



**Species of Management Concern
Standard Operating Procedure**
Skeena Business Area
2023-05-03

INTRODUCTION

This Species of Management Concern (SOMC) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is intended to provide guidance to all BCTS staff and contractors. 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 SOMC. The corporate framework on the development of SOMC programs is outlined in the provincial [BCTS SOMC 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. It includes and applies to relevant Business Area staff, licensees, and contractors working for BCTS.

The SOP applies to the Skeena Business Area Focus List dated 2023-03-27. Please see appendix A for the Focus List.

This SOP was developed through the corporate program using the methodology outlined in the provincial BCTS SOMC Guide. The TSK Focus List was reviewed for the Business Area by a qualified Registered Professional Biologist following the criteria outlined in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative utilizing the BC Conservation Data Centre. A risk rating system was applied to narrow the list of species to those that could be impacted by forest activities. The Focus List was reviewed and updated on 2023-01-13 and finalized on 2023-03-27.

Geographic areas that this SOP is applicable to:

- BCTS Operations in the Coast Mountains and Skeena – Stikine Natural Resource Districts
- BCTS Operations in TSA's within the two Districts noted above
- Any other land tenure in which BCTS operates as a forest land management partner with 3rd party entities, e.g., community forests, disposition agreements, etc. (note that if timber is to be sold as SFI certified, then this and other aspects of the SFI Certification program must be applied)



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OBJECTIVES

1. Define the various steps and procedures that are required to occur at different operational stages to effectively manage and protect Species of Management Concern.
2. Identify who has the responsibility to complete the procedures outlined in this SOP.
3. Meet legal and Sustainable Forestry Management certification obligations.
4. Educate BCTS staff, Licensees, Permittees, and Contractors in the identification, and management of Species of Management Concern.
5. Forest Stewardship Plans – Red & Blue listed species



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

1. SOMC Program Maintenance	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>If your SOMC program is based on corporate resources, annually check the SOMC intranet site (https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/for/bcts/sustainability/sustainability/species-of-management-concern) for updates to the materials. Ensure the current version of these products are used as the BA SOMC Focus List and for training. Complete updates as necessary before training and distribution of SOMC materials.</p>	Planning Officer
<p>If your SOMC program has been developed through a BA specific process, annually engage the services of a qualified registered professional to review and update SOMC program materials (Focus List, field cards, awareness sheets) to reflect changes in regulations or conservation status, occurrence information, certification requirements, or management direction that must be considered. Complete updates as necessary before training and distribution of SOMC materials.</p>	Planning Officer AND/OR Provincial Wildlife Resource Specialist
2. TRAINING and AWARENESS	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>Coordinate SOMC 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 as well as a review of the local Focus List species and available resources.</p>	Planning Officer
<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 recognition and management in the field.</p>	Contract Coordinators & Woodlands Supervisors
<p>TSL holder awareness training will occur at pre-work meetings as described in Section 4.</p>	Harvest Conformance Staff



3. PLANNING	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>Prior to starting any block or road layout works, identify any known occurrences of 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.</p> <p><i>Reference any BA specific layers used to complete this process or any additional higher level plan considerations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review the BC CDC species at risk mapping to identify any known occurrences of SOMC. ○ Review known locations of SOMC habitat features such as dens, raptor nests, confirmed breeding areas. ○ Review the established (approved) and draft (proposed) UWR and WHA layers and their General Wildlife Measures to ensure there is no conflict. ○ Reference any additional requirements associated with higher level plans (as identified in the Skeena Business Areas Forest Stewardship Plans). 	Planning Forester Practices Forester

4. PRE-WORKS	
Procedure	Responsibility
<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 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 is identified (i.e., reference EMS EFPs) 	Harvest Conformance Staff Operations Technologist
<p>For planning and development contracts (e.g., cutblock and road layout, multi-phase, road construction, etc.) -- Review the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Species of Management Concern Focus List ● 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 is identified 	Practices Forester Planning Forester Operations Technologist



5. FIELD ASSESSMENT	
Procedure	Responsibility
Provide all BCTS field staff and contractors with the SOMC Field Cards to be used for species recognition and management in the field.	Multiphase Contract Coordinator Woodlands Supervisors
<p>If a SOMC or SOMC habitat feature is identified in the field:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage a qualified registered professional if required to confirm identification of a species or status of a habitat feature, • follow the Field Action protocol on the Field Card OR Best Management Practice • notify the Practices Forester (or other designated BCTS contact) • <i>See Section 7. REPORTING for details on this requirement</i> 	All BCTS Staff and Contractors
Once a SOMC 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.	Contract Coordinator, Planning or Practices Forester and Contractor
Address the SOMC assessment findings and associated management strategies and requirements in both the Road and Block Site Plans, and their associated support documents. Note that Site Plans are not legal plans, hence any requirements to manage SOMC must be contained within the FSP or TSL document. Areas to be protected from harvest must be excluded from the harvest area exhibit A; WTRA's can be moved by the TSL holder.	Contract Coordinator, Practices Forester and Contractor
Identify the location of known occurrences of SOMC habitat features 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.	Contract Coordinator and, Practices Forester and Contractor
Submit the spatial location of the identified SOMC or SOMC habitat feature to BCTS as per the <i>"Digital Submission Standards – User Guide"</i> , including all the necessary data required to report the occurrence to the BC Conservation Data Centre.	Multiphase contractor / Contract Coordinator Provide spatial to Northern GIS Group
When the Final Development Package submission is received, update the local BCTS spatial layer to include any SOMC habitat features identified as part of the development.	Northern GIS Group



6. FOREST OPERATIONS	
Procedure	Responsibility
Insert any relevant clauses or wording related to timing restrictions or other management requirement associated with the SOMC or SOMC habitat feature into the TSL Highlights or other contractual documents. Wording of any such clauses should be reviewed by BCTS Provincial Operations to ensure enforceability.	Operations Technologist / Practices Forester / Woodlands Supervisor / Engineering Technician / Engineering Supervisor
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 or SOMC habitat features, and any special management requirements associated with the features identified within a development area.	Engineering Technologist & Harvest Conformance Staff
Monitor forest operations to ensure that all applicable SOMC 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).	Engineering Technologist, Silviculture & Harvest Conformance Staff
If a previously unidentified SOMC or SOMC habitat feature is discovered during the forest operations, notify BCTS immediately. <i>See Section 7. REPORTING for details on this requirement.</i>	Licensee, Contractor, BCTS Monitoring Staff
For forest operations under BCTS Contract --If a previously unidentified SOMC or SOMC habitat feature is discovered, develop, and implement a specific management protocol for the species using the species supplemental information or by consulting a qualified registered professional. Modify the 'works' contract if/as required to implement the associated protocol.	Contract Coordinator / Multiphase Contractor, RPBio, Works Contractor
For forest operations under TSLs --If a previously unidentified SOMC or SOMC habitat feature 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 obtaining professional advice to develop a management protocol.	Licensee



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<p>If a previously unidentified SOMC or SOMC habitat feature is discovered during harvesting or road construction and the applicable First Nation has requested to be notified, the Harvest Conformance Tech will notify the Woodlands Supervisor, Planning Forester who in turn will notify the First Nation as soon as possible after discovery.</p>	<p>Woodlands Supervisor, Harvest Conformance Tech, Planning Forester</p>
<p>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 requirements such as timing windows or protection of habitat features. If any SOMC 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.</p>	<p>BCTS Staff</p>

7. REPORTING	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>Submit occurrences of SOMC or SOMC habitat features 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.</p>	<p>BCTS Staff Multiphase Contractor</p>
<p>Complete any additional reporting requirements outlined in specific Land Use Orders within the Business Area such as in the Great Bear Rainforest Order.</p>	<p>Planning Forester</p>

8. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>On an annual basis, review the business processes relating to the BA's SOMC management and update the processes, as required.</p>	<p>Planning Officer, CSO</p>

Additional SOMC Resources

- [Skeena Business Area EMS SFM Webpage](#)
- iMap tool [Conservation Data Centre \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/wildlife/wildlife-data-information/submit-wildlife-data-information)
- 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 \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)



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- Government Plants, Animals and Ecosystems Website [Plants, Animals & Ecosystems - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/plants/animals_ecosystems/)