



**Species of Management Concern  
Standard Operating Procedure**  
Strait of Georgia Business Area  
2023-06-14

## 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](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.

- This SOP applies to the SOMC [Animal Master List](#) and [Plant Master List](#) that were developed through the corporate program using the methodology outlined in the provincial BCTS SOMC Guide. The Lists were finalized in July 2022.
- The SOP applies to the [TSG - Plant Communities Focus List](#) that was developed for the Business Area by a qualified Registered Professional Biologist following the criteria outlined in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Performance Measure 4.2 to protect critically imperiled and imperiled ecological communities utilizing information from 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. This Focus List was updated on January 23, 2023.
- This SOP applies to [TSG - Species At Risk Focus List](#) that was developed for the Business Area by a qualified Registered Professional Biologist following the criteria outlined in the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Performance Measure 4.2 to protect threatened and endangered species, as well as critically imperiled and imperiled species. The information from the BC Conservation Data Centre will be used. A risk rating system was applied to narrow the list of species to those that could be impacted by forest activities. This Focus List was updated on October 26, 2022.
- This SOP Includes [TSG Elk Management Policy](#), [TSG Northern Goshawk Protocol](#), [TSG Bear Dens BMP](#), [TSG Red Legged Frogs and Western Toads SOP](#), [TSG At Risk Ecological Communities SOP](#)



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This SOP applies to the BCTS managed areas within the Campbell River and Port Alberni Resource Districts which are all considered part of the Strait of Georgia Business area. These are inclusive of areas overlapped by [Forest Stewardship Plans \(FSP\)](#) in the Business area, which change from time to time:

- Areas covered by the South Central Coast FSP
- Areas covered by the Campbell River FSP
- Areas covered by the Pacific Maritime FSP
- Areas covered by the West Coast FSP
- Any other land tenure in which BCTS operates as a forest land management partner with 3<sup>rd</sup> 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)

## **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. (Ex. Ops Tech, Eng. Tech, RPBio, Planning Forester, Practices Forester)
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. Meet applicable Forest Stewardship Plans' Results and Strategies
6. Consider the best available science, professional standards, and policy or guidance documents.



## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

<b>1. SOMC Program Maintenance</b>	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>If your SOMC program is 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> (<a href="https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/for/bcts/sustainability/sustainability/species-of-management-concern">https://intranet.gov.bc.ca/for/bcts/sustainability/sustainability/species-of-management-concern</a>) 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>	<p>Planning Officer or designate</p>
<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. Program material can be found on the <a href="#">BCTS Certification website</a>.</p>	<p>Planning Officer or Biological Services contract coordinator</p>

  

<b>2. TRAINING and AWARENESS</b>	
Procedure	Responsibility
<p>Conduct 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>	<p>Biological Services contract coordinator, BCTS Staff, Contractors as applicable</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 recognition and management in the field.</p>	<p>Biological Services contract coordinator</p>
<p>TSL holder awareness training will occur at pre-work meetings as described in Section 4.</p>	<p>BCTS Staff</p>

  

<b>3. PLANNING</b>	
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. Reference any BA specific layers used to complete this process or any additional higher level plan considerations.</p>	<p>Planning Forester or Practices Forester</p>



For example:

- Internal to BCTS, access and review through ArcMap or ArcView the Constraints Layers which include (but not limited to):
  - Goshawk\_Known\_Nests
  - Red & Blue Listed Ecosystems
  - CDC Known Non-Sensitive Endangered Species
  - AREC Focus List- 2020
- Check the applicable Land Use Plans for the [West Coast Region](#)

#### 4. PRE-WORKS

Procedure	Responsibility
<p><b>For TSLs or Road Construction</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 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 is identified (i.e., reference EMS EFPs)</li> </ul>	TSL Coordinator, Operations Technician, Engineering Technician
<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>• Species of Management Concern Focus List</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 is identified</li> </ul>	Practices Forester, Planning Forester, Operations Technician

#### 5. FIELD ASSESSMENT

Procedure	Responsibility
<p>Provide all BCTS field staff and contractors with the SOMC Field Cards to be used for species recognition and management in the field.</p>	Biological Services contract coordinator
<p>If a SOMC or SOMC habitat feature is identified in the field:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage a qualified registered professional if required to confirm identification of a species or status of a habitat feature,</li> <li>• follow the Field Action protocol on the Field Card,</li> <li>• record relevant information, take photos, and document the location,</li> <li>• notify the Practices Forester (or other designated BCTS contact)</li> <li>• <i>See Section 7. REPORTING for details on this requirement</i></li> </ul>	BCTS Staff and Contractors



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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.	BCTS Staff and Contractors
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.	BCTS Staff and Contractors
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.	BCTS Staff and Contractors
Submit the spatial location of the identified SOMC or SOMC habitat feature to BCTS as per the <a href="#">Submit Wildlife / Plant Data and Information - British Columbia</a> , including all the necessary data required to report the occurrence to the BC Conservation Data Centre.	BCTS Staff and Contractors
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.	BCTS GIS

**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.	Engineering Technologist, Operations Technologist
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 Technologist
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, Harvest Technologist
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
<b>For forest operations under BCTS Contract</b> --If a previously unidentified SOMC or SOMC habitat feature is discovered, develop, and implement a specific	BCTS Staff/Multi phase Contractor,



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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.	RPBio, Works Contractor
<b>For forest operations under TSLs</b> --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 providing professional advice to develop a management direction.	BCTS Staff, Licensee
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 Practices Forester will notify the Planning Forester/Indigenous Relations Liaison, who in turn will notify the First Nation as soon as possible after discovery.	Practices Forester, Planning Forester, Indigenous Relations Liaison
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 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.	BCTS Staff, Practices Forester

<b>7. REPORTING</b>	
<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Submit occurrences of SOMC or SOMC habitat features 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.	Multi-phase Contractor Planning Forester
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.	Planning Forester

<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 management and update the processes, as required.	Planning Forester, Planning Officer



**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/conservation-data-centre/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/conservation-data-centre/submit-wildlife-plant-data/)

BCTS SOMC Intranet Site [Species of management concern - Ministry of Forests \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.gov.bc.ca/conservation-data-centre/species-of-management-concern/)

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