

Lakes Forest District

Policy -Biodiversity Guidelines

This policy is developed within the context of Section 41 (1) of the *Forest Practices Code of British Columbia Act* and Section 15 (7) of the *Operational Planning Regulation*.

Section 41 (1) of the *Act* states:

"41(1) The district manager must approve an operational plan or amendment submitted under this Part if

- (a) the plan or amendment was prepared and submitted in accordance with this Act, the regulations and the standards, and
- (b) the district manager is satisfied that the plan or amendment will adequately manage and conserve the forest resources of the area to which it applies."

and Section 15 (7) (a) of the *Operational Planning Regulation* states:

"15 (7) A person must ensure that a forest development plan describes, for the area under the plan,

- (a) the actions required to achieve the known landscape level objectives, including any biological diversity objectives "

Policy Statement:

"Through this policy, Lakes Forest District establishes that it is in agreement with the principles of biological diversity as outlined in the objectives and recommendations of the Biodiversity Guidebook (September, 1995). The recommendations will apply to holders of forest licences, holders of woodlot licences and the Small Business Forest Enterprise Program. The district manager will evaluate each operational plan on its' own merits and where circumstances warrant (or under exceptional circumstances) may vary from this policy."

Approved: _____

Date: _____

District Manager

Introduction

The overall biodiversity strategies outlined herein were developed using the Biodiversity Guidebook as the primary reference tool. These procedures and tables will provide guidance to licensees with respect to setting and maintaining biological diversity objectives in their plans and operations. It is imperative that the *Guidebook* be used in conjunction with this Policy. These guidelines will build consistency on a District-wide basis for all tenure holders thereby ensuring that Lakes TSA is managing for the maintenance of proper biodiversity levels.

The Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) table is currently striving for Plan completion by March 31, 1997. After this consensus-based document receives cabinet approval, the District will commence landscape unit planning where objectives such as the biodiversity emphasis option will be fully evaluated and refined. This is a lengthy process and not expected to be complete for some time. In the interim, it is recognized that forest managers must ensure biological diversity is properly maintained.

Lakes Forest District is in agreement with the strategies and recommendations contained within the Guidebook. These will apply to major licence holders, woodlot licence holders and the Small Business Forest Enterprise Program. It is expected that all silviculture prescription draft and final submissions will meet the requirements outlined in this Policy within 4 months of the approval date.

This Policy serves to establish the landscape units, on an interim basis, as drafted by the LRMP table, set the biodiversity emphasis options and formalize the percentages of cutblock areas required as wildlife tree patches (WTPs).

Landscape Units

There are no formally designated landscape units in Lakes Timber Supply Area. However, the LRMP has derived landscape units which will likely remain unchanged as the Plan is finalized and forwarded for final approval. For the purpose of maintaining biodiversity objectives for the time period between now and formal landscape unit designation, these landscape units will be used.

Biodiversity Emphasis Option

With respect to applying biodiversity emphasis options to landscape units, Lakes Forest District is directed by the Biodiversity Guidebook which states "If no landscape unit has been designated for an area, or an emphasis option has not been assigned for a landscape unit, the default is that area is managed using the lower biodiversity emphasis option." **For Lakes TSA, the lower biodiversity emphasis option applies.**

Wildlife Tree Patches

Table 20 (b) of the Biodiversity Guidebook was used in establishing the percentage of cutblock area required as wildlife tree patches for each interim landscape unit. District staff used the following data in deriving information about forest inventory, area harvested and netdowns all required for final calculations toward percentage retention for each landscape unit:

- (1) MOF Forest Inventory Information - prior to 1994
- (2) Major Licensee Silviculture Information System (MLSIS) - 1994 - 1996
- (3) Integrated Silviculture Information System (ISIS) - 1994 - 1996

Appendix 1 of this policy shows the various data requirements used in the calculations and provides summaries of each landscape unit.

Chart 1 on the following page establishes the percentages for each landscape unit.

Chart 2 within Appendix 3 depicts the percentage of WTP requirements within each biogeoclimatic subzone for each landscape unit where landscape units have been designated.

	SBS dk	SBS mc2	ESSF
Fleming	No Logging	9%	9%
Babine West	8%	9%	6%
Babine East	6%	9%	6%
Taltapin	11%	11%	8%
Bulkley	10%	10%	8%
Burns Lake West	9%	9%	6%
Burns Lake East	8%	9%	8%
Francois West	10%	11%	7%
Francois East	10%	9%	-
Cheslatta	9%	9%	-
Ootsa	9%	10%	-
Intata	11%	12%	-
Chelaslie	9%	9%	6%
Tetachuk Entiako	7% SBPS 9% SBS dk	8%	-

Notes on calculating figures:

Figures were interpolated from the Biodiversity Guidebook

The biodiversity figures for wild life tree patches were calculated using a combination of MLSIS data for the years of 1994 to 1996 and forest inventory information for the years before 1994. Although there may be discrepancies with data between agencies, these are relatively small and will not impact on changes in percentage retention within each unit.

Application of Wildlife Tree Patches into Operational Plans

Forest Development Plans

Each forest development plan should generally discuss biodiversity objectives and outline the percentages which will be retained within logical units (ie. block or cutting permit). The following characteristics should be considered in establishing objectives for maintaining biodiversity:

- seral stage distribution
- temporal and spatial distribution of the cut and leave areas "patch size distribution

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- old seral retention and representativeness
- landscape connectivity
- stand structure

- species composition

Silviculture prescriptions

It is expected that the characteristics for maintaining biodiversity as outlined above and on page 11 of the Biodiversity Guidebook (September 1995). These characteristics are explained fully in the Guidebook for each natural disturbance type...(NDT3 is the most prevalent natural disturbance type in Lakes TSA.

The percentage to be retained within each cutblock should be identified within each silviculture prescription. The wildlife tree patch will form part of the gross area under the SP and will be specifically identified as a WTP unit within the Ecology section of each SP. In this way, the percentages can be determined. Where an SP straddles two biogeoclimatic subzones and the percentages differ, the area within each subzone should be summed and the percentage of the BGC subzone that forms the majority of the gross area, applies. As an example if an SP within Francois West Landscape Unit contained 15 hectares of SBSmc2 and 5 hectares of ESSF, 11% would be retained as WTPs.

Similarly, where blocks are transitional to another subzone, retention percentages will reflect the majority subzone. For example, an SBS mc2 block to the ESSF. Thus, percentages for the SBS mc2 would prevail.

The map included with the SPs should depict the WTPs. It is not necessary to traverse or ribbon the WTPs that are adjacent to the cutblock boundaries. However, these areas do become non-harvest zones through their definition and licensees are responsible for ensuring that the areas prescribed as WTPs within the SP remain unharvested and are managed to protect/ensure their integrity through in-block measures.

It is recognized that the terrain and forest cover composition will not always allow for good placement of WTPs on a block-by-block basis. It is also recognized that for landscape level biodiversity, it may be more appropriate to apply the retention percentages over several blocks. For tenure holders, harvesting under cutting permits the WTP percentage may be applied over the cutting permit. For example, in the Intata Landscape Unit in the SBSdk, where a cutting permit containing two blocks was such that one block only allowed for 3% WTP, the gross areas of both blocks could be combined and extra WTP area be added to the second block so that the CP totals the 11% requirement.

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For the SBFEP where harvesting typically occurs on a licence-by-licence basis, it may be appropriate to apply the percentage over five adjacent blocks.

For establishing the percentage of area that may be occupied by permanent access structures (Section 39 (2) (n) and (p) of Operational Planning Regulation), the gross area will include that area retained as Wildlife Tree Patches.

Tracking

The Wildlife Tree Patches will be tracked using MLSIS and ISIS. The SP data will be entered by the MOF after approval. MLSIS Form C's and Woodlot Licence Annual Reports will then report the WTPs in the area breakdown (Treatment Unit, Non-productive - Unnatural (NP-UNN)). The MOF FS922 Forms will be used to record WTPs within the SBFEP. The WTPs will also be depicted on the maps with each report submission.

Appendix 1

Calculation and Summary Sheets for Landscape Units

Appendix 2

Landscape Unit Maps

Appendix 3

Table of percentage of WTP retention within each BGC subzone for each landscape unit (designated landscape units)

Chart 2 - Percentage of cutblock area required for wildlife tree patch retention within each biogeoclimatic subzone for each landscape unit (**where landscape units have been designated**).

	SBS dk	SBS mc2	ESSF
Fleming	No Logging	6%	6%
Babine West	5%	6%	3%

Babine East	3%	6%	3%
Taltapin	8%	8%	5%
Bulkley	7%	7%	5%
Burns Lake West	6%	6%	3%
Burns Lake East	5%	6%	5%
Francois West	7%	8%	4%
Francois East	7%	6%	-
Cheslatta	6%	6%	-
Ootsa	6%	7%	-
Intata	8%	9%	-
Chelaslie	6%	6%	3%
Tetachuk Entiako	4% SBPS 6% SBS dk	5%	-

Notes on calculating figures:

Figures were interpolated from the Biodiversity Guidebook

The biodiversity figures for wild life tree patches were calculated using a combination of MLSIS data for the years of 1994 to 1996 and forest inventory information for the years before 1994. Although there may be discrepancies with data between agencies, these are relatively small and will not impact on changes in percentage retention within each unit.

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