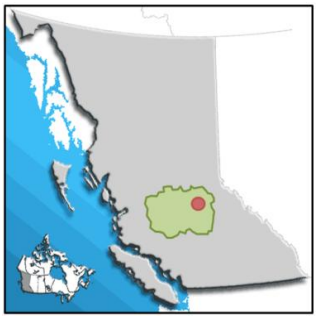
Case Study: How Cumulative Effects were Considered in the Context of Cutting Permits

PROJECT LOCATION

Cariboo Region, 100 Mile House Forest District



Cumulative Effects:
Changes to environmental, social and economic values caused by the combined effect of past, present and potential future activities and natural processes.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS VALUES ASSESSED

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Proposed Cutting and Road Building Permits:

- Salvage Mountain Pine Beetle killed pine.

Potential Benefits:

- Forestry related employment.
- Fire risk management.
- Increased fibre supply for local industry.

Potential Concerns Identified:

- Potential for cumulative effects to hydrologic conditions and wildlife habitat.
- Potential impacts to First Nations Aboriginal and Treaty rights in relation to fishing, hunting moose and trapping marten.

CARIBOO CUMULATIVE EFFECTS ASSESSMENT (CEA) INFORMATION USED

Moose and Marten

The CEA assessed current condition of moose and marten habitat based on the following:

1. **Hazard** – the current state of the landscape and the ability to meet habitat requirements (% of habitat impacted by roads and harvesting).
2. **Ecological Importance** – the relative importance or consequence of an impact to habitat (abundance of high value habitat).
3. **Current Mitigation** – the level of mitigation currently in place (% of habitat protected).

Fisheries/Watershed Condition

The Cariboo CEA assessed current hydrologic sensitivity based on the following:

1. **Hazard –** indicators of sedimentation and potential changes to streamflow.
2. **Ecological Importance** – ratings of the importance of fish habitat.
3. **Current Mitigation** – current degree of watershed protection and management. Licensee watershed assessment information was also considered.

"The Cariboo Cumulative Effects Assessment has been a very useful tool for considering the potential implications for proposed development" – **Pat Bryne, District Manager**

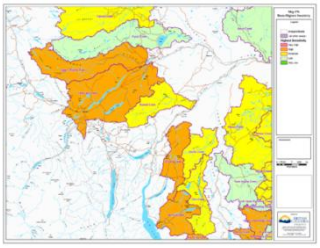
CUMULATIVE EFFECTS AND THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

At the beginning…

First Nations expressed concern about the cumulative effects of this proposal, along with other activities, potentially impacting the harvesting of their traditional food sources, in particular moose and fish, under Aboriginal or Treaty rights. These concerns over potential cumulative effects and impacts of the Crown decisions triggered the District Manager to consider cumulative effects in this decision.

CEA review and engagement….

The Cariboo CEA was reviewed by staff, along with other available information on moose and fish habitat and populations, and discussed with First Nations and the forest licensee.



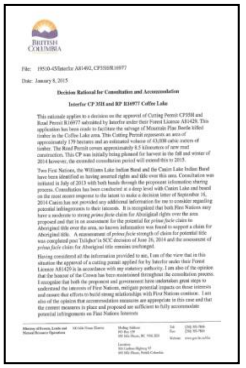
Addressing CE concerns…

The Cariboo CEA assisted staff in considering cumulative effects for assessing potential impacts of the proposed activities on Aboriginal and Treaty rights, as well as identifying options for mitigating potential impacts to moose and watershed condition in consultation with the forest licensee and First Nations.

The decision…

The Cutting and Road Building Permits were approved, with supporting measures for mitigating potential impacts to moose and watershed condition such as access controls, road rehabilitation, timing of harvesting and enhanced riparian area practices. A decision rationale documented the consideration of cumulative effects as part of the decision maker's assessment of the potential impacts of the proposed activities on Aboriginal and Treaty rights.

The outcome…



The interests and recommendations of First Nations and the forest licensee with respect to cumulative effects were clearly heard and used to inform resource decision making. The Cariboo CEA provided readily available information for considering cumulative effects for three values of interest to First Nations, and supported meaningful and informed engagement by the Province with First Nations on potential impacts to Aboriginal or Treaty rights. Cumulative effects were reasonably considered in the decision making process.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS BENEFIT STREAMS

STREAMLINE AUTHORZATONS	SUPPORT DURABLE DECISIONS	IMPROVE OUTCOMES FOR VALUES	CONSIDER IMPACTS TO ABORIGINAL & TREATY RIGHTS
Existing CEAs for values likely reduced staffing resources and permit times.	Greater information to support decision and document rationale.	Increased mitigation options considered and implemented.	Improved information to assess potential impacts to Aboriginal or Treaty rights.