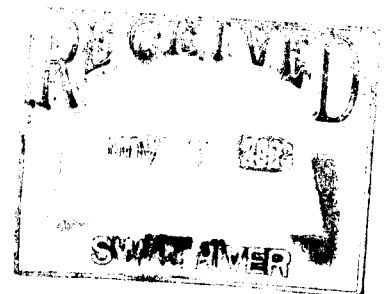


**SPRUCE PRODUCTS LIMITED**

**VIMY RIDGE/ONION LAKE**

**ROAD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**



# **VIMY RIDGE/ONION LAKE ROAD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

## **1.0 Background Information**

The Ketchum Tower Road is currently the primary route into the Onion Lake (ONL) Operating Area. Access from PR 366 was the feasible choice when the area was first logged. However, over the past few years it has become increasingly difficult to move any forest products from the ONL blocks in an economical manner.

- Any haul between March 1st and December 1<sup>st</sup> has never been economical due to the ever present weight restrictions on PR 366. Winter weights (Dec 1<sup>st</sup> to Feb 28<sup>th</sup>) do allow an increase in weights to A1 loading. This provides a three month haul window at only three-quarters of an expected payload. This has always affected/constricted both the log haul and mobile chip operations.
- The distance of bush road increases yearly which in turn has increased the turnaround time per load.

The light loads and increased turnaround time in combination with the dramatic increase in fuel prices is causing the haul rates from this area to become unmanageable.

With the current economic conditions in the forest industry, Spruce Products can no longer bear the increase that is required to move forest products out of the Onion Lake operating area via PR 366.

It is quite apparent Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation has no interest in assisting the forest industry with increased winter weights on PR 366. Requests have been put forward for years to allow RTAC loading, with no results.

The solution to this is reactivation of the Vimy Ridge Road to access the remaining Onion Lake blocks. The Vimy Ridge Rd. was built as a primary forest access road. It provides access directly to PTH 10, which is a RTAC highway. Year round RTAC loading (full loads) will allow operations in the ONL area to remain viable.

LP's future AOP's will identify forest management activities in the Vimy Ridge operating area. Vimy Ridge is planned to succeed Onion Lake, so the Vimy Ridge Rd. will become active regardless.

## **2.0 Access Development**

Currently, there is dry weather access to within 3.5 km of block ONL-802 via the Vimy Ridge Rd. Only 3.5 km of new right of way would need to be developed between ONL-802 and VM-43. (i.e. ROW harvest, stumping, grade development, ditching where necessary) This access would be developed this fall.

Upgrading will be required on the existing bush road west of the hydro line that crosses the Vimy Ridge Rd. This will include grading and replacement of some culverts.

The Vimy Ridge Rd. was developed to a Class 3 road. It will require some grading and gravel.

The attached access plan identifies road and crossing location details.

### **3.0 Road Maintenance and Safety**

The intent of use for the Vimy Ridge Rd. is consistent with the use of the Ketchum Tower Rd. The Class 3 road will allow access during wet periods but is still limited to in-block road conditions. However, if conditions do permit prior to frozen ground, the wood haul can proceed earlier without any issues with load weights. This will greatly lengthen the haul season. Road maintenance will be undertaken when required to maintain a Class 3 level. Safe movement of traffic, as always, will remain a priority.

- Gravel/sand on hills and corners if required during the winter haul season
- Clearing culverts that are plugged by beavers to avoid washed out grades
- Regular inspections of crossing structures each spring and periodically following major rain events
- Primary access signage posted where necessary to warn the general public and insure safe movement of traffic on the logging roads
- Kilometer markers

### **4.0 Access Control**

Spruce Products Limited realizes the need to control access for the purpose of mitigating wildlife resource concerns, public safety issues and, to protect road infrastructure. The gate located at the water crossing on the bottom of the Vimy Ridge Rd. will be utilized when required to restrict vehicle access during soft road conditions (primarily spring break up to the start of the summer logging season).

In order to mitigate wildlife resources concerns:

- Berms will be constructed on tertiary roads which join the Vimy Ridge road
- Seasonal road closure will be established at the end of Designated Route X (Vimy Ridge Rd.)

### **5.0 Road Use Forecast**

Annual harvest volumes will remain in the 20,000m<sup>3</sup> to 25,000m<sup>3</sup> range (sftwd/hdwd combined) in the Onion Lake operating area. Therefore, at least another five years activity is forecasted for Onion Lake. Following completion of harvest and renewal, the road will be decommissioned between Vimy Ridge and Onion Lake (~ 2014). Activities will then shift east to the Vimy Ridge operating area.

### **6.0 Ketchum Tower Road Decommissioning**

The Ketchum Tower Rd. will require decommissioning once the Vimy Ridge Rd. is in use. This may need to be completed in two stages if frozen ground conditions will not allow proper earth work.

The following work will be completed once the access plan is approved:

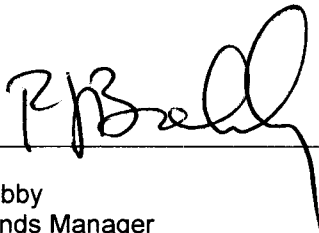
- Effective closure will be completed within two weeks of the Vimy Ridge Rd. becoming the primary route. Berms will be constructed at the back of the turnaround area located at the junction of PR 366. These berms will restrict access to the existing and old Ketchum Tower Rd. locations.
- The road will be trenched from behind the berms to the old gate location to prevent unnecessary erosion.
- The Ketchum Tower Rd. will be trenched from Km 12 back through the old cutover to a point that will effectively restrict access from the other end.
- Signage will be in place to identify road closure.

Other work to be completed next year (summer):

- Existing crossings on the Ketchum Tower Rd. will be dug out, seeded if required and natural drainage restored. These locations are identified by UTM coordinates.
- The Ketchum Tower roadbed will be seeded with a grass/WSS seed mixture at locations that will promote growth.

Attachments:

- Road Development Information Sheets
- Water Crossing Prescription Sheets
- Vimy Ridge-Onion Lake Access Overview Map
- Onion Lake Road Proposed Crossing Removal Location Map



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