



Reference: 402608

August 4, 2023

Marsha Conley
Vice-President
Dean Park Estates Executive Committee

Trevor Stephenson
Chair of Fire Safety Committee
Dean Park Estates Executive Committee

Sent via email: execom@dpeca.ca

Dear Marsha Conley & Trevor Stephenson:

Thank you for your letter of July 19, 2023, regarding wildfire risk in ŁÁÚ,WELŃEW/John Dean Provincial Park. BC Parks appreciates your engagement, and I am happy to provide you with information regarding the fuel reduction project that is currently underway.

BC Parks, in collaboration with BC Wildfire and a professional forestry consultant, has developed a robust fuel management plan, prescription and implementation plan for ŁÁÚ,WELŃEW/John Dean Provincial Park. The goals are to reduce the risk of crown and surface fires, minimize the threat of fire spreading to/from adjacent residences, and to create an anchor point for suppression efforts, if needed. The general scope of work involves removing select trees, ladder-fuels, and surface fuel over the span of a 3–5-year period. The main treatment area follows the eastern boundary of the park, adjacent to the residents.

Last year, BC Wildfire Service was onsite leading the fuel reduction work. An element of that project was to pile and burn small woody debris. Unfortunately, crews were unable to complete the work as they were redeployed to assist with provincial wildfires and flood events. BC Parks hired a qualified forestry company to complete the remaining work. Due to tight timing, the contractor missed the window for burning (November 1st – February 1st) resulting in the piles remaining on-site over the summer.

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Wildfire professionals have advised BC Parks that the remaining debris piles are not considered a significant fire threat.

BC Parks is in the process of procuring another qualified forestry company to safely burn the debris piles this winter. Burning is considered the best technique for debris removal as it results in the least amount of ecological disturbance.

Regarding flagged trees within the treatment area, they serve various purposes. They mark designated travel paths to avoid sensitive habitats, treatment unit boundaries, data collection areas, and deciduous tree species that reduce fire behaviour. Not all flagged trees indicate hazards for workers or pose wildfire risks. The handling of trees that require removal varies depending on their safety and wildlife value. Where possible, trees are converted into wildlife trees instead of being felled. In cases where a high wildlife value is associated with a tree, a 'no work zone' buffer is created around it to maintain the area's ecological integrity. In accordance with the fuel reduction prescription, standing dead trees greater than or equal to 17.5 cm diameter were not, and will not be removed.

BC Parks continues to prioritize work associated with the LAU, WELNEW/John Dean Provincial Park fuel reduction project. We will continue to implement fuel reduction treatments as per the fuel management prescription requirements, to minimize wildfire risks. BC Parks Area Supervisor, Katy Fulton will reach out to both of you to ensure you're informed about the upcoming project work and provided with regular updates.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Standen', written in a cursive style.

Jim Standen
Assistant Deputy Minister
Conservation and Recreation Division