



BC Timber Sales  
Babine Business Area  
Wet Weather and Soil Disturbance Guide

This guide has been developed in support of the BCTS Babine Business Area Environmental Management System. It is intended to assist BCTS clients and staff in recognizing wet weather and ground conditions that may impact worker safety, damage to the environment and damage to road systems. It also includes proper erosion control methods through grass seeding. BCTS staff, Contractors and Licensees are to ensure that a Pre-work has been completed prior to the commencement of work and to ensure that they are familiar with both the Site Plans and the applicable Environmental Field Procedures, including 'STOP WORK' procedures.

### **What is Soil Disturbance?**

- Includes compaction, rutting, gouging, scalping and the construction of trails, roads, landings, pits and quarries.
- It is caused mainly by moving machinery and logs
- Excessive soil disturbance is that which is beyond what is necessary under the right combination of equipment and site conditions.

This is caused by excessive random (unplanned) traffic over sensitive terrain or under wet conditions, commencing or continuing to work in poor (wet) soil conditions, or by heavily concentrated activity outside of roadside work areas. This is to be avoided through proper planning, familiarity with Site Plans and recognizing these situations before they become a problem.

### **Wet Weather Procedure:**

This document includes the recommended procedure to determine whether forestry operations should be shut down due to adverse weather conditions which present a risk to workers, equipment, and environmental site conditions.

Discontinue logging and road building activities during times of saturated soils, rain events and periods of limited evaporation such as spring and fall to reduce the risk of landslide or erosion events as well as compaction, rutting, gouging and scalping. If the total amount of rainfall over a specific period is excessive, or soils are unable to absorb any more moisture, the operations should be halted to avoid environmental damage.

In TBA, wet conditions are expected during the shoulder seasons of spring break-up and fall.

### **Preventing Erosion and Sedimentation through Grass Seeding:**

The appropriate application of seed and seed type to the landscape can help prevent erosion during wet soil conditions, as well as to control invasive and noxious weeds.

TBA currently uses two seed mixtures, both with a specific application.

- Erosion Control Mix: for use on roadside, landing, and right-of-way including cut banks, and is appropriate for use in areas overlapping range tenures, and
- Grizzly Mix: for use in the Bulkley operating area, to discourage Grizzly bears from roadside grazing

TBA suggests not to apply any grass seed mixtures between June 21<sup>st</sup> and September 21<sup>st</sup> of each year, as the seeds are not likely to germinate adequately in the heat.

Licensees and contractors can contact the contract coordinator or conformance technician to arrange seed that will be provided by BCTS.

### **BCTS EMS Requirements**

The following are related operational requirements in BCTS EFP's # 4 and # 5 that apply to harvesting and road management activities:

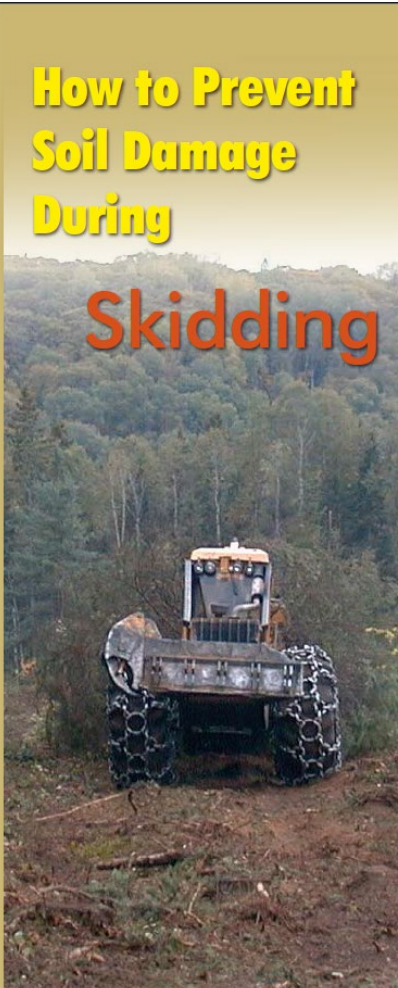
- Operate during favourable weather and site conditions;
- Implement strategies to minimize impacts to soil productivity and water quality;
- Avoid excessive soil disturbance;
- Utilize sediment control measures (i.e. silt fences, hay bales, rock armouring, water bars and sediment ponds as appropriate);
- Clean introduced debris from ditches, culverts and streams on an ongoing basis.

**STOP WORK** and contact your project supervisor and the BCTS representative if:

- You observe site deg or compaction happening
- You experience unfavourable weather or site conditions that could cause environmental damage.
- You observe conditions that have the potential for immediate environmental damage.

The following publication provides a reference for good practices to recognize and prevent soil compaction and disturbance:

*How to Prevent Soil Damage During Skidding*  
*FP Innovations*









The contents represent excerpts from FERIC's "Preventing soil damage in the Boreal and Acadian forests of Eastern Canada: A practical guide for forest operations".

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