



Revised Area-based Analysis (ABA) status for 2016 and Regulatory Policy Requirements

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

Effective immediately the following ABA statuses apply for Riparian Reserve Zones: 44 are “Normal”, 24 are “Enhanced Management” and one area has escalated to “Regulatory Policy”. There are no changes to the Old Forest status with three areas delineated as “Enhanced Management” and three as “Normal”. Revised ABA status information is available as shapefiles and status maps on the Commission’s [ABA website](#).

The table below lists the “Enhanced Management” and “Regulatory Policy” areas for Riparian Reserve Zones and Old Forest:

Water Management Basins Classified as Enhanced Management			
Blueberry River	Kyklo River	Lower Pine River	Moberly River
Burnt River	Lower Fort Nelson River	Lower Prophet River	Murray River
Cache Creek	Lower Halfway River	Lynx Creek	Sukunka River
Cameron River	Lower Kiskatinaw River	Middle Beaton River	Upper Peace River
Chinchaga River	Lower Liard River	Middle Fort Nelson River	Upper Pine River
Doig River	Lower Muskwa River	Milligan Creek	West Kiskatinaw River
Water Management Basins Classified as Regulatory Policy			
Pouce Coupe River			
Old Forest Classified as Enhanced Management			
Omineca	Wet Trench	Wet Mountains	

RIPARIAN REQUIREMENTS

Operators are reminded that according to Section 5 (v) of the Environmental Protection and Management Regulation operating areas are not to be located within a Riparian Reserve Zone except to facilitate a crossing. There is an expectation that no activity will be proposed in Riparian Reserve Zones, with the exception of crossings which should clearly demonstrate the use of existing disturbance.

The Commission requires operators submitting oil and gas activity applications with new land to indicate if there is impact to Enhanced Management or Regulatory Policy areas on their application and deliver a Mitigation Strategy as detailed in the [Supplementary Information for Area-based Analysis](#) and the [Oil and Gas Activity Application Manual](#).

REGULATORY POLICY

The 2016 recalculation of Surface Land Use and Area-based Analysis has escalated the Pouce Coupe water management basin into Regulatory Policy status. Preliminary analysis from other provincial assessments have also supported the need for this change. In consideration of these results and other matters with the Fresh Water Atlas and GIS based stream classifications, the Commission is engaging with Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations to review and confirm the status of the Pouce Coupe water management basin.

INTERIM MEASURES FOR REGULATORY POLICY

In consideration of the matters with the Fresh Water Atlas, and GIS based stream classifications, operators are encouraged to validate the classification and delineation of streams and wetlands in their operating area and use this as supporting documentation in their Mitigation Strategy. ABA riparian status is a consideration for any incursions associated with S1-S3 streams, L1-L2 lakes and W1-W2 wetlands.

The application review process will be escalated to a Regulatory Policy review for the Pouce Coupe. Operators are required to avoid creating new crossings in Riparian Reserve Zones in the Pouce Coupe and a more in depth review of the Mitigation Strategy will be applied to any proposed activity within this area.

Where avoidance is not practicable the Mitigation Strategy should include a detailed list of specific measures that will be taken to minimize and mitigate impacts to the Riparian Reserve Zone, together with a summary of operational constraints. Applications in Regulatory Policy areas must demonstrate:

- Avoidance of Riparian Reserve Zones.
- Use of existing disturbance.
- Stronger adherence to the Mitigation Hierarchy.
- A detailed rationale for any new disturbance and a summary of operational constraints.
- Specific measures to limit impacts to the environment.
- Delineation of ABA areas on construction plan.
- Verification of wetlands and stream classification as applicable.

Any application for activity within a Regulatory Policy area will be flagged for escalated review by the Stewardship Division. If approved, more stringent permit conditions may be attached to the permit.

If you have any questions regarding this bulletin, please contact:

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