

BEC-Tree Species Description: ICHvc

Mature and old forests dominate the ICHvc landscape (81% of the forested area is age class 7 to 9). About 7 % of the forested area consists of natural immature forests resulting from disturbances such as fire, snow avalanche activity, and windthrow. During the 1980's and early 1990's, significant timber harvesting took place, resulting in about 12% of the forested area classified as age class 1 to 3, managed immature. Mature forests are western hemlock – subalpine fir mixes (44% of each) with subalpine fir dominating in the valley bottoms, where cold air ponds, and hemlock (including some mountain hemlock) dominating on the midslopes. Hybrid spruce occurs on moister, richer sites (5%) and lodgepole pine is absent. Natural immature stands are also dominated by subalpine fir with a considerable deciduous component (35% - mostly cottonwood with minor aspen and birch) as well as hemlock (21%).

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	81	N/A	5	N/A	2	12

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	Hw	Bl	Sx	Deciduous
% of total natural old/mature (age class 7-9) forest cover	44	44	5	5
% of total natural immature (age class 4-6) forest cover	21	37	7	35

Managed second growth forests contain more spruce (13 to 35%¹) and less subalpine fir (32%) and western hemlock (27 to 48%) compared with the natural old-growth. The inventory also indicates that lodgepole pine has been introduced on some harvested sites (5%). With 12% of the ICHvc harvested, there has been some change in species composition at the landscape level. Considering the intense snowfall statistics for the ICHvc (snowfall amounts of 6+ m), future silvicultural regimes should emphasize more subalpine fir, less spruce, and little or no lodgepole pine.

% species composition of post-harvested stands [Source: RESULTS 1988-2001]

Species	Sx	Bl	Hw	Pl
% of harvested area	14	32	48	5

Author: A. Banner (March 2011)

¹ Range of values reflects differences between VRIMS and RESULTS data sources.

Note: the above write-up does not account for TFL forest cover/regeneration information. This may impact on the tree species and age class percentages described above.