

## BEC-Tree Species Description: SBSdw2

The SBSdw2 represents a landscape of primarily fire regenerated stands. Prior to the recent catastrophic mountain pine beetle outbreak, mature (> 120 year old) natural forests occupied about 36% of the forested land area, and older immature forests of 61 to 120 years old covered about 32 % of the forested landscape. Younger natural immature forests (<60 years old) only covered a relatively small portion of the forested area. Prior to the beetle outbreak lodgepole pine was the dominant mature forest cover, while interior spruce and Douglas-fir were the next most dominant species. Aspen made up about 6% while black spruce and subalpine fir had low cover. It is important to note that as a result the mountain pine beetle epidemic most of the mature lodgepole pine and the larger diameter immature trees in the SBSdw2 have been killed. Depending on stand age, beetle-killed stands often have live sub-canopy layer of immature spruce and Douglas-fir and occasionally subalpine fir. Aggressive and extensive salvage harvesting is ongoing with a focus on the most merchantable stands.

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	36	1	32	1	7	22

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	Pl	S	Fd	Bl	Ep	Act	At
% of total natural old/mature (age class 7-9) forest cover	53	18	21	<1	<1	1	6
% of total natural immature (age class 4-6) forest cover	53	13	16	<1	1	<1	15

RESULTS data for the period 1988 to 2009 indicates that lodgepole pine comprises 61% of the regenerated stands in the variant while hardwoods, spruce and Douglas-fir comprise about 15%, 11% and 10% respectively. Species suitability is currently limited in the SBSdw2 with pine, Douglas-fir and spruce being the principal regeneration species. Recent climate envelope modeling predicts that much of the current SBSdw2 will have less suitable habitats for spruce and subalpine fir.

% species composition of post-harvested stands [Source: RESULTS 1988-2009]

	Pl	S	Fd	Bl	Hardwoods
% of harvested area	61	11	10	2	15

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Notes:

- Black spruce is geographically limited to the northern half of the subzone (mostly north of McLeese Lake) and is mostly restricted to wetland sites.

The very high mortality of pine as a result of the most recent MPB outbreak in the SBSdw2 landscape means that the current forest cover inventory is not up to date and no longer accurately reflects the area harvested and regeneration status. It is not possible at this time to properly characterize species composition over much of this subzone.