

BRIEFING NOTE FOR INFORMATION

October 17, 2023

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Bruce Ralston, Minister of Forests

ISSUE: Preliminary summary of the old growth impacted by 2023 wildfires

BACKGROUND:

- As of October 10, 2023, **more than 2.8 million hectares** of land have been affected by wildfires.
- Preliminary estimates indicate **94 million cubic metres** of timber volume has been burned.
- Using current average harvest rates, this is equivalent to **almost two years** of allowable annual cut.

Old Growth Impacted

- The preliminary estimated area of old growth burned is **245,922 hectares**, which equates to **2.2 percent of the total old-growth** area in the province.
- The preliminary estimated volume of old growth burned is **26.8 million cubic metres**, which equates to **0.8 percent of the total old-growth volume** in the province.

Old-growth Deferrals Impacted

- The preliminary estimated area of deferred old growth burned is **77,518 hectares**, which equates to **3.3 percent of the total deferred old-growth area** in the province.
- The preliminary estimated volume of deferred old growth burned is **8.3 million cubic metres**, which is **1.5 percent of the total old growth deferral volume**.

DISCUSSION:

- The preliminary estimated area of old growth burned in 2023 is **six times the area of old growth harvested annually** in each of 2020 and in 2021.
- Completion of burn assessments is anticipated in November, at which time impact figures will be refined.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

- The summary of wildfire impacts on the provincial timber supply will be assessed once burn assessments are complete.

SUMMARY:

- **The estimated area of old growth burned in 2023 is 245,922 hectares, which equates to 2.2 percent of the total old-growth area in the province. This is approximately six times the area of old growth harvested annually in each of 2020 and in 2021.**

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REVIEWED BY:

	Initials	Date
DM		
a/DM	EOD	Oct 24, 2023
ADM	SB	Oct 19, 2023
E.D.	AN	Oct 17, 2023