Update
Extension Note

Tree Improvement Branch

Volume Two Number Three *August 26, 1998*

Interior Seed Planning Zone Review

Interior SPZ Review

The objectives of the Interior Seed Planning Zone (SPZ) Review were to 1) update interior seed zone's in order to incorporate recent biological information and interpretation, 2) to make better use of the biogeoclimatic ecological classification system (BEC) mapping tools, and 3) to increase administrative efficiencies. The review included a close examination of the relationships between seed planning zones, genetic class, seedling request ordering, transfer guideline application and the BEC classification system. Input included representation from both ministry and industry clients involved in planning, tree breeding, orchard management and silvicultural activities. The review resulted in two major recommendations: 1) incorporation of new orchard breeding zones (i.e. SPZ's) for the interior, and 2) alignment of SPZ's with BEC classification units.

Background Rationale

The new SPZ's represent expanded areas of intended use for Class A seed. Genetic and provenance test results indicate that Class A seed can be moved safely within much broader areas than originally planned and that greater flexibility can be accommodated through the use of overlap zones. In addition, the old SPZ boundaries required updating as they were based on a mix of administrative and biological units that did not consider species differences. In many places old zonal boundaries crossed biogeoclimatic variants, subzone and even zone lines. These inconsistencies restricted the use of BEC maps.

New Interior Class A SPZ's

The new interior Class A SPZ's were endorsed by the Interior Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) in June, 1998. Three major features describe the new zones including: 1) adoption of a species-level approach, 2) incorporation of BEC sub-zone and/or variant boundaries, and 3) inclusion of zones of overlap. Interior Class A orchard species include: interior Douglas-fir (Fdi), interior lodgepole pine (Pli), interior spruce (Sx), western larch (Lw) and western white pine (Pw). Overlap SPZ's exist for most interior orchard species with the exception of western white pine.

SPAR Implementation
Implementation of the new interior Class A SPZ's on the Seed Planning and Registry system (SPAR) has recently been completed (Release 6.0, August 5, 1998). The majority of the necessary changes are transparent to the SPAR user. Modifications to SPAR include changes to the Seedling Request function with the addition of a second site SPZ field for the identification of Class A zones. Entry of Class B seedling requests has remained unchanged.

Changes Seed Owners can expect
The new SPZ codes have been entered against all interior Class A seedlots. You will note that the new interior Class A SPZ codes are unique for each species. New interior Class A SPZ's represent expanded areas of intended use due to larger zones and the addition of overlap zones. In many cases, this will result in a wider coverage of Class A seedlots. Changes to SPZ's may also affect surplus seed availability. Check SPAR for an updated inventory of suitable seed sources. We recommend that you check SPAR before undertaking wild stand cone collections as areas not previously covered by Class A seed may now be available as a result of the new interior Class A SPZ .

Note: Only active seed and cutting lots are being converted to the new SPZ codes. Expired lots will not be updated. SPZ's attached to seedling requests will also not be converted in order to preserve historical information.

Changes Seed Users can expect
When submitting seedling request orders, expect to see the following changes:

1. Two site SPZ's (Class A and Class B) are required for those species covered by orchards (e.g. Fdi, Lw, Pli, Pw, Sx).

2. The Lot Selection List may be larger due to an increase in available seedlots. Seedlots from different orchards that previously covered different intended use areas (i.e. SPZ's) may now fall within the same new interior Class A zone(s).

Please note: When a request is made in SPAR only one site SPZ will be stored. The site SPZ associated with the genetic class of the lot requested is the one that is stored. Requests saved as Incomplete (INC) do not have a site SPZ stored (i.e. lot not selected).

Cross Reference BGC/SPZ Tables
Cross reference BGC/SPZ tables have been developed to assist field foresters in identifying the seed planning zone in which a given planting site is located. This is important when submitting seedling requests and when conducting suitable seed/cutting lot searches. These tables should be used for general reference only and not as transfer guidelines. Intended use areas identified for class A lots are defined at the SPZ level and not the BGC level.

Interior cross reference tables differ from the coast in that they have been developed for Class A use only and are grouped by species. SPZ's can be cross referenced with BGC's using the tables along with BEC base maps. These tables can also be used to build queries using GIS-based mapping tools (e.g. PAMAP or ARCview).

Cross *reference BGC/SPZ tables are available through the Tree Improvement Branch website. Digitized BEC map files are available through the Research Branch website.*

SPZ Overlays and Maps

SPZ maps are available as mylar overlays for use with BEC base maps. New interior Class A SPZ overlays (by species) are available as 8 1/2" X 11" general reference maps as well as at a 1:2,000,000 province-wide scale. More detailed SPZ overlays at the 1:500,000 and 1:250,000 scales are also being developed for use with BEC regional maps.

Both class A and B SPZ map files will soon be available in an electronic format for access through the ministry's Intranet or through the TIB Internet website.

For more information, contact either:

Leslie McAuley / Ron Planden	OR	Alvin Yanchuk,
Tree Improvement Branch,		Research Branch,
Phone: (250) 387-6208		Phone: (250) 387-3338
Email: Leslie.Mcauley@gems9.gov.bc.ca		Email: Alvin.Yanchuk@gems4.gov.bc.ca
Email: Ron.Planden@gems6.gov.bc.ca		http://www.hre.for.gov.bc.ca
http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/tip		

For more information, see the Interior SPZ Review report, June, 1998.