

SYILX FORESTRY

PRINCIPLES & STANDARDS

snhawix^{w}tn

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INTRODUCTION

An account of Syilx Forestry Principles & Standards for all forestry practitioners working within syilx Okanagan Territory

The Syilx Forestry Principles & Standards detail how to care for forest ecosystems within a syilx responsibility framework—sharing guidance for forestry practices that are in alignment with syilx law, principles, and values. The principles were created for the syilx-led collaborative stewardship of forest ecosystems and resources in Syilx Okanagan Territory. Implementation demonstrates a commitment to ethical forestry by those operating within syilx Territory including licensees, tenure holders, natural resource practitioners, and the provincial government.

SYILX STEWARDSHIP

SYILX RIGHTS: The Syilx Nation holds un-extinguishable rights, title, and steltalt-responsibilities to the land and the resources within unceded syilx Territory. Syilx laws pre-date any agreements, declarations, or other legislation in our Territory. We remain the rightful titleholders to all lands and resources within our Territory—as recognized in Canadian law by the Canadian Constitution Act.

SYILX TERRITORY: Our 69,000 km^2 territory is a beautiful and diverse land with semi-arid landscapes, abundant lakes, dry and wet forests, and endangered grasslands. The northern boundary is located near snxƛ̓utɬxstn, Big Bend, north of snkx̌yknt̓n, Revelstoke. The eastern boundary roughly borders nt̓əl̓t̓kʷitkʷ, Kootenay River or what is now known as Kootenay Lake. The western boundary extends past nɬq̓iɬm l̓x, Quilchena in the Nicola Valley and the southern boundary extends south of the Canada-US border into the state of Washington. See the map in the Appendix.

MULTI-GENERATION ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT: The syilx people have taken care of the land and all that gives us life since time immemorial—always governing our land according to principles that carry with them a sacred, inherent responsibility to care for the tmxʷulaxʷ (land) and the tmixʷ (all living things). It is the application of our laws, our language, and our ecosystem management strategies that have led to thousands of years of resilience, harmony, and adaptation within our territory. As stated in the Okanagan Nation Declaration (1987):

> "We are the unconquered Aboriginal people of this land, our mother. The creator has given us our mother, to enjoy, to manage and to protect; we, the first inhabitants, have lived with our mother from time immemorial; our Okanagan governments have allowed us to share equally in the resources of our mother; we have never given up our rights to our mother, our mother's resources, our governments and our religion; we will survive and continue to govern our mother and her resources for the good of all for all time."

DEVELOPING THE PRINCIPLES & STANDARDS

The Syilx Forestry Principles & Standards were developed over the past decade by the syilx Nation through the tmxʷulaxʷ Working Group of the Natural Resource Committee of the Okanagan Nation Alliance. They are derived from syilx snhawixʷtn, protocols and laws that are intended to protect, conserve, manage and, where appropriate, develop the lands and waters of the Nation's territory within a context of forest stewardship.

LEARNING FROM OUR COMMUNITIES: This work is a compilation at the Nation level of many years of dedication by syilx Bands and Communities who worked out these approaches on-the-ground within their forests and through engagement with foresters on their lands. It reflects materials and information that is currently in use as forest planning and practice requirements by syilx Communities, forest licensees, and tenure holders.

A LIVING PROCESS: This marks the first time that these Principles & Standards have been brought together in one place. This is not a comprehensive list. As these Principles & Standards move into active use in the Territory, they will continue to be refined and updated to reflect the evolving ecological, professional, and legal context within which they are situated.

CLARITY FOR THE FORESTRY SECTOR

There is a growing and urgent need for Syilx Forestry Principles & Standards to communicate to BC and forest licensees operating in the Territory, how the Nation and Communities expect forest ecosystems and resources be managed.

CURRENT IMPACTS PUT FORESTS AT RISK: The syilx Nation has observed that current forest management practices are degrading lands and waters. Cumulative developments interacting with accelerating climate change are putting forest biodiversity—and our syilx Communities—at unacceptable levels of risk.

GUIDANCE: The Principles & Standards provide guidance for Provincial Ministries and licensees to align planning and harvesting laws, policies, and practices with syilx principles and the Province's legal obligations to the syilx Nation.

These Principles represent an initial step in transforming forestry. These principles and standards are shared to enhance existing practice and serve as a minimum standard for forestry professionals. The implementation of these principles requires respectful and meaningful engagement.

WORKING TOGETHER: The Principles & Standards provide greater clarity and security to the forestry sector by creating a foundation for working from places of common values. This supports the building of collaborative relationships between forestry practitioners and syilx Communities in order to engage longer-term planning processes in support of valuable stewardship and economic outcomes.

BENEFITS FOR ALL

Aligning forestry management with the Syilx Principles & Standards offers healthier and more resilient landscapes for everyone. The approaches outlined here reduce wildfire risk, mitigate drought and flood impacts, and improve the quality of habitat for healthier fish and wildlife. These are important outcomes for the tmix^{w}-all living things.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MANY VOICES: We are very thankful for the leadership, contributions, and feedback from syilx knowledge keepers, elders, leaders, and Nation members who have passed along their knowledge, experience, and support for the development of the Syilx Forestry Principles and Standards.

We express gratitude to laxlaxtk^{w} Dr. Jeannette Armstrong and the En'owkin Centre for the development of a syilx Environmental Ethic from which the Forestry Principles were derived.

SYILX COMMUNITIES LAID THE FOUNDATION: Honour and gratitude goes to the syilx Communities that spent many years developing their unique approaches to forestry and engagement with the forest industry. The work of syilx Bands to develop their own approaches to forestry planning and practices were gathered together to create these collective Syilx Forestry Principles and Standards.

tmxʷulaxʷ Working Group: Additional gratitude to tmxʷulaxʷ Working Group (Forestry Working Group) that took on the task of overseeing the development of this Nation-level compilation of Syilx Forestry Principles and Standards. Starting in 2018, the members of the group contributed their time, knowledge, and energy to push this work forward, including:

- calyx, Snpinkt'n Indian Band
- xwestikn, Snpinkt'n Indian Band
- Rob Edwards, Lower Similkameen Indian Band
- Brody Armstrong, Snpinkt'n Indian Band
- Cailyn Glasser, Okanagan Nation Alliance
- Colleen Marchand, Okanagan Indian Band
- Dan Macmaster, RPF, Nk'mip Forestry LLP
- Dave Gill, RPF, Ntityx Resources LP
- Dennis Macdonald, RFT, Upper Nicola Band
- Elliott Tonasket, Snpinkt'n Indian Band
- Marc Steynen, RPF, Okanagan Nation Alliance
- Mark Marton, RPF, Upper Similkameen Indian Band
- Peter Flett, RPF, Nk'mip Forestry LLP

SYILX FORESTRY PRINCIPLES

HOW THE PRINCIPLES WERE DEVELOPED

SYILX COMMUNITIES: It is essential to acknowledge and honor the dedicated work at the Community level that has been done by each syilx Bands over many years. The work of each Community to develop their own approaches to the forestry planning and practices for their areas has provided vital contributions to these collective Syilx Forestry Principles—and to the standards that accompany each principle.

SYILX ENVIRONMENTAL ETHIC: These forestry principles are grounded in the syilx environmental ethic that was described by knowledge holder and academic Laxlaxtkʷ Dr. Jeannette Armstrong in a paper outlining concepts from syilx Traditional Ecological Knowledge (2012) and demonstrating how these provide a time-tested model for environmental sustainability.[1] The syilx environmental ethic shared by Laxlaxtkʷ is derived from—and applied through—principles that serve as a foundation for all relationships between the people and the land. Syilx people view the natural world as a dynamic interdependent system rather than as resources to be exploited. A care component of this understanding is the analysis of key insight shared in captikʷɬ which teach principles of restraint, respect, and reciprocity.

SYILX FORESTRY WORKING GROUP: Starting in 2018, the Forestry Working Group met at the Nation level and began the process of pulling together the forestry planning and practice guidelines from each Community in order to create these principles. The syilx Environmental Ethic shared by Laxlaxtkʷ, along with the insights of the captikʷɬ, provided the grounding for the Syilx Forestry Principles and became the organizing approach for laying out the accompanying standards for forestry practices today.

Overview

The syilx Forestry Principles are based on comprehensive syilx teachings passed through oral history and captikʷɬ that respect syilx responsibility to the tmixʷ-all living things, the siwɬkʷ-water, and the tmxʷulaxʷ- land. These principles have stood the test of time and proven their utility over thousands of years—providing harmony between syilx lands, waters, living things, and the people.

These living and evolving syilx-centric forestry practices are grounded in time-honoured syilx knowledge and also live within the context of contemporary forest management, complimented by western science, and rooted in the Community-based perspectives and experiences of each syilx Community.

Principle 1: Syilx rights, responsibilities, laws, and protocols are recognized and upheld

Principle 2: Effective stewardship and restoration of ecosystems is demonstrated for 7 generations

Principle 3: siwɬkʷ-Water is protected

Principle 4: Ecological integrity and resilience is maintained and enhanced at the landscape level

Principle 5: Ecological integrity and resilience is maintained and enhanced at the stand level

Principle 6: Natural processes are maintained, enhanced, or restored

[1] Armstrong, Jeannette. (2012). "Okanogan traditional ecological knowledge: Perspectives of utilizing and sustaining ecosystems." Paper presented at the 97th Ecological Society of America Annual Convention in Portland, Oregon.

Principle 7: Healthy and resilient ecosystems foster community well-being

Principle 8: Collaborative processes and accountability are demonstrated

Principle 9: Syilx people receive a fair share of the economic benefits

PRINCIPLE 1: SYILX RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, LAWS, AND PROTOCOLS ARE RECOGNIZED AND UPHELD

RIGHTS & LAWS: Syilx laws stand above all provincial legislation. The syilx people are the original inhabitants of these lands and syilx laws pre-date any agreements, declarations, or other legislation in our Territory. We have never ceded our Territory which means that the land was never legally given to the Crown by syilx people through a treaty or other agreement. We remain the rightful titleholders to all lands and resources within our Territory—and the fact that these rights have never been extinguished is recognized and affirmed in Canadian law by the Canadian Constitution Act (1982). The source of provincial authority over syilx territory remains unresolved in Canadian law, even while the Province of BC continues to function as though it has full authority to decide how syilx lands and resources are used.

RESPONSIBILITIES: Syilx people are inherently tied to the integrity of the siwɬkʷ, the tmxʷulaxʷ and tmixʷ—and we have an inherent right to uphold our responsibility to steward our territory.

INTENT OF PRINCIPLE 1: Syilx people are full partners in the forest industry.

Forestry operators act within the good faith relationships established with the Province of BC and other non-syilx partners in the Territory and work in active collaboration with syilx people. Syilx laws and captikʷɬ provide the foundation for forestry practices in syilx Territory. Syilx decision-making structures uphold syilx laws for forestry activities. Forestry on Syilx lands is practiced in the context of cultural, ecological, and social abundance.

STANDARDS FOR UPHOLDING SYILX RIGHTS

1. Forestry activities are planned and developed with the full knowledge, cooperation, and endorsement of the appropriate syilx rights holders.
2. Forestry licensees refer all proposed forestry activities to the appropriate syilx rights holders and engage with them for all forestry activities within Syilx Okanagan Territory according to the protocols and processes established by each syilx community.
3. Forestry licensees hold up all mutually agreed recommendations from syilx rights holders regarding the conservation, protection, and mitigation of impacts to cultural heritage resources and other forest values.

PRINCIPLE 2: EFFECTIVE STEWARDSHIP AND RESTORATION OF ECOSYSTEMS IS DEMONSTRATED FOR SEVEN GENERATIONS

LONGER TIMELINES: Syilx people have managed our lands since time immemorial. The planning process never ends. All activities on the landscape reflect a planning process that aligns with syilx law to ensure that abundance and biodiversity are stewarded into the future. Teachings and knowledge continue to be passed down and ongoing collaborative planning is necessary to achieve the desired condition of siwɬkʷ, the tmixʷ and the tmxʷulaxʷ in 7 generations.

INTENT OF PRINCIPLE 2: Long-term planning is critical in all aspects of forest management.

Forestry operators recognized that forest management decisions made for the short-term have significant repercussions for forest ecosystems and associated forest values. In an industrial forestry context, the short planning cycles used by government agencies and forest licensees continue to compound the cumulative impacts to syilx forest values in the Territory.

Principle 2 encourages forest practitioners to integrate syilx teachings and longer-term ecosystem-based practices into shorter-term operational planning cycles (FSPs, FOPs, FLPs) to avoid further degradation of critical and interconnected ecosystem values in the Territory. This forward-looking practice does not place economic values above the sustainability and resiliency of siwɬkʷ, the tmixʷ, and tmxʷulaxʷ. Forest planning is done in collaboration with syilx rights holders and demonstrates a 7-generation planning cycle that considers the desired future ecosystem condition for all forest values.

STANDARDS FOR 7 GENERATIONS STEWARDSHIP

1. Forest practitioners recognize that forest management decisions made for the short-term can have significant repercussions for forest ecosystems and associated forest values over the long-term.
2. Forest practitioners integrate syilx inter-generational perspectives and incorporate longer-term objectives for the future forest state into all forest planning and practices.

PRINCIPLE 3: SIWɬKʷ (WATER) IS PROTECTED

WATER IS OUR RELATIVE: Syilx people have a deep intrinsic relationship with our relative siwɬkʷ, which is the lifeblood of the land, and one of our most important teachers. siwɬkʷ is part of us. Our sacred siwɬkʷ connects and sustains all life. Maintaining the integrity of water and respecting this relationship is essential to our identity as syilx People.

DUTY TO WATER: The use of siwɬkʷ is not taken lightly. We are responsible to ensure that our relation can continue to maintain the health and resiliency of our tmixʷ and tmxʷulaxʷ. We have a duty to ensure water can maintain all its relationships—known and unknown—by treating it with reverence and reciprocity. The importance of water is related through captikʷɬ and natural laws that teach us how to live sustainably with water and remind us to follow protocols so that future generations can survive in harmony with all living things.

PLAN FOR WATER: Water-centric planning is a long-standing concept that Syilx people continue to practice. A place-based stewardship approach has been used for thousands of years to ensure those with the most knowledge and understanding of SIWɬKʷ within a specific region of the territory are responsible for ensuring that proper measures of respect are carried forward. The syilx people envision a flourishing land, culture, and ways of life hundreds of years from now through the responsible management of the land and the water.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES: The Okanagan Nation Alliance has played a leading role as a voice for water in syilx Territory, including developing:

siwɬkʷ-Water Declaration reflects the collective voice of the Syilx Nation sharing the importance of water and the responsibilities held by Syilx people to sustainably manage water in keeping with long-standing principles and responsibilities to act for siwɬkʷ for everyone in the Okanagan for perpetuity.

Syilx siwɬkʷ-Water Strategy includes the unique perspectives and input of more than 100 community members from across the syilx Nation and outlines actions to protect and manage siwɬkʷ today and in the future.

> **From The Syilx siwɬkʷ-Water Declaration**: "We, the syilx People affirm our relationship with our tmxʷulaxʷ and responsibility to future generations to raise our voices and speak for the protection of our siwɬkʷ. Maintaining the integrity of water and respecting its relationship to all life is essential to our identity and responsibility as syilx People. We have inherent and implicit Aboriginal Rights, Title, and Responsibilities to water; and syilx people must be at the forefront of all water planning, protection, and operations. Through Creator guidance, we will do what is necessary to protect our waters and express our jurisdictional authority and responsibilities to protect and respect our relative siwɬkʷ. We stand united and will apply and implement our knowledge, laws, and self-determination.

INTENT OF PRINCIPLE 3: Water-centric planning informed by syilx guiding principles for siwɬkʷ-water play a central role in forestry.

Forestry practitioners recognize the interconnectedness of natural resources and human activities within a watershed and adopt a holistic watershed planning and management approach that integrates SIWɬKʷ. Forestry practitioners endorse and honor Syilx Forestry Standards for SIWɬKʷ and plan forest management and operations using the siwɬkʷ-Water Declaration and the syilx Water Strategy as guiding principles for water protection, conservation, and restoration.

STANDARDS FOR WATER PROTECTION

This section outlines WATER and RIPARIAN PROTECTION STANDARDS for the following water features and concludes with an overview of STANDARDS to protect, conserve or restore water values.

- cəcwixaʔ-streams
- kɬqʷəsqəstam-wetlands
- tiktq-lakes
- Water catchment areas

iʔ sʕacəcs—THE WAY IT LOOKS: A key concept that applies to these Riparian Standards is iʔ sʕacəcs, which means "the way it looks." This approach allows for site-specific variation in forestry practices based on the specific needs of the tmixʷ and the tmxʷulaxʷ in order to create some flexibility to manage riparian areas to address, for example, forest health, wildfire hazards, and wildlife habitat on a very small scale. **iʔ sʕacəcs applies to these Riparian Standards.**

For cəcwixaʔ (Streams)

cəcwixaʔ are a vital component of forest ecosystems contributing to groundwater, sub-surface flow, and the well-being of all animals and plants.

DEFINITION: A cəcwixaʔ is any seasonal, ephemeral, or permanent place of water flow or drainage within a larger watershed. A cəcwixaʔ is any watercourse, waterway, drainage area, or stream where water passes above ground or underground at any point in time. A cəcwixaʔ is not defined by the presence of channel scour or a continuous channel bed—it may be entrenched or not entrenched, and there is no minimum or maximum width for a stream reach.

ELEVATION: The elevation of a cəcwixaʔ plays a key role in how protective measures are employed. For example, cəcwixaʔ at higher elevations are increasingly sensitive and require more stringent protections to ensure their health because of the critical role they play in downstream water quality and quantity.

cəcwixaʔ Standards for Forestry Practitioners:

1. Protect, enhance, and maintain effective riparian areas adjacent to all cəcwixaʔ.
2. Avoid forestry harvest within sensitive high elevation headwater areas due to potential impacts on snowpack retention, water mineralization, and water run-off and movement.
3. Adhere to all best practices for any forest harvesting near cəcwixaʔ in order to protect cəcwixaʔ and riparian areas and avoid and/or mitigate potential increases to soil erosion, sedimentation, and its entry and movement in cəcwixaʔ.
4. Retain a combination of a riparian reserve zone with 100% retention of all merchantable, non-merchantable, and riparian vegetation, and a riparian management zone with a minimum retention of 50% basal area of merchantable stems and protection of possible non-merchantable and other riparian features.
5. The width of a riparian reserve zone will depend on the individual condition and classification of each stream.
6. Retain riparian reserve zones for S4 and S5 streams to protect riparian structure and function where harvesting is required.
7. Protect all S6 and Non-classified Drainages (NCDs) depending on their specific size and features. NCDs will be managed as classified streams with appropriate site-specific riparian reserve and/or management zones.

For kɬqʷəsqəstam (Wetlands)

A kɬqʷəsqəstam or wetland is a catchment area that fills with water during freshet, but may dry in the summer months. Wetlands support a unique assemblage of water affiliated plants and animals and are an integral part of

the forest ecosystem as they are productive and biologically diverse systems that enhance water quality, control erosion, maintain stream flows, sequester carbon, and provide a home to many threatened and endangered tmixʷ.

kɬqʷəsqəstam Standards for Forestry Practitioners:

1. Protect, enhance, and maintain effective riparian areas adjacent to all kɬqʷəsqəstamʔ.
2. Retain and protect a combination of riparian reserve zone and riparian management zone for all wetlands.
3. Retain a portion of the merchantable stems and a majority of non-merch stems in the riparian management zones for wetlands.
4. Locate all resource roads and temporary forest roads away from wetlands. When temporary forest roads are located near wetlands they will be rehabilitated in an expedient manner when access is no longer required via these roads.

For tiktq (Lakes)

TIKTQ ARE ALL LARGE BODIES OF WATER SURROUNDED BY LAND. TIKTQ CAN RANGE SIGNIFICANTLY IN SIZE BUT ARE OF CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE TO THE TMIXʷ AND THE TMXʷULAXʷ. THEY HAVE A HIGH VALUE IN SYILX CULTURE.

tiktq Standards for Forestry Practitioners:

1. Protect, enhance, and maintain effective riparian areas adjacent to all tiktq.
2. Manage all tiktq with a combination of riparian reserve zone and riparian management zone.
3. Locate all resource roads and temporary forest roads away from lakes. When temporary forest roads are located near lakes, they are rehabilitated in an expedient manner when access is no longer required via these roads.

For Water Catchment Areas

Water catchment areas are defined as small areas where water collects or pools temporarily or permanently, that are too small to classify as kɬqʷəsqəstam.

Water Catchment Standards for Forestry Practitioners:

1. Exclude or reserve all water catchment areas from harvest areas during planning activities.

Standards To Protect, Conserve or Restore Water Values

The following standards apply to all of the above water bodies and augment the standards already outlined.

1. Protect all identifiable riparian features at the landscape level. Riparian Reserve and Management Zones extend an appropriate distance from the riparian feature based on topography, vegetation, and other values.
2. Protect all identifiable riparian features at the stand level with an appropriate Riparian Reserve and Management Zones (See Table 1).
3. Prevent all adverse effects to soils and water quantity and quality by constraining forestry operations in areas with sensitive soils and steep slopes (>60%), as defined in operational plans.

4. Minimize and prevent all adverse effects on water quality from operations that occur near or within riparian areas and stream (including NCDs) crossings.
5. To maintain fish passage, open bottom structures are preferred—including bridges and arched pipes, or oversized closed pipes on small <1m wide streams, with a suitable and stable substrate without perched outlets.
6. Stream crossing structures provide an appropriate span and minimize all impacts to the stream banks and water quality.

7. Forestry practitioners design, implement, and maintain a monitoring program to evaluate the effectiveness of forestry practices on water quantity and quality and riparian ecosystems.

Table 1: Riparian Management by cəcwixaʔ (stream), kɬqʷəsqəstam (wetland), and tiktq (lake) Class

siwlɬkʷ Feature & Class	Description (m or ha)	Total RMA	RRZ Width (m)	RMZ Width (m)	RMZ Minimum Retention (% Basal Area)
S1-A Stream	≥100	100	50	50	50
S1-B Stream	≥20	70	50	20	50
S2 Stream	>5 and <20	50	30	20	50
S3 Stream	1.5 to <5	50	20	30	50
S4 Stream	< 1.5	50	20	30	50
S5 Stream (non-fish)	> 3	50	10	40	50
S6 Stream (non-fish)	< 3	50	10	40	50
NCDs	variable	10	5	5	50
W1 Wetland	>5 ha	100	10	90	50
W2 Wetland	1 to 5 ha	100	10	90	50
W3 Wetland	1 to 5 ha	100	10	90	50
W4 Wetland	0.25 to 1.0 ha	100	10	90	50
W5 Wetland	Complexes	100	10	90	50
L1-A Lake	>1000 ha	100	10	90	50
L1-B Lake	>5 to 1000 ha	100	10	90	50
L2 Lake*	1 to 5 ha	100	10	90	50
L3 Lake	1 to 5 ha	100	10	90	50
L4 Lake	0.25 to 1.0 ha	100	10	90	50
Water Catchments	variable	10	5	5	50

*Located in PP, BG, IDFxh, xw, xm, BEC units only

PRINCIPLE 4: ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY AND RESILIENCE IS MAINTAINED & ENHANCED AT THE LANDSCAPE LEVEL

Long-term ecosystem resilience in syilx territory depends on the abundance and diversity of the tmix^{w} at all levels and the ecological patterns, processes, and structural attributes responsible for that biological diversity. Biological richness and the ecosystem services provided by natural terrestrial processes when sustained at all scales through time include: clean water, species richness, vegetation diversity, soil productivity, water quantity/quality, predator–prey interactions, and carbon storage. Maintaining these valuable services requires sustaining and enhancing the structure, function, and composition of natural ecosystems. The syilx perspective requires landscape-level planning that regard the tmx^{w}ulax^{w} as an ecological system providing the foundation and life support for all living things.

INTENT OF PRINCIPLE 4: Landscape level planning supports biological diversity and abundance.

Landscape level planning identifies mechanisms to maintain the natural diversity of species and habitat elements across all planning units and spatial and temporal scales. The goal of these planning efforts is to maintain or enhance abundance and diversity of organisms and structural attributes responsible for biological diversity and ecosystem resilience across the territory. Resilient forest ecosystems strongly depend on active management that incorporates both ongoing disturbance and the effects of climatic change with the end goal of supporting dynamic forest mosaics with a mix of stand types and ages for resiliency.

STANDARDS FOR ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

This section outlines standards for forestry activities at the landscape level including:

- Wildlife habitat
- Old forests
- Seral stage representation
- Restoration and regeneration

For Landscape Level Planning

1. All landscape-level plans are developed in collaboration with and endorsement by Syilx rights holders for all areas in Syilx territory. A minimum standard for all landscape-level planning initiatives involves collaboration with appropriate community and Nation level representatives.
2. A watershed management approach is a critical component of landscape-level planning as it emphasizes the interconnectedness of all living things and promotes a holistic management approach that considers ecological and human well-being.
3. Access management plans are a critical component of all landscape-level planning. Collaborative access management planning is especially important near the immediate areas adjacent to all Syilx communities and where there are culturally important areas of traditional and contemporary use.
4. Access management plans are essential where there are damaged ecosystems, critical habitat areas for threatened or declining animal species, species of concern, and species-at-risk.
5. Landscape-level plans identify important movement corridors between core protected and/or conserved areas that provide critical habitat connectivity for wildlife.
6. Forest practitioners comply with all legal objectives in higher-level plans such as the Land-use Orders under the Okanagan-Shuswap and Kootenay Boundary Land and Resource Management Plans.
7. All areas with high-archeological potential and areas of high cultural significance are identified by forestry planning initiatives as areas for protection at the landscape level.

For Wildlife Habitat

1. Forest practitioners comply with all legal objectives and syilx-developed plans for Ungulate Winter Ranges (UWR) designated for ungulates including mule deer, white-tailed deer, black-tailed deer, elk, moose, Southern mountain caribou, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats.
2. Forest practitioners comply with all legal objectives for Wildlife Habitat Areas (WHA) designated for critical habitat areas for culturally important species and other animals at risk including, but not limited to: grizzly bear, bighorn sheep, grasshopper's sparrow, white-headed woodpecker, yellow breasted chat, brewer's sparrow, half-moon hairstreak, great basin spadefoot, blotched tiger salamander, Williamson sapsucker, Western screech owl, sage thrasher, Lewis's Woodpecker, and Southern mountain caribou.
3. Forest practitioners conserve single habitat structures such as dens, mineral licks, nests, or other habitat features required by a wildlife species and typically not already designated. Assessments by Syilx knowledge holders and/or third-party qualified biologists are required for all prospective forest development activities to identify and report wildlife and habitat features.
4. Given the importance of siwɬkʷ-water and its connection between upland forest ecosystems and fish habitat, forest practitioners will comply with the requirements for all designated Fisheries Sensitive Watersheds (FSW) with regards to the conservation of water quantity and quality.
5. Forest licensees commit to all General Wildlife Measures (GWMs) contained in all Government Actions Regulations (GAR) Orders. Forestry activities in core caribou habitat (provincial or federal caribou recovery habitat) for critically endangered Southern mountain caribou herds are not permitted. Where caribou herds are considered extirpated, at this time, exceptions contrary to the GAR Order objectives must be referred to the appropriate syilx rights holders for review and consideration.

For Old Forests

The objective is to ensure old seral stage forests are well represented across the landscape in syilx Territory by moving the forest towards an appropriate ecological condition with a variety of forest life stages, opening sizes, and tree species—including old forest and new forest stands—and a diversity of native plant communities and wildlife habitats.

1. At the landscape level, areas with Old Forest are identified geographically and verified using ground-based assessment methods. Unless a spatialized old forest retention strategy has been developed and endorsed by the affected syilx community, management of Old Forest prioritizes Big Treed Old Growth (Map 8) as well as Priority Deferral Areas (Map 1, Ancient Forests, Remnant Old Ecosystems or Priority Big Tree Old Growth) as identified by the 2022 Old Growth Technical Advisory Panel.
2. Areas or zones with verified old forest attributes are stewarded for old forest values including large diameter trees, a range of age classes and patch sizes, old and mature tree recruitment, small gap openings, coarse woody debris, and biodiversity values appropriate to the ecosystem type.
3. Old Forest zones are established using physical features such as watercourses, ridges and slope breaks to provide protective and connective corridors for siwɬkʷ-water and wildlife movement.
4. A target of 30% of each BEC subzone within a planning unit, watershed, or sub-basin is managed to retain, recruit, or restore Old Forest values.
5. Harvesting within Old Forest areas is limited with permission from the appropriate syilx rights holders through their endorsement of appropriate management plans and with the objective of maintaining or enhancing old forest values.
6. Where Old Growth Deferral Areas (OGDAs) and/or Old Growth Management Areas (OGMAs) are approved for management through harvesting activities, equivalent replacement Old Growth areas of equal or better biological value are selected and/or recruited subject to review and validation by syilx rights holders. Any harvesting conducted within a spatialized Old Forest Zone in a landscape plan adheres to strict conditions that retain critical structures and functions and demonstrate an improvement to forest health, wildfire hazard, water quantity/quality, and wildlife habitat.

7. In the absence of a spatialized old forest retention strategy that has been endorsed by the appropriate silx community, OGMAs are spatially identified, verified, retained, and not subject to incursion by forestry practitioners based on abiotic and biotic forest health factors without endorsement by syilx communities.

For Seral Stage Representation

The current legal targets for seral stage representation are not sustainable or sufficiently precautionary to support the tmix^{w} and the critical need for healthy and resilient forest ecosystems. A more precautionary approach is required that considers the needs of all forest values and ecosystem attributes, functions, and structures needed to maintain their resilience.

This approach is based on both Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and Western Science knowledge frameworks that consider all forest values. Retention targets for late and mid-seral forests reflect increased uncertainties and risks associated with climate change related to the frequency and severity of drought, wildfires, and other forest health issues.

1. Landscape-level planning processes, including new and emerging Forest Landscape Planning tables, ensure the appropriate representation of all seral stages across all BEC subzones (all ecosystems) in the territory, unless otherwise identified by Syilx rights holders.

    Note that seral stage objectives for many BEC subzones and variants do not meet many seral stage targets for the assigned biodiversity emphasis option (BEO) as set through the Thompson Okanagan and Kootenay Boundary LRMP legal orders. The dominant use of the low BEO, currently required through the LRMP legal orders, requires reassessment given the cumulative impacts of the forest industry and other users, and the growing impacts of cumulative effects and climate change on forest ecosystems in the territory.

2. Forestry licensees commit to meeting full legal (no drawdowns) seral stage targets for all BEC subzone/variants where new forest harvest and road building activities are proposed.
3. Calculations of old seral forests do not include those areas located in Parks and Protected Areas and other protected areas. Early and mid-seral forests are managed to recruit mid and old seral forests, promote biodiversity, manage wildfire risk, and provide pre-commercial and commercial thinning opportunities.

For Restoration and Regeneration

1. Landscape level planning processes such as the new and emerging Forest Landscape Planning tables, identify and prioritize damaged, degraded, or under-represented ecosystems with a focus on the rehabilitation, enhancement, and restoration to a more resilient forest state.
2. Landscape level planning activities include the active management of regenerating areas as functional wildlife habitat. The active management of younger stands in dry fir forests, as an example, is integral to the reduction of wildfire risk and the provision of wildlife habitat as younger stands move through the pole sapling successional stage to a more mature forest type.
3. Timber Supply Reviews (TSRs) incorporate a syilx scenario, taking into account the syilx Forestry Principles and Standards in the analysis process and sensitivity modelling.

PRINCIPLE 5: ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY AND RESILIENCE IS MAINTAINED AND ENHANCED AT THE STAND LEVEL

Long-term ecosystem resilience in syilx territory depends on the abundance and diversity of the tmixʷ. This is true at the landscape level, as discussed in Principle 4, as well as at the stand level which is the focus of this principle. Ecological richness depends on the natural patterns, processes, and structural attributes that are responsible for biological diversity. Essential ecosystem services that are provided by natural terrestrial processes include important values such as clean water, species richness, vegetation diversity, soil productivity, and carbon storage—to name a few. Fungal networks are an integral part of underground ecosystems and are indicators of overall ecosystem health.

The syilx perspective requires stand-level planning that regards the tmxʷulaxʷ as an ecological system which provides the foundation and life support for all living things. Entwined with this is the enduring responsibility to protect siwɬkʷ (water) as the giver of life.

INTENT FOR PRINCIPLE 5: Stand level planning enhances ecological structure and biodiversity.

Stand level planning is informed by established landscape level plans that follow the intent and standards outlined in Principle 4. The stewarding of tmxʷulaxʷ and protection of SIWɬKʷ-water is the foundation for stand-level planning and operational activities. Wherever possible, ecological structure and biodiversity at the stand level is maintained and enhanced.

STANDARDS FOR ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

This section outlines standards for forestry activities at the stand level including:

- Cut blocks and roads
- Harvest systems
- Opening size
- Wildlife tree areas
- Adjacency
- Culturally modified trees
- Advanced regeneration
- Deciduous
- Invasive plants
- Species at risk
- Woody debris
- Silviculture
- Wildfire salvage
- Stumping

For Cut Blocks and Roads

When planning and developing proposed cut blocks and roads, Forest Licensees consider the following standards and provide a rationale for any deviation from these standards.

1. All stand-level operational plans are developed in collaboration with and endorsement by Syilx rights holders for all areas in syilx Territory. A minimum standard for all forest operation plans (FOMS) involves collaboration with appropriate community representatives.

1. Forest practitioners develop site plans that demonstrate how ecosystem structure and function are maintained, and where possible, enhanced and restored.
2. Cultural heritage and resource assessments are mandatory for all proposed stand-level development activities in syilx Territory.
3. Stand level plans in conjunction with access management planning are critically important in areas directly adjacent to all syilx communities due to the abundance of culturally important features and dependence on these areas for traditional and contemporary use.

For Harvest Systems

1. Forest Licensees increase the use of retention-based silvicultural systems and decrease their dependence on clearcutting and clearcutting with reserves.
2. Silvicultural systems, such as single tree and group tree selection, are ecologically appropriate and based on harvest objectives and stand level attributes that mitigate unnecessary impacts to the tmx^{w}ulax^{w} and the tmix^{w}.
3. Silvicultural systems are chosen to minimize wildfire, and address windthrow and forest health risks for all retained forest attributes.

For Opening Size

Forest openings are defined as a gap or a break in the forest matrix that is engineered or designed in an ecologically appropriate and place-based manner.

1. The maximum size for all individual and combined forest openings is forty hectares and includes the retention of a minimum of 20% dispersed stems.

For Wildlife Tree Areas

1. Wildlife trees areas (WTRAs) are anchored around ecological features such as veteran and large trees, deciduous trees, wildlife trees and features, and riparian features and connected to the surrounding forest matrix to provide suitable habitat for the tmix^{w}.
2. In areas with significant cumulative impacts, the size of WTRAs is increased to retain additional biological features. Windthrow and wildfire risk is considered when planning WTRAs. Larger WTRAs are preferred compared to multiple smaller WTRAs.

For Adjacency

New forest openings may be proposed adjacent to recently harvested areas but cannot be harvested before the adjacent area has reached appropriate visual and hydrological green-up conditions as detailed by the relevant Forest Stewardship or Landscape Plan.

For Culturally Modified Trees

Culturally modified trees (CMTs), including lightning impacted trees, are conserved and buffered within WTRAs and other retention features.

For Advanced Regeneration

In areas planned for harvest activities, licensees retain up to 30% of healthy advanced conifer regen other than Ponderosa or lodgepole pine in order to provide critical ecosystem structure and function for

the tmix^{w}. This is a place-based decision and this percentage may vary according to site-specific ecosystem conditions.

For Deciduous

All deciduous stands and stems are retained for their contribution to biodiversity and wildlife habitat.

For Invasive Plants

The establishment and spread of invasive plant species in forest openings and along forest roads is a significant concern in syilx Territory.

1. Stand level operational plans address the growing spread of invasive plants and commit to the control of existing invasive plant infestations, prevention of further spread, and monitoring until all licensee obligations for road and forest openings have been met.

For Species at Risk

1. Forest licensees identify all species-at-risk in their permitted and tenured areas and maintain and enhance "at risk" and culturally important plants and plant communities.
2. A precautionary approach is used to maintain or improve habitat for "at risk" and culturally important animal and animal communities. Through partnerships and other communities of practice, Licenses do the following:
    - Enhance knowledge of the health of culturally important and "at risk" plants and plant communities and determine solutions.
    - Develop opportunities to reintroduce cultural burning practices onto the land for those species dependent on fire.
    - Restore or enhance culturally important and "at risk" plants by developing a program for collecting site appropriate seed or plant material to develop a regular planting program for these species.

For Woody Debris

1. The full utilization of all harvested fibre is preferred and all methods of post-harvest cleanup, as much as is possible, include the use of non-merchantable and waste products.
2. The piling and burning of large slash piles is not favoured. Preferred practices include:
    - Mastication and mulching of remaining stems, pieces, and woody debris coupled with scattering and spreading to be incorporated as carbon and nutrient inputs.
    - Chipping remaining stems, pieces, and woody debris for use as value-added fuel and wood fibre products; and
    - Debris piling to help enhance the habitat for the tmix^{w}.

For Silviculture

Reciprocity through the restoration and enhancement post-disturbance and/or post-disaster is a central principle for the syilx Nation. All silviculture prescriptions are place-based and site-specific to meet the needs of each harvested area.

1. Silviculture plans support healthy, resilient, young forests that provide a range of values within two years of harvest.

2. Salvage harvest areas are reforested with a mix of ecologically appropriate tree species harvested from the specific area. The broadscale use of early seral species such as Lodgepole pine for regeneration is discouraged, as is the overstocking of previously open forest areas and grasslands.
3. The best efforts are made to source seed that is collected close to harvested openings and all appropriate standards and guidelines for seed use are followed.
4. The local effects of climate change are considered when sourcing and planting tree seedlings and other vegetation.
5. Brushing of grass, forb, and shrub layers is minimized to encourage conifer seedling growth to meet free growing obligations.
6. Deciduous trees are planted to meet objectives such as ecosystem resilience, wildlife habitat, and/or water quality.
7. Chemical herbicides are not used to control competing vegetation in harvested and reforested areas.

For Wildfire Salvage

Stand-level structure and function remain important in stands impacted by wildfire as they provide a range of structural and functional elements across wildfire-impacted landscapes.

Some of these elements include:

- Patches with archaeological and cultural sites.
- Stands and patches of live trees.
- Mosaics of intact unburnt and burnt patches with a range of sizes, burn severity, and snag density.
- Special habitats and habitat features.
- Biological legacies such as large veteran trees, large snags and large coarse woody debris.
- Stand-level connectivity with residual trees and wildlife tree patches.

The following standards are expected by forest practitioners when conducting salvage operations.

1. Cutting Permits intended to support wildfire salvage operations that were approved prior to a wildfire should be reevaluated to ensure that the wildfire-impacted forest state is incorporated into a new or amended cutting permit that reflects its altered or impacted condition.
2. Do not harvest within WTRAs and other retention areas identified in Landscape and Operational Plans unless it can be demonstrated that doing so provides immediate benefits to wildlife and water quality.
3. Roads and trails are planned in areas with the lowest risk of sediment delivery to streams.
4. Where possible use fire guards to minimize the construction of new roads and trails.
5. Retain riparian reserve zones (RRZ) and riparian management areas (RMA) of classified streams, wetlands, and lakes within fire-impacted stands.
6. Retain biological legacies such as veteran and deciduous trees.
7. Focus harvest sequence and timing on higher burn severity stands first. Many site-specific factors such as stand species mix, terrain or soils may influence salvage timing.
8. Minimize equipment crossings on streams and NCDs. Ensure suitable crossing structures are used for equipment crossings and that these structures are removed at completion and the crossing site is rehabilitated.
9. Burnt trees felled for fire suppression and or safety reasons are retained on site as coarse woody debris.
10. Salvage harvesting activities within 400 meters of classified wetlands, lakes or established culturally significant areas have the following measures applied:
    - Dispersed clumped tree retention.
    - Coarse Woody Debris (CWD) retention to prevent sediment transport.
    - New road construction is avoided and any new roads constructed is fully rehabilitated.

- Existing roads and trails not required to access additional salvage harvest areas or for ongoing access are blocked to ensure motorized access is restricted within 400m of classified wetlands, lakes or established culturally significant areas.

10. Access management plans are completed for each fire affected area at the landscape level. New roads required for salvage harvesting are either fully rehabilitated or permanently deactivated after the fire salvage harvest areas are replanted. Existing roads are deactivated as per the fire specific access management plan.
11. Existing stream crossings associated with fire salvage activities are assessed and upgraded when required. In heavily fire-impacted watersheds, existing and new crossings are sized for 200-year peak flows (Q200) and removed immediately after the salvage harvest areas are replanted. Some crossing structures may be left in place to meet the objectives set out in the specific fire access management plan. Alternative crossing structures such as fords may be utilized in certain circumstances.

About Stumping

Overall, stumping is considered a highly aggressive disturbance activity that conflicts with syilx stewardship principles. Stumping to mitigate the spread of root rots (primarily Armillaria and Phellinus spp.) is unacceptable from the syilx perspective. Fungal networks are an integral part of underground ecosystems and are indicators of overall ecosystem health. The negative impacts of stumping include: high ground disturbance, increased soil movement, destruction of plants, spread of invasive species, disruption of mycorrhizal networks, alteration of hydrology, removal of legacy ecological structures, increased machine traffic, and prioritization of timber-centric objectives. The positive aspects of stumping relate narrowly to increased growth rates, piece size, and the survivability of commercial tree species. The many negative impacts far outweigh these perceived positive.

PRINCIPLE 6: NATURAL PROCESSES ARE MAINTAINED, ENHANCED, OR RESTORED

Since time immemorial, syilx people have managed the lands and waters of the Territory in a context of reciprocity. Syilx Territory is geographically and ecologically diverse and requires multiple approaches to ensure natural processes are maintained and restored in this context. Much of the Territory is fire-dependent and has suffered degradation and loss of biodiversity from fire suppression. Other areas of the Territory contain swaths of old forests and sensitive ecosystems that require particular care. These are examples of processes and considerations that must be built into both landscape-level and site-level plans to restore and enhance ecosystem services and resources for generations to come. Forestry practices, through a syilx principled lens, are a tool that can be applied to restore these natural relationships with the land.

INTENT FOR PRINCIPLE 6: Landscape-level restoration plans for ecosystem values are put in place throughout the Territory in collaboration with community and Nation level representatives.

The goal is to define the current and future desired ecosystem state through an ecosystem-based and syilx perspective in order to ensure forestry and all land-based activities are reciprocal in nature and contribute appropriately to resilient future forest ecosystems. This occurs through support for programs and initiatives that (1) address cumulative effects, (2) grow community resiliency to increasingly severe wildfires and floods at both the landscape and stand levels, and (3) reduce wildfire hazards to protect communities and people.

STANDARDS FOR NATURAL PROCESSES

This section outlines standards for forestry activities related to maintaining natural processes including:

- Practices for forestry practitioners
- Fire-adapted ecosystems
- Wildfire recovery
- Recovery planning
- Recovering funding
- Forest health
- Monitoring
- Climate resiliency and adaptation
- Watershed assessment
- Riparian management
- Access management
- Archaeology
- Soil disturbance
- Silviculture
- Resource roads
- Temporary forest roads

Practices for Forestry Practitioners

The following outlines approaches that forestry practitioners are expected to employ as a baseline for working in syilx Territory.

1. Understand the syilx principle of reciprocity and plan for the replacement and/or restoration of forest ecosystem components that are removed or damaged. Where restoration is not possible, biodiversity offsetting or ecological compensation addresses the loss of valued forest ecosystems and/or their components.

1. Work collaboratively with Traditional Knowledge and Western frameworks to better understand and avoid increasing cumulative impacts to forest ecosystems within the operating area.
2. Collaboratively identify the future-desired forest ecosystem from a syilx perspective, and understand the natural processes of forest succession and management interventions required to achieve a desired future state.
3. Choose silviculture systems that provide the greatest opportunity to achieve the desired future-forest state, address forest health, resiliency, and non-timber values.
4. Prescribe the most appropriate silviculture system based on terrain and access, harvest treatment objectives, environmental impacts, economic feasibility, and other resource concerns.
5. Develop TEK and science-based information and tools to enable planning at both the landscape and stand planning levels—as well as for adaptation in the longer term to address and prepare for climate change.
6. Use silviculture stocking standards that are best suited to achieve the identified desired-forest ecosystem.
7. Do not apply broadcast herbicides as silviculture management tool within syilx Territory.

For Fire-Adapted Ecosystems

The long-term suppression of wildfire and its use as a cultural management tool has impacted forest structure, composition, and function—reducing habitat and biodiversity values and the overall resilience of forest ecosystems.

The careful return of cultural and prescribed fire as a management tool re-integrates traditional cultural practices, reduces the risk of wildfires, and supports the restoration of fire-dependent ecosystems.

1. Forest practitioners at all levels are expected to support programs and initiatives that accelerate the return of prescribed and cultural fire as a pro-active management tool for landscape and stand-level wildfire mitigation in syilx territory.

For Wildfire Recovery

Wildfire recovery is about more than healing the land. It is about the connections and interdependence between syilx communities and our lands—and the connection between physical rehabilitation and broader ecological, social, and cultural recovery.

1. Wildfire can significantly impact the values for which legal objectives or specific designations were established. Post-wildfire salvage must consider and incorporate protection and restoration of habitat, biodiversity, and other values previously provided for by landscape-level legal designations. Salvage harvesting is not considered in Parks and Protected Areas, Ecological Reserves, “conservation lands,” and other areas with landscape-level legal designations, unless there is approval from the impacted syilx Communities. This includes:
    - Archaeological sites established under the Heritage Conservation Act;
    - Old Growth Management Areas (OGMA);
    - Ungulate Winter Ranges (UWR);
    - Wildlife Habitat Areas (WHA);
    - Fisheries Sensitive Watersheds (FSW);
    - Areas with Visual Quality Objectives; and
    - Important areas of cultural use.

For Recovery Planning

1. The Province and forest practitioners must engage in meaningful wildfire recovery planning with impacted syilx Communities. The first step is establishing a joint leadership and governance structure to facilitate a consensus approach to decision-making and the identification of recovery priorities.
2. Collaboration with impacted communities is important in all steps of recovery planning and this includes the sharing and review of all wildfire assessment, monitoring, and other information for all aspects of wildfire recovery.
3. Braiding Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Western science provides the technical expertise required to develop joint recommendations, guidance, principles. and strategies for wildfire recovery.

For Recovery Funding

Funding for wildfire recovery is critical for the meaningful participation of impacted syilx communities.

1. Funding to ensure syilx participation must be identified within existing provincial envelopes and not limited to the rehabilitation of previously free-growing plantations and mature forests damaged by wildfire.

Forest Health

Post-wildfire, forests in syilx territory may experience a range of forest health symptoms.

1. Forest health objectives and planning are considered in a landscape-level context and integrated with broader wildfire recovery and restoration planning.
2. Meaningful engagement with syilx communities about management of forest health issues and the scope of the proposed activities is essential to integrate community perspectives.
3. An Integrated Pest Management approach may be used to address issues such as bark beetles.

About Monitoring

Monitoring requirements are identified in partnership with syilx communities and may include assessment activities for a range of priority impacts and values.

Practices for Climate Resiliency and Adaptation

Forest practitioners are expected to employ the following practices in support of climate resiliency:

1. Develop traditional knowledge and science-based information and tools to enable landscape and stand level planning to adapt forestry practices over the long-term to address and prepare for climate change.
2. Develop and implement restoration plans for damaged and neglected ecosystem components.
3. Develop and maintain landscape-level fuel breaks to increase wildfire suppression and control efficiency.
4. Actively prioritize and manage lands adjacent to communities to reduce the potential for destructive wildfires.
5. Choose silviculture systems that provide the greatest opportunity to address forest health, resiliency, and non-timber values.
6. Develop and deliver pre-commercial and commercial thinning programs to manage stand structure and fuel loading in second growth regenerating forests.
7. When regenerating stands, forest licensees restore a diverse array of species to make forests more resilient to insects, diseases, and wildfire.

8. Monitor and use annual insect and disease monitoring data to identify and address potential forest health issues and areas.
9. Monitor for blowdown in partial cuts and maintain active trapping programs for forest health agents.
10. Establish consistent and collaborative monitoring programs to assess and identify damaged and degraded ecosystem structure and function.

For Watershed Assessment

1. Watershed assessments is conducted post wildfire to identify, understand, and manage key risks within wildfire-impacted watersheds.
2. Watershed assessments are carried out in full collaboration with syilx Communities and with the input and guidance of knowledge holders and community members.

For Riparian Management

1. Salvage harvesting in the Riparian Management Areas (RMA) of streams, wetlands and lakes is avoided.
2. Salvage harvesting does not occur in any Riparian Reserve Zones in order to protect other riparian features and minimize any disturbance resulting in sediment mobilization into the water.
3. Where machines enter riparian areas, they adhere to appropriate harvest timing and other best management practices to minimize soil disturbance and mobilization of sediment.

For Access Management

Access management following large and severe wildfires is a key concern for syilx communities. Following wildfire, syilx communities are concerned that increased access, facilitated by fireguards and other access features, will worsen soil disturbance, landslides and flooding, and increase hunting pressures on vulnerable wildlife populations.

1. Access management plans are collaboratively developed to address these concerns and include an assessment of resource roads, fireguards, and strategies for their deactivation and rehabilitation.
2. Sensitive areas and access management for commercial and recreation mushroom pickers is identified during the recovery planning process.

For Archaeology

1. Archaeology assessments for wildfire impacted areas are not limited to areas of high archeological potential.
2. The scope, both in extent and intensity, of archaeology assessments on roads and disturbed areas are developed collaboratively with syilx communities.

For Soil Disturbance

Salvage activities in wildfire impacted areas may increase soil disturbance and the encroachment of non-native invasive plants.

1. Site-level assessments of soil sensitivity are done prior to salvage harvesting.
2. Harvesting practices utlized limit mechanical disturbance in burnt areas, particularly in severely burnt areas in order to help mitigate soil disturbance and the spread of invasive plants.

For Silviculture

Post wildfire assessments may reveal that management treatments are not required to reestablish resilient ecosystems. Depending on the recovery objectives and the severity of wildfire impacts (burn severity) some areas may not require treatment. These areas are collaboratively identified with syilx knowledge holders during the recovery planning process.

1. Silviculture principles to guide reforestation and revegetation of fire impacted areas are collaboratively developed with syilx communities.
2. Wildfire salvage areas will be regenerated with a mix of ecologically appropriate tree, shrub, and forb (including grass seed) plant species appropriate to the ecosystem. The broadscale use of early seral species such as Lodgepole pine for regeneration is discouraged as is the overstocking of previously open forest areas and grasslands.

For Resource Roads

Resource roads present the greatest risk of environmental impacts to water. Roads contribute to soil erosion, sedimentation, and altered flow patterns and regimes which means resource roads have the ability to alter hydrological processes across large areas, which in turn impact both water quantity and quality. Resource roads not only impact hydrological process, but also have direct impacts to aquatic ecosystems and forest structure and function. They impact wildlife through the loss of productive forest area, fragmentation of habitat, and the alteration of predator-prey dynamics.

The objective of a syilx standard concerning resource roads is to mitigate the continued expansion of road networks and minimize the amount of temporary and permanent resources roads required across all tenure types in syilx Territory.

Forest practitioners in syilx Territory commit to a policy of "no net increase in road density" and to reduce road density in areas where there are known impacts to the tmix^{w} and tmx^{w}ulax^{w}. This means that license holders must monitor, identify, and reduce the number of permanent roads and commit to closing, de-activating, and fully rehabilitating temporary roads as soon as possible once all silviculture and other permit obligations.

1. The construction of new permanent roads is minimized. New permanent roads are not built without the rehabilitation of an equivalent section of road in accordance with the "no net increase in road density" standard.
2. Road construction standards detail in a prescription or management plan how the proposed construction and maintenance operations will mitigate possible impacts to environmental and cultural values.
3. Permanent roads that are required for long-term access are monitored on a regular basis to mitigate all impacts to siwɬk^{w}.
4. Permanent circle roads are not built without prior approval from syilx rights holders.
5. Permanent resource roads are not built in areas of intact mature and old forest areas.
6. Permanent resource roads are not built in critical habitat areas for endangered species or animals of special interest or concern.
7. Permanent resource roads are not built in ecological corridors and critical areas for wildlife migration and movement.

8. The retention of visual screens or vegetated buffers along permanent resource roads is required to reduce the line-of-sight into harvested and regenerating forest openings.

For Temporary Forest Roads

1. Temporary forest roads are designed and used for a single season only. Temporary summer roads may be built in advance and temporary winter roads can be built concurrent with winter harvest.
2. All temporary roads are rehabilitated within two years of use, and revegetated with appropriate trees, shrubs, and/or forbs.
3. The intent is to gradually reduce the number and length of roads in accordance with the “no new net increase in roads” standard.

PRINCIPLE 7: HEALTHY AND RESILIENT ECOSYSTEMS FOSTER COMMUNITY WELLBEING

The syilx people are intrinsically linked to our tmxʷulaxʷ- land and siwɬkʷ-water. We understand that we are only as healthy as the tmixʷ-all living things. For example, wildfire recovery is about more than healing the land. It is about the connections and interdependence between syilx communities and our lands—and the connection between physical rehabilitation and broader ecological, social, and cultural recovery. The maintenance of ecological integrity is correlative to community well-being—improving one at the expense of the other is unacceptable to syilx people.

Traditional knowledge, languages, cultural practices, and oral traditions built up over millennia are connected to the land. Within this context, the protection of all cultural, heritage, and archeological resources is also imperative.

Community well-being depends on healthy water, healthy ecosystems, and healthy foods. Food sovereignty is a critical issue for syilx communities. When forest ecosystems are degraded, the maintenance and restoration of appropriate habitat for wildlife, plant-based foods, and medicines must be part of forestry practices to restore the productive capacity of the land.

INTENT FOR PRINCIPLE 7: Healthy ecosystems contribute to healthy communities and this includes access to traditional foods.

Forest licensees understand that cultural and heritage resources must be protected through protocols, assessments, and related processes. Place-based and site-specific knowledge from syilx knowledge holders, elders, and communities is relied upon to adequately protect the food sovereignty of the syilx Nation. Forest licensees collaboratively identify, protect, maintain, and restore food resources areas for spitlem, siya, berries, roots, and medicines as identified by syilx knowledge holders, elders, and communities. Forest licensees collaboratively identify, protect, maintain, and restore critical wildlife and wildlife habitat areas that provide food including ungulates and fish.

STANDARDS FOR FOSTERING COMMUNITY WELLBEING

For Cultural Values

1. In developing their operational plans, forestry licensees and the Province are expected to incorporate the information and follow the recommendations contained in all Preliminary Field Reconnaissance (PFRs), Cultural and Heritage Resource Assessments (CHRAs), Archeological Overview Assessments (AOAs), and Archeological Impacts Assessments (AIAs).
2. Forestry licensees establish chance-find procedure and implement staff and contractor cultural heritage training programs to ensure the protection of all cultural features and values.
3. Identified cultural heritage features and values are protected through a variety of methods including exclusion from the forest opening in reserve and/or WTRAs and other adaptive management strategies.

For Food Plants and Medicines

There are numerous types of food resources including spy'qaɬq-berries or berry bush and sʔaǩʷip-roots that are used for food and medicine. Each plant and their use requires various levels of protection.

1. Forestry practitioners are aware of and work with syilx Communities to conserve and maintain food resources at the stand level. Examples include:

- The use of pre-commercial and commercial thinning treatments across the landscape to reduce stand density and increase forage production.
- Where black huckleberry exceeds 10% ground cover, harvest only during the winter months. Where black huckleberry exceeds 50% ground cover within a pending forest opening, only selection or diameter limited harvesting systems are recommended.

For Wildlife Features

1. Wildlife Features such as dens, nests, wallows, nutrient licks, and bedding areas are protected and used as ecological anchors within retention patches (WTRAs).
2. Wildlife Features may be excluded from the planned forest openings depending on significance of the feature and habitat type.
3. Wildlife Trees are protected and used as ecological anchors within retention patches (WTRAs) or where appropriate may be protected as part of dispersed retention throughout the proposed forest opening.
4. Wildlife features are assessed during stand-level assessments and planning operations and are retained in an ecologically appropriate manner near riparian areas, WTRAs, or edge habitat to provide access to appropriate cover, escape, and other habitats.

For Fish and Fish Habitat

1. All forestry practitioners adhere to and use the Syilx siwɬkʷ (Water) Declaration and Water Strategy as guiding principles for water protection, conservation, and restoration.
2. All forestry practitioners endorse and honor the Syilx Forestry Standards for siwɬkʷ addressed under Principle 3.

For Ungulates

The goal for all forestry practitioners is to conserve, protect and improve habitat quality and supply for sx̌ʷaʔcínm (deer), sník'ɬc'aʔ (elk), styílcáʔ (caribou), yilíkʷlxkn (bighorn sheep), sx̌ʷx̌'iʔ (goat), and paʔpaʔlʕáca̓ʔ (moose).

1. Collaboratively engage knowledge holders, community members, contractors, and the broader community to remove barriers to wildlife movement, and to restore and improve important habitat.
2. Provide habitat connectivity between seasonal ranges, concentrating snow interception cover in winter habitats, riparian areas, along known migration routes, and terrain breaks.
3. Concentrate snow interception cover in locations adjacent to areas of preferred winter forage such as shrubs on known travel routes and along terrain breaks.
4. Incorporate wetlands, wet brushy areas, and rocky outcrops and ridges into retention strategies at the stand and landscape levels. Where habitat features occur in operational areas, stand-level plans address the maintenance of these habitat features.
5. Plan for a multi-aged forest across the landscape with less than 30% of the total area in dense (>5,000 sph) mid-seral (~30 to ~60-year-old) stands.
6. Maintain at least 15% of the landscape below 1200m in stands less than 35 years old and adjacent to mature coniferous forest.
7. Maintain at least 33% of the landscape in coniferous stands taller than 19 meters (60 feet).
8. Within winter range, maintain a snow intercepting canopy (Douglas-fir leading for deer) that measures at least 35% crown closure.
9. Retain in-block understory patches to break up line-of-sight from permanent roads.

10. Retain all deciduous tree and shrub species within harvested areas. Operational plans identify the presence of preferred forage species if present, and specify measures to protect or enhance their production.
11. Consider and use an increasing variety of silvicultural systems, including pre-commercial and commercial thinning, diameter limit or group selection systems to create a variety of gap sizes to enhance habitat features and forage production while maintaining snow intercepting canopy (min 35% crown closure).
12. Minimize road density in important forage and movement areas and near wetlands.
13. Rehabilitate and plant all in-block roads that are within 200 meters of water features. Revegetate these areas with an appropriate mix of native-leading grass, deciduous, and coniferous species.

For Culturally Important Wildlife

The goal for all forestry practitioners is to conserve, protect and improve habitat quality and supply for skm̓xist (black bear), kiʔlawnaʔ (grizzly bear), sen'k'lip (coyote), skəkʕakaʔ (birds), stunx (beaver), yx̌ʷyx̌ʷutxn (badger), piṗq̓s (marten), and wápupxn (lynx).

1. Maintain a balance of young, mid, and old forested areas targeting approximately one third for early, mid, and old seral stages across each watershed.
2. Protect, maintain, and provide appropriate habitat and forest conditions across the landscape for culturally important wildlife species. Where the condition and quantity of habitat is insufficient, forest practitioners collaboratively develop plans to restore, enhance, and/or recruit appropriate habitats.
3. Permanent resource roads are not built in ecological corridors and critical areas that provide habitat for wildlife migration and movement. Temporary roads are minimized in important habitat areas and rehabilitated within two years of construction. Licensees collaboratively develop rehabilitation plans within their areas of responsibility to identify opportunities to reduce road densities.
4. Retain a network of old forest conditions across the landscape. Connect physical habitat features such as riparian areas, ridges, and slope-breaks to provide protected and connected corridors for siwɬkʷ (water) and wildlife movement.
5. Incorporate wetlands, wet brushy areas, rocky outcrops, ridges, and other habitat features into retention strategies at the stand and landscape levels. Where habitat features occur in operational areas, stand-level plans will address the maintenance of these habitat features.
6. In harvest areas, maximize in-block retention to retain connectivity along water features, riparian areas, terrain breaks, and healthy understory and shrub patches.
7. Avoid all forestry operations during migration and nesting periods for birds.
8. Protect wildlife features including dens, burrows, and nests of eagle, osprey, heron, goshawk, and pileated woodpecker.
9. Protect all yx̌ʷyx̌ʷutxn (badger) burrows with a minimum 20-meter radius buffer to ensure they are free of machine and human intrusion and disturbance. If the burrow is an active maternal denning site, protect the site with a 100+ meter buffer for the current season.
10. Protect all identified skm̓xist (bear) and kiʔlawnaʔ (grizzly bear) dens by including the den within WRTAs of a suitable size to prevent impacts to the den site. Alternatively, exclude the den outside of the harvest area in a retention or protected area.
11. For piṗq̓s (marten) within appropriate post-harvest areas, provide stand-level habitat features such as debris piles, vertical structures such as stub trees, and large woody debris.
12. When conducting Wildfire Risk Reduction (WRR) treatments and/or commercial thinning operations, avoid "sanitizing" forest stands and retain a variety of wildlife features including CWD, wildlife trees, large snags, elevated windfalls, "witches" brooms or other features which may be used for denning and resting by piṗq̓s (marten).
13. Consider pre-commercial and commercial thinning treatments across the landscape to reduce stand density and increase the size of individual trees.

PRINCIPLE 8: COLLABORATIVE PROCESSES AND ACCOUNTABILITY ARE DEMONSTRATED

For syilx people, collaboration is a vital process that respects all voices and perspectives. In the context of forestry in syilx Territory, collaborative processes are essential to respect the diverse values, traditions, and aspirations of each syilx Community. These processes require broad participation in planning together with clearly articulated decision-making processes that incorporate existing traditional, local, and scientific knowledge.

INTENT FOR PRINCIPLE 8: Forestry in syilx Territory is done by co-management and shared decision-making with syilx rights holders.

Planning and decision-making will be driven by collaboration between the Province of BC, forest licensees, the syilx Nation, and syilx as we collectively work towards true co-management and shared decision-making for all forestry planning and operational activities.

STANDARDS FOR COLLABORATION & ACCOUNTABILITY

Practices for Forestry Practitioners

The following outlines approaches that forestry practitioners are expected to employ as a baseline for working in syilx Territory.

1. Incorporate traditional knowledge into all stewardship practices. Involve Elders and Knowledge Keepers both at the ONA and community levels to help refine forestry practices.
2. Develop community-based, syilx decision-making processes through which landscape-level and operational plans informed by syilx principles are developed and approved.
3. Planning and management decisions about local tenures and volume opportunities are collaborative in nature with syilx communities, the Province, and forest licensees.
4. Establish collaborative processes between the syilx Nation, Communities, Licensees, and the Province that support the implementation of syilx-principled, landscape-level plans.
5. Establish partnership agreements between the syilx Communities and forest licensees that enable collaborative processes.
6. Syilx communities participate in the monitoring and auditing of forestry activities in the Territory. This includes implementation, effectiveness, and habitat monitoring at the stand and landscape levels.
7. Raise community awareness and provide opportunities for members to re-connect with the land. Provide opportunities to Nation members to participate in field trips.
8. Resource syilx people to participate in forestry training, operations, and capacity building opportunities.
9. Discuss opportunities with syilx communities to use nsyilxcən place names on mapping products.

PRINCIPLE 9: SYILX PEOPLE RECEIVE A FAIR SHARE OF ECONOMIC BENEFITS

The syilx Nation continues to push for justice and wellbeing for our people—recognizing that the syilx Nation and Communities have an inherent right to derive economic benefits from our lands, territories, and resources. As we consider the necessity of achieving sustainable growth and being mindful of climate change, we factor in the imperative to close the economic gap and ensure that resources flow directly to syilx people. These are our unceded lands. Healthy communities depend on healthy ecosystems, but ecosystem health alone is not sufficient for human well-being. Forestry management must also stimulate the social and economic health of forest dependent communities. Syilx Communities are to receive a fair and equitable share of all revenues and harvest royalties commensurate with the resources removed from our unceded lands.

INTENT FOR PRINCIPLE 9: The syilx Nation and communities are recognized as full partners in the natural resource and forestry economy.

All syilx Communities have opportunities to obtain and manage area-based forest tenures and/or volume opportunities large enough to support a viable annual cut and economic benefits for each communities. There will be a net increase per year in Indigenous-led forest volume and tenures for all syilx Communities in the Territory.

STANDARDS FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Practices for Forestry Licensees

The following outlines approaches that forestry licensees are expected to employ as a baseline for working in syilx Territory.

1. Establish projected 5-year cut level based on a long-term (120+ years) sustainable rate of timber harvest to generate optimal economic benefits for syilx Communities.
2. Use the highest quality and most current information to determine sustainable harvest levels and plan annual timber harvesting levels that generate a consistent and sustainable revenue stream.
3. Maintain a sustainable year-to-year, even-flow of harvest that avoids economic boom and bust cycles as much as possible.
4. Maintain an up-to-date forest inventory and conduct analyses to determine trends in forest growth to ensure annual sustainable harvest levels.
5. Do not transfer, disperse, or sell existing forest tenures and licenses without appropriate engagement and consultation with potentially impacted syilx Communities.
6. Provide fair and proportional employment, contract, and capacity building opportunities for syilx Community members.

GLOSSARY

NSYILXCƏN TERM S

nsyilxcən	Interpretation
captikʷɬ	Teachings about syilx Okanagan laws, customs, values, governance structures and principles that define and inform syilx rights and responsibilities to the water, land, and all living things
cəcwixaʔ	Singular stream
cuʔcuwixaʔ	Plural, many small streams
kɬqʷəsqəstam	Wetlands
siwɬkʷ	Water
snhawixʷtn	syilx protocols and laws
steltalt	rights, title, and responsibilities to the land and the resources
tiktq	Lakes
tmixʷ	All living things
tmxʷúlaxʷ	The land and everything that lives on it

WESTERN TERMS

Ancient Forests - are areas established by Old Growth Technical Advisory Panel (OGTAP) and are Old Growth Forest stands that are older than 250 years in ecosystems with frequent stand-replacing disturbances or 400 years of age in ecosystems with infrequent stand-replacing disturbances.

Big-treed Old Growth – are areas established by OGTAP and are Old Growth Forest stands that contain the largest trees (measured by height and diameter).

Dry Fir Forests– Forested stands that contain Douglas-fir trees in the dry and semi-arid Interior Douglas Fir (IDF) biogeoclimatic zone.

Forest Licensees – Holders of Forest Act agreements that provide the right to harvest a set volume of Crown timber within either a Timber Supply Area or a fixed area such as a Tree Farm Licence, First Nations Woodland Tenure, or Community Forest. Along with harvest rights, forest licensees have significant forest management responsibilities including forest protection, operational planning, road building, and reforestation. For the purposes of this document, BCTS is considered to be a Forest Licensee.

Forest Practitioners – All experienced and qualified professionals engaged in the management of forest ecosystems and forest resources.

Group Tree Selection – type of silviculture system that removes small groups of trees over time to create small openings. Opening sizes may vary but are typically <1ha in size or <2 tree lengths in the narrow dimension.

No Net New Roads – a Indigenous led policy that limits the permanent construction of new resource roads and ensures that any new road construction must be offset by removing an equal length or area of existing permanent road. The intent of this practice is to reduce existing road densities to an acceptable level (density) to mitigate harmful impacts of high road densities on wildlife and other forest values.

No-Harvest Areas - areas set aside by Tolko for wildlife management. No operational activities will occur within these areas.

Non-Classified Drainage - an ephemeral or intermittent watercourse having continuous defined channel bed that is less than 100m in length, and at some points may spread over an area without defined banks, before flowing again as a defined channel less than 100m in length. An NCD is a water course that does not meet the definition of a stream and is not an area of overland flow. An NCD may impact water quality and quantity in classified streams.

Old Forests – Forests older than 140 years in ecosystems with frequent stand-replacement disturbances and forests older than 250 years in ecosystems with infrequent stand-replacing disturbances

Old Growth Deferral Areas – Old Growth Forested areas where logging or other industrial activities have been paused to protect old growth forested ecosystems.

Old Growth Technical Advisory Panel (OGTAP) - panel formed by BC government to develop and map science-based deferral recommendations.

Permanent Roads - roads that are constructed for long-term use to facilitate forest management activities.

Priority Deferral Areas – are established by OGTAP and are Old Growth Forests most at risk of permanent loss, that were identified and mapped as the highest priority areas for deferral. These areas include Big-treed Old Growth, remnant old ecosystems and Ancient Forests.

Remnant Old Ecosystems - are established by OGTAP and are Old Growth Forest ecosystems with less than 10% Old Growth Forest remaining (either less than 10% total by BEC unit, or less than 10% within each landscape unit to capture geographic variability).

Retention Areas - areas deferred from harvesting for the foreseeable future unless (i) new data/assessment shows that some form of harvest can proceed; (ii) harvesting is required to address a forest health issue; or (iii) a new catastrophic event (fire, windthrow, etc.) warrants salvage operations. In some cases, retention areas might be assigned a legal designation (Wildlife Tree Retention Areas (WTR), Old Growth Management Areas (OGMA), etc.) while in other cases they will be known as retention areas or no-harvest areas.

Risk – the likelihood or probability that an adverse or undesirable event will occur. It is a combination of the likelihood of the event happening and the impact or consequence if the event does happen.

Single-Tree Selection – A silviculture system that implements tree removal (thinning) at the individual tree level.

Temporary roads – roads that are constructed for short-term use to forest management activities and are not intended to become permanent infrastructure.

Visual Screening – a buffer windfirm vegetation and/or terrain features that blocks the view from a road surface into an adjacent area. The purpose of the visual screen is to minimize line-of-site to wildlife and protect wildlife from the stress and behavioral changes caused linear disturbance features.

Watershed Assessment – an assessment conducted by a Qualified Professional that evaluates the combined effects of current and planned primary forest activities in a watershed. It evaluates whether primary forest activities could cause adverse impacts to the quantity of water in the watershed, the timing of water flow in the watershed, riparian function and health within the watershed as well as impacts to human health.

APPENDIX: MAP OF SYILX OKANAGAN TERRITORY

