

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

ORDER OF THE MINISTER OF WATER, LAND AND RESOURCE  
STEWARDSHIP

*Forest and Range Practices Act*

Ministerial Order No.

I, Eric Valdal, as delegate of the Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship,  
order the following:

1. Being satisfied that the following described areas contain habitat that is necessary to meet the habitat requirements for bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*), and the habitat requires special management that is not otherwise provided for under the Government Actions Regulation (GAR) or another enactment, Ungulate Winter Ranges (UWRs) U-4-003 and U-4-004 in the Rocky Mountain and Selkirk Natural Resource Districts are established as set out in Schedule A.
2. Being satisfied that the following measures are necessary to protect or conserve bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*) and that protection or conservation is not otherwise provided for under the GAR or another enactment, UWRs U-4-003 and U-4-004 are managed as provided in Schedule B.

December 19, 2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



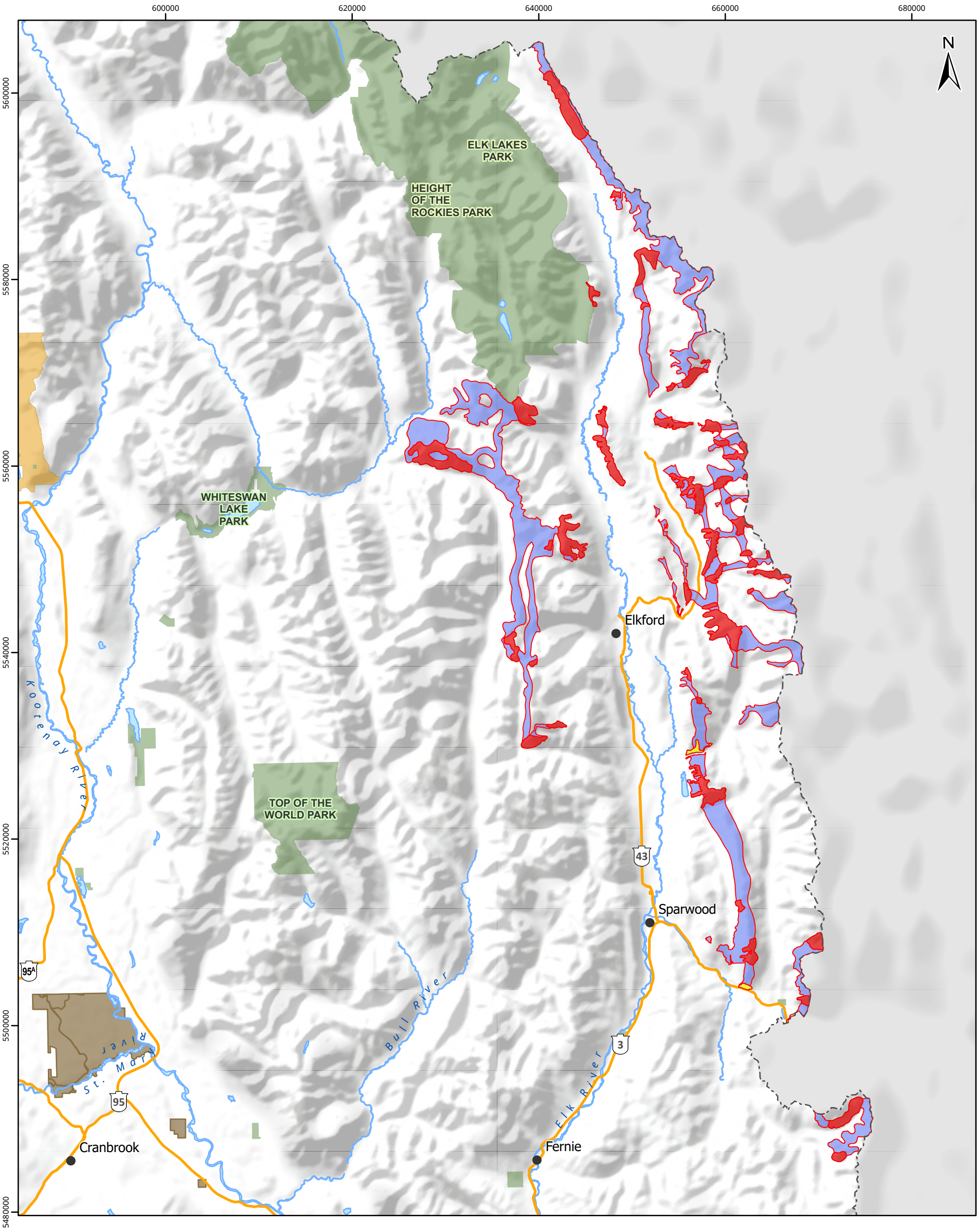
\_\_\_\_\_  
Minister of Water, Land and Resource  
Stewardship  
(or authorized signatory)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Eric Valdal, Area Executive Director

*(This part is for administrative purposes only and is not part of the Order.)*

**Authority under which Order is made:**

Regulation and Government Actions Regulation (B.C. Reg. 281/2023) s. 9(2) and 12(1)  
section: \_\_\_\_\_



**SCHEDULE A**  
**Ungulate Winter Range**  
**Kootenay Boundary Region (4)**  
**U-4-004**

**Total Area:** 39,026.18 ha

**Map produced by:**

The Fish and Wildlife Information Services Section  
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship  
**October 31, 2025**

**For more information:** SPI\_Mail@gov.bc.ca



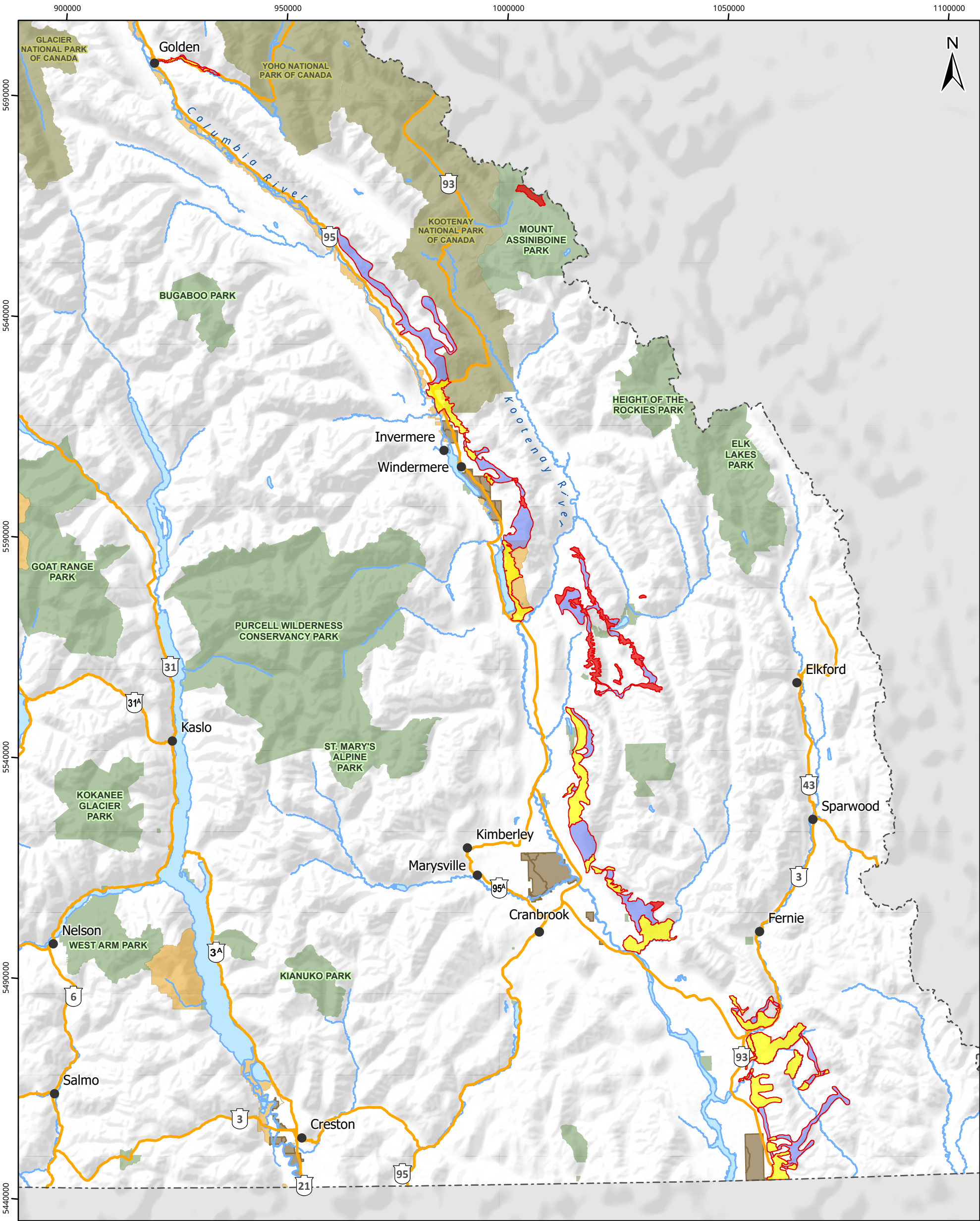
Ministry of  
Water, Land and  
Resource Stewardship

- UWR, Core - High Elevation
- UWR, Core - Low Elevation
- UWR, Management Zone
- Indian Reserve
- Provincial Park / Ecological Reserve / Protected Area
- Wildlife Management Area
- Highway

0 5 10 15 20 25 km

**Coordinate System:** NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11N





**SCHEDULE A**  
**Ungulate Winter Range**  
**Kootenay Boundary Region (4)**  
**U-4-003**

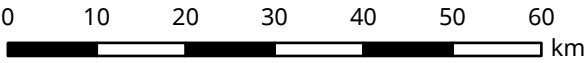
**Total Area: 79,846.45 ha**

**Map produced by:**  
The Fish and Wildlife Information Services Section  
Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship  
**October 31, 2025**  
**For more information:** SPI\_Mail@gov.bc.ca

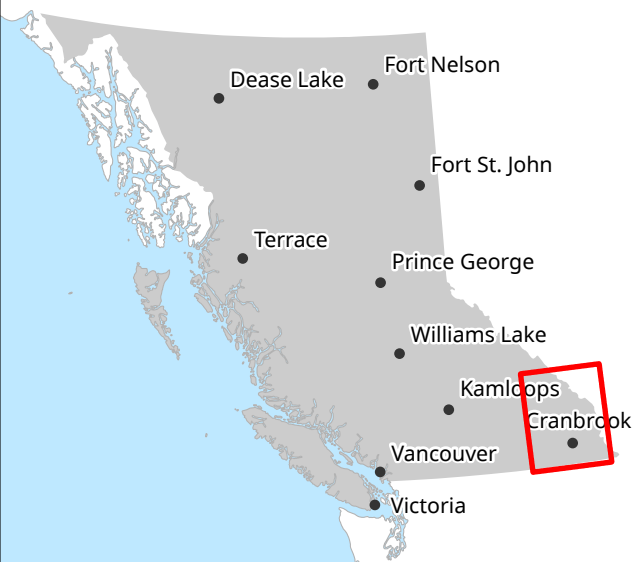


Ministry of  
Water, Land and  
Resource Stewardship

- UWR, Core - High Elevation
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**Schedule A** – see attached maps.

## **Schedule B**

### **Part 1: Definitions**

1. Unless otherwise specified, words and expressions not defined in this Order have the meaning given to them under the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, *Mineral Tenure Act* and the regulations made under them.
2. In this Order and schedules to this Order:
  - a) **Control treatments** mean practices that aim to prevent reproduction and recruitment of invasive plant individuals into an existing population and eventually reduce the distribution and density of the target species over time. A low level of the invasive species may persist after treatment.
  - b) **Core Winter Range** means, subject to section 1 (b) of Part 3 of this Order, areas shown as bighorn sheep Core Winter Range on the Schedule A map and includes the delineation of:
    - i. low elevation, and
    - ii. high elevation.
  - c) **Key area** means a location within a range tenure that is selected because it is representative of the ecological site or pasture, and where monitoring data (such as range readiness, stubble heights, or trends) can be collected to evaluate the effectiveness of grazing management practices. Key areas should be:
    - i. *Representative*: reflective of the average conditions of the larger area in terms of soil, vegetation, and grazing use.
    - ii. *Accessible*: easy to access for regular monitoring.
    - iii. *Stable*: not subject to unusual disturbances (not near a water trough, salt block, or road).
    - iv. *Sensitive*: respond predictably to changes in grazing pressure and management.
  - d) **Management Zone** means the area designated on the Schedule A map necessary to facilitate seasonal bighorn sheep migration to and from bighorn sheep Core Winter Range.
  - e) **Mineral exploration activity** means an activity, described in paragraph (a) of the definition of “mining activity” in section 1 of the *Mines Act*, performed in relation to coal and minerals other than placer minerals, where the cutting of trees or construction and/or maintenance of roads and trails related to this exploration is required.

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- f) **Placer exploration activity** means an activity, described in the definition of “mining activity” in section 1 of the *Mines Act*, performed in relation to placer minerals, and that involves the processing of less than 2000 m<sup>3</sup> of pay dirt per year.
- g) **Producing mines** means mines that must comply with section 10.1.2 or 10.2.1 of the *Health, Safety and Reclamation Code for Mines in British Columbia*.
- h) **Qualified Professional** means an individual registered with a regulatory body, as defined in Schedule 1 of the *Professional Governance Act*, acting within the individual’s area of expertise.
- i) **Range readiness** means a defined stage of plant growth at which grazing may begin under a Range Use Plan without permanent damage to vegetation or soils.
- j) **Rehabilitate** means:
  - i. de-compacting compacted soils,
  - ii. returning displaced surface soils, side-cast and berm materials, and
  - iii. managing for erosion, sedimentation and invasive plants.
- k) **Revegetated** means the exposed area is covered with native grasses, forbs, shrubs and/or trees, and/or agronomic, non-invasive herbaceous species that are adapted to the site and are compatible with other plant species.

### **Part 2: Overlaps with Mountain Goat Orders**

1. Where bighorn sheep Core Winter Range and Management Zone shown on the attached Schedule A map overlap with mountain goat Core Winter Range (UWR Order U-4-002), the general wildlife measures for mountain goat will apply.
2. Where bighorn sheep Core Winter Range and Management Zone shown on the attached Schedule A map overlap with mountain goat Management Zone (UWR Order U-4-002), if the adjacent mountain goat Core Winter Range is unoccupied by goats as per GWM 4 of U-4-002, the general wildlife measures for bighorn sheep and mountain goat will apply. If the adjacent mountain goat Core Winter Range is occupied by goats as per GWM 4 of U-4-002, the general wildlife measures for mountain goat will apply.
3. Where bighorn sheep Core Winter Range and Management Zone shown on the attached Schedule A map overlap with mountain goat Specified Area (UWR Order U-4-002), the general wildlife measures for bighorn sheep and mountain goat will apply.

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## **Part 3: Maps and Spatial Data**

1. With respect to the Ungulate Winter Ranges (UWRs):
  - a) The areas shown in the maps set out in the attached Schedule A (U-4-003 and U-4-004) and contained in the spatial layer stored in the BC Geographic Warehouse (WHSE\_WILDLIFE\_MANAGEMENT.WCP\_UNGULATE\_WINTER\_RANGE\_SP), which include a Core Winter Range and Management Zone, are UWR U-4-003 and U-4-004 for bighorn sheep. The centre points of the lines on the attached Schedule A are what establish the UWR boundaries.
  - b) If there is a discrepancy between the areas shown on the map attached as Schedule A and the UWR spatial layer stored in the British Columbia Geographic Warehouse (WHSE\_WILDLIFE\_MANAGEMENT.WCP\_UNGULATE\_WINTER\_RANGE\_SP), the areas detailed in the spatial layer will be taken as correct.

## **Part 4: General Wildlife Measures (GWMs)**

### **Ungulate Winter Range**

1. The following measures apply to the Core Winter Range and Management Zone of Ungulate Winter Ranges U-4-003 and U-4-004 as shown on the Schedule A map:

#### *Primary Forest Activities*

##### *High Elevation Core Winter Range*

- 1) Primary forest activities must not occur within High Elevation Core Winter Range, except primary forest activities are allowed for producing mines and mineral exploration if:
  - a. Bighorn sheep habitat is assessed under the current environmental mitigation policy during the *Mines Act* permitting process; and
  - b. GWM 7 in this Order is followed for mineral exploration activities.

##### *Low Elevation Core Winter Range and Management Zone*

- 2) All machinery must be high-pressure cleaned of all soil and organic debris before operations begin. Georeferenced and time-stamped photos of each cleaned machine must be taken on site prior to the commencement of work and made available upon request by the district manager.
- 3) A pre-harvest invasive plant survey must be completed by a Qualified Professional within the area under prescription and submitted into the provincial InvasivesBC database prior to any forest activities taking place.
- 4) Timber harvesting must occur under dry, frozen, or  $\geq 45$  cm snow-covered site conditions to mitigate soil disturbance. Bedding areas and foraging areas are to be spatially located on a site-by-site basis in consultation with First Nations

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communities and/or their designated subject matter experts knowledgeable of bighorn sheep winter range and must meet the following post-harvest stand densities and site characteristics:

- a. Bedding Areas: To maintain sight lines, locate bedding areas where lower densities of layer 3 and 4 trees exist. Of the preharvest stand, retain at least one third of the largest trees on site to a stand density of 175 to 250 stems/ha to provide bedding sites and security cover while maintaining sight lines.
  - b. Foraging Areas: Of the preharvest stand, retain the largest trees on site to a stand density of 80 to 100 stems/ha evenly distributed throughout potential foraging areas to promote healthy bunchgrass communities.
  - c. Soil disturbance must not exceed 3% of the net area to be reforested.
- 5) New roads, trails, landings and access structures required for timber harvesting must be rehabilitated and revegetated to achieve 85% non-invasive ground cover after three (3) growing seasons from the commencement date of harvest. A certified seed mix appropriate for site restoration and stabilization based on consultation with subject matter experts is required to be used. Measures to inhibit public motor vehicle passage, such as using informational signage, must be taken while the road or trail remains open for operational activity and post-harvest obligations.
- 6) Invasive plant surveys of all species identified in the Invasive Plants Regulation (FRPA) and in Table 1 (Regional Invasive Plant List) must be conducted annually for the following three (3) growing seasons post-harvest, and invasive plant control treatments applied to all affected areas under prescription. All post-harvest surveys and treatments must be submitted into the provincial InvasivesBC database.

**Table 1. Regional Invasive Plant List**

Weed Species	Scientific Name
Bighead knapweed	<i>Centaurea macrocephala</i>
Bohemian knotweed	<i>Reynoutria x bohemica</i>
Caraway	<i>Carum carvi</i>
Cheatgrass	<i>Bromus tectorum</i>
Chicory	<i>Cichorium intybus</i>
Flat peavine	<i>Lathyrus sylvestris</i>
Russian thistle	<i>Salsola kali</i>
Teasel	<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>
Wild parsnip	<i>Heracleum maximum</i>

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- 7) For the purpose of mineral exploration activities and placer exploration activities within any Low Elevation Core Winter Range and Management Zone, the following measures apply. Additional best management practices are included in Appendix A.
- a. Timber harvesting for road-supported exploration activities occurs only under dry, frozen, or  $\geq 45$  cm snow-covered site conditions to mitigate soil disturbance;
  - b. Any necessary tree falling avoids mature timber ( $\geq 80$  years old) unless it is not practicable to do so; and
  - c. Individual forest openings required for mineral or placer exploration sites are not greater than 1 ha; this measure does not apply to forest openings for development of roads or trails.

### *Range Activities*

- 8) Domestic sheep, goats and camelids are prohibited within any Core Winter Range and Management Zone.
- 9) Salt or mineral supplements placed within the Core Winter Range and Management Zone for the purposes of improving or maintaining livestock nutrition will be in an unused condition, copper free, and will not have been predisposed to contact with domestic sheep, goats, llamas, or alpacas.
- 10) Within the Core Winter Range and Management Zone, livestock grazing may commence once range readiness leaf stage criteria are met, and livestock must be removed when the average stubble heights set out in Table 2 are reached. Assessments must focus on native species present in the key area. If native species are absent, agronomic species must be evaluated.

**Table 2. Range Readiness (Leaf Stage) for Livestock Turnout and Average Stubble Heights for Livestock Removal**

Grazing Species	Scientific Name	Leaf Stage	Average Stubble Height (cm)
Bluegrass species	<i>Poa</i> spp.	2.5	8
Brome species	<i>Bromus</i> spp.	3.0	10
Fescue, Idaho	<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>	4.0	12
Fescue, rough	<i>Festuca campestris</i>	4.5	17
Needlegrass species	<i>Achnatherum</i> spp. and <i>Heterostipa</i> spp.	3.0	12
Orchardgrass	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	3.0	10

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Grazing Species	Scientific Name	Leaf Stage	Average Stubble Height (cm)
Ricegrass, rough-leaved	<i>Oryzopsis asperifolia</i> ,	3.0	8
Wheatgrass, bluebunch	<i>Pseudoroegneria spicata</i>	4.0	15
Wheatgrass, crested	<i>Agropyron cristatum</i>	3.5	8
Wheatgrass, western	<i>Pascopyrum smithii</i>	4.0	12
Wildrye, blue	<i>Elymus glaucus</i>	4.0	15

- 11) New and replacement rangeland fences within any bighorn sheep Core Winter Range and Management Zone must employ wildlife safe fence designs.

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## Appendix A

The following information is provided for context and support to the Order establishing Ungulate Winter Ranges (UWRs) U-4-003 and U-4-004. Private land, federal land, parks and protected areas are excluded from the application of the general wildlife measures (GWMs). This appendix is not part of the Order.

The intention of this Order is to restore bighorn sheep habitat. The effectiveness of the Order in achieving habitat restoration goals will be assessed on an ongoing basis, and amendments will be made to the Order in situations where measures are consistently shown to be not practicable or where habitat restoration outcomes are not being met.

Where the bighorn sheep Order for U-4-003 and U-4-004 overlaps with mountain goat Order U-4-002, the type of UWR polygon (i.e., Core Winter Range or Management Zone) and presence or absence of mountain goats will determine which GWMs apply.

- Where mountain goat Core Winter Range overlaps with bighorn sheep Core Winter Range or Management Zone: GWMs 1-3 from the mountain goat Order restricting primary forest activities (with exceptions) apply.
- Where mountain goat Management Zone overlaps with bighorn sheep Core Winter Range or Management Zone:
  - If the adjacent mountain goat Core Winter Range is unoccupied by goats as per GWM 4 of U-4-002: GWMs 4 through 6 of the mountain goat Order and GWMs 2 through 7 of the bighorn sheep Order apply. Woodlot harvesting practices may continue as per GWM 5 in the mountain goat Order.
  - If the adjacent mountain goat Core Winter Range is occupied by goats as per GWM 4 of U-4-002: GWM 4 from the mountain goat Order restricting primary forest activities from November 1 through June 14 applies. Woodlot harvesting practices may continue as per GWM 5 in the mountain goat Order.
- Where mountain goat Specified Area overlaps with bighorn sheep Core Winter Range or Management Zone: GWM 10 from the mountain goat Order restricting helicopter-based logging applies and GWMs 2 through 7 of the bighorn sheep Order apply.

### GWM 4: Soil Conditions

To minimize the risk of soil compaction, timber harvesting must occur under dry, frozen, or  $\geq 45$  cm snow-covered site conditions. To identify “dry” or lower risk conditions in medium- to fine-textured soils, a simple field procedure can be followed as described by Sutherland (2003) and available here: <https://library.fpinnovations.ca/link/fpipub40623> (see Appendix 2).

### GWM 7: Mineral and Placer Exploration

Further to GWM 7, the following additional management practices should be considered:

#### *High Elevation Core Winter Range*

- Mineral exploration activities and placer exploration activities within High Elevation Core Winter Range should occur from July 15<sup>th</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup> and access should

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be helicopter-based or on foot to minimize the introduction and/or spread of invasive plant species.

- All machinery should be high-pressure cleaned of all soil and organic debris before operations begin.

### *Low Elevation Core Winter Range and Management Zone*

- All machinery should be high-pressure cleaned of all soil and organic debris before operations begin.
- Existing clearings, trails and roads should be used where available.
- New trails and roads should not have a road surface width greater than 3.5 meters except for the purposes of safety or culvert placement.
- The total of individual forest openings, including those created for the purposes of building trails and roads should not exceed:
  - 10 percent of the cell, OR
  - 10 percent of any aggregate of cells, as defined by the tenure holder, up to a maximum of 25 cells.
- Actions should be taken on newly constructed or reconstructed trails and roads to restrict motor vehicles; measures to inhibit public motor vehicle passage, such as using informational signage, should be taken while the road or trail remains open for operational activity.
- All newly constructed roads, trails and exploration sites should be promptly rehabilitated and revegetated to achieve 85% cover of non-invasive plant species upon completion of exploration activities.

### **GWM 10: Range Readiness and Stubble Height Assessments**

More information about range readiness is available in Fraser (2003a):

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/rangeland\\_health\\_brochure5.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/rangeland_health_brochure5.pdf)) and more information about stubble heights is available in Fraser (2003b): [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/rangeland\\_health\\_brochure6.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/rangeland_health_brochure6.pdf).

### **GWM 11: Wildlife Safe Fence Design**

To minimize risks to wildlife, design of new and replacement rangeland fences should follow the principles in: *British Columbia, Rangeland, Four Strand Barbed Wire Fence Specifications* (BC Ministry of Forests and BC Cattlemen's Association 2023) available at:

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/four\\_strand\\_barbed\\_wire\\_fence\\_specifications.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/four_strand_barbed_wire_fence_specifications.pdf).

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### References:

- British Columbia Ministry of Forests and British Columbia Cattlemen's Association. 2023. British Columbia, Rangeland, Four Strand Barbed Wire Fence Specifications. Available at: [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/four\\_strand\\_barbed\\_wire\\_fence\\_specifications.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/four_strand_barbed_wire_fence_specifications.pdf). 20 pp.
- Fraser, D.A. 2003a. Using Range Readiness Criteria. Forest Practices Branch, British Columbia Ministry of Forests, Victoria, BC. Rangeland Health Brochure 5. Available at: [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/rangeland\\_health\\_brochure5.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/rangeland_health_brochure5.pdf). 10 pp.
- Fraser, D.A. 2003b. Applying Best Stubble Heights on Rangelands. Forest Practices Branch, British Columbia Ministry of Forests, Victoria, BC. Rangeland Health Brochure 6. Available at: [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/rangeland\\_health\\_brochure6.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/rangelands/rangeland_health_brochure6.pdf). 10 pp.
- Sutherland, B.J. 2003. Preventing Soil Compaction and Rutting in the Boreal Forest of Western Canada: A Practical Guide to Operating Timber-Harvesting Equipment. Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada. Point-Claire, QC. Available here: <https://library.fpinnovations.ca/link/fpipub40623>. 53 pp.