

BEC-Tree Species Description: SBSdw1

The SBSdw1 represents a landscape of primarily fire regenerated stands. Prior to the recent catastrophic mountain pine beetle outbreak, the SBSdw1 landscape was dominated by near mature and mature (age class 5-7) mixed species stands of pine, Douglas-fir and spruce. Older stands tended to be dominated by fire resistant Douglas-fir on drier sites and spruce on wet fire resistant site. Aspen and paper birch are the dominant hardwood species and often dominate sites with historical frequent human initiated fires. It is important to note that as a result the mountain pine beetle epidemic most of the mature lodgepole pine and the larger diameter immature pine trees in the SBPSdw1 have been killed. Depending on stand age, beetle-killed stands often have a live sub-canopy layer of immature spruce and Douglas-fir. Occasionally subalpine fir advance regeneration is very abundant in the understory and may already be several decades old. Aggressive and extensive salvage harvesting is ongoing with a focus on the most merchantable stands.

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	32	1	49	1	6	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	PI	S	Fd	Bl	Ep	Act	At
% of total natural old/mature (age class 7-9) forest cover	30	20	36	1	2	2	10
% of total natural immature (age class 4-6) forest cover	30	15	19	<1	8	3	25

RESULTS data for the period 1988 to 2008 indicates that lodgepole pine is the dominant species being regenerated in harvested stands. These data also indicate that hardwoods, principally aspen and birch are often common. Species suitability is currently somewhat limited in the SBSdw1 with pine, Douglas-fir and spruce being the principal species with aspen and birch also suitable on many sites.

% species composition of post-harvested stands [Source: RESULTS 1988-2008]

	PI	S	Fd	Bl	Hardwoods
% of harvested area	49	16	10	7	19

Author: R. Coupé (January 2012)

Notes:

- Black spruce is very uncommon in this variant and geographically limited to the northern half of the subzone (mostly north of the Quesnel River and is restricted to wetland sites)
- Western redcedar is occasionally present along the eastern edge of the variant in the transition to the ICH zone.

The very high mortality of pine as a result of the most recent mountain pine beetle outbreak in SBSdw1 landscape means that the current forest cover inventory is not up to date and no longer accurately reflects the area harvested and regeneration status. It is not possible at this time to properly characterize species composition over much of this subzone.