



Bulkley Valley – Lakes District

Airshed Management Plan

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**Regional Working Group – Subcommittee  
Resource Management Burning  
DRAFT Minutes**

**Date: August 18, 2003**

**Location: WLAP Boardroom**

*Note: These minutes are brief to reflect the fact that minutes from the licensee meeting and the proceedings from the July 22 meeting cover off most of the discussion; only new points and action items are recorded.*

**Attendance ( ✓ ) and Regrets ( X ):**

✓	Bardossy	Sally
✓	Bysouth	Doug
✓	Ehalt	Garth
✓	Gallant	Laurie
X	Howard	Andy
X	Miller	Lonny
✓	Reistma	Leroy
✓	Rigby	Christine
✓	Scharwz	Paul
✓	Sharpe	Ian
✓	Stevens	Dave
✓	Wittwer	Eugene
✓	Wright	Kimberley

**Jargon and Acronyms:**

RMB	Resource Management Burning
DM	Regional District Manager
Burn Day	A day with ideal conditions for burning

**Documents distributed or Presentations at meeting:**

1. Agenda for Meeting August 18, 2003.
2. Draft Proceedings from July 23, 2003 RMB workshop.
3. Summary of Industry Group meeting (reproduced below)

**Start Time:**

1:00 pm

## Agenda:

### **1:00 pm - Introductions, Announcement, Review and revise Goals and Agenda**

1:10 - Review and adopt proceedings

1:20 Report from licensee meeting (Leroy - can you give us a quick review of what was discussed, who came, and any specific agreements or action items?)

1:30 Building the Current and Best Practices Chart

2:15 Break

2:30 Building the Action Plan

3:15 Wrap-Up and Next Steps

3:30 Adjourn

Adopted proceedings from July Workshop, suggest changing the wording in Table 2.

### **Announcements:**

News item regarding status of beehive burner permit extension – clarification needed; seems to be some confusion over changing the content of the permit versus the time period.

- Noted that there is some discomfort at the table with speaking frankly given recent quotes in local media; lengthy discussion ensued on how to alleviate this problem so that we can all proceed confidently with the process and keep the larger goal in mind of better air quality and quality of life for everyone
- Rules of engagement must be respected and goals of this process are serviceable with cooperation of all participants.
- Concept of facilitator as the only representative of this group to issue media statements regarding table discussions; decided that if members cannot focus on progress instead of solutions that this would be the best route to take.
- Request made to have a formal “rules of engagement” and use the “sidewalk test” to govern our actions; noted that conflicts of interest between sitting at this table and being a spokesperson for another group may mean changing strategies normally used by activists or stepping back from one of these two positions. These points will be discussed by affected parties outside of this meeting and the results of these discussions reported to the facilitator.

#### 1. Report from Licensee Meeting

- Leroy summarized key points from the July 31 meeting and distributed copies of their minutes, which are reproduced below.

## **Summary of Items Discussed at Industry Group Meeting on Resources Burning (July 31)**

### *Improvements made to date:*

Roadside log processing centralizes the tops and branches to the roads side area and results in both a greater portion of the debris remaining on the forest floor and a better burn pile.

Block development plans have prescribed the leaving of piles for small animal habitat on the borders of the cut blocks. This has allowed for the burning process to be initiated earlier in the season due to the reduced fire hazard from not having to burn the piles with the greatest risk of spreading into the neighboring forest. The earlier in the season that one can burn the piles the better the conditions for achieving a clean burn.

Commencement of burning at least 2 hours after sunrise and not less than 4 hours before sundown has proven to be an effective technique for improving venting conditions in the Bulkley District.

### ***Improvements Suggested***

#### **Requirement to Burn All Piles**

Compliance and Enforcement Officers from the Ministry of Forest have been enforcing the rule that piles of material that fail to burn on the initial attempt must be subsequently re-ignited. As a general rule, piles that fail to burn on the initial attempt are comprised of poorer quality burning material. Insisting upon these piles being burnt results in a low temperature higher smoke emission burn. In addition, the secondary burn is often required after the forest has already commenced regeneration and the combustion of these piles negatively affects neighboring plant life.

It is suggested that granting the forest companies the ability to exercise judgment when determining whether or not a secondary burn is required would be helpful in minimizing smoldering piles. If an allowance can be granted for piles to be left in the block during the initial block harvesting prescription approval process, then it **stands to reason** that removing this step from the initial block planning stage and placing it in the discretion of the forest companies at the time of initial burning program evaluation would serve the purpose of selecting material to be left on the basis of smoke emission minimization.

#### **Days of Burning**

Weather conditions are extremely volatile during the traditional burning season. Days of burning are defined by good venting conditions and low risk of fire escape. Venting conditions are best during periods of air mass volatility, which often coincides with precipitation. Burning conditions are best when the ground is wet but the piles have been dried by the sunny weather following rain that has dampened the forest floor.

It is suggested that the decision to burn versus not burn be made with more consideration given to the nature of the burn conditions and how these conditions relate to a longer term forecast of venting. Burning on a clear, sunny day allows for minimization of total smoke emissions. If a forecast of good venting is recognized in the next two to three day period, an ability to achieve a cleaner burn with an opportunity to vent the lower level of emissions in an acceptable period is achieved. This practice also supports Alpine Air's objective of visibility as smoke is of greatest concern on cloudy days. Time of day burning may also help to improve the results of this effort to utilize good burning conditions when the venting is less than perfect.

#### **Area of Burning**

Greater coordination of who is burning, when they are burning, how much they are burning, and at what block of time during the day is being used to burn is needed in areas of direct air flow into the population corridor. A greater understanding of what is taking place in these areas will help to prevent air quality issues which will in turn result in greater operating flexibility in non-air shed tributary regions.

#### **Decision Points, Sticky Points and Other Important Notes:**

- Discussion on points made in above summary resulted in agreement that less piles need and should be burnt.
- Flexibility of "burn days" would increase efficiency during burning season.
- Proper and thorough documentation should be recorded why piles were left and not burnt.
- A letter summarizing the above points and proposing a new system for exemptions that specifically includes the smoke emission factor in addition to wildfire risk, pest control and habitat considerations should be written by this group to District Managers; this letter should have pre-approved WLAP support to be more influential with the DM's.

- A business case that supports the inclusion of a custom forecaster should specifically outline all the elemental savings to everyone involved and address the conceived issue of lost revenue to the burn contactor.
- Christine discussed the prospective of using the disbursement model for troubleshooting some of the issues concerning RMB.

**Today's Meeting Adjourned at:**

**3:30pm**

**Next meeting date:**

**To be set at a later date, and will potentially be a conference call.**

**Next meeting location:**

**Not applicable at this time.**

**Agenda Items for next meeting:**

Communication and Education activities related to Resource Management Burning to be discussed at the next meeting/conference call of this subcommittee once a framework for burning has been confirmed.  
Status of action items listed below.

**Facilitator for next meeting:**

**Laurie Gallant**

**Scribe for next meeting:**

**Footprint Environmental Consultants**

	<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Status</b>
1	Finalize and post proceedings report from previous meeting on website so that progress on this issue can be observed by the media and general public.	Laurie Gallant & Kim Wright	08/19/03	done
2	Forward electronic copy of summary from licensee's meeting to Footprint for inclusion in minutes of RWGSC-RMB meeting for August 18, 2003.	Leroy Reistma	08/19/03	done
3	Coordinate writing of letter to DM regarding granting licensees discretion on when to burn based on three factors: habitat, fire risk, and smoke source.	Paul Scharwz	08/22/03	Draft done
4	Contact Dan Morrison regarding costs and benefits of a seasonal (4 month) part-time (4 hours/day) position to prepare three-day forecasts and coordinate burning for licensees. The reply from Dan will then be forwarded to the subcommittee.	Ian Sharpe	None set	Done – info to be forwarded.
5	Coordinate the preparation of a business case to fund a regional coordinator position based on the information provided by Dan.	Leroy Reistma	09/15/03	In progress
6	Follow up on discussion regarding Rules of Engagement.	Laurie Gallant	Next meeting	In progress
7	Send out message to all CWGs regarding progress on this issue and schedule meetings to resume again in September.	Laurie Gallant	Early September	Done.