



Reference: 264420

May 27, 2021

EMAIL: kevin.kriese@bcfpb.ca

Kevin Kriese, Chair
Forest Practices Board
PO Box 9905 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, British Columbia
V8W 9R1

Dear Kevin Kriese:

On behalf of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD), I ask you to please accept this letter as government's response to the Forest Practices Board's recommendations in its report *Management of Biodiversity in the Prince George Timber Supply Area (December 2020)*.

As the Forest Practices Board is aware, FLNRORD is currently in the process of responding to the *Strategic Review of How British Columbia Manages for Old Forests Within its Ancient Ecosystems (September 2020)*. This operational response is within the context of that ongoing review. In addition, FLNRORD is in the process of moving forward with Modernized Land Use Planning and it is anticipated that future planning will refine the interim spatialization described in this response.

Forest Practices Board Report Recommendation 1:

Promptly spatialize old growth management areas where the immediate risks to old forest are the greatest.

Government Response:

FLNRORD recognizes the findings of the investigation and has initiated work with First Nations in the Timber Supply Area to develop an interim spatialization approach to the implementation of the *Order Establishing Landscape Biodiversity Objectives for the Prince George Timber Supply Area October 20, 2004* (the "Order"). A spatialized approach to the implementation of the Order will be consistent with the old forest retention objectives defined within the Order.

Key Components:

- FLNRORD's intent is to develop a spatialization approach for the entire Prince George Timber Supply Area. Priority for spatialization would be given to areas of greatest ecological risk.

- A spatialized approach will be interim, with an anticipated duration of 2-3 years. The reason for this interim approach is to promptly respond to the Forest Practices Board and preserve options for longer-term approaches to old growth that would be determined through land use planning.
- Implementation of spatialization may be sequenced to occur in different parts of the Timber Supply Area at different times to manage relationships and existing collaborative processes.
- Implementation of any interim spatial approach will be implemented either through agreement with forest licence holders and First Nations or enforced through the discretion of District Managers.

Forest Practices Board Report Recommendation 2:

Review and update the requirements for biodiversity in the PG TSA. This should be consistent with emerging partnerships with First Nations, following a transparent process for public involvement and considering the potential implications of climate change on forest management.

Government Response:

Determination of a long-term approach to old growth in this area is most appropriately undertaken through land use planning, which is the preferred process mechanism to determine the social, cultural, economic, and environmental trade-offs associated with different approaches. Land use planning in a significant portion of the Prince George TSA is in the early stages and old growth is a primary value under consideration. Interim protection of spatial old growth areas is under active development. Long term protection will come through a finalized land use plan anticipated once a broad public process has been completed.

In closing, I would like to again thank the Forest Practices for its report and recommendations on biodiversity in the PG Timber Supply Area. The ministry looks forward to continued engagement with the Forest Practices Board on how to protect old-growth values as well as practices for the implementation of the modernized land use planning for the protection of ecological values while recognizing communities, residents and Indigenous Nations.

Sincerely,



David Van Dolah
Acting Regional Executive Director
Omineca Natural Resource Region

pc: Eamon O'Donoghue, Assistant Deputy Minister, North Area
Diane Nicholls, Assistant Deputy Minister, Chief Forester
David Muter, Assistant Deputy Minister, Resource Stewardship Division
Russ Laroche, Executive Director, Species at Risk Recovery Branch
David Van Dolah, Acting Regional Executive Director, Omineca Natural Resource Region
Jill Park, Acting District Manager, Stuart Nechako Natural Resource District

Kevin Kriese, Chair

John Huybers, District Manager, Prince George Natural Resource District

Rachael Pollard, Acting Director, Resource Practices Branch

Norah White, Manager, Sustainable Resource Management, Resource Practices Branch



Forest Practices Board

File: 97325-20/2018-042

June 8, 2021

David Van Dolah
Acting Regional Executive Director
Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
499 George Street
Prince George, BC V2L 1R5

Dear David Van Dolah:

Re: Complaint 18042 – Response to recommendations

Thank you for your May 27, 2021 letter responding to recommendations the Board made in its *Management of Biodiversity in the Prince George Timber Supply Area* complaint investigation report.

The Board supports government's intent to address the recommendations through the interim spatialization of old growth in areas with greatest ecological risk, and updating the requirements for biodiversity in the Prince George Timber Supply Area through land use planning with broad public input.

The Board recognizes that full implementation of the recommendations will take time and it will continue to monitor government's progress over the next few years.

While this file is now closed, I would appreciate an update on your progress in implementing the recommendations by December 31, 2022.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Kriese
Chair

David Van Dolah

June 8, 2021

Page 2

cc

Eamon O'Donoghue, Assistant Deputy Minister, North Area

Diane Nicholls, Assistant Deputy Minister, Chief Forester

David Muter, Assistant Deputy Minister, Resource Stewardship Division

Russ Laroche, Executive Director, Species at Risk Recovery Branch

Jill Park, Acting District Manager, Stuart Nechako Natural Resource District

John Huybers, District Manager, Prince George Natural Resource District

Rachael Pollard, Acting Director, Resource Practices Branch

Norah White, Manager, Sustainable Resource Management, Resource Practices Branch