

For immediate release  
Feb. 24, 2026

## Wildfire-risk-reduction work near Alkali Lake largely compliant

WILLIAMS LAKE – The Forest Practices Board has completed an investigation into wildfire-risk-reduction harvesting in cutblock areas near Alkali Lake in the Cariboo, finding that most activities met legal and forest practices requirements, with one administrative error identified.

The investigation examined five wildfire-risk-reduction treatment areas located within mule deer winter range. Four of the five areas complied with legal requirements. In one case, harvesting proceeded without a required exemption.

Wildfire-risk reduction has become an increasing priority for communities, First Nations, and government as wildfire frequency and severity continue to rise. In many areas, the efforts take place in landscapes with pre-existing legal objectives for wildlife habitat and old growth, creating challenges when different forest values overlap on the same land base.

While the exemption was not obtained in one treatment area, the board observed that the work on the ground reduced wildfire risk and maintained mature forest cover important for mule deer winter habitat.

“This investigation shows that community wildfire safety and wildlife habitat aren’t an either-or choice,” said Gerry Grant, vice-chair of the board. “In this case, the work on the ground supported community wildfire safety while maintaining important habitat values.”

The investigation highlights the complexity of managing wildfire risk in landscapes with overlapping legal objectives. As wildfire risk continues to increase in B.C., integrated and adaptive processes are essential to support community safety while maintaining wildlife habitat and other forest values.

### Quick Facts:

- Scope of investigation: The board examined five specific wildfire-risk-reduction cutblocks harvested since Jan. 1, 2020.
- Location: The treatment areas are located near the community of Esk’et, approximately 52 kilometres south of Williams Lake in the Cariboo-Chilcotin Natural Resource District.
- Compliance record: Four of the five cutblocks met legal requirements under the Forest and Range Practices Act and the Forest Planning and Practices Regulation.
- Habitat overlap: All five cutblocks were located within a designated mule deer winter range, with one treatment area overlapping with a legally protected old-growth management area.

### Learn More:

- To read the full report, visit: <https://www.bcfpb.ca/release-publications/releases/alkali-lake-harvesting>

### Contact:

Tanner Senko  
Communications Manager  
Forest Practices Board  
[tanner.senko@bcfpb.ca](mailto:tanner.senko@bcfpb.ca)  
Phone: 250-889-8211 / 1 800 994-5899