



**Species of Management Concern
and At Risk Ecological Community
Standard Operating Procedure**
Babine Business Area
2026-04-02

INTRODUCTION

BCTS is committed to manage Species at Risk identified through federal and provincial legislation, as well as to meet Sustainable Forest Management certification requirements. Additionally, some species and species habitat features do not have legal requirements but are still recognized by BCTS as needing additional management guidance. Together these species are referred to as Species of Management Concern (SOMC). BCTS has similar legal and certification obligations related to the management of At Risk Ecological Communities (AREC).

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is intended to provide guidance to all BCTS staff, Licensees and contractors related to BCTS SOMC and AREC programs. The corporate framework on the development of SOMC and AREC programs is outlined in the provincial [BCTS Species and Ecosystems of Management Concern Guide](https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/assets/intranet/flnrord/bcts/tos/sustainability/somc/somc_program_guide.pdf) (https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/assets/intranet/flnrord/bcts/tos/sustainability/somc/somc_program_guide.pdf).

SCOPE

This SOP covers all aspects of forestry planning, block and road development within the Lakes, Morice and Bulkley Operating Areas of the Babine Business Area (TBA). It includes and applies to relevant Business Area staff, licensees, and contractors working for BCTS.

This SOP applies to the TBA SOMC and AREC Focus Lists that were developed through the corporate program using the methodology outlined in the provincial BCTS SOMC Guide. The Focus Lists were reviewed and updated on August 29th and 30th, 2024, respectively.

<https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/for/bcts/sustainability/sustainability/species-of-management-concern/focus-lists>

<https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/for/bcts/sustainability/sustainability/at-risk-ecological-communities/arec-focus-lists>

OBJECTIVES

1. Meet legal and Sustainable Forestry Management certification obligations.
2. Define the steps and procedures that are required to effectively manage and protect SOMC and AREC.
3. Identify who have the responsibility to complete the procedures outlined in this SOP.
4. Educate BCTS staff, Licensees, Permittees, and Contractors in the identification, and management of SOMC and AREC.



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Standard Operating Procedure
Babine Business Area
2026-04-02

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

1. SOMC and AREC Program Maintenance	
Procedure	Responsibility
Annually check the SOMC intranet site (https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/for/bcts/sustainability/sustainability/species-of-management-concern) and AREC intranet site (https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/for/bcts/sustainability/sustainability/at-risk-ecological-communities) for updates to the materials. Ensure the current version of these products are used as the BA SOMC Focus List and AREC Focus List for training. Complete updates as necessary before training and distribution of SOMC and AREC materials.	CSO
2. TRAINING and AWARENESS	
Procedure	Responsibility
Conduct SOMC and AREC awareness training session for BCTS staff and multi-phase contractors. Training is to be completed at a recommended frequency of at least every 2 years or sooner pending updates to the program; attendance must be recorded. At a minimum, training content should include background on legal and certification requirements related to SOMC and AREC as well as a review of the local Focus Lists and available resources.	CSO, Contract Coordinators
Provide all TBA field staff with access to, or a copy of, the SOMC and AREC program materials, which includes training. All SOMC program materials are available publicly on the TBA EMS External Website , which must be kept up to date with any changes to the program.	CSO, Contract Coordinators
TSL holder awareness training will occur at pre-work meetings as described in Section 4.	Conformance Tech
3. PLANNING	
Procedure	Responsibility
Prior to starting any block or road layout works, identify any known occurrences of AREC, SOMC or their habitat as part of the Planning-to-Operations Handover (release) process. If occurrences are identified, discuss the management implications with the contractor.	Planning Forester, Practices Forester



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Standard Operating Procedure**
Babine Business Area
2026-04-02

4. PRE-WORKS	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>For contracts (e.g., cutblock and road layout, multi-phase, road construction, etc.) -- Review the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOMC and AREC Focus Lists • Wildlife features in the vicinity of the planned activities • Management strategies to be considered (from legal orders, FSP, BA SOP's, etc.) • Reporting procedure if a species occurrence or an AREC is identified 	<p><i>Contract Coordinators</i></p>
<p>For TSLs --Review the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOMC operator awareness sheet • Wildlife features in the vicinity of the planned activities • BCTS' plan to manage any known features or AREC including timing restrictions or any other requirements for the TSL, as well as any relevant results and strategies in the FSP • Reporting procedure if a species occurrence or an AREC is identified (i.e., reference EMS EFPs) 	<p><i>Conformance Techs</i></p>

5. FIELD ASSESSMENT	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>Provide all BCTS field staff and contractors with the SOMC Field Cards and the AREC Field Confirmation Procedures to be used for species and AREC identification in the field.</p>	<p><i>CSO, Contract Coordinators</i></p>
<p>If a SOMC, SOMC habitat feature, or an AREC is identified in the field:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engage a qualified registered professional if required to confirm identification of an AREC, a species or the status of a habitat feature, • review the TBA SOMC Field Package and AREC Field Confirmation Procedures , • follow the Field Action protocol on the Field Card or the applicable AREC Field Assessment Procedure for the Natural Disturbance Type of the area, • record relevant information, take photos and document the location using the Species of Management Concern Survey123 Field Form - Ministry of Forests, • notify the Practices Forester (or other designated BCTS contact) <p><i>See Section 7. REPORTING for additional requirements.</i></p>	<p><i>BCTS Staff and Contractors</i></p>



**Species of Management Concern
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Standard Operating Procedure**
Babine Business Area
2026-04-02

<p>Once a SOMC, SOMC habitat feature or an AREC is identified, develop a specific management protocol using any additional supplemental species information, such as local BMPs or SOPs and/or by consulting a qualified registered professional.</p>	<p align="center"><i>BCTS Staff and Contractors, CSO support</i></p>
<p>Depending on the SOMC or AREC in question and site specifics, management options will vary and may include: Avoidance/Protection: Exclude the SOMC habitat feature or AREC from the Exhibit A area or protect it through establishment of some form of reserve within the TSL. Note: If it is incorporated into a WTRA ensure the associated RESULTS submission includes the appropriate silviculture reserve objective code. It is recommended the reserve be excluded from the Exhibit A area to ensure licensees cannot relocate the reserve. Modified practice: results or strategies from an approved FSP, professional recommendations or other mitigating practices from a BMP may be appropriate to describe in the TSL Highlights, Site Plan and/or TSL document. Please contact BCTS Provincial Operations staff if advice is required on how best to approach the situation.</p>	<p align="center"><i>Pre Award and Post Award Staff</i></p>
<p>Identify the location of known occurrences of SOMC habitat features or AREC on the Site Plan, Road Construction and Harvest Plan maps. Identify any areas of concern or timing restrictions relating to the management of the identified features, including any species- or site-specific management requirements, if applicable.</p>	<p align="center"><i>Pre Award and Post Award staff, and Contractors</i></p>
<p>Ensure all information is complete and included in the entry to the Species of Management Concern Survey123 Field Form - Ministry of Forests.</p>	<p align="center"><i>Pre Award and Post Award staff, CSO support</i></p>
<p>When the Final Development Package submission is received, update the local BCTS spatial layer to include any SOMC habitat features, or AREC identified as part of the development.</p>	<p align="center"><i>BCTS GIS</i></p>

6. FOREST OPERATIONS	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>Insert any relevant clauses or wording related to timing restrictions or other management requirement associated with the SOMC habitat feature or AREC into the TSL Highlights or other contractual documents. Wording of any such</p>	<p align="center"><i>Pre Award staff, Contract Coordinator</i></p>



**Species of Management Concern
and At Risk Ecological Community
Standard Operating Procedure**
Babine Business Area
2026-04-02

clauses should be reviewed by BCTS Provincial Operations to ensure enforceability.	
As part of the Harvest and Roads pre-work process, notify contractors (road construction) and TSL holders (road construction and harvesting) of the location of any known SOMC, SOMC habitat features or AREC, and any special management requirements associated with the features identified within a development area.	<i>Contract Coordinator</i>
Monitor forest operations to ensure that all applicable SOMC or AREC management strategies are properly implemented by contractors and TSL holders operating within the BA. Follow the inspection and monitoring requirements established under the BA’s Environmental Management System (EMS).	<i>Contract Coordinator, Conformance Staff</i>
If a previously unidentified SOMC, SOMC habitat feature or AREC is discovered during the forest operations, notify BCTS immediately. <i>See Section 7. REPORTING for additional requirements.</i>	<i>Licensee, Contractor</i>
For forest operations under BCTS Contract --If a previously unidentified SOMC, SOMC habitat feature or AREC is discovered, develop, and implement a specific management protocol for the species or AREC using the species supplemental information, the draft BCTS AREC Management Guidance or by consulting a qualified registered professional. Modify the ‘works’ contract if/as required to implement the associated protocol.	<i>Contract Coordinator</i>
For forest operations under TSLs --If a previously unidentified SOMC, SOMC habitat feature or AREC is discovered by the licensee, support as required to create and implement a management protocol for the species or feature. Methods to support could include sharing any relevant BCTS protocols / procedures or providing professional advice to develop a management plan.	<i>Conformance Staff</i>
If a previously unidentified SOMC, SOMC habitat feature or AREC is discovered during harvesting or road construction and the applicable First Nation has requested to be notified, the Practices Forester will notify the Indigenous Relations Liaison, who in turn will notify the First Nation as soon as possible after discovery.	<i>Practices Forester, IRL</i>
During and at the completion of harvesting or road construction, as part of the periodic inspections and monitoring required under the BCTS EMS, assess adherence to any SOMC or AREC requirements such as timing windows or protection of habitat features. If any requirements were not met, conduct an EMS Incident Investigation ensuring details are documented on the Incident Report Form (CHK-009) and entered into the LRM EMS Certification Module.	<i>Contract Coordinator, Conformance Staff</i>



**Species of Management Concern
and At Risk Ecological Community
Standard Operating Procedure**
Babine Business Area
2026-04-02

Notify CSO. If you suspect a potential non-compliance with a legal requirement, C&E must be notified.

7. REPORTING

Procedure	Responsibility
Submit occurrences of SOMC, SOMC habitat features and AREC to the BC Conservation Data Centre, using the Incidental Observations submission process (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/wildlife/wildlife-data-information/submit-wildlife-data-information). Note: Species to be reported to the BC CDC include all Red or Blue-listed species and their nests or dens, species included on Schedule 1 of the <i>Species at Risk Act</i> and their nests or dens. All AREC on BCTS Focus Lists must be reported.	CSO
Complete any additional reporting requirements outlined in specific Land Use Orders within the Business Area such as in the Great Bear Rainforest Order or the Haida Gwaii Land Use Objective Order.	CSO

8. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Procedure	Responsibility
On an annual basis, review the business processes relating to the BA's SOMC and AREC management and update the processes, as required.	CI Chair

DEFINITIONS

Species of Management Concern (SOMC): Specific species, ecosystems and habitats that occur within BCTS operating areas and have the potential be adversely affected by forestry activities. SOMC include the following:

- Species and ecological communities that are designated as being at risk by federal or provincial agencies
- Federal – included on Schedule 1 of the *Species at Risk Act* (only species)
 - Provincial – included on the red or blue list (species and ecological communities)
- Species listed in specific regulations
 - BC *Wildlife Act*



**Species of Management Concern
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Babine Business Area
2026-04-02

- FRPA – IWMS, GAR species (WHAs or UWR)
- SFI Certification – includes species or communities (FECV) listed by NatureServe (Global) to be critically imperiled or imperiled
- Some SOMC are not at risk but require special management for social and/or economic reasons

ADDITIONAL SOMC RESOURCES

Ministry of Forests Species of management Concern Survey123 Form, [Species of Management Concern Survey123 Field Form - Ministry of Forests](#)

BC Conservation Data Centre:

- iMap tool [Conservation Data Centre \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- Species and Ecosystem Explorer [Search Criteria \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
- Submit Wildlife and Plant Data – Incidental Observations [Submit Wildlife / Plant Data and Information - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

BCTS SOMC Intranet Site [Species of management concern - Ministry of Forests \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

BCTS AREC Intranet Site [At risk ecological communities - Ministry of Forests \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

Government Plants, Animals and Ecosystems Website [Plants, Animals & Ecosystems - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

Title	Species of Management Concern and At Risk Ecological Community Standard Operating Procedure -Babine Business Area			
Date Created	June 27, 2025			
Created By	Danielle Gnoyke, TBA CSO			
Maintained By	TBA CSO			
Version Number	Modified By	Modifications Made	Date Modified	Status
1	<i>D. Gnoyke</i>	<i>Added links to AREC Field Confirmation Procedures</i>	<i>Sept 16, 2025</i>	<i>Done</i>



BCTS
BC Timber Sales

**Species of Management Concern
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Standard Operating Procedure**
Babine Business Area
2026-04-02

2	<i>D.Gnoyke</i>	<i>a. Updated process wording to include use of MOF SOMC/AREC Survey123 form with applicable links. b. Addition of Survey123 Form link to resources section.</i>	<i>April 2, 2026</i>	<i>Done</i>
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