

PROPOSAL NUMBER: ESRD-2013-04

DESCRIPTION: Developing a long-term monitoring protocol for FireSmart sites

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ISSUE: A handful of districts in Alberta have been collecting data on forest fuel treatment sites and developing databases to store it. This information could be useful for determining treatment maintenance schedules and ESRD would like to extend these initiatives across the province. However, no standard data collection protocol is in place that would ensure the type, the quality, the consistency and the timing of information needed.

BACKGROUND: Wildfire management agencies across Canada have been active conducting extensive forest fuel treatments for the past two decades. In most cases, regular re-treatment is likely required to maintain these sites' capacity to reduce fire behaviour. However, our understanding of when and how to re-treat these sites is poor. By collecting initial site information—such as fuel type, treatment method, and location—as well as conducting regular vegetation inventories and fire behaviour predictions, wildfire managers can begin to get a sense of when these sites might need to be re-treated.

OBJECTIVE: Develop a universal long-term monitoring and data collection protocol that would produce the data necessary to determine treatment maintenance schedules and would allow the information to be shared across districts and, possibly, across provinces.

APPROACH: Identify the goals and objectives of a universal, long-term FireSmart-monitoring program.

Identify the data needs of a universal, long-term FireSmart-monitoring program.

Review the data collection protocols used by existing programs (AB Vegetation Monitoring and PSP).

Identify the data collection protocols that would support the requirements of a long-term FireSmart-monitoring program.