



**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 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](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. It includes and applies to relevant Business Area staff, licensees, and contractors working for BCTS. Additionally, Timber Sale Licensees and Permittees (LPs) have requirements to meet requirements identified in this SOP as applicable.

Program Document	BCTS Staff	MPAD	Road Contractors	Silviculture Contractors	TSL LPs
	Intended For (✓) :				
SoMC and AREC SOP	✓	✓			
SoMC and AREC Management Guide(s)	✓				
TCC Focus List – SoMC and AREC	✓	✓			
SoMC Field Manual	✓	✓			
SoMC Operator Awareness Sheets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SoMC Survey App	✓	✓			
AREC Field Procedures	✓	✓			



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## **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.
5. Meet requirements under the Cariboo Chilcotin Land Use Plan
6. Align with the Cariboo Chilcotin Business Area Forest Stewardship Plan



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## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

<b>1. SOMC and AREC Program Maintenance</b>	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>If your SOMC and AREC programs are based on corporate resources, annually check the <a href="https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/for/bcts/sustainability/sustainability/species-of-management-concern">SOMC intranet site</a> (https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/for/bcts/sustainability/sustainability/species-of-management-concern) and <a href="https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/for/bcts/sustainability/sustainability/at-risk-ecological-communities">AREC intranet site</a> (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.</p>	<p><i>Certification Standards Officer</i></p>
<b>2. TRAINING and AWARENESS</b>	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>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; 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.</p>	<p><i>Certification Standards Officer, Contractors as applicable</i></p>
<p>Provide all BCTS field staff and multi-phase contractors with training materials, applicable SOPs / Best Management Practices and reference materials to be used for species and AREC identification and management in the field.</p>	<p><i>Ops Tech, Planning Forester</i></p>
<p>TSL holder awareness training will occur at pre-work meetings as described in Section 4.</p>	<p><i>Ops Tech, Planning Forester</i></p>
<b>3. PLANNING</b>	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>Prior to starting any block or road layout works, identify any known occurrences of AREC, SOMC or their habitat as part of the FSP Checklist. If occurrences are identified, discuss the management implications with the contractor. Consider the following steps:</p>	<p><i>Planning Forester, Practices Forester</i></p>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review the BC CDC species at risk mapping to identify any known occurrences of SOMC or AREC.</li> <li>○ Review known locations of SOMC habitat features such as dens, raptor nests, confirmed breeding areas.</li> <li>○ Review the established (approved) and draft (proposed) UWR and WHA layers and their General Wildlife Measures to ensure there is no conflict.</li> <li>○ Reference any additional requirements associated with the Cariboo Chilcotin Land Use Plan</li> </ul>	
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<b>4. PRE-WORKS</b>	
<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<p><b>For TSLs</b> --Review the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOMC operator awareness sheet</li> <li>• Wildlife features in the vicinity of the planned activities</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Reporting procedure if a species occurrence or an AREC is identified (i.e., reference EMS EFPs)</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><i>TSL Coordinator, Ops Tech</i></p>
<p><b>For planning and development contracts</b> (e.g., cutblock and road layout, multi-phase, road construction, etc.) -- Review the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOMC and AREC Focus Lists</li> <li>• Wildlife features in the vicinity of the planned activities</li> <li>• Management strategies to be considered (from legal orders, FSP, BA SOP's, etc.)</li> <li>• Reporting procedure if a species occurrence or an AREC is identified</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><i>Practices Forester, Planning Forester, Ops Tech</i></p>

<b>5. FIELD ASSESSMENT</b>	
<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<p>Provide all BCTS field staff and contractors with the SOMC Field Cards and the AREC Assessment Procedures to be used for species and AREC identification in the field.</p>	<p align="center"><i>Practices Forester</i></p>
<p>Review the BCTS PO Species of Management Concern Dashboard for the area you are working (Survey123)</p>	<p align="center"><i>BCTS Staff and Contractors</i></p>



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<p>If a SOMC, SOMC habitat feature, or an AREC is identified in the field:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engage a qualified registered professional if required to confirm identification of an AREC, a species or the status of a habitat feature,</li> <li>follow the Field Action protocol on the Field Card or the applicable AREC Field Assessment Procedure for the Natural Disturbance Type of the area,</li> <li>record relevant information, take photos and document the location in Species of Management Concern Survey123 ,</li> <li>notify the Practices Forester (or other designated BCTS contact)</li> </ul> <p><i>See Section 7. REPORTING for additional requirements.</i></p>	<p align="center"><i>BCTS Staff and Contractors</i></p>
<p>Once a SOMC, SOMC habitat feature or an AREC is identified, identify appropriate local management action from TCC program documents. IF a specific management protocol does not exist, create one 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</i></p>
<p>Depending on the SOMC or AREC in question and site specifics, management options will vary and may include:</p> <p><b>Avoidance/Protection:</b> 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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><b>Modified practice:</b> 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>BCTS Staff and Contractors</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>BCTS Staff and Contractors</i></p>
<p>Submit the spatial location of the identified SOMC, SOMC habitat feature or AREC to BCTS as per the “<i>Digital Submission Standards – User Guide</i>”, including</p>	<p align="center"><i>BCTS Staff and Contractors</i></p>



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all the necessary data required to report the occurrence to the BC Conservation Data Centre.	
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.	<i>BCTS GIS</i>

<b>6. FOREST OPERATIONS</b>	
<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
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 clauses should be reviewed by BCTS Provincial Operations to ensure enforceability.	<i>Eng Tech, Ops Tech</i>
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>Eng Tech, Ops Tech</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>Eng Tech, Ops Tech</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>
<b>For forest operations under BCTS Contract</b> --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>BCTS Staff/Multi- phase Contractor, RPF, RPBio, Works Contractor</i>
<b>For forest operations under TSLs</b> --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.	<i>BCTS Staff, Licensee</i>



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Methods to support could include sharing any relevant BCTS protocols / procedures or providing professional advice to develop a management plan.	
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 Planning Forester/Indigenous Relations Liaison, who in turn will notify the First Nation as soon as possible after discovery.	<i>Practices Forester, Planning 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. Notify Practices Forester and CSO. If you suspect a potential non-compliance with a legal requirement, C&E must be notified.	<i>BCTS Staff, Practices Forester</i>

<b>7. REPORTING</b>	
<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Record field data of SOMC or AREC occurrence via BCTS PO Species of Management Concern Survey123 app	<i>BCTS Staff and Contractors</i>
Submit occurrences of SOMC, SOMC habitat features and AREC to the BC Conservation Data Centre, using the <a href="https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/wildlife/wildlife-data-information/submit-wildlife-data-information">Incidental Observations</a> 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.	<i>Multi-phase Contractor, Planning Forester</i>
Complete any additional reporting requirements outlined in specific Land Use Orders within the Business Area	<i>Planning Forester</i>

<b>8. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT</b>	
<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
On an annual basis, review the business processes relating to the BA's SOMC and AREC management and update the processes, as required.	<i>Planning Forester, Certification Standards Officer</i>



**BCTS**  
BC Timber Sales

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## **Additional SOMC Resources**

BC Conservation Data Centre:

- iMap tool [Conservation Data Centre \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca/conservation-data-centre/)
- Species and Ecosystem Explorer [Search Criteria \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca/species-and-ecosystem-explorer/)
- Submit Wildlife and Plant Data – Incidental Observations [Submit Wildlife / Plant Data and Information - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca/submit-wildlife-plant-data/)

Government Plants, Animals and Ecosystems Website [Plants, Animals & Ecosystems - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca/plants-animals-ecosystems/)

[PO Species of Management Concern Survey123: Operational User Guide CONTRACTORS or STAFF](#)