

CRIT Guidance Memorandum

**To: Coast Forest Region, District Managers
Coast Forest Region, Timber Sales Managers
Les Kiss, Coast Forest Products Association**

**From: Joe LeBlanc, CRIT Co-chair
Hal Reveley, CRIT Co-chair**

**CC: CRIT Members
Charlie Western, PFIT Silviculture Working Group Chair**

Date: November 18, 2008

Re: Reporting Forest Cover Data for Blocks with High Residual Basal Area.

Background

This document provides guidance on how to report post harvest forest cover data into RESULTS for openings managed under silvicultural systems with retention¹ that is not mappable².

The *Forest Planning and Practices Regulation* (FPPR) s. 86 requires reporting of forest cover information on all areas harvested to which a free growing obligation applies under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* (FRPA) s. 29 or to which s. FPPR 44 (4) applies. The standards to which FPPR 44 (4) apply are specified under a Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP) in accordance with FPPR 16 (4).

Forest cover data submitted into RESULTS is used by the Ministry of Forests and Range (MFR) and the Chief Forester to complete timber supply reviews and to set the allowable annual cut (AAC) in timber supply areas. RESULTS forest cover data is used to generate statistics that estimate the available timber supply under current management practices. Over the last decade the variety of silvicultural systems prescribed in the Coast Region associated with high levels of retention has increased while the database structure within RESULTS, designed primarily for clear-cuts, has largely remained intact. As our current management practices change and we apply a larger variety of silvicultural systems across the landscape, with varying levels of retention, it becomes increasingly important to accurately and consistently report the resulting forest cover data into RESULTS. This information will assist the Chief Forester in determining current practices, such as the amount of high retention silvicultural systems being applied, and assist in modeling the impact these current practices may have on timber supply.

¹ The generic term retention refers to trees retained on a cut block and is distinguished from the more specific term "retention system" which refers to a silvicultural system.

² Mappable is defined as an area of retention > 0.25 ha in size

Scope

This guidance:

- is based on the use of the existing RESULTS database with its current capabilities and does not require any change to licensee GIS operating systems;
- applies to new cut blocks or existing cut blocks to which obligations have not been declared achieved.

Licensees are not being asked to update RESULTS forest cover data on cutblocks for which their obligations have been declared achieved. For these areas, licensees are asked to work with local district staff where specific forest cover information is required to support the TSR review process.

Suggested Guidance

1) Basal Area retention

For variable stands (e.g., old growth) forest cover data includes, for each polygon where trees are retained for either timber or non timber objectives, the average residual basal area per hectare for tree layer 1³ as part of both inventory and silviculture components.

For uniform second growth stands inclusion of basal area on polygons where trees are retained is less important although a good practice.

The *inventory component* includes the average basal area per hectare retained on the polygon and the *silviculture component* includes the average basal area per hectare that contributes to meeting the silviculture obligations.

2) Tree distribution pattern

One of the following 4 categories, as referenced in Figure 1, is selected to describe the spatial distribution of the residual basal area for layer 1 trees:

- **Code 1** – polygons with low levels (<10 m² per ha basal area) of dispersed or non mappable aggregate retention patches
- **Code 3** – polygons with moderate levels (10-30 m² per ha basal area) of dispersed or non mappable aggregate retention patches
- **Code 6** – polygons with high levels (> 30 m² per ha basal area) of dispersed or non mappable aggregate retention patches and subject to a free growing obligation under FRPA s. 29
- **Code 9** – polygons with high levels of dispersed retention in which there is no regeneration obligation (i.e. standards under FPPR s. 44 (4) such as intermediate cut, or commercial thinning)

³ Layer 1 (mature) refers to stems > 12.5 cm Dbh

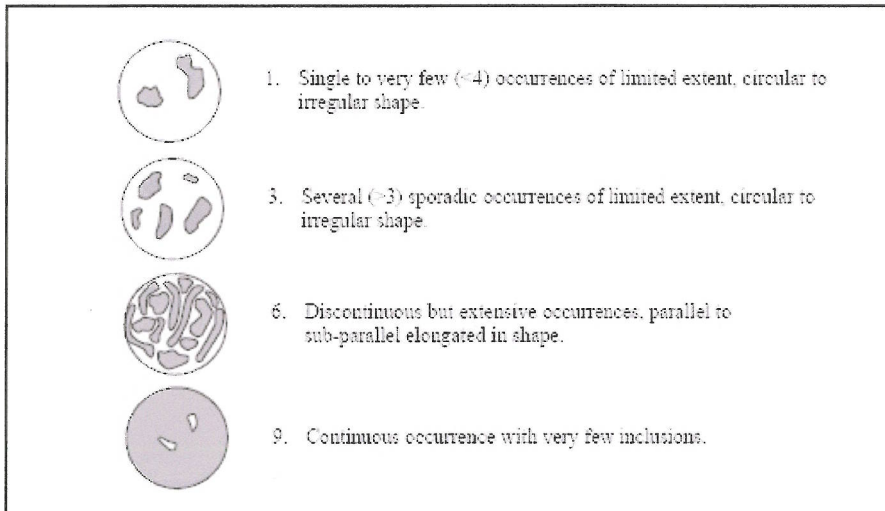


Figure 1: RESULTS tree cover pattern codes^{4 5}.

Examples:

These examples illustrate how a forest cover submission might be assigned a **tree distribution pattern code** given the type of silvicultural system applied and the amount of basal area retained.

Single tree selection silvicultural system

35 m² per ha residual basal area uniformly dispersed as single trees and small groups of trees throughout the polygon. Apply Code # 6.

Retention silvicultural system

20 m² per ha residual basal area retained as small aggregates (<0.25 ha) distributed throughout the polygon. Apply Code # 3.

Intermediate cut harvest

50 m² per ha residual basal area uniformly dispersed throughout the polygon. Apply Code # 9.

3) Reserves⁶

Reserves greater than 0.25 ha, not subject to current harvesting, are defined spatially (mapped) and assigned a RESULTS reserve type code of Group reserve. A Group reserve is not normally associated with a Standard Unit (SU). If the reserve is intended to be short term retention it is assigned a RESULTS objective code of “timber” and if it is intended as long term retention it is assigned a RESULTS reserve code objective other than “timber” (e.g., WTR).

⁴ Shaded (gray areas) represent trees or groups of trees that have been retained

⁵ A uniform dispersed distribution of basal area may fall into any of the tree distribution classes depending on the amount of residual basal area.

⁶ Guidance items 3, 4, 5 and 6 have been extracted from the **RESULTS Information Submission Specifications – Licensee Submissions** document. They have been included in this document to stress their importance relative to reporting forest cover data for blocks with residual basal area.

For reserves, such as a Wildlife Tree Retention Area (WTR), where harvesting occurs under an approved result or strategy as part of an FSP, a RESULTS reserve code of “dispersed reserve” should be assigned. This dispersed reserve code applies to any reserve which is associated with a stocking standard or a standard under FPPR s.44(4) and is part of a SU.

4) Silvicultural system

The predominant silvicultural system associated with the cut-block is reported in RESULTS by way of the Disturbance Report. Where more than one silvicultural system applies to a block, the silvicultural system that applies to the largest area is referenced.

5) Pre-harvest forest stand label

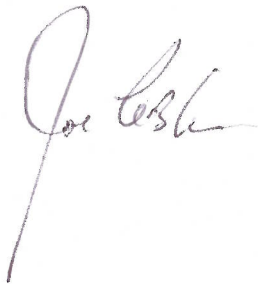
A pre-harvest forest stand label is entered for all cut-blocks using the best available information (i.e. cruise or recent forest cover data). For cut-blocks with more than one forest cover polygon label, the forest cover label that represents the largest polygon is recorded in RESULTS.

6) Stratification

Stratification criteria are outlined under section 5.7.3.4 of the *RESULTS Information Submission Specifications – Licensee Submissions* document. Strata with retained residual basal area are separated from strata with little or no residual basal area.

If you have any questions regarding this guidance, please direct to Craig Wickland, CRIT Silviculture Working Group Chair at (250) 751-7094.

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