



Mid-Term Timber Supply

June 11, 2012

Resource Values Assessment: Access Management – Resource Roads

State of Knowledge:

- With increasing pressure to identify and harvest additional timber in timber supply areas impacted by mountain pine beetle, there may be a need for additional resource roads to access this timber.
- Resource roads can, provide access for backcountry recreation or wildfire management, but they can also have negative environmental impacts. These can include dead or injured wildlife from vehicle collisions or modified wildlife behaviour.
- There have been many studies and projects in British Columbia looking at the wide range of environmental effects of resource roads.

Current condition:

It is estimated that the Prince George Timber Supply Area (TSA) has more than 27,000 kilometres of resource roads; Lakes TSA has more than 6,200 kilometres; Williams Lake TSA has more than 18,000 kilometres; Quesnel TSA has more than 13,000 kilometres; Morice TSA has more than 5,400 kilometres; 100 Mile House TSA has more than 5,500 kilometres. Kamloops TSA has more than 14,500 kilometres; Merritt TSA has more than 6,700 kilometres. These numbers only include roads administered under the *Forest and Range Practices Act*. They do not include non-status roads or roads issued under the *Mines Act*.

Sustainability Risk:

Resource roads can lead to:

- Increased presence of invasive plant and animal species posing a risk to biodiversity and native species;
- Increased risk of slope failures in sensitive terrain;
- Sediment production and transport in streams and rivers, including impacts on fish habitat;
- Direct loss of habitat or habitat fragmentation for many species, including Mountain Caribou;
- Increased interactions with humans and many species, including Grizzly bears;
- Dead or injured wildlife from vehicle collisions;
- Changes in the behaviour of wildlife;
- The Timber Supply Areas identified above are generally moderately to extensively roaded.
- Many environmental impacts associated with road development can be mitigated through proper design techniques and planning.
- Watersheds with no roads or limited road networks are generally at the highest risk of having negative environmental impacts associated with road development, although the level of risk will be watershed or site specific depending on the values present.

Supporting Documents

Daigle, P 2010. A summary of the environmental impacts of roads, management responses and research gaps: A literature review. BC Journal of Ecosystems and Management 10(3):65-89
[online: <http://jem.forrex.org/index.php/jem/article/viewFile/38/9>]