

Little Smoky / A La Peche Caribou Compartment Series – operational guidelines

June 1, 2018

Accessing compartments

The access to the compartments is primarily controlled by the stated year of entry. As the timeframes for accessing the caribou compartments are asymmetrical over time, “Series” was used instead of traditional forestry terms such as “Period”. Series are specific to the forest management unit (FMU).

“Series 1” refers to the compartments that are immediately available for harvesting during the May 1, 2016- April 30, 2021 timber years. Harvest plans that fall within these compartment boundaries can be submitted for the 2018/2019 harvest season. “Series 1” replaces the Zone 1 boundaries that were released with the 2016 Alberta Government *draft* Little Smoky and A La Peche Range Plan. “Series 1” will be the only available area within the range for harvesting until the detailed range plans are produced, approved, and put into effect.

GOA encourages FMA holders work with their embedded quota holders when developing operational plans to harvest within “Series 1” to ensure that the available volume is accessed in a fair and reasonable manner.

GOA is expecting that the detailed range plans will be in effect by May 1, 2021. Prior to accessing the “Series 2” compartments, the forest management plans (FMP) for FMUs that access the caribou range will need to be revisited to varying degrees. The degree will vary, depending on how well the current FMP aligns with the range plan, and how much of the FMA falls within the range.

It is anticipated that at a minimum, a new operable twenty-year spatial harvest sequence (SHS) will need to be developed by May 1, 2021. This updated SHS will follow the principles outlined in the forest management planning standard, and will allocate a proportional amount of the available volume within the open compartments to both the FMA holder and the quota holders, based on their tenure shares.

A series of compartments cannot be accessed prior to the start date associated with the series (see Table 1). If quadrant controls are defined for an area, such as was done for W15, the same entry rules apply. An operator can defer harvesting blocks from the first quadrant to the second quadrant, but not past the end of the series.

Name		Opening date	Closing date
Series 1		May 1, 2016	April 30, 2021
Series 2		May 1, 2021	April 30, 2031
	Quadrant 1	May 1, 2021	April 30, 2026
	Quadrant 2	May 1, 2026	April 30, 2031
Series 3		May 1, 2031	April 30, 2041
	Quadrant 1	May 1, 2031	April 30, 2035
	Quadrant 2	May 1, 2036	April 30, 2041
Series 4		May 1, 2041	April 30, 2051
Series 5		May 1, 2051	April 30, 2061
Series 6		May 1, 2061	April 30, 2071
Series 7		May 1, 2071	April 30, 2081
Series 8		May 1, 2081	April 30, 2091
Series 9		May 1, 2091	April 30, 2101
Series 10		May 1, 2101	April 30, 2111

Table 1: Compartment access timing by Series.

If an operator has been actively harvesting, but there is remaining merchantable growing stock in an open compartment at the end of the access period, the tenure holder is encouraged to continue harvesting in the initial compartment, and delay entry in the subsequent compartment. This choice would be made on a compartment basis, but would not be granted if blocks have been deferred for the entire time the series was open.

The choices of one tenure holder to either access or defer wood cannot impede the primary harvest of the other tenure holders

Harvest pattern

Stands that are part of the contributing landbase, and contribute to the calculation of the AAC at any point in the planning horizon, will be eligible for harvesting while the Series is open. Minimum harvest ages for stands will reflect the ages used in the TSA, and may vary by species mix and natural subregion. If age-related deferrals were present in the FMP to ensure merchantable volume, they should be converted to minimum harvest age adjustments instead¹.

Operating ground rules will still be in applied within the caribou range.

¹ For example, Sb stands, normally assigned a minimum harvest age of 90, were deferred for 20 years to allow them to mature. For this exercise, any Sb stand that is currently over 110 years old should be considered eligible for harvesting.

Accessing the caribou range is a form of area control. Variance will not apply within the caribou range, and additional blocks will not be allocated to offset any shortfalls between the forecasted and delivered volumes for a series of compartments.

Where applicable, the volumes and corresponding step-downs described in the 2016 Alberta Government *draft* Little Smoky and A La Peche Range Plan are applicable.

Future compartment revisions

The compartment boundaries and timing will be reviewed by EP, following the results of the periodic caribou surveys.