

BEC-Tree Species Description: SBSdw3

Historically the forests of the Stuart variant of the Dry Warm Sub-boreal Spruce biogeoclimatic unit (SBSdw3) were dominated by fire-origin seral forests. Lodgepole pine dominated stands mixed with hybrid white spruce and Douglas-fir and a hybrid white spruce and subalpine-fir understory were widespread on upland sites with deeper soils while hybrid white spruce and subalpine-fir dominated stands were generally restricted to lower to toe slopes and along riparian features. On compact or lacustrine soils with shallow rooting depth black spruce dominated the understory of lodgepole pine dominated stands. Black spruce was also common in the localized wetlands that dot the landscape and occasionally richer wetlands are dominated by tamarack. Douglas-fir dominated forests were common on dry ridges and coarser-textured soils on warm aspects. In areas near historic settlements, aboriginal burning and land clearing increased the number of stands dominated by trembling aspen and paper birch.

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	40	1	38	1	6	15

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	At	Bl	Ep	Fd	Pl	Sx
% of total natural old/mature (age class 7-9) forest cover	13	1	1	8	46	30
% of total natural immature (age class 4-6) forest cover	23	1	2	4	50	20

Localized forest high grading of hybrid spruce in the 1950's has lead to an increase in subalpine fir (10% in age class immature harvested stands). Clear-cut harvesting of the 1960's to present has resulted in stand compositions that are similar to those on the natural landscape. A reduction of Douglas-fir stocking on average sites may be one exception as well more open stocking of recently planted stands where natural ingress has been limited. Trembling aspen also tends to be more dispersed and not in denser patches as it was in the natural landscape due to brushing and weeding practices.

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

Species	Bl	Fd	Pl	S	Hardwoods
% of harvested area	3	4	67	15	10

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