



Mid-Term Timber Supply

June 11, 2012

Resource Values Assessment: Species at Risk

State of Knowledge:

- B.C. is Canada's most biologically diverse province. Species at risk are provincially and/or federally designated Red and Blue species, populations and ecological communities classified by the Conservation Data Centre (CDC) as Endangered, Threatened or of Special Concern.
- Species at Risk designations use science parameters to determine potential extinction or extirpation risk of species within B.C., and their need for special attention to ensure their persistence.

Current condition:

- Within the Central Interior timber supply areas there are 322 species, populations or ecological communities assessed as Species at Risk. Of these, 93 are assessed at the higher threat level of Endangered or Threatened, and 28 are listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). Species are reassessed periodically, and a number of Central Interior species are currently being reassessed (e.g. caribou, grizzly bear, northern goshawk).
- Provisions under the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, such as land use objectives, ungulate winter ranges, old growth management areas, wildlife habitat areas, visual quality objectives, and riparian provisions, provide incremental habitat protection for many Species at Risk.
- Several forest certification programs use this information on species designations and applied habitat conservation measures to identify values that must be protected to maintain certifications.
- Regional land use policy includes limited measures to protect Species at Risk, often with objectives that are balanced with socio-economic values.

Sustainability Risk:

- Sustained representation of Species at Risk depends on maintenance of ecological integrity. Habitat loss, disruption or compromised ecosystem function reduce the ability of an ecosystem to recover from disturbance, resulting in threats to Species at Risk, particularly in light of climate change impacts.
- Accelerated harvest, excessively large young openings, high road densities, reduced forest stand retention, and increased human access exacerbate the threat to Species at Risk.
- Landscape-level forest retention, connectivity and appropriate forest structure retention are required to protect or recover Species at Risk.
- Canada and B.C. have made international commitments for protection and recovery of Species at Risk. The reputation and stability of our market places may be reduced if assessment bodies such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (internationally), COSEWIC (nationally), and the Conservation Data Centre (provincially) perceive that designated conservation areas are unable to provide adequate protection for species and ecological communities, and place more species at risk.
- Federal Species at Risk legislation may be employed to direct conservation and recovery actions, despite potential impacts to provincial interests.
- The third-party forest certification of forest companies might be put at risk if standards for protection of Species at Risk are relaxed.

Supporting Documents:

Information on endangered species and ecosystems - <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/atrisk/>

Fraser, Bruce (chair). *Report of the British Columbia Task Force on Species at Risk*. January 2011.

http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/sartaskforce/Documents/SpeciesAtRisk_report.pdf

Biodiversity Conservation during Salvage Logging in the Central Interior of BC. Forest Practises Board Special Report No. 35. Nov. 2009. <http://www.fpb.gov.bc.ca/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=4956>

Managing Species at Risk in British Columbia – Guidance for Resource Professionals. Assoc. Of BC Forest Professionals and the College of Applied Biology. Nov. 2009. <https://www.cab-bc.org/files/SAR%20Paper.pdf>