

Information Letter 2008-05

July 11, 2008

## Foothills Landscape Management Forum Berland Smoky Access Plan Area

### Purpose

This Information Letter (posted at <http://srd.alberta.ca/lands/formspublications/usingpublicland/default.aspx#frms>) addresses new obligations and specific direction for primary access routing<sup>1</sup> applications within the Berland Smoky planning area (attachment #1).

### Background

Through an extensive integrated land management initiative, the Foothills Landscape Management Forum (the Forum) developed the Berland Smoky Access Plan (the Plan). This work was carried out by representatives from energy and forestry industries, in consultation with the Department of Sustainable Resource Development (SRD).

The Plan identifies primary access routing within the Berland Smoky area as agreed to by the plan participants, and endorsed by SRD on June 23, 2006.

The Plan is posted on the following website: <http://srd.alberta.ca/lands/usingpublicland/integratedlandmanagement/nwilminitiatives.aspx> and can be obtained from SRD at:

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, South Petroleum Plaza  
 9915 – 108 Street  
 Edmonton, AB T5K 2G8

### Expectations/Procedures

- 1) All primary access routing agreed to in the Plan will conform to the following:
  - Planning and construction shall be consistent with the Plan and with Information Letter 2003-23: “Oil and Gas Best Practices in the West Central Caribou Range”, found on website: <http://inform.energy.gov.ab.ca/Documents/Published/IL-2003-23.pdf>

- At the time of disposition application, primary access routes may be requested to be up to and including all weather road standard. The Plan provides guidance on the location of primary corridors regardless of road standard.
- Road disposition applications within the plan area will adhere to the plan’s route selection criteria and guidelines.
- At the time of disposition application, industry will be expected to provide details of required stakeholder consultation and/or notification.
- Collaboration and communication between industrial land users in the area shall be undertaken within the context of SRD Integrated Land Management principles (attachment #2). This will be reflected in appropriate disposition documentation (e.g., Area Operating Agreements, Environmental Field Reports).
- Planning, construction, and operation of roads shall incorporate the potential for shared use by other land users, and must address government requirements regarding public access. This will be reflected in appropriate disposition documentation (e.g., Area Operating Agreements, Environmental Field Reports).
- Applications that remain consistent with primary access routes identified in the Plan will undergo a streamlined review and approval process, meaning that further evaluation of road standards and of alternative primary routing options will not be required and further demonstration that a road is needed will not be required. Based on the site specific proposal submitted within the approved corridor, the road may be subject to site specific conditioning.

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of the Information Letter, “primary access routing” means the main routes on attachment 1.

- 2) Applications that do not conform to, or that contradict the Plan, will be referred to the Plan membership to seek alignment with the existing plan. Plan membership (including SRD) must support the change in the modified primary access routes and submit an amended corridor plan.
- 3) SRD will determine if information provided by primary access route applicants is consistent with the Plan and its guidelines.
- 4) Temporary winter access along existing open seismic lines that does not adhere to the primary access routes in the plan may be permitted under special circumstances. When this winter access becomes redundant upon the construction of the primary route, such access will be reclaimed.
- 5) The impact on other resource values and users of new roads (e.g., spur roads) coming off of primary access routes shall be minimized through:
  - early consultation with other industrial land users and SRD;
  - integrated access planning between the industrial/commercial land users;
  - careful selection of road type, construction standards, anticipated lifespan needed, and conditions of use; and
  - appropriate and timely reclamation of these spur roads.
- 6) Industry will provide to SRD information on the status of the development and reclamation of roads within the primary access routes as such information becomes available. This information will be held by SRD and made available to existing and new land users in the area.
- 7) As broad policy directions emerge from the Alberta Government (e.g., West Central Caribou Landscape Management Plan; grizzly bear recovery strategies; Land-use Framework), or as new information becomes available from the Forum or other sources, this Information Letter and referenced Plan may need to be reviewed and modified to ensure consistency with provincial direction.

### **Contacts**

SRD staff can be contacted at the number below. To use the government's toll-free RITE Line, dial 310-0000 and enter the desired phone number.

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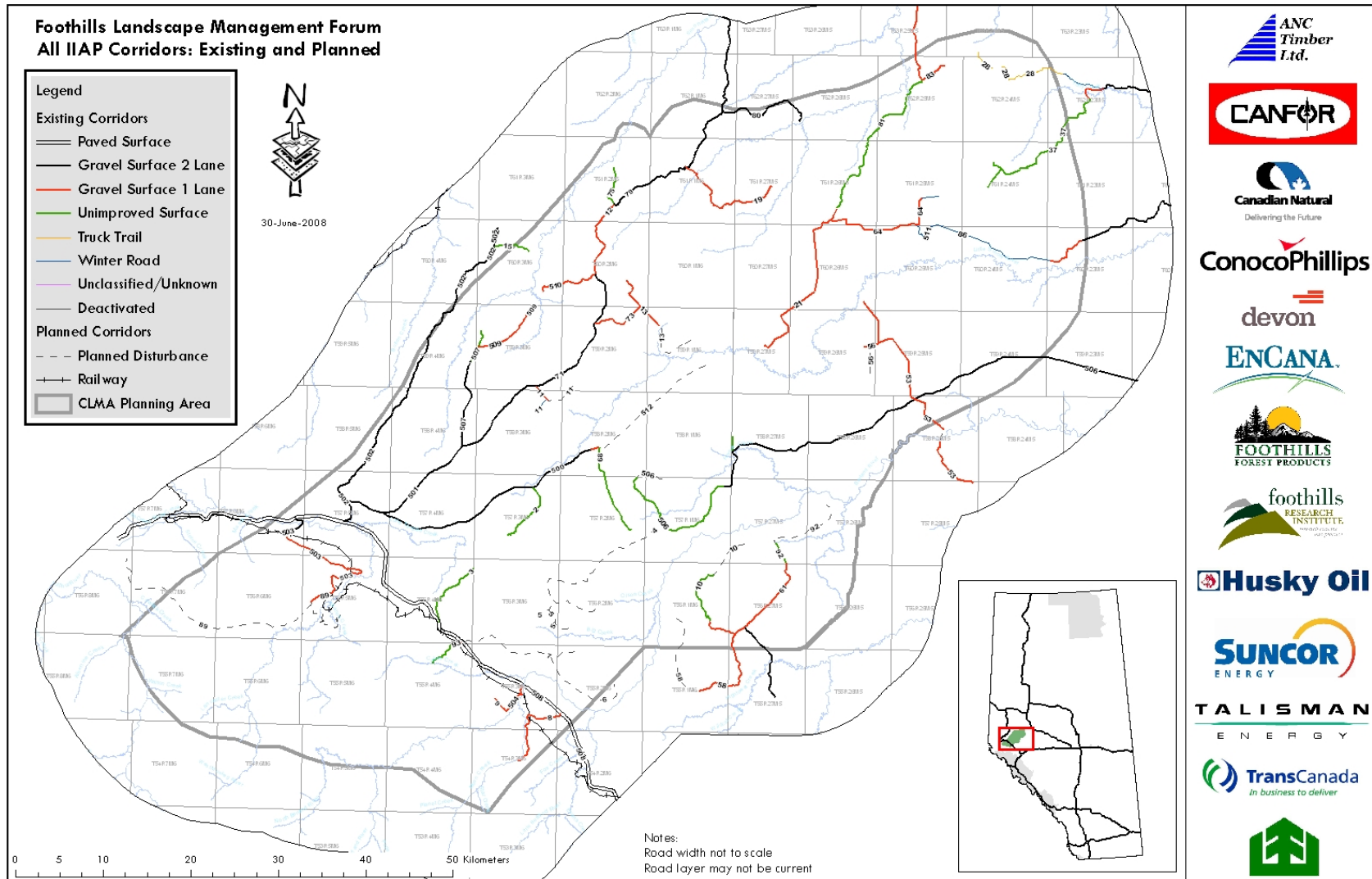
Original signed

Glenn Selland, Executive Director  
 Land Management Branch  
 Lands Division  
 Alberta Department of Sustainable  
 Resource Development

Original signed

Jennifer Steber, Business Unit Leader  
 Resource Land Access  
 Alberta Department of Energy

# Attachment #1: Map of Existing and Planned Corridors



## Attachment 2: Integrated Land Management Principles

With the diverse range of interests in and uses of provincial Crown land and the diversity of landscapes in Alberta, ILM needs to be anchored by an approach and philosophy across all sectors that embraces and accepts that:

- operational ILM planning should consider past, current and potential future land and resource demands, historic uses, and land use goals as established by policy or higher order planning documents;
- site specific adaptive approaches to land and resource use are required, recognizing that an approach which is appropriate to one area may not be appropriate to others;
- innovative ideas and practices are encouraged and supported as part of a process of continuous improvement;
- equal opportunities for meaningful engagement need to be provided to all potential users of provincial Crown land and associated natural resources;
- timely information sharing needs to occur, facilitating the identification of needs and the sharing of perspectives, area specific information, and land/resource related data;
- clear objectives with measurable outcomes need to be stated at the onset, so that ILM has clear direction and goals, performance can be assessed, and the related processes can be continuously adapted as necessary;
- a range of tools is required, including but not limited to, regulatory and non-regulatory incentives, stewardship programming and performance measures, to motivate all potential users of provincial Crown land and associated resources to participate in and implement ILM; and,
- successful management of provincial Crown land and implementation of ILM ultimately depends on the collaborative commitment and actions of all participants of ILM.

With the above approach in mind, participants in ILM must apply the principles below to achieve ILM outcomes. These principles must be considered and applied in their entirety, with the understanding that one principle is just as important as the others.

### ***Integrated Land Management will be...***

- ☑ **...comprehensive and balanced** in its consideration of the issues/benefits/risks relevant to the scale being considered. The range of First Nations, social, environmental, economic, historic and potential future interests, values, implications and trade-offs, in the short and long term will be considered in decision-making.
- ☑ **...supported by a stewardship ethic.** Users of provincial Crown land and associated natural resources will be responsible and accountable for their decisions and actions with regard to the maintenance of values associated with land and resources.

- ☑ ... **knowledge and science-based** in its approach. Use of the best available information<sup>2</sup> will lead to an understanding of the potential consequences of choices, and will provide the foundation for informed and prudent decisions.
- ☑ ...**sensitive to cumulative environmental effects**. Planning will take into account the individual and cumulative impacts and benefits of natural and anthropogenic activities and events that affect the environment.
- ☑ ...**sensitive to cumulative socio-economic effects**. Planning will take into account the individual and cumulative benefits and impacts on social values<sup>3</sup> and economic factors.
- ☑ ...**proactive and responsive**, providing for continuous improvement and the incorporation of new information and innovation, while at the same time, identifying information gaps and other needs, and seeking to fill them.
- ☑ ...**linked and integrated** with key guiding policies and plans<sup>4</sup>.
- ☑ ...**timely and outcome-oriented**, such that decision-making processes are efficient and strive for consensus<sup>5</sup>.
- ☑ ...**clearly communicated**. ILM roles and responsibilities, related processes and outcomes will be well-defined and understandable, and be clearly communicated to all stakeholders and the public on a timely basis.
- ☑ ...**collaborative and inclusive**, seeking out and supporting engagement and partnerships among participants.
- ☑ ...**respectful**, and consider the diverse values, interests, knowledge and motivation of ILM participants.

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<sup>2</sup> Information considered in decision-making should include, but not be limited to, the best available science, research, data, knowledge (including place-based, local, regional and traditional knowledge, past experiences, and cultural considerations); resource and land use goals; and economic, social or environmental opportunities and limits defined through trade-off or other analyses.

<sup>3</sup> Refers to those things that society believes important as identified through the “comprehensive and balanced” principle.

<sup>4</sup> Includes local, regional, and provincial scale policies and plans of the Government of Alberta and the federal government (where it has or shares jurisdiction in Alberta), and broad-scale plans (e.g., disaster response) of municipal governments, and government-endorsed policies and plans of individuals, groups and organizations.

<sup>5</sup> According to the Clean Air Strategic Alliance, “a consensus exercise is the bringing together of a group of people in an attempt to address the interests or concerns that underlie the parties' positions on an issue. The focus is therefore on finding solutions to the problems faced by each party so that each participant can agree to a set of recommendations. While participants may not agree with every detail of the overall package, the end result of a successful consensus exercise is a set of decisions that everyone can "live with," because it reflects the interests of everyone at the table.” ([http://www.casahome.org/about\\_casa/consensus.asp](http://www.casahome.org/about_casa/consensus.asp))