



Anglin Lake Subdivision – RM of Lakeland

FireSmart Community Assessment Report

Assessment Completed by:

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Site Description

Anglin Lake subdivision is located approximately 70 km north of Prince Albert on Highway 953 on the south side of Anglin lake.

The forest area within the subdivision is mixed wood with pockets of dense softwood. Fuels in the area include trembling aspen, poplar, birch, spruce, and balsam fir.

Observations and Primary Issues

A Community Wildfire Hazard Assessment begins with observations of the roofing assembly and roof cleanliness of its homes/cabins; work our way down the building's exterior which includes rating of the siding, windows, decks; ember accumulator features around the building; and location of nearby combustible materials around the structures. We also rate vegetation, topography, infrastructure, fire suppression capability, and the fire ignition potential surrounding the community.

Listed below are 9 comments for the community and some photographic evidence that supports the observations.

- I. Structures should be labelled with individual signs identifying the property lot and block location for emergency purposes. Signs should be clearly visible from the road and use a consistent system that provides for sequenced or patterned naming conventions. All signs should be constructed of non-combustible material such as metal posts and reflective metal placards.



Figure 1: Above picture shows wooden non-reflective sign.

- II. There are two routes of ingress and egress in the subdivision. There were few reflective standard street signs throughout the subdivision. The road width in many locations is narrower than the recommend > 6.1 m. However, there was a turnaround large enough to accommodate emergency vehicles. Many locations had no right of way maintained with trees growing along the shoulder. Road widths should allow for simultaneous evacuation and emergency response.



Figure 2: Picture shows metal reflective street signs at subdivision entrance.



Figure 3: Left picture showing narrow road driving surface and unmaintained shoulder. Right picture showing large turnaround .

- III. Building exterior rating for the entire community average. Most homes had vinyl or wood board siding. Vinyl or untreated shake siding provides no fire protection where stucco, metal, brick, rock or cement provide best protection for the building. Log or heavy timber provides more fire-resistant protection than normal wood board siding.
- IV. Roofing material in the subdivision was generally constructed from Type A materials like metal or asphalt. These materials are most fire resistant and remain effective under severe wildfire exposure. There were structures observed to have cedar shakes which is not recommended as cedar shake roofing provides little protection against fires. It is important that residents clean off all debris that accumulates on roof tops and within gutters.



Figure 4: Left picture showing a clean (no leaf litter) metal roofs. Right picture showing asphalt shingles needing replacement.

- V. Combustible wood decks attached to dwellings that are not enclosed along with buildings themselves that are not skirted or closed in were noted within the subdivisions. Decks and homes should be closed in with minimum 12mm thick sheathing. These non-protected areas serve as ember accumulators where new spot fires can easily ignite in the tinder dry fuels that can be found in these locations.



Figure 5: Both pictures showing unskirted decks with dry firewood underneath. Embers could enter and ignite dry leaf litter and firewood in these areas.

- VI. Another area of concern was seasoned firewood or other wood combustibles piled directly against the home or other structures. These areas serve as locations where ignition can occur from flying embers, even from a simple unattended nearby campfire. It is recommended that firewood be stored away from structures and the amount is limited to one years use. Fire wood that is stacked against live standing trees can act as ladder fuels for fire to reach the canopy and increase fire intensity.
- VII. The forest stands in the area are mixed wood (aspen, popular, birch) with pockets of dense conifers (balsam fir and spruce). Seasonal risk in the surface vegetation including standing dead and down woody debris will sustain a wildland fire. Dry surface fuels are a particular concern when vegetation is cured due to drought or seasonal effects. It is recommended that residents

remove all dead trees and larger shrubs within their lot to not only to reduce their fire risk but the potential damage to structures and infrastructure if they were to break off or blow down.



Figure 6: Figures above – mixed wood stands with areas of pure conifers along with dead standing and downed trees.



Figure 7: Example of a thinned & pruned conifer stand (Sled Lake – Winter 2022).

- VIII. Being in a lake community, many people have and enjoy the use of a fire pit. All fire pits should be screened with mesh not exceeding 12mm, located on clean rock, concrete, sand or mineral soil, and should have a minimum of 1 m non combustible area surrounding the fire pit. The pit is to be constructed of metal or concrete and in good condition with no rusting or breaks.



Figure 8: Firepit surrounded by noncombustible material, however, recommend the use of mesh to control sparks.

- IX. The risk for accidental human caused fires is generally higher in populated areas. Accidental ignition includes fire pits, fireworks and improper disposal of smoking material. Overhead powerlines near vegetation and propane tanks amidst vegetation or adjacent to buildings are also ignition sources that are highly apparent.



Figure 9: Pruning and maintaining trees close to utility lines and power lines should be completed in areas.

XI. The pictures below show some examples of good FireSmart practices within the community.



Figure 10: Houses on left shown with clean asphalt, minimal vegetation against structure. Right picturing showing pruned conifers.

Suppression and Response Capabilities

The Lakeland & District Fire Department is located in Christopher Lake is the closest responding agency and a mutual aid agreement is in place with the RM of Buckland. The RM of Lakeland has 3 Class A engines and 4 2000 gallon tankers.

Wildfires within the RM of Lakeland will be actioned by the Weyakwin Protection Area Type 1 Wildland Firefighters. Type II fire crews are also available to assist SPSA crews on fires surrounding this location.

Recommendations

The FireSmart Canada Neighbourhood Recognition Program seeks to create a sustainable balance that will allow communities to live safely while maintaining environmental harmony in a wildland urban interface (WUI) setting. Residents within the community should focus attention on the structures and the surrounding area to create a fire-resistant zone. This can be accomplished by disconnecting the home from any high and/or low-intensity fire that could burn to it, and by being conscious of the potential ignition from wind-driven embers. The pictures below show some examples of good FireSmart practices within the community.

The following section of this report provides recommendations for consideration for the community FireSmart Board by listing wildfire safety issues that were identified in the subdivision during the assessment.

- Establishment of a “fire free zone”, allowing no fire to ignite or burn on or within 1.5 metres of a structure by removing easily ignited fuels located within this zone.
 - Keep roofs and rain gutters/eaves trough free from leaves, dried needles, and twigs. Incorporate yearly cleaning of gutters when performing spring yard cleaning.

- If your cottage/home has non-treated cedar shakes, consider replacing with less flammable class A asphalt or metal roofing or setting up sprinkler heads on the roof that could be activated if a wildfire did occur.
- Stacked firewood, bark mulch or wooden building material piled directly against home or under structures should be moved a minimum of 10 metres away or screened in to prevent ignitions.
- Remove hazardous fuels within the “home ignition zone”. The home ignition zone includes the fire free zone and encompasses the area within 10 metres from the home or building structure. This includes 10 m from any flammable attached wooden decks. This would include the removal, thinning and pruning of spruce, pine and cedar trees and the removal of any brush, leaves and other debris within this area. Any remaining spruce and pine trees should be pruned to a height of 2 m if there is any flammable vegetation under them.
- Homes, decks, and other structures should be skirted in to prevent accumulations of dried fuels. These open areas allow embers to blow in and start spot fires under the structures. Make a point during spring yard cleaning to rake and remove any accumulations of fuels such as dried leaves, needles, and twigs from under wooden decks and structures. Best protection would be to screen decks and skirt all buildings with 3 mm wire mesh or minimum 12mm thick wood sheathing.
- Add 8 – 12 mm wire mesh screens for over fire pits and create a 1 m wide fire resistant strip around the fire pits.
- Fuel management options within the community could include the thinning and removal of any dead and down trees within the deciduous stands to further reduce the risk of fire. Also mowing and maintaining annual grasses to 10 cm or less would reduce the fine fuel build up.
- Local fire suppression equipment could be expanded to include water tanks on ATV trailers that can quickly and easily be maneuvered through the community.
- The RM of Lakeland should also keep continuing communication and cross train with the Local Fire Department and other responding agencies to ensure clear direction and cooperation should a fire event occur.

Wildfire related training should be part of the capacity building package for the community. Having a representative or two from the community attend a Local FireSmart Representative Training Workshop that SPSA hosts annually would be a good start.

Successful FireSmart Mitigations

When adequately prepared, a structure can likely withstand a wildfire without the intervention of the fire service. Further, a house and its surrounding community can be both FireSmart and compatible with the area’s ecosystem. The FireSmart Neighbourhood Program is designed to enable communities to achieve a high level of protection against wildfire loss even as a sustainable ecosystem balance is maintained.

Homeowners are reminded that proper attention to their home ignition zone can prevent ignitions in this area. They should identify the things that will ignite their homes and address those as priorities.

Anglin lake has a number of positive FireSmart examples already and the goal would be to keep improving as time goes on. Being recognized as a FireSmart Neighbourhood under this program does not necessarily mean that it is FireSmart. What it does mean is that the residents are aware of what needs to be done and are taking steps to become FireSmart.

Links to Helpful Resources

FireSmart Canada Website: <https://www.firesmartcanada.ca/>

FireSmart Canada Community Recognition Program Tab:
<https://firesmartcanada.ca/programs/neighbourhood-recognition-program/>

FireSmart Canada FireSmart Manual's Tab: <https://www.firesmartcanada.ca/resources-library/category/manuals>

Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency Website: <http://www.saskpublicsafety.ca>

Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency FireSmart Tab:
<http://www.saskpublicsafety.ca/communities/firesmart-communities>

Signature of Local FireSmart Representatives / Provincial Liaison

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