

BEC-Tree Species Description: ESSFmc

Over 80% of the forested area of the ESSFmc is comprised of age class 7 and older forests. Younger stands of fire origin (age class 4-6) comprise 13% of the landscape and just 2% of the area consists of immature stands resulting from timber harvesting. Older stands are by far dominated by subalpine fir (69%) with lesser amounts of hybrid spruce (18%) and lodgepole pine (12%). Younger natural stands are also dominated by subalpine fir (55%) but pine is more common in these fire origin stands (29%). The spruce component is similar to that of older stands. Deciduous species are relatively uncommon in the ESSFmc (+/- 3%, mostly in younger natural stands) and whitebark pine is found as a very minor component on high elevation exposed sites in some localities. Incidental species include western and mountain hemlock and black spruce.

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	83	0	13	0	2	2

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	Bl	S	Pl	Hardwoods
% of total natural old/mature (age class 7-9) forest cover	69	18	12	0
% of total natural immature (age class 4-6) forest cover	55	14	29	2

According to the VRI inventory data, timber harvesting and regeneration strategies have resulted in a larger proportion of pine and spruce (45% and 35% respectively) with the subalpine fir component being much reduced (19%). RESULTS inventory label data for stands established between 1988 and 2008, however show a more or less even composition of these 3 species overall, though with considerable variation from year to year. Pine tended to be emphasized in the earlier years while both the subalpine fir and spruce component have increased more recently.

% species composition of post-harvested stands [Source: RESULTS 1988-2008]

Species	Bl	S	Pl
% of harvested area	34	36	30

From a landscape perspective, the impacts of regeneration management strategies on species composition and diversity in the ESSFmc have been limited because of the relatively small proportion of area harvested. Future regeneration strategies should continue to include a significant subalpine fir and spruce component with limited use of lodgepole pine, especially at higher elevations where snow damage is a concern. Consideration should be given to establishing whitebark pine on appropriate sites.

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