



**Forest Health & Adaptation Section  
Forest Management Branch**

**Alberta Agriculture and Forestry  
Mountain Pine Beetle  
Municipal Grant Funding  
Program**

**Program Overview and Guidelines**

# Mountain Pine Beetle Municipal Grant Funding Program Overview and Guidelines

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## 1.0 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### 1.1 Province's Mandate

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AF) or the Province is mandated to deliver programs and services that support the following key resource areas of the environment:

- a) Forest Protection,
- b) Fish and Wildlife Management, and
- c) Land Management.

### 1.2 Background

The Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) is the most destructive insect pest of pine. MPB threatens six million hectares of Alberta forests. It is estimated that the economic value of the trees at risk in Alberta is over \$23 billion. Approximately 15,000 Albertans and 70 Alberta communities depend on the forest industry for their livelihood (direct and indirect jobs). Right now, there are 25 major forest companies (Annual Allowable Cut of 10,000 m<sup>3</sup> or greater) operating in Alberta. More than half of them (14) rely on pine to continue operations. Another two medium and 21 small operators would be severely impacted by declines in their AAC, caused by MPB.

To prevent major MPB outbreaks, and reduce source populations, Agriculture and Forestry (AF) along with Municipal partners, need to implement and maintain an aggressive and proactive detection and control program in Alberta.

AF is implementing aggressive mountain pine beetle surveillance and control programs on provincial public lands, and is asking municipalities to manage mountain pine beetle problems on municipal and private lands. A mountain pine beetle outbreak will have a significant effect on municipalities including reduced aesthetics, property values, tourism and recreation opportunities, human safety, wildlife habitat, timber value, watershed quality; and increased fire hazard.

The Province will prioritize municipalities that have a risk of infestation based on provincial objectives and may offer financial assistance for their mountain pine beetle control program.

## 2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 2.1 Alberta Agriculture and Forestry

The Province undertakes to do the following:

- a) Identify and/or confirm the presence of current/historic mountain pine beetle attacked trees on an annual basis and inform eligible municipalities about the availability and requirements of the beetle control program.
- b) Provide eligible municipalities with the aerial survey results progressively between August 15 and October 15 each year to help with project planning.
- c) Assist with the preparation of the grant funding proposal and provide advice on all aspects of program delivery and reporting requirements.
- d) Review the applications and report grant decisions in a timely manner.
- e) Provide financial assistance to eligible municipalities to develop, implement, and report on a mountain pine beetle control program.
- f) Reserve the right to request additional information on any aspect of the proposal including the budget and compliance reporting.
- g) Reserve the right to audit or require an audit of the books and accounts of the municipality with respect to the grant funding.

- h) Review the program annually and make changes that add value and effectiveness to the control program. As a result, beetle risk priority, eligible activities and the extent of funding may change each year, depending on funding availability, municipality's performance, control actions required, and the beetle population.

## **2.2 Grant Applicant**

The eligible municipality undertakes to do the following:

- a) Partner with the Province and submit a funding request according to program guidelines.
- b) Enter in to a grant agreement to receive the approved funding.
- c) Deliver the control program according to the terms and conditions of the grant agreement.
- d) Comply with all applicable laws, licensing, reporting and other requirements.
- e) Report results and other details to the Province as required or requested.
- f) Multiple municipalities may coordinate their programs and apply for one grant for the entire program. Recipient municipalities must include a council resolution appointing a lead municipality from the partner municipalities within the grant proposal.

## **3.0 GRANT ELIGIBILITY & FUNDING**

### **3.1 Eligibility Requirement**

This grant is available to municipalities that are pre-identified by AF as having pine beetle infestations with a high risk of spread. These municipalities are asked to partner with the Province in addressing this important issue.

AF contacts these municipalities and notifies them of the problem and the assistance available from the Province. Program representatives are available to help with the preparation and submission of a duly completed application for grant funding to implement the approved control activities.

Multiple municipalities may co-ordinate their programs and apply for one grant for the entire program. Recipient municipalities must include a council resolution appointing a lead municipality from the partner municipalities.

### **3.2 Eligible Purposes**

The purpose of the program is to treat beetle-infested trees in order to control the spread of infestations. The grant program is designed to help control the mountain pine beetle infestations in partnership with eligible municipalities. However, it is not designed to compensate for losses arising from the mountain pine beetle infestations and/or control actions.

Funding will be available in the fall prior to the commencement of the program year.

The following activities and costs are eligible for a grant:

- a) Development of the management plan.
- b) Training for municipal staff and staff contracted for the beetle project on AF ground survey and control techniques and standards and other directly applicable training needs.
- c) Pine beetle ground surveys (e.g. Walk-through, concentric, transect)
- d) Treatment of infested trees (e.g. milling, debarking, falling and burning, chipping, or peeling standing).
- e) Communication, education and outreach efforts.
- f) Quality control costs.
- g) Project management costs (separate from reasonable municipal administrative costs and include project manager and/or other necessary project management staff).
- h) Final report preparation.
- i) Prevention (use of anti-aggregation chemicals may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Provincial Pine Beetle Coordinator)
- j) Administrative costs to manage the grant (reasonable costs up to 8% of the total cost of the approved activities). Costs can include office assistance, photocopying, etc.

- k) Cost of audit or verification done by an independent public accountant.

### 3.3 Emergency Control Activities (ECA)

In the event it is necessary to implement control activities on previously undetected trees before beetle flight, an Emergency Control Activity Program (ECA) can be carried out from July 1 to August 14.

The costs associated with ECA must be budgeted, tracked and accounted for separately. After completion of the emergency control activities, a report on program results and costs must be filed with AF by September 14 for reimbursement of costs.

### 3.4 Funding Allocation

The funding allocation is based on meeting provincial objectives, the established beetle management zone and the priority beetle management activities. **Please refer to the AF MPB Municipal Grant Funding Program Priorities document.** Applications from Leading Edge, Holding and Inactive Zone municipalities will be assessed based on the priorities outlined in the document. It is advisable to discuss your particular situation with the local Forest Health Officer before applying for funding.

## 4.0 APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

### 4.1 Information Requirements

When preparing the the grant application form for submission, the “Description of project/program” section should be organized under the following headings:

#### a) Introduction

This would include the name of the proposed project and brief project description including what is to be done, how it will be completed and when it will be completed.

#### b) Goals and Objectives

#### c) Maps of the Survey Area

The maps must include the following details:

- Municipal boundary
- Private and municipal owned lands
- Roads and access corridors
- Parks and other tree stands (if available). Each municipality will have varying degrees of ‘green space’ that may be affected.
- General area to be surveyed and the potential type of survey for each area (e.g. walk through surveys, concentric ground surveys, transect ground surveys).
- Scale and North arrow

This map will be a preliminary overview of the survey program, and will change based on ground inspections.

#### d) Methodologies and Survey Techniques

The local Forest Health Officer can assist with the survey planning or the municipality can refer to the AF’s Mountain Pine Beetle Detection and Management Guide for survey techniques.

The proposal must include:

- Survey timelines
- Survey Map
- Areas to be surveyed and the type of survey for each area.

- Survey techniques
- Data collection standards
- Submission timelines

There is a mandatory training requirement for municipal staff and staff contracted for the beetle project on AF ground survey, control techniques, standards. **All crew leaders/supervisors and new surveyors used or hired to do surveys must attend and successfully complete AF's Mountain Pine Beetle Detection and Management Training Program.** Funding and time for this training is an acceptable expenditure under this grant program.

AF will require a copy of the GPS locations (paper or electronic) of all infested trees (or patches of infested trees) as well as other information related to the beetle population. The local Forest Health Officer can provide a list of the data that must be collected. These data must be submitted to the Forest Health Officer bi-weekly. **All data must be in the datum NAD83 and the location recorded in degrees minutes decimal.** A handheld GPS unit is suitable for data collection. Location data is important for a provincial reporting database, and consistent standards will ensure the data collected meets minimum reporting standards.

AF will provide data collection sheets for municipal use. Should a municipality choose to use their own data collection sheet, the information collected must be consistent with AF requirements.

#### e) Control Techniques

The proposal must include:

- Control timelines
- Control Tactics
- Treatment methods to be employed
- Staff/Contractor assignments
- Equipment to be used
- Infested tree management (burn/sold for milling)
- Reporting
- Map showing areas of treatment (ongoing)
- Submission timelines

All treatments must be completed by the following June 30 from the time of survey. If treatment can not be completed by June 30, an application for a time extension can be made to the local Forest Health Officer. Reasons for the extension and projected completion date must be indicated.

The local Forest Health Officer can assist with the control tactic that is the most appropriate, efficient and cost-effective. Tactics such as fall and burn, fall and peel, whole tree chipping, debarking, chipping and composting of residue are approved. The local Forest Health Officer may approve other tactics. Refer to the Mountain Pine Beetle Detection and Management Guide for more information.

AF will require a copy of the GPS locations (paper or electronic) of all controlled trees (or patches of infested trees) with the same accuracy as the surveys. The local Forest Health Officer will provide a list of the data that must be collected and a form for municipal use.

If the trees are to be sold for milling, AF reserves the right to place conditions on the sale. These conditions may change annually, and will generally involve transportation, milling and debris disposal timelines. It is, therefore, advisable to contact the local Forest Health Officer or refer to the AF website for the latest restrictions at:

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/formain15847/\\$file/2011-04-MountainPineBeetle-LogManagement-Apr2011.pdf?OpenElement](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/formain15847/$file/2011-04-MountainPineBeetle-LogManagement-Apr2011.pdf?OpenElement)

#### **f) Communication, Education and Outreach Strategy**

The proposal must outline how information is to be presented and relayed to the community and other stakeholders to raise public awareness of this destructive pest of pine, beetle life cycle, hosts and damage, management strategies and what landowners and stakeholders can do to help contain and alleviate the problem.

The proposal should include/consider the following:

- List of stakeholders by grouping
- Community outreach – news letters, mail outs
- Media
- Open house – locations
- Land owner communication and contact procedures
- Staff and Contractor training
- Presentations

#### **g) Quality Control Technique**

The proposal should identify how the surveys and control operations will be checked and monitored (When? Who? Intensity?). This process should also indicate how deficiencies would be corrected. As per AF standard, 15% of survey sites, and 10% of control trees must be checked for quality.

A quality control audit for survey and control will consist of the following:

- Resurvey an area to determine if any attacked trees were missed.
- Check the marked trees to ensure the data was collected and recorded properly.
- Check to ensure mountain pine beetle attacked all marked trees.
- Check the burn pines to ensure all beetle life stages are killed.
- Check the peeled logs to ensure all beetle life stages are killed.
- Ensure chemical treatments are performed by a certified applicator. Ensure all chemical treatments are completed adequately to kill all beetle life stages.
- Ensure the logs are sold to an approved processing facility.
- Ensure the logs are processed in a timely manner and the debris is treated adequately to kill any remaining beetle life stages.

AF will also check the quality of the surveys and control measures. The quality control will be conducted under the supervision of the local Forest Health Officer. The quality control may proceed in any area with infested trees in the municipality; however, the local Forest Health Officer will check with the municipality prior to beginning any quality control activity to ensure the proper landowner communication procedure is conducted.

If any aspect of the survey or control operation is inaccurate or incomplete, the municipality will receive a *Notice of Deficiency* within two weeks of the quality control inspection. The municipality then has two weeks to write a corrective action plan and submit it to the local Forest Health Officer.

#### **(h) Project Work Assignments**

The proposal must identify the number of staff and/or contractors hired or assigned to the project.

For contracts, the tendering and awarding process must meet acceptable provincial or municipal requirements. The Province can provide a list of contractors in the local area who have the expertise to complete the survey or control work. In addition, AF will provide training and technical expertise to the contractors/staff members as required.

#### **(i) Project Budget**

The budget must clearly indicate the amount of funding requested. The cost estimates should be prepared with due regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The budget

should be broken down by major cost categories as outlined below and further broken down in to the costs of contracts, wages, equipment, supplies, rentals and administration costs. The major cost categories include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Development of the management plan.
2. Project management.
3. Pine beetle ground surveys.
4. Treatment of infested trees.
5. Prevention (use of anti-aggregation chemicals may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Provincial Pine Beetle Coordinator).
6. Communication and outreach efforts.
7. Quality control costs.
8. Administration costs (including reasonable costs for preparation of final report).
9. Cost of audit or verification done by an independent public accountant.

Please note administration costs for the project cannot exceed 8% of the total cost of approved activities.

If a funding shortfall is discovered during the project implementation phase, a municipality may request additional funding by submitting a revised proposal, clearly explaining the rationale for additional funding. The revised proposal must include an updated budget and implementation schedule. The deadline for submitting the revised proposal is **January 15** of the program year.

**(j) Implementation Schedule**

The proposal should include an action plan of beetle control activities to be undertaken, with specific start and end dates for each major activity.

The proposal should also identify any risks involved in completing each activity, mitigation steps and results to be achieved.

**(k) Details of grants (including amounts) received or receivable for this project from other sources**

**(l) Details of previous grants (including amounts) paid or payable to your municipality by the Minister of Alberta Agriculture and Forestry and/or other Government of Alberta departments**

**(m) An explanation of how the municipality will recognize the Province's contribution**

**(n) Council resolution identifying co-coordinating municipalities and lead municipality if the proposal is for multiple municipalities**

## **5.0 APPLICATION AND PROJECT TIMELINE**

### **5.1 Application Deadline**

The eligible municipality must prepare the written application in accordance with the Province's program guidelines. Local Forest Health Officers will be available to assist with the preparation of the application.

The municipality must submit the completed application to the local Forest Health Officer by or before **October 31** or by the extended deadline as approved by the local Forest Health Officer.

### **5.2 Project Deadline**

The Project is to be completed by **June 30**, if the project will not be completed by June 30 the local Forest Health Officer and determine the new anticipated deadline.

## **6.0 GRANT AGREEMENT**

Each approved applicant must enter into a grant agreement with Alberta Agriculture and Forestry regarding the use of the grant before the funds will be released.

The terms and conditions of the grant agreement will include, but will not be limited to, the use of the grant for the approved project only, revenue treatment, reporting and accountability requirements, the Minister's right to audit the grant project, and the Minister's right to require a refund of any excess grant funds or funds not used in accordance with the grant agreement.

The municipality must use the approved grant by **June 30** or by the approved extended project completion date.

Full compliance with the grant agreement, including meeting the project timeline and project terms and conditions (also detailed in Schedule A as attachment to the signed grant agreement), and the conditions that apply after completion of the project, will be required.

## **7.0 COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS**

### **7.1 Acknowledgement of Compliance**

Municipalities are required to submit a duly completed Acknowledgement of Compliance form and the various required reports as attachments. The required reports are listed under "Final Reports" in section 8.0.

### **7.2 Project Accountability**

In the final report the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the municipality receiving the grant must submit a full accounting of the project cost, certifying that the grant was used for the approved project in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement.

### **7.3 Income Earned Accounting**

Municipalities are required to account for and apply any income earned (which includes interest, capital gains, dividends, etc.) on the approved grant to the project. The income also includes any revenue received from the sale of logs to an approved processing facility.

Where significant time extensions, project changes, high grant amounts, or other circumstances warrant, municipalities may also have to account for such income if so advised by program representatives.

A requirement to apply and account for the income earned is included in the grant agreement.

### **7.4 Time Extension**

The Province recognizes that the entire project or some aspects of the project may be delayed on occasion due to factors that are beyond the municipality's control. It is, therefore, the Province's intent to accommodate reasonable project delays and problems, where possible. However, to meet program accountability and compliance requirements, municipalities requesting completion date extensions must **submit a request in writing** that includes at least the following:

- a) the project funds expended at the date of the request;
- b) the reason for the delay; and
- c) the revised completion date and any revised project components.

Program staff may require other useful information to evaluate the request and these may include:

- a) an updated project implementation schedule;
- b) a contingency plan to mitigate further project delays; and
- c) a listing of the contract and/or other resources that will be used to complete the project.

Upon receipt of such a request, the Provincial Pine Beetle Coordinator will consider the request and provide recommendations to the Deputy Minister or his designate.

If the request is approved, the Provincial Pine Beetle Coordinator will then prepare an amending grant agreement to amend the appropriate project conditions in the original documentation and forward it to the municipality for authorized signature(s) in order to process the requested changes.

#### **7.5 Notice of Deficiency [section 4.2.2(e)]**

The municipality will receive a *Notice of Deficiency* within two weeks of the quality control inspection if any aspect of the survey or control operation is inaccurate or incomplete. The municipality then has two weeks to write a corrective action plan and submit it to the local Forest Health Officer.

#### **7.6 Follow-Up**

The program guidelines and the grant agreement both emphasize the terms and conditions of Mountain Pine Beetle Control Program funding. Provincial government's accountability framework for grants requires that program staff must ensure an acceptable level of municipal compliance with these conditions. While program staff will be practically helpful when problems arise, staff will employ follow-up and collection procedures to deal with municipalities that do not make reasonable efforts to meet the terms and conditions of the grant agreement.

Program staff will continue to conduct site visits to inspect completed project.

### **8.0 FINAL REPORTS**

#### **8.1 Submission Deadline**

The Province requires a final report to be submitted by **July 30**. If a time extension for project completion was approved, the report must be submitted within one month of the approved extension to the project completion date.

#### **8.2 Reporting Requirements**

The final report must include Acknowledgement of Compliance and the following attachments:

- a) Summary of the Survey Areas and the Final results
- b) Summary of the Controlled Trees.
- c) Summary of Communications, Outreach and Education Completed.
- d) Summary of Quality Control Actions.
- e) Final Data Sheets of Survey and Control Information.
- f) Suggestions for Future Improvements.
- g) Financial Statements as per the Grant Agreement (see 8.3)
- h) Business plan review including a description of outcome of the program that clearly shows how the program goals and objectives were met, and also identifies any expected results that were not achieved and why.
- i) Samples of Province recognition.

#### **8.3 Financial Requirements**

The Recipient must keep appropriate accounting records of all transactions with respect to the Program and shall, upon request, make all such records available to any or all of the following persons, or their authorized representatives:

- a) the Province;
- b) the Auditor General of Alberta; or
- c) the Minister of Finance

The Recipient must permit the examination and taking of copies and extracts of and from those accounting records. Records are subject to audit by an officer or agent of Alberta at any reasonable time from the date of the Agreement until three years from the date of the termination of Agreement.

If AF requires a formal audit by an independent financial institution, the costs associated are applicable under the grant.

## **9.0 PROGRAM STAFF**

The Forestry Manager or his/her designate at the field level will assist municipalities with the development and implementation of the Mountain Pine Beetle Control Program. If technical assistance regarding the Grant Funding Program guidelines is needed, contact Mike Undershultz at (780) 422-1508 or [mike.undershultz@gov.ab.ca](mailto:mike.undershultz@gov.ab.ca)