

**BEC-Tree Species Description: ESSFmm**

Historically the forests of the Moist Mild Engelmann Spruce – Subalpine Fir biogeoclimatic unit (ESSFmm) were dominated by older stands due to a longer fire return interval for the unit. Subalpine fir and Engelmann spruce dominated stands were widespread on upland sites. Lodgepole pine dominated stands occurred in areas with more recent fire history. Very rare, stunted open subalpine fir and Engelmann spruce treed bogs occur in very wet organic depressions. Black spruce occurs on some of these sites at lower elevations. Whitebark pine occurred on scattered very dry, shallow rocky crests, and rocky warm upper slopes at the higher elevation limits of the unit. Interior Douglas-fir and western white pine distribution was restricted to warm aspects at the lower elevation limits of the ESSFmm.

Age class distribution as a % of total forest area [Source: VRIMS 2008]

Stand age class	7-9 natural forest	7-9 harvested forest	4-6 natural forest	4-6 harvested forest	1-3 natural forest	1-3 harvested forest
% of total forest area	79	0	14	0	4	3

Tree species distribution in natural old/mature (age class 7-9) and natural immature (age class 4-6) as a % of the total natural old/mature and natural immature forest cover respectively [Source: VRIMS 2008]

Species	Bl	Pl	Se
% of total natural old/mature (age class 7-9) forest cover	54	5	39
% of total natural immature (age class 4-6) forest cover	45	31	17

Forest management practices of the 1960’s to present have resulted in stands that are more commonly dominated by Engelmann spruce or lodgepole pine than subalpine fir due to the preferential planting of these species.

% species composition of post-harvested stands [Source: RESULTS 1989-2003]

Species	B	Pl	S
% of harvested area	24	11	63

Author: C. DeLong (March 2011)