

## **Cumberland Delta Resource Management Fires Burn Plan – 2022**

Dates: January 14, 2022, to March 31, 2022

Proponent(s): N-28 Fur Block; N-90 Fur Block

General Intent of Burn: To rejuvenate a healthy and diverse plant population for the improvement of habitat for all wildlife in the Cumberland Delta wetlands.

Rationale: The proponents, as resource managers, understand that fire applied in the right conditions can promote rejuvenation of more desirable plant species and increase plant species diversity.

Objectives of Burn: To monitor and manage Phragmites within the proposed priority burn areas. To observe potential positive outcomes of the resource management fires, for the increase of diversity of more desirable plants including Sweet Flag, with the intent of an increase to the wildlife populations. Post-burn observations will be made available to the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (SPSA).

Site Description, Size, and Location: The proposed priority areas are within N-28 and N-90 trapping zones. Planned burn areas are indicated on the maps in Appendix A.

Burn Site History: The proposed burns are within the boundaries of the N-28 and N-90 Fur Blocks. Historically, many of these burn sites have had the riparian edges burned seasonally for generations prior to changes in regulations, with the intent to control reed grass and improve wildlife habitat.

Inventory and Sampling of Priority Burn Areas: Previous inventories in these areas have found Phragmites, sweet flag, swamp horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*), mare's tail (*Equisetum arvense*), common scouring rush (*Equisetum hyemale*), small-fruited bulrush (*Scirpus microcarpus*), cattail (*Typha latifolia*), awned sedge (*Carex atherodes*), cow's parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*), wild mint (*Menthe arvensis*), and red willow (*Cornus stolonifera*). Inventories will be completed in the fall of each year to monitor species responses in the sample areas. SPSA did a Conservation Data Centre Check for rare and sensitive species. Although a couple of rare species are known to be in some of the burn site areas, the timing of the burns is not expected to negatively impact them. This was confirmed with the Ministry of Environment's Conservation Data Centre Botanist.

Proposed Period of Burns: The burn time is January 14 to March 31, 2022. This time is optimal for favourable weather and burning conditions. Lakes must be frozen with substantial snow coverage on like edges to act as a safety barrier or buffer. Additionally, the proposed priority burns must be done before the egg-laying season of migratory birds and before root systems of desired plants may be harmed.

Burn Costs: The proponents along with Prince Albert Grand Council will incur costs of the resource management burns. Any costs associated with an escaped fire that causes damage or requires a request for assistance from SPSA will be incurred by the proponents.

Preliminary Ignition and Control Plan: There will be no less than two individuals, but ideally eight individuals utilized on each burn. The edges of lakes, ponds, creeks, will be burned in strips against the wind and will be carefully monitored as individuals work forward using drip torches. One burn area must be extinguished before the next is started. Up to six quads/snowmobiles will be on site as will water

pumps, chisels, and hoses. The fire areas will be monitored closely by the team and when one plot is extinguished, then and only then, will the next area be ignited.

Contingency Plan or Escaped Fire Plan: Utilization of the quads/snowmobiles and the water pumps will be used to extinguish an escaped fire as quickly as possible. If required, The Hudson Bay Response Base will be contacted to assist with extinguishment of the escaped fire. Due to the extremely low complexity, low risk of these resource management fires the likelihood of an escaped fire requiring additional assistance is extremely low.

Smoke Management: The nearest communities to the proposed resource management fires are the Northern Village of Cumberland House and Cumberland House Cree Nation, which is situated over 2 km north of the closest burn plots (Egg Lake). The nearest portion of Highway #123 is situated 1 km north of the nearest burn site (Egg Lake) and smoke from the Egg Lake Burn Site will be a short lived issue, if at all, to public safety on the highway. The Egg Lake Burn site should only be burned when winds are from the west or north or east. The community of Red Earth is 33 km south of the burn plots on Cut Beaver Lake and Shoal Lake is 24 km south of the burn plots at Cut Beaver Lake. The probability of one of resource management fires causing any issues to these communities is almost non-existent. The north edge of Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN) is 2 km south of the burn site proposed for Carrot Lake. Highway # 9 going from OCN to Manitoba is also approximately 2 km south of the Carrot Lake Burn Site. The Carrot Lake Burn site will need to be burned when winds are from the west or south or east. E.B. Campbell Dam and airfield is 34 km southwest of the closest burn plot at Cook Lake and there will be minimal amount of smoke from these small fires. The proposed burns will be planned according to correct wind speeds and wind directions.

Operational Concerns: Concerns regarding risks to values near the burn areas are low due to the vegetation being burned is limited to cattails and Phragmites. Safety zones for each area will be identified before ignition begins as well as the escape routes for the igniters. All burn areas will be checked within two days after they are burned to monitor for any remaining hotspots along the burn perimeters.

Pre-Burn Site Preparations: Equipment and pre-burn preparations will be put in place the day before the burn. Water pumps, hoses, and other equipment will be taken to the burn areas and set up, so it is ready for an early morning burn. The areas will be photographed before, during and after the burn is completed.

Consultation Plan: Duty to consult to be completed by Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (SPSA) as per agreement. Fur block Presidents of N-28 and N90 have been consulted with and are in full agreement of the resource management burns. Adhering to the Duty to Consult process, SPSA personnel will send Notification Letters to local First Nations and Metis Locals to notify them of the burns and allow 21 days for these communities to identify any concerns or questions. SPSA will contact all other stakeholders by phone, e-mail or mailed notification letters

Communication Plan/Notification Schedule: First Nation and Metis communities will be notified of the proposed dates of the burns in the notification letters sent out by SPSA. Other stakeholders contacted during consultation will also be notified of the proposed burn dates. SPSA requests that proponents call the Hudson Bay Response Base at 306-865-4440 and notify the days that burns are planned before ignition that the proponent calls the Controlled Burn number at 1-866-404-4911 the day of the burn

before ignition and again after the fire is out. This allows Sask911, SPSA, and other Emergency Responders to be prepared to address any fire and/smoke calls that are reported.

Other Concerns: A post burn report will be submitted within **90 days** of completed burns. Contents of the post burn report will be determined between the proponent(s) and SPSA.

Signed and approved in Principle:

**Proponent(s):** (Signatures from the Fur Block Presidents for both N-28 and N-90 required)

**Fur Block N-28 Representative**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fur Block N-90 Representative**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SPSA Protection Officer:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SPSA Operations Manager:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SPSA Director of Land Operations:**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SPSA Vice President of Operations:**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix A – Burn Site Maps

