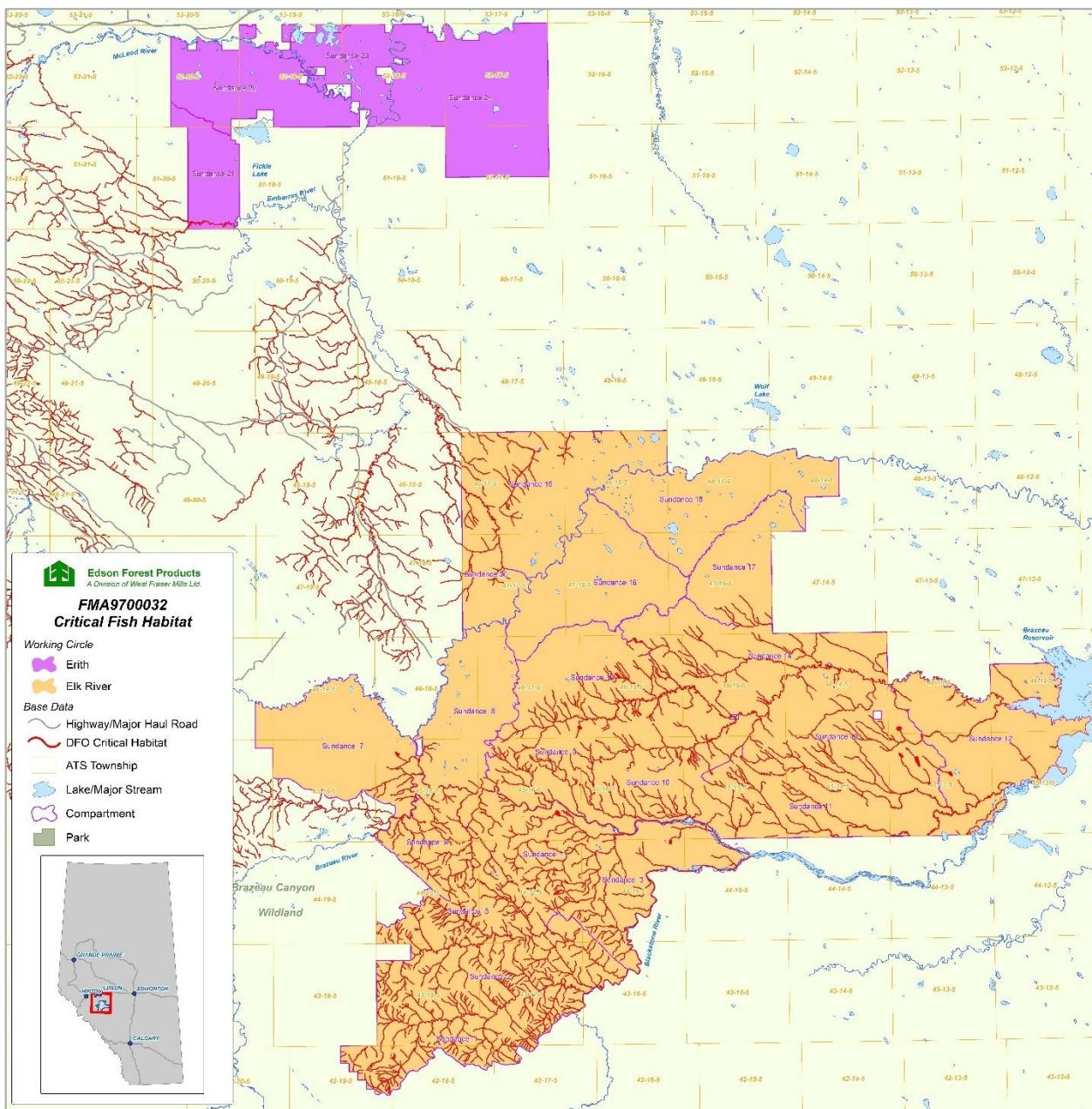


Figure 7. Critical habitat within the Edson Lumber FMA area.

3.5 2023 Wildfires

From January 1, 2023, to October 3, 2023, there were 80 wildfires in the Edson Forest Area, burning a total of 234,558 ha. The wildfires overlapping our FMAs were given the Provincial fire identifiers of EWF-031, EWF-037, EWF-040, EWF-076, RWF-034, and RWF-040 and were mainly part of the Pembina wildfire and the Wildhay Wildfire complexes.

EWF-031 was detected on May 4, was 201,913 ha in size, and was determined to be caused by lightning. EWF-037 was detected on May 6, was 12,073 ha in size, and was determined to be caused by lightning. EWF-040 was detected on May 6, was 578 ha in size, and was determined to be caused by lightning. EWF-076 was caused by lightning and assessed on July 7, 2023, as 71.6 ha in size. RWF-040-2023 was caused by humans and is estimated to be 5,089 ha in size. RWF-034 was caused by lightning and is estimated to be 87,492 ha in size. Fires EWF-031, RWF-034, and RWF-040 essentially shared fire edges. These three fires (EWF-031, RWF-034, and RWF-040) resulted in a 92,689 ha burn on the Edson FMA. On the Hinton FMA, 7,064 ha were burned during the 2023 wildfire season.

Edson Lumber and Hinton Lumber developed salvage harvest plans for the compartments impacted by wildfires in the 2023 wildfire season, with salvage harvesting continuing into the 2024/25 and 2025/26 timber years. Compartment harvest plans focused on salvaging merchantable stands that suffered significant mortality during these significant fire events. Field reconnaissance confirmed which areas would be included in the harvest plan and which contained suitably merchantable fiber. Alberta determined specifications for stand salvageability and requirements for operations within a wildfire area based on the information in Directive No. 2007-01 Fire Salvage Planning and Operations. The objective under the Directive is to utilize as much of the fire-killed timber as possible within the two years of the fire event while maintaining environmental values. The Directive outlines objectives for timber utilization, retention of burned and unburned forests, specifications, and direction for future timber supply and reforestation standards.

Harvesting commenced in November 2023, continued through the remainder of the 2023/24 timber year, and went into the 2024/25 and 2025/26 timber years. Primarily from the Edson FMA wildfires, over 1.1 million cubic meters of fire-damaged timber were salvaged and processed in Hinton and Edson facilities. Not all blocks scheduled for salvage harvest met viability requirements as time progressed from the fire date to salvage layout, plan approvals, and the opportunity to harvest. In 2026/27 and more than two years post-fire, there is likely to be no additional large-scale salvage of fire-damaged timber in those fire event areas. [Appendix I](#) and [Appendix II](#) show the approximate areas impacted by the 2023 wildfires. The wildfire boundary's general impacts based on satellite imagery analysis are shown in light pink. The black-hatch shape is the general fire perimeter as defined by Alberta and shown on their Alberta Wildfire Status Dashboard.

Edson Lumber and Hinton Lumber have responsibility for reforestation in areas where fire salvage occurred. Reforestation of fire salvage areas will continue as part of our normal reforestation obligations during the 2026/27 operating season. Additionally, Edson Lumber has been approved for funding from the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta under the Wildfire Reclamation Program to undertake reforestation on approximately 4,070 ha of regenerating stands destroyed by the 2023 wildfires. During the 2026/27 operating

season, Edson Lumber plans to plant approximately 3 million trees and site prepare approximately 1,000 ha under the Wildfire Reclamation Program

3.6 Community Hazardous Fuels Reduction (CHFR) Program

The Community Hazardous Fuels Reduction (CHFR) Program is a Government of Alberta initiative that reduces wildfire risk to at-risk communities by removing hazardous forest fuels (primarily mature, highly flammable conifer stands) within five kilometers of communities on public land. Working with forest tenure holders, the program prioritizes harvesting and other vegetation treatments where they can most effectively reduce wildfire intensity, improve firefighting effectiveness, and protect public safety, while adhering to Alberta's environmental and regulatory standards. Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber are currently operating in areas on the FMAs that fall within the CHFR program. Please note that Hinton and Edson lumber is not operating on any CTP blocks within the CHFR program that fall outside of the Hinton and Edson FMA areas.

3.7 Management of Other Values

This section briefly summarizes Hinton/Edson Lumber's plans to address several important non-timber forest values. These non-timber values are only a small example of the values West Fraser considers in sustainable forest management.

3.7.1 Grizzly bear

Activities associated with this GDP are not expected to cause additional impacts on grizzly bears. West Fraser is working with Alberta by using data and tools provided by fRI Research, such as habitat, movement, and mortality risk maps, to assist with the forest management planning process. Road density calculations have been undertaken for all primary and secondary grizzly bear habitat units as part of Forest Management Plans, Stewardship Reports, and future road development corridors have been incorporated into grizzly bear habitat analyses.

3.7.2 Trumpeter swan

Timber management activities will have no impact on the known trumpeter swan nesting ponds in the Edson Lumber or Hinton Lumber FMA areas, as they are buffered according to GoA requirements, and operations do not occur without permission within 800m of identified lakes between April 1 and September 30 and the primary strategy around the lakes is avoidance of activity during that restricted activity period.

3.7.3 Athabasca rainbow trout and bull trout

The Athabasca rainbow trout (the only native population of rainbow trout in Alberta) is listed as "endangered" under the federal *Species at Risk Act (SARA)*. The Saskatchewan and Nelson Rivers Bull trout populations are listed as Threatened under *SARA*. West Fraser was involved in developing Recovery Plans for these species and will incorporate direction from the Recovery Plans into planning, operations, and future management planning. The aquatic species at risk map indicates areas where Critical Habitat is present on each FMA. West Fraser is closely working on developing operating procedures for these identified areas through communication with the Alberta Forest Products Association and Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). West Fraser is following guidance

from DFO and working closely with DFO to collect the appropriate data to submit complete applications for Request for Reviews and *Fisheries Act* Authorizations to adhere to legislation.

3.7.4 Common nighthawk and olive-sided flycatcher

These two birds were designated as “threatened” under the federal *Species at Risk Act* in 2010. However, the species were downlisted to “special concern”; therefore, the Species Conservation Strategies have not been updated since 2014. Species Conservation Strategies are developed as part of the Company’s Forest Management Plan (FMP) and have been or will be incorporated into Forest Management Plans. Hinton and Edson Lumber is transitioning mostly from single species conservation strategies (SCS) to habitat conservation strategies (HCS) that address multiple species. The new HCS format will still include specific details for identified species at risk. Currently, both species (SCS) and habitat conservation strategies (HCS) are being used.

3.7.5 Woodland Caribou

Woodland caribou is a threatened species, and West Fraser carefully follows federal and provincial considerations and direction. West Fraser’s caribou plans have been informed by the Species Conservation Strategy for Caribou in our Forest Management Plan (FMP), but have been subject to change with provincial and federal guidance as it develops. Known woodland caribou range overlaps with West Fraser’s Berland working circle, and planning operations were previously commenced based on the direction of provincial planning objectives. Long-term caribou range objectives developed through the Berland sub-regional task force will provide future direction beyond the time frame of this GDP.

3.7.6 Barred owl

The barred owl is recognized as “species of special concern” by the Alberta Government and protected under *Alberta’s Wildlife Act*. The Forest Management Plan (FMP) and harvesting strategies include aggregate harvesting and maintaining large-diameter deciduous trees through retention patches. Barred owl habitat generally consists of old mixed wood forests. West Fraser has a conservation strategy for barred owls and two related, ongoing barred owl FRIAAs (Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta) projects.

3.7.7 Pileated woodpecker

Pileated woodpeckers receive protections above those provided for most birds under the Migratory Birds Convention Act of 1994 due to modernizations to the Act in 2022. In particular, their nesting cavities receive longer-term protection, even when unoccupied. As a result, West Fraser has and continues to focus on training internal and external staff on the identification, retention, and appropriate buffering of these cavities. This includes a developed Pileated-specific training slide, migratory birds training, operating procedures, and a quick reference brochure.

3.7.8 Riparian areas

Hinton and Edson Lumber standards and guidelines for operating beside watercourses are set out in the provincially approved and standardized 2025 Timber Harvest Planning and Operating Ground Rules. This Operating Ground Rules define the riparian area as follows:

1. “Riparian areas on public land are the vegetation zones next to flowing and standing water bodies (e.g., rivers, lakes, sloughs). They are found in all natural regions of the province, from the prairies and foothills to the boreal mixed wood region.” [GOA, 1997]
2. “Terrestrial areas where the vegetation complex and microclimate conditions are products of the combined presence and influence of perennial and/or intermittent water, associated high water tables and soils that exhibit some wetness characteristics. Normally used to refer to the zone within which plants grow rooted in the water table of these rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, reservoirs, springs, marshes, seeps, bogs, and wet meadows. The riparian zone is influenced by, and exerts an influence on, the associated aquatic ecosystem.” [GoA-OGR, 2025]

The critical habitat orders (CHOs) for Bull Trout and Athabasca Rainbow Trout describe the 30 m riparian area as “...necessary to protect key stream attributes such as clean and cold water with low sediment and silt, maintain channel configuration and habitat structure, and provide terrestrial food inputs and woody debris into the aquatic environment.” The CHOIs for Bull Trout and Athabasca Rainbow Trout also define riparian areas as “...the areas bordering a water body such as a stream, river, lake, or wetland. They serve important ecological functions such as erosion and flood/flow control, provision of food, and shading to moderate water temperature.” Under Section 58 (1) of the *Species at Risk Act*, destruction of this 30 m riparian area is prohibited.

3.7.9 Indigenous Peoples

West Fraser commits to collaborative relationships that respect the unique culture and rights of Indigenous Peoples, incorporating Indigenous Peoples' perspectives and knowledge into our work and increasing the participation of Indigenous Peoples in our business through direct employment, the procurement of services, and other forms of partnership. We can achieve these goals together through early, open, and inclusive dialogue that helps deepen relationships by mutually investing in our respective capacities to work constructively together and through our combined efforts to achieve free, prior, and informed consent. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) informs our practices and interactions.

3.7.10 Climate Change

West Fraser is committed to addressing climate change through its 2030 carbon reduction targets. The company aims to reduce its scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions by 46.2% and scope 3 GHG emissions by 25% by 2030. These targets have been validated by the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi) and are aligned with the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement. West Fraser's climate strategy includes prioritizing climate-related initiatives and integrating climate action and resilience into its culture. The company's efforts are part of a broader commitment to sustainable forestry practices and responsible wood procurement, contributing to a climate solution for the built environment.

4 Summary

This plain language Information Package provides an overview of Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber's General Development Plans, explaining what a GDP contains, other pertinent information, and the detailed explanation of what is being consulted. It also provides an overview of Hinton and Edson Lumber's proposed vegetation management plans for the next timber year.

Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber will hold open houses in Hinton and Edson to allow stakeholders and the general public to discuss our activities with our forestry professionals. Dates for Open houses will be posted in the newspaper advertisements. Hinton and Edson Lumber will continue to post newspaper advertisements for compartments where planning activities are scheduled, ensuring affected stakeholders have the opportunity to provide input on upcoming activities in those compartments.

The 2026 open house details are as follows:

	Edson	Hinton
Location:	Galloway Museum	Ramada Inn Hotel
Address:	223 55 St, Edson	149 Woodley Dr, Hinton
Date:	March 24, 2026	March 25, 2026
Time:	4 p.m. – 8 p.m.	3 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber seek feedback about how the GDPs and Vegetation Management Plans may potentially impact important values. If you have any concerns about how these Plans may affect important values, want to provide feedback to West Fraser, or have any questions, please get in touch with us using any of the contact methods noted in section 5: Hinton Lumber/Edson Lumber Contact Information.

5 HINTON LUMBER /EDSON LUMBER Contact Information

HINTON/EDSON LUMBER CONTACT INFORMATION

E-mail: hwpwoodlands@westfraser.com

Phone: 1-800-293-6955 Toll-free number

Fax: (780) 865-8901

Our write to us, at: Hinton/Edson Woodlands, 99 West River Road, Hinton, Alberta, T7V 1Y7

Appendix I Hinton Lumber GDP and Vegetation Management Map

HINTON LUMBER MAP LEGEND EXPLANATION

Five Year Target Compartments



Harvesting may occur somewhere in these compartments within the next five years. In most compartments, targeted stands will be dominated by lodgepole pine, although in some compartments, aspen is the targeted stand type.



Potential Gravel Pits

These are areas where gravel pits might be constructed over the next 5 years.

Five Year Non-Target Compartments



At this time, these compartments (white) are not targeted for harvesting in the next five years. However, if certain conditions change (e.g., new MPB attack, changing economics, fire salvage, etc.), Hinton Lumber/Edson Lumber may move into these compartments sooner.



Remote Decking Sites

These are areas where logs are decked along major roadways so that they can be hauled at a later date from a formal site.

Harvest Blocks Approved or Submitted for Approval



These are the blocks that are most likely to be harvested in the next 1-2 years. These blocks are shown for informational purposes – there is no requirement to show cutblock locations on the GDP. Blocks may still be harvested that do not show up on this map.



> 3 Year Road Development

Roads that are planned for application development or construction during the 2026/2027 operating season. Roads shown on this map are typically planned for periods greater than three years of use, and the road alignment has been ground verified.

Potential Chemical Vegetation Management Blocks



These blocks may undergo an herbicide application during the upcoming summer (i.e., August or September 2026). The method of herbicide application may be from the ground (backpack sprayer) or the air (helicopter sprayer).



Long-Term Road Corridor Planning

Roads that are planned for application development or construction during the 2026/2027 operating season. Roads shown on this map are typically planned for periods greater than three years of use, and these road corridors are in the field reconnaissance stage of planning.

Potential Manual Vegetation Management Blocks



These blocks may undergo a mechanical tending (i.e., removal of competing vegetation using saws) during this operating year (May 1, 2026 – April 30, 2027).



Planting Camps

These are camping areas used mainly by Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber's contract tree planting crews while planting trees in the spring and summer. Tree planting generally occurs each year in May, June, July, and August.

Historical Resources Listing (HRV 4C)



These areas identify a traditional use site of a historic nature within the boundaries of the polygon that is registered with Alberta.



DLO Under Review for Reclamation

Roads that are being reviewed and planned for reclamation during the 2026/27 operating season.

SKYSAT Interpreted Burn Area

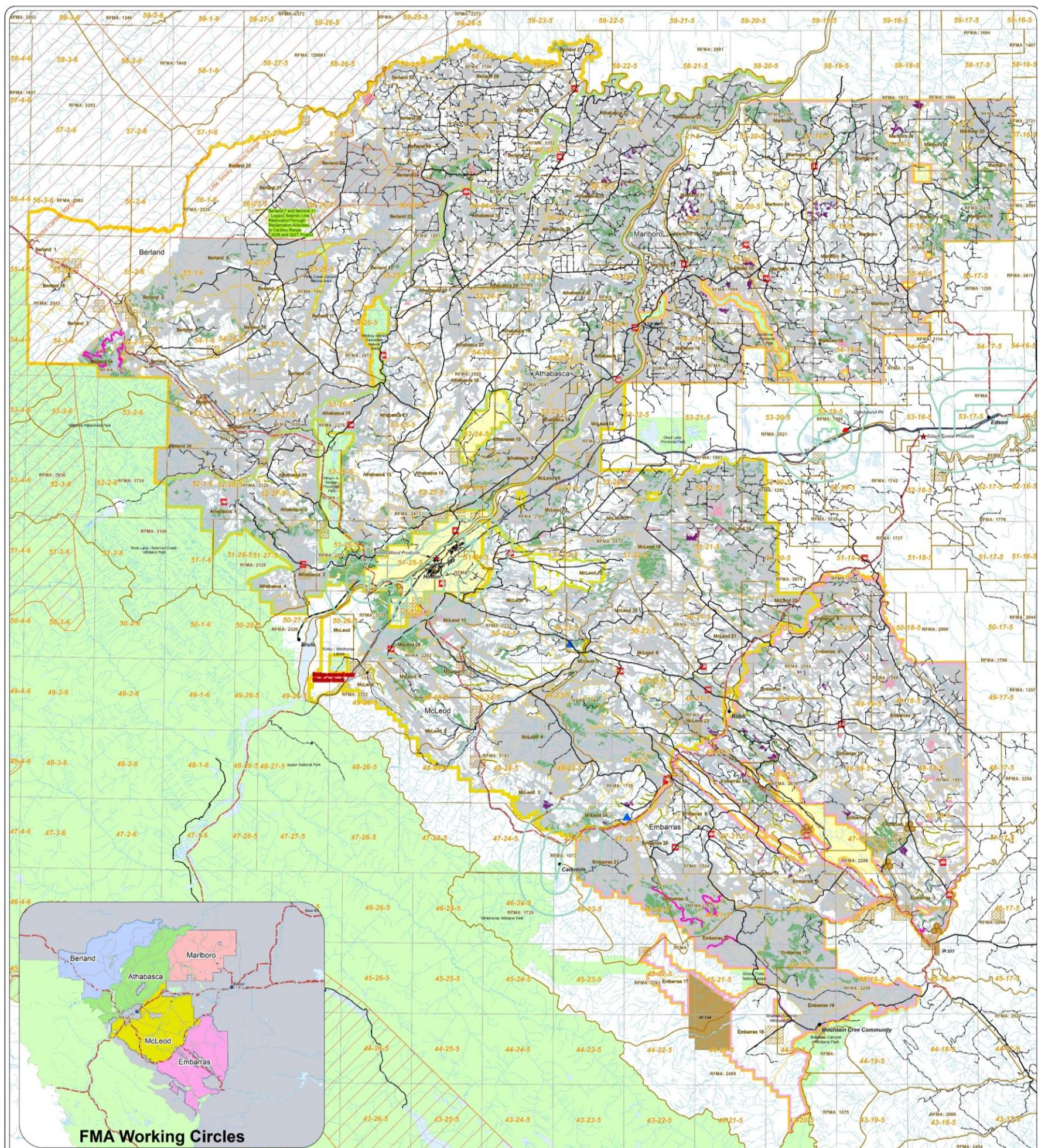


Based on satellite imagery analysis, these light pink shapes show the 2023 wildfire boundary's general impacts.



HINTON LUMBER FMA 2023 Fire Boundary

This black-hatch shape is the general 2023 fire perimeter as defined by Alberta and shown on their Alberta Wildfire Status Dashboard.



Appendix II Edson Lumber GDP and Vegetation Management Map

EDSON LUMBER MAP LEGEND EXPLANATION

Five Year Target Compartments



Harvesting may occur somewhere in these compartments within the next five years. In most compartments targeted stands will be dominated by lodgepole pine, although in some compartments, aspen is the targeted stand type.



Potential Gravel Pits

These are areas where gravel pits might be constructed over the next 5 years.

Five Year Non-Target Compartments



At this time, these compartments (white) are not targeted for harvesting in the next five years. However, if certain conditions change (e.g., new MPB attack, changing economics, fire salvage, etc.), Hinton Lumber/EDSON LUMBER may move into these compartments sooner.



Remote Decking Sites

These are areas where logs are decked along major roadways so that they can be hauled at a later date from a formal site. These sites are used to temporarily store logs before they are hauled to the mill site for processing.

Harvest Blocks Approved or Submitted for Approval



These are the blocks that are most likely to be harvested in the next 1-2 years. These blocks are shown for informational purposes – there is no requirement to show cutblock locations on the GDP. Blocks may still be harvested that do not show up on this map.



>3 Year Road Development

Roads that are planned for application development or construction during the 2026/2027 operating season. Roads shown on this map are typically planned for periods greater than three years of use, and the road alignment has been ground verified.

Potential Chemical Vegetation Management Blocks



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Long Term Road Corridor Planning

Roads that are planned for application development or construction during the 2026/2027 operating season. Roads shown on this map are typically planned for periods greater than three years of use, and these road corridors are in the field reconnaissance stage of planning.

Potential Manual Vegetation Management Blocks



These blocks may undergo a mechanical tending (i.e., removal of competing vegetation using saws) during this operating year (May 1, 2026 – April 30, 2027).



Planting Camps

These are camping areas used mainly by Hinton Lumber and Edson Lumber's contract tree planting crews while planting trees in the spring and summer. Tree planting generally occurs each year in May, June, July, and August.

Historical Resources Listing (HRV 4C)



These areas identify a traditional use site of a historic nature within the boundaries of the polygon that is registered with Alberta.



Edson Lumber FMA 2023 Fire Boundary

This black-hatch shape is the general 2023 fire perimeter as defined by Alberta and shown on their Alberta Wildfire Status Dashboard.

SKYSAT Interpreted Burn Area



Based on satellite imagery analysis, these light pink shapes show the 2023 wildfire boundary's general impacts.

