BEC-Tree Species Description: CWHws1

The CWHws1 forested landscape is 37% old forest (age class 7 to 9). About 37% is immature natural forest (18% age class 4-6 and 19% age class 1-3); this larger percentage of natural immature forest reflects the more frequent fire history within the submaritime CWHws1 in addition to some landslide and blowdown disturbance history. There have also been considerable impacts of forest harvesting within the CWHws1; about 25% of the forested area is age class 1 to 3 forests resulting from timber harvesting. Older forests are western hemlock-dominated (62%) generally with a significant amabilis fir component (15%). Sitka spruce and western redcedar occur in more or less equal proportions (+/-8%) and some lodgepole pine occurs on the driest sites (3%). Deciduous forests comprise about 5% of the forested area and these are dominantly the cottonwood stands on the Skeena and other larger rivers.

Age class distribution as a % of total forest area [Source: VRIMS 2008]

Stand age class	7-9 natural forest	7-9 harvested forest	4-6 natural forest	4-6 harvested forest	1-3 natural forest	1-3 harvested forest
% of total forest area	37	0	18	0	19	25

Tree species distribution in natural old/mature (age class 7-9) and natural immature (age class 4-6) as a % of the total natural old/mature and natural immature forest cover respectively [Source: VRIMS 2008]

Species	Hw	Ba	Ss	Cw	Pl	Deciduous
% of total natural old/mature (age class 7-9) forest cover	62	15	8	7	3	5
% of total natural immature (age class 4-6) forest cover	34	3	3	3	25	31

Second growth forests resulting from harvesting and regeneration management strategies are dominated by western hemlock (50 to 53%[1]), but also contain amabilis fir (21 to 38%[1]), deciduous species (1 to 11%[1] - mainly red alder and cottonwood), western redcedar (4-9%[1]), Sitka spruce (3 to 7%[1]), and lodgepole pine (1 to 3%[1]).

% species composition of post-harvested stands [Source: RESULTS 1988-2007]

Species	Ba	Cw	Hw	Pl	Ss	Deciduous
% of harvested area	38	4	53	1	3	1

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[1] Range of values reflects differences between VRIMS and RESULTS data sources

About one quarter of the CWHws1 landscape is managed second growth and thus there is considerable potential for sivicultural management intent impacting on tree species composition and diversity at the landscape level. The forest cover and silviculture inventory data indicate, however, that second growth tree species composition is not drastically different from that of old-growth. Nevertheless, there is potential for increased use of western redcedar, Sitka spruce (in low spruce weevil risk areas), and amabilis fir to improve diversity in managed second growth. Management intent should also be aimed at ensuring tree species diversity is maintained in the overstory, thus ensuring that the stand is not dominated by one main canopy species with the remaining species being restricted to the understory.

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Note: the above write-up does not account for TFL forest cover/regeneration information. This could impact on the tree species and age class percentages described above.