

ORDER – WILDLIFE HABITAT AREAS

4-118 and 4-120

Douglas-fir/snowberry/balsamroot plant community – Rocky Mountain Resource District

This order is given under the authority of sections 9(2), 10(1) and 10(2) of the *Government Actions Regulation* (B.C. Reg. 582/2004) (GAR).

1. The Deputy Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, being satisfied that
 - i. the following area contains habitat that is necessary to meet the habitat requirements for Douglas-fir/snowberry/balsamroot (*Pseudotsuga menziesii/Symphoricarpos albus/Balsamorhiza sagittata*) plant community;orders that
 - a) the area shown in the map set out in the attached Schedule As (4-118 and 4-120) and contained in the wildlife habitat areas (WHAs) spatial layer stored in the Geographic Warehouse (WHSE_WILDLIFE_MANAGEMENT.WCP_WILDLIFE_HABITAT_AREA_POLY) are established as wildlife habitat areas 4-118 and 4-120 for Douglas-fir/snowberry/balsamroot plant community. The centre point of the line on the attached Schedule As is what establishes the WHA boundary; and
 - b) if there is a discrepancy between the areas shown in the map set out in the attached Schedule As and the WHA spatial layer stored in the Geographic Warehouse (WHSE_WILDLIFE_MANAGEMENT.WCP_WILDLIFE_HABITAT_AREA_POLY), the areas as detailed in the WHA spatial layer will take precedent.
2. The Deputy Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, being satisfied that
 - i. the general wildlife measures (GWMs) described below are necessary to protect and conserve the habitat of Douglas-fir/snowberry/balsamroot plant community; and
 - ii. GAR or another enactment does not otherwise provide for that protection or conservation;orders that
 - a) the GWMs outlined in Schedule 1 are established for WHAs 4-118 and 4-120.
3. The Deputy Minister of Natural Resource Operations, being satisfied that
 - i. the wildlife habitat area requires special management that has not otherwise been provided for under this regulation or another enactment;orders that
 - b) the objectives outlined in Schedule 1 are established for WHAs 4-118 and 4-120.

Definitions

Words and expressions not defined in this order have the meaning given to them in the *Forest and Range Practices Act* (FRPA) and the regulations made under it, unless context indicates otherwise.

Livestock attractants: a substance or structure that draws livestock, including salt/minerals, supplements, water developments and cattle oilers.

Douglas-fir/snowberry/balsamroot desired plant community: open savannah with large Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine, canopy cover 2-35%; widely spaced herb layer dominated by >5%, preferably >15%, cover of at least two of: bluebunch wheatgrass, arrow-leaved balsamroot, or Idaho fescue.

Antelope-brush/bluebunch wheatgrass desired plant community: shrub-steppe with between 15% and 30% canopy cover of antelope-brush; herb layer dominated by >5%, preferably >15% cover each, of at least two of the following: bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, rough fescue, or arrow-leaved balsamroot; a composition with <10% each of co-dominating saskatoon in the shrub layer, and pinegrass or other species in the herb layer is acceptable.

Schedule 1 – General Wildlife Measures and Objectives

4-118

Access GWMs

1. Do not construct roads and trails or conduct any maintenance activities that require new approvals.

Harvesting and silviculture GWMs

2. Do not harvest or salvage except to support restoration measures with silvicultural treatments. Retain widely spaced, large, older trees and snags.
3. Do not remove non-timber forest products.

Range GWMs

4. Do not place livestock attractants within the WHA.

Range Objectives

5. Implement livestock grazing (i.e., timing, distribution, and level of use) in order to meet the following objectives:
 - a) maintain and increase the species present in the desired plant community for Douglas-fir/snowberry/balsamroot and Antelope-brush/bluebunch wheatgrass where each plant community occurs;
 - b) manage soil disturbance to ensure integrity of desired plant community; and
 - c) maintain shrub-steppe/grassland structure in accordance with the Antelope-brush/bluebunch wheatgrass desired plant community; and
 - d) maintain a diversity of understory species composition.

Pesticide GWMs

6. Do not use pesticides, except for the application of herbicides to control for noxious weeds or invasive plants.

Recreation GWMs

7. Do not develop recreational sites, trails or facilities.

4-120

Access GWMs

1. Do not construct roads and trails or conduct any maintenance activities that require new approvals.

Harvesting and silviculture GWMs

2. Do not harvest or salvage except to support restoration measures with silvicultural treatments. Retain widely spaced, large, older trees and snags.
3. Do not remove non-timber forest products.

Pesticide GWMs

4. Do not use pesticides, except for the application of herbicides to control for noxious weeds or invasive plants.

Range GWMs

5. Do not place livestock attractants within WHA.

Range Objectives

6. Plan livestock grazing (i.e., timing, distribution, and level of use) in order to meet the following objectives:
 - e) maintain and increase the species present in the Douglas-fir/snowberry/balsamroot desired plant community;
 - f) manage soil disturbance to ensure integrity of desired plant community; and
 - g) maintain or enhance open old forest structure in accordance with the Douglas-fir/snowberry/balsamroot desired plant community; and
 - h) maintain a diversity of understory species composition.

Recreation

7. Do not develop recreational sites, trails or facilities.



Signed this 27 day of June, 2011

Doug Konkin, Deputy Minister

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Appendix 1:

The following information is provided as background information and support to the order establishing WHAs 4-118 and 4-120. This appendix is not part of the order.

1. **Activities to which the order does not apply:** Section 2(2) of the *Government Actions Regulation* states

An order under any of sections 5 to 15 does not apply in respect of

- (a) any of the following entered into before the order takes effect:
 - (i) a cutting permit;
 - (ii) a road permit;
 - (iii) a timber sale licence that does not provide for cutting permits;
 - (iv) a forestry licence to cut issued by a timber sales manager under section 47.6 (3) of the Forest Act;
 - (v) subject to subsection (3), a minor tenure,
- (b) a declared area,
- (c) areas described in section 196 (1) of the Act, and
- (d) areas referred to in section 110 of the Forest Planning and Practices Regulation.

2. Authority to consider an exemption from these GWMs is provided in section 92(1) of the FPPR, section 79(1) of the *Woodlot Licenses Planning and Practices Regulation* and section 36(3) of the *Range Planning and Practices Regulation*. An exemption may be provided if the Minister's delegate is satisfied that the intent of the GWM will be achieved or that compliance with the provision is not practicable, given the circumstances or conditions applicable to a particular area.

An exemption application should be submitted to the Minister's delegate (Director, Resource Management (MFLNR), for the Region that the WHA is located) with a rationale describing the nature of the problem and options to integrate WHA conservation with proposed forest and/or range practices. This submission will assist in timely consideration of the matter, and will inform the conditions, if any, of the exemption that may be granted prior to commencement of activities. Upon receipt of a complete exemption application, a determination will normally be made within 14 days of arrival. Incomplete packages will be returned to the proponent for re-submission.

3. Due to the extreme sensitivity to disturbance of this plant community, fencing may be required to meet range goals and GWMs as described above, to allow for plant community recovery, or for restoration treatments. Should it be determined that fencing is required, the MoE and MFLNR will work collaboratively with the range tenure holder to explore opportunities for funding assistance and to determine areas of responsibility for fence construction and maintenance.

4. **Goals for Douglas-fir/snowberry/balsamroot and antelope-brush/bluebunch wheatgrass WHAs:**

- Manage to maintain and increase the species in the Desired Plant Community.
- Maintain a diversity of natural disturbance regimes.
- Allow for the processes of litter accumulation and renewal

- Maintain a diversity of understory species composition (e.g., *Festuca* spp.).
- Maintain or restore native grass-dominated ground cover.
- Avoid or minimize access.
- Minimize introduction and spread of invasive species.
- Minimize soil disturbance.