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Purpose

These practices are required for work camps\(^1\) establishing or operating in bear country during the bear season\(^2\), for the following purposes:

- To enhance the safety of all workers that reside and work in industrial camps located in bear country by managing attractants\(^3\) and preventing wildlife access to camps.
- To improve the management and conservation of black and grizzly bears in Alberta by reducing human-bear conflicts through reducing or removing attractants\(^3\).
- To provide the appropriate direction for companies that operate in bear country to comply with the Alberta Wildlife Act and bear safe practices.

Preface

Throughout this document, there are certain terms that are accompanied by an asterisk\(^*\). In these cases, these terms are further identified and defined within the Alberta Public Lands Glossary of Terms to ensure applicants are fully aware of their meaning and intent. The Alberta Public Lands Glossary of Terms is available on the Environment and Parks external website.

When important terms are not currently defined in the Alberta Public Lands Glossary of Terms, a superscripted number will accompany these certain terms and the following definitions shall apply:

\(^1\) “Work Camps” refers to all Commercial and Industrial Camps on public land. They could be associated with any of the following disposition codes: DML, PLA, DOA, TFA, MSL, DMS, LOC, DLO, DPL, PIL, MLL, DML, EZE, REA, SML or SMC, and includes temporary work camps such as tree planting camps.

\(^2\) “Bear season” refers to the period from April 1 to November 30.

\(^3\) “Attractants” means anything a bear may associate with food, a mate or a cub in distress is considered an attractant. They may include but are not limited to: garbage, human, pet or livestock food, wastewater, cooking grease, recycling, petroleum products (i.e. plastic jerry cans), personal hygiene products and blood and animal carcasses.

\(^4\) “Large Carnivore” refers primarily to any bear, cougar, coyote or wolf.

\(^5\) “Human-wildlife conflicts” means any incident that has the potential to cause injury and/or property damage. This includes any large carnivore feeding on unnatural foods (i.e. garbage, human food, pet food, ornamental fruit trees, composters, and barbeques). It also includes incidents where the reaction of the large carnivore could result in personal injury, such as stalking behaviors, bluff-charges or maulings.

\(^6\) “Bear-resistant containers” means a securable container constructed of a solid, non-pliable material, capable of withstanding 270 joules (200 foot-pounds) of energy. When secured and under stress, the container will not have any cracks, openings or hinges that would allow a bear to gain entry by biting or pulling with its claws. Wood containers are not considered bear-resistant unless they are reinforced with metal.
Approval Conditions Applicable to All Industrial Camps

Staff Training and Awareness

- All staff must have wildlife-safety training.
- Under the Alberta Wildlife Act (24(1)), it is illegal to harass any wildlife. All companies must have a clear policy against staff feeding and harassing wildlife.
- All staff should have access to BearSmart educational resources (i.e. Staying Safe and Working Safe in Bear Country videos, Government of Alberta BearSmart pamphlets).
- Signs should be posted to inform staff of bear safe practices (i.e. no littering, do not feed wildlife, remove attractants from vehicles).

Site Selection

- All new camps must be constructed within 100 meters of an existing arterial all-weather permanent access.
- Camps must not be placed within 200m of a large permanent watercourse, a Grizzly bear den site*, a mineral lick* or a major wildlife corridor*. Camps should be located out of visual and auditory range from the aforementioned sites and areas.

Sightings and Adaptive Management

- All large carnivore sightings and activities within 100m around the camp and operating area must be recorded. A Fish and Wildlife Officer can request this information at any time.
- Camps must have a large carnivore wildlife response plan that includes a main on-site contact person and the Report-A-Poacher phone number (1-800-642-3800) quickly accessible.
- Any human-wildlife conflicts that can be handled safely by onsite staff members or contractors, and within their authorities, does not need to be reported local Fish and Wildlife Officers.

Electric Fence

- Must construct and maintain an adequate electrified fence (i.e. bottom wire appropriate distance from the ground), complete with electrified gate access, to prevent bears from accessing the site.
- Electrified perimeter fence must encompass all garbage containment areas, dining areas and wastewater containment, cooking and accommodation facilities.
- Clear all vegetation within 2m on either side of the electrified fence to maintain fence function.
- The electrified function of the fence and gate must be operational at all times during the bear season².
- The electrified function must be set up as per manufacturer’s instructions and must be tested daily. See BearSmart: Electric Fences and Bears fact sheet (2017) for the Government of Alberta’s recommendation for effective electric fencing for BearSmart purposes.

Camp Arrangement

- Unless they are within the same enclosed hard-walled building, sleeping areas should be kept away from cooking, eating and wastewater containments areas by at least 100m.
- Skirting must be in place and maintained on all applicable buildings to prevent wildlife access.
- Attractants should not be kept within 5m inside the perimeter of the electric fence.

Contact Report-A-Poacher

All human-wildlife conflicts that cannot be handled safely by onsite staff members or contractors, and within their authorities, shall be promptly reported to the Fish and Wildlife Officers by calling Report-A-Poacher (1-800-642-3800).
Attractants

- All attractants must be secured in bear-resistant containers or hard-walled structures and within the electrified perimeter fence. Attractants may include, but is not limited to:
  - human food
  - garbage
  - recycling
  - cooking grease
  - food containers
  - barbeques

- Camp area should be inspected daily for new or misplaced attractants.
- The presence of odours and attractants should be minimized as much as possible.

Vegetation Management*

- Remove fruit-bearing vegetation from the camp and surrounding 50m area.
- Clear vegetation within 2m on either side of the electrified fence to maintain fence function.
- Clear visually obstructing vegetation within the electrified fence and at least 15m outside the electrified fence to ensure adequate line of site.

Garbage, Cooking Grease and Recycling

- Garbage, cooking grease and recycling must be secured in bear-resistant containers or hard-walled structures and within the electrified perimeter fence.
- Bear-resistant containment must be secured with lids that shall be kept closed when not being loaded.
- Bear-resistant containment must be emptied before reaching full capacity.
- External bear-resistant containment surfaces must be kept clean.
- Ensure garbage, cooking grease and recycling are not stored on site when all staff will be off site for more than two days.

Waste Water

- Must use totally enclosed bear-resistant black and grey water containment. Company must discourage random dispersal of fecal material.
- Must treat all liquid effluents and waste, or dispose of at an authorized waste disposal facility.
- Water standpipes, taps or hand pumps must remain free of food particles, grease accumulations and other debris.
- Should minimize wastewater odors (i.e. use liming techniques).

Other Attractants

- No garbage, food or other attractants shall be left in the vehicles kept outside the fenced camp area.
- No unsupervised pets shall be kept on the premises. Pets shall be kept in enclosed buildings when staff are away from camp. Pet food must be secured in bear-resistant containers or hard-walled structures and within the electrified perimeter fenced area.
- Non-food attractants such as petroleum products must be secured in bear-resistant containers or hard-walled structures and within the electrified perimeter fenced area.
- Smoking areas and cigarette disposers shall be within the electrified perimeter fenced area.
- All personal hygiene items and other attractants must not be stored in tents.

Additional Conditions for Long-term Industrial Camps (more than one bear season)

- Camps must have a permanent two-meter high chain-link or game-proof fence accompanied by a permanent electrified fence with at least six electrified strands. The electric fence may be retrofitted to the chain-link fence.
- Camps must use certified bear resistant containers.