



Fuel Management Plan

Prince Albert Crown Forest

Prepared by
Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency
Date: July 2025

Contents

Introduction..... 3

Project Objective 3

Project Areas 4

Fuel Management Prescription:..... 7

Project Engagement Process 8

Environmental & Heritage Considerations..... 8

Summary 8

Fuel Management Plan Sign-off 10

Figure 1: Proposed block north of Evergreen Road. Grey shaded area is fuel management that was completed in 2023-2024 4

Figure 2: Two blocks totaling 7.7 and 4.3 hectares south of the Marks 9 golf course..... 4

Figure 3: Representative photo of the blocks near Marks 9 golf course. 5

Figure 4: Representative photo of the stand type adjacent to highway 3..... 6

Figure 5: Representative photo of the maintenance block that needs cleanup..... 6

Figure 6: Mature Jack Pine stand that was hand thinned by Forest Drive in 2022..... 7

Introduction

The City of Prince Albert has expressed concerns about the wildfire risk to the various subdivisions on the north side of the Saskatchewan River. Many of these subdivisions are rated at a “Very High Risk” from wildfire due to the jack pine stands in the area.

In 2019 the federal government opened the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund for project applications. The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency put in a proposal to this fund to carry out community wildfire mitigation project work within the province, including work on Crown Land in the Prince Albert area. The federal government will cover 50% of eligible project costs for mitigation work on crown land with the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency covering the other 50%.

As part of the Wildfire Risk Reduction and Community Resiliency Project funded by the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund 51.9 hectares of forest is proposed for thinning and maintenance.

Project Objective

To contract out the opportunity to remove dead trees, clean up deadfall, and to thin and prune the softwood trees to ensure these areas will not carry a high intensity fire. The treated blocks will not burn as intensely because there is less fuel available to burn, making it easier for suppression efforts to be successful should a wildfire ignite or burn into these areas.

Thinning projects have shown to be effective in reducing the intensity of wildfire and preventing tree crown to crown spread. Fires that burn less intensely and are not burning as full crown fires are much easier for suppression crews to manage. The end result would be a clean, parklike area that is still aesthetically pleasing but will not carry an intense wildfire. Thinning projects are not designed to stop fires and it is important to note that individuals who own property in the area should take the necessary FireSmart steps to reduce the risk from wildfire to their own properties.

This work will also help to increase safety levels of any responding to a wildfire incident and those evacuating because of the incident.

The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency has developed case studies on how these thinning projects have shown to be effective in helping manage wildfires within Saskatchewan. These case studies are available on saskpublicsafety.ca

Project Areas

Mitigation work this fiscal year will take place in 7 blocks and will total 51.9 hectares. All of the blocks are jack pine dominant with varying age classes within the stands. One block will be completed north of Evergreen Road adjacent to the thinning that was completed in the winter of 23-24 (Figure 1). There will be two blocks of thinning to be completed south of the Marks Nine Golf Course that will tie into existing fuel treatment areas to the north and south (Figure 2). These two blocks will be 7.7 and 4.3 hectares in size and are heavily infected with dwarf mistletoe which will be targeted first during the project (Figure 3).



Figure 1: Proposed block north of Evergreen Road that is 6.3 hectares in size. Grey shaded area is fuel management that was completed in 2023-2024



Figure 2: Two blocks totaling 7.7 and 4.3 hectares south of the Marks 9 golf course.



Figure 3: Representative photo of the blocks near Marks 9 golf course.

West of Prince Albert along Highway three there will be two proposed blocks that will tie into existing fuel treatment areas adjacent to Holmes Drive to the west and Forest Drive to the east (Figure 4). The two blocks are 17.4 and 6.8 hectares in size respectively and are composed of mature jack pine.

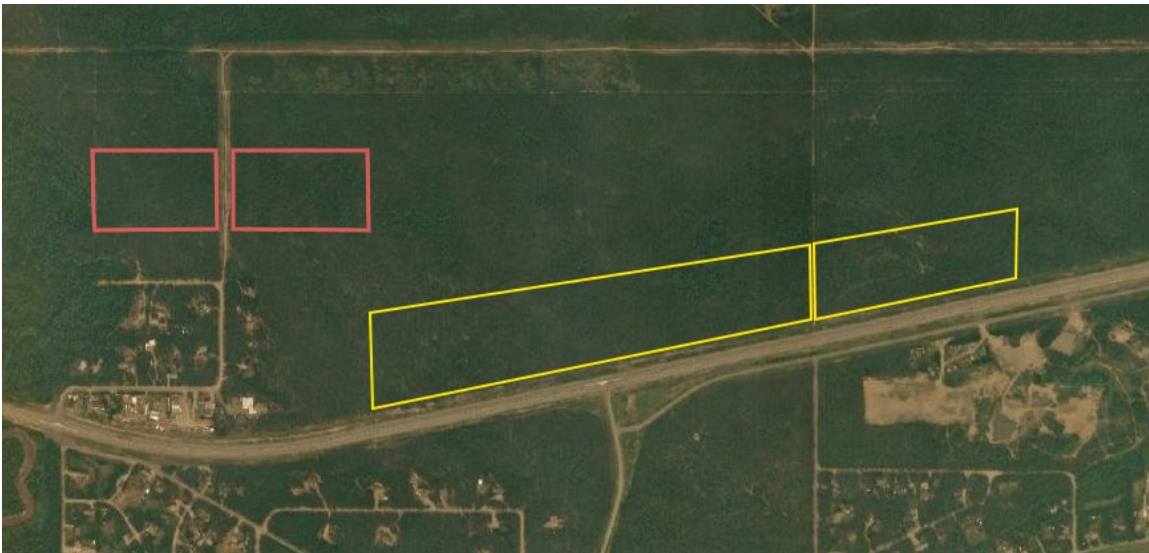


Figure 4: Yellow blocks are new thinning, and red blocks are maintenance to complete unfinished work from 2024-2025.



Figure 5: Representative photo of the stand type adjacent to highway 3.

There will also be two blocks of maintenance work to be completed north of Holmes Drive (Figure 4). These blocks are to complete work that was left unfinished from the winter of 2024-2025. The stand has not reached 2 meters of crown separation and there is a large amount of slash remaining in the block to be burnt. All areas being thinned can be accessed directly from the existing road network and no new access trails will be constructed.



Figure 6: Representative photo of the maintenance block that needs cleanup.

Fuel Management Prescription:

Hand Crew Thinning

The proposed work would start in November before excessive snow depth and cold temperatures make the mitigation work more difficult. Burning of slash will not begin until there is enough snow to facilitate safe brush pile burning.

Hand crews using chain saws would remove all the standing dead and any down trees within the blocks and the softwood trees would be thinned so there is a 2 m separation between the widest portion of the crowns. All live hardwood trees would be left. When removing trees, the unhealthy trees would be targeted leaving the healthiest trees behind. All mature softwood trees that are left within the block will be pruned to a height of 1.5 m to help prevent a surface fire from getting up into the tree crowns. The resulting slash would be piled and burned as the crew's progress through the blocks.

Trees suitable for firewood would be cut up and piled within the blocks for the locals to utilize. Any firewood resulting from the project cannot be sold or bartered.

The completed project will look similar to Figure 6 below.



Figure 7: Mature Jack Pine stand that was hand thinned by Forest Drive in 2022

The burn piles will have to be checked by the crews on a regular basis and any resulting ground fires will have to be dug out and extinguished as they are found. No burning would be allowed until there is snow cover to minimize these potential issues. Controlled Burns and Grass Fires notification would be required once the project commences until completion.

Project Engagement Process

This proposal is designed to be shared with the local stakeholders for comment and ultimately for sign off by the Rural Municipality of Buckland, the areas Protection Officer, Director of Land Operations, and a Registered Professional Forest Technologist.

The project will go through the government's Duty to Consult process to ensure any legal duty to consult obligations are met.

Environmental & Heritage Considerations

A Saskatchewan Conservation Data Centre project review of the proposed sites was performed and appropriate mitigation measures are in effect for rare, endangered, or at risk species.

The work being proposed would be done by hand crews, which is considered to be a low intensity activity as all work is to be done by chainsaws and brush saws and the crew will be accessing the area by foot. Small burn piles within the parcel areas may generate some local smoke conditions. No new access trails would be created as a result of these projects.

A Heritage Resource Review has been requested for the proposed project sites with no concerns returned. Past experience has shown that hand crews will have no impact on Heritage sites.

Summary

Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency staff are available to meet to discuss the project in more detail, contact the representative below. Comments and suggestions are welcomed and every effort will be made to incorporate any input into a final proposal.

Once the plan is approved by the listed stakeholders and any necessary Duty to Consult processes are complete then the project can be advertised. The approved project would be advertised as a Negotiated Request for Bids opportunity on the Sasktenders.ca website. All work must be completed by March 31, 2026.

Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency Contact Information

Michael Springinotic

Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation Specialist

Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency

Box 5005, 2120 Central Ave N

Prince Albert, Canada S6V 6W9

Cell 306-940-6349

michael.springinotic@gov.sk.ca

saskpublicsafety.ca