

# **Lakes South Sustainable Resource Management Plan**

## **Old Growth Forest Objective Amendment**

**April 2007**



**Integrated Land  
Management Bureau**



# Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

## Ministerial Order

### Lakes South

#### **ORDER TO AMEND OBJECTIVES 2 AND 3 (OLD GROWTH FOREST RETENTION OBJECTIVES)**

#### **LAKES SOUTH SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2003**

Pursuant to Section 93.4 (1) of the *Land Act*, objectives 2 and 3 listed in the Lakes South Sustainable Resource Management Plan, June 2003, are cancelled and replaced with the following objective. The objective applies to the area shown on the attached Map 1 dated March 20, 2007.

**Old Growth Forest Objective:**

**Manage for old growth forests by retaining Old Growth Management Areas (OGMAs), as identified on Map 1, and subject to the following:**

Timber harvesting and boundary adjustments are not allowed in OGMAs, except as necessary under a) or b) and only where these activities will not diminish the overall effectiveness of old forest conservation.

- a) Timber harvesting may be allowed for one or more of the following purposes, provided that a similar alternate area or areas is identified and reserved from harvesting in the same Landscape Unit/BEC variant unit as in the original OGMA, and provided that interior forest conditions are met:
  - i. New road development and maintenance where no practicable alternatives exist, and subject to these roads being deactivated once operational activities are complete; or
  - ii. To address a substantiated forest health factor within an OGMA, where this poses a significant and substantiated forest health risk to forests outside the OGMA and where harvesting constitutes an appropriate and effective control action; or,
  - iii. To address a public or industrial safety concern, or an environmental hazard where no practicable alternative exists.

- b) Boundary adjustments to the OGMAs may be allowed, provided that a similar alternate area or areas is identified and reserved from harvesting in the same Landscape Unit/BEC variant unit as in the original OGMA, and provided that interior forest conditions are met.

**Application of this order**

This order and the land use objective in this order take effect on the date that notice of this order is published in the Gazette.

Pursuant to section 16(2) of the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, the objectives amended by this order apply despite this subsection.

Pursuant to section 8(2) (b) of the *Forest and Range Practices Act* the holder of a Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP) must propose and submit for approval amendments to the FSP within four months of the date that the order takes effect.

Map 1 attached to this order provides the general geographic location to which the objective applies. The actual location of operational activities in the immediate vicinity of these boundaries may vary from the boundaries shown on the map in order to adjust for inaccuracies in the boundaries, or to reflect better information on the presence or absence of old growth values, provided that the overall intent of the objective is achieved.

Objectives for old growth may be amended in the future to incorporate new information arising from issues identified by the Implementation and Monitoring Committee, Morice and Lakes Innovative Forest Practices Agreement holders, monitoring results, Timber Supply Review or other relevant information.

**Original Signed by:**

**May 4, 2007**

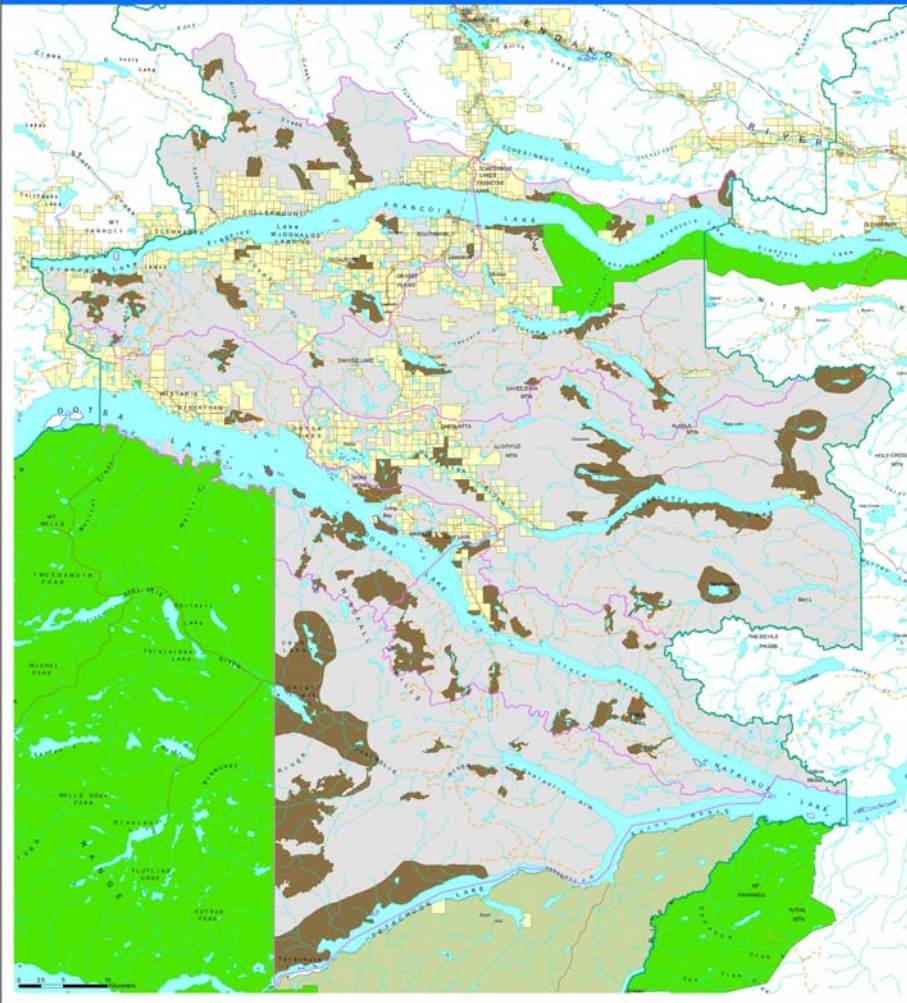
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Tom Kearns  
Regional Executive Director  
Northern Region  
Integrated Land Management Bureau  
Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

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Date

# Map1: Old Growth Management Areas - Lakes South SRMP



**LEGEND**

- Old Growth Management Area
- Provincial Park
- Protected Area
- Private Land, Indian Reserve or Woodlot
- Lakes South SRMP Area
- Lakes South Landscape Unit Boundary
- Lakes TSA Boundary

**Integrated Land Management Bureau**

**Lakes South SRMP OGMAs**

Produced by:  
**Regional Client Service - Smithers**

Prepared for: ALBERNADO  
 Date Created: March 26, 2007  
 Created by: shelmis  
 Filepath: W:\env\enr\Regional Planning Project\Lakesouth\_SRMP\work\Map\_Lakes\_South\_OGMAs\_Map07.mxd



Table 1. Lakes South OGMA Area Analysis (March 26, 2007)

Landscape Unit (biodiversity emphasis option)	BEC Variant	Crown Forested	Old age	Old target		Old establishment target)		OGMAs				Uncha Red Hills Park	
				%	Ha	%	Ha	Crown Forest in OGMAs		Old in OGMAs		Crown Forest	Old
								%of est. target	Ha.	%of est. target	Ha.	Ha.	Ha.
<b>FRANCOIS WEST</b>	SBS dk	25472	>140	11%	2802	75%	2101	177%	3711	96%	2020	0	0
Intermediate	SBS mc 2	21347	>140	11%	2348	75%	1761	144%	2529	106%	1870	0	0
	ESSF	3740	>250	9%	337	75%	252	149%	376	91%	230	0	0
<b>L.U. TOTAL</b>		<b>50559</b>			<b>5487</b>		<b>4115</b>	<b>161%</b>	<b>6616</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4120</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>FRANCOIS EAST</b>	SBS dk	45834	>140	11%	5042	50%	2521	122%	3076	80%	2014	6153	1561
Low	SBS mc 2	12321	>140	11%	1355	50%	678	54%	366	48%	327	828	194
	ESSF	3982	>250	9%	358	50%	179	0%	0	0%	0	1028	0
<b>L.U. TOTAL</b>		<b>62137</b>			<b>6755</b>		<b>3378</b>	<b>102%</b>	<b>3442</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>2341</b>	<b>8009</b>	<b>1755</b>
<b>CHESLATTA</b>	ESSF	8653	>250	9%	779	75%	584	208%	1212	0%	0	0	0
Intermediate	SBS mc 2	35435	>140	11%	3898	75%	2923	129%	3771	63%	1848	0	0
	SBS dk	48434	>140	9%	4359	75%	3269	203%	6652	114%	3733	0	0
<b>L.U. TOTAL</b>		<b>92522</b>			<b>9036</b>		<b>6777</b>	<b>172%</b>	<b>11635</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>5581</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>OOTSA NORTH</b>	SBS mc 2	5378	>140	11%	592	75%	444	120%	532	101%	447	0	0
Intermediate	SBS dk	11020	>140	11%	1212	75%	909	161%	1460	92%	837	0	0
<b>LU TOTAL</b>		<b>16398</b>			<b>1804</b>		<b>1353</b>	<b>147%</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>1284</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>OOTSA CMZ</b>													
(E)	LOW (E)	11093	>140	20%	2219	50%	1109	287%	3189	91%	1011	0	0
<b>L.U. TOTAL</b>		<b>11093</b>			<b>2219</b>		<b>1109</b>	<b>287%</b>	<b>3189</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>1011</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>INTATA NORTH</b>	SBS dk	13205	>140	11%	1453	75%	1089	83%	906	32%	351	0	0
Intermediate	SBS mc 2	5597	>140	11%	616	75%	462	162%	747	113%	523	0	0
	ESSF	386	>250	9%	35	75%	26	38%	10	0%	0	0	0
<b>LU TOTAL</b>		<b>19188</b>			<b>2103</b>		<b>1577</b>	<b>105%</b>	<b>1663</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>874</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>INTATA CMZ</b>													
(E)	LOW (E)	25313	>140	20%	5063	50%	2531	162%	4099	68%	1730	0	0
<b>L.U. TOTAL</b>		<b>25313</b>			<b>5063</b>		<b>4109</b>	<b>140%</b>	<b>5762</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>2604</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>CHELASLIE CMZ</b>	HIGH (B,C,D)	59871	>140	40%	23948	75%	17961	114%	20506	47%	8461	0	0
	MODERATE (A)	21307	>140	30%	6392	20%	1278	31%	397	16%	207	0	0
	LOW (E)	9944	>140	20%	1989	30%	597	13%	75	12%	74	0	0
<b>L.U. TOTAL</b>		<b>91122</b>			<b>32329</b>		<b>19836</b>	<b>106%</b>	<b>20978</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>8742</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>368332</b>			<b>64795</b>		<b>42254</b>	<b>131%</b>	<b>55277</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>26557</b>	<b>8009</b>	<b>1755</b>

THLB in OGMAs		Old THLB in OGMAs	
%of est. target	Ha.	%of est. target	Ha.
129%	2709	79%	1669
121%	2125	89%	1573
118%	299	62%	157
125%	5133	83%	3399
87%	2199	59%	1484
50%	338	45%	303
0%	0	0%	0
75%	2537	53%	1787
0%	0	0%	0
56%	1636	15%	434
39%	1289	18%	576
43%	2925	15%	1010
107%	474	89%	395
97%	878	72%	651
100%	1352	77%	1046
162%	1794	81%	895
162%	1794	81%	895
52%	568	25%	277
135%	622	93%	429
0%	0	0%	0
75%	1190	45%	706
128%	3230	55%	1390
79%	3230	34%	1390
80%	14383	37%	6718
26%	331	14%	174
1%	7	1%	5
74%	14721	35%	6897
78%	32882	41%	17130





## Strategies

- 1) Ensure that over time, the old forest establishment target for each LU/BEC variant unit as noted in Table 1 is achieved;
- 2) Within OGMA's the following activities will be allowed:
  - First Nations traditional uses;
  - cone gathering and tree topping;
  - fire suppression;
  - existing grazing leases;
  - hunting, fishing, trapping;
  - commercial or non-commercial recreational use;
  - subsurface resource uses, including exploration for and development of oil and gas, mineral, and aggregate resources, and including incidental tree cutting for these purposes;
  - harvesting and collecting botanical forest products;
  - any other use for which an existing lease or licence has been issued under the *Land Act*.

Persons engaged in these uses are encouraged to avoid or minimize disturbance to OGMA's. Disturbance within OGMA's that occur as a result of these uses will be assessed on a landscape unit basis.

- 3) Within OGMA's, boundary adjustments will be allowed in order to:
  - adjust for mapping errors so that the functional boundaries of the OGMA better reflect the physical features (i.e. streams) intended as the boundaries;
  - improve harvest boundary alignment in a way that will contribute to the maintenance of the OGMA;
  - shift the location of the contiguous area of the OGMA to improve the retention of old forest attributes as identified through field assessment;
- 4) Allow natural processes (i.e. fire, insects, disease) to occur within OGMA's except where those processes threaten values within or outside the OGMA's. Aim at retaining structural features of old growth where intervention is required (see Figure 1 Decision Matrix for Harvesting in OGMA's, Lakes South Sustainable Resource Management Plan, June 2003). Note that the DM no longer has authority to decide which option will be used for the OGMA. That responsibility now lies with the Integrated Land Management Bureau;
- 5) OGMA's will be periodically reviewed. If they are severely compromised due to exploration or mining activities, natural processes or other allowable uses, ILMB may modify or replace them through a legal order amendment. Note that forest stands within OGMA's that have been impacted by mountain pine beetles may still contribute to old seral targets;
- 6) The extent and location of the disturbance in OGMA's and of the alternative area or areas reserved from harvesting should be reported in a digital format to the Integrated Land Management Bureau annually.

## **Background**

The Lakes South Sustainable Resource Management Plan (SRMP), June 2003 outlines objectives and strategies for resource management which include the management of representative old growth forests. Candidate old growth management areas (COGMAs) were identified and agreed to as part of the SRMP process, but were not legally established. This was done in order to allow forest licensees flexibility with regards to harvesting and road building activities in response to a mountain pine beetle infestation. Since the beetle infestation has now reached its peak in much of the SRMP area, and will soon reach its peak across the entire Lakes South area, the Integrated Land Management Bureau (ILMB) is legally designating the OGMAs, and as such, is cancelling objectives 2 and 3, and replacing them with a new objective.

An assessment of the candidate OGMAs was completed to:

- Determine whether timber harvesting activities had occurred within them;
- Determine whether timber harvesting had compromised the biodiversity values in affected OGMAs; and,
- Update the OGMA spatial coverage to reflect changes proposed by the forest industry or government agencies.

From this assessment, amendments were made to the candidate OGMAs, and are reflected in Map 1: Old Growth Management Areas – Lakes South SRMP. Table 1 provides summary statistics for the OGMAs shown on Map 1. It is important to recognize that the OGMAs reflect a package deal. There may be some instances where better areas could have been proposed as OGMAs, but were not selected due to the careful balancing of social, environmental and economic factors. To address the fact that the old forest establishment targets could not be met in all landscape units, the overall area of OGMAs was increased to allow the younger forest stands to grow into old growth over time (recruitment).

This assessment process was managed by ILMB through a partnership with the Morice and Lakes Innovative Forest Practices Agreement licensees, and in consultation with Cheslatta Forest Products, the Ministry of Forests and Range, and the Ministry of Environment.

## **Old Growth Forest Retention through OGMA Establishment**

Old Growth Management Areas (OGMAs) are identified primarily for the purposes of retaining or restoring the ecological attributes associated with old forest, and maintaining areas that are subject to natural forest succession. They may also contribute to the retention of other features important for biodiversity or other values. OGMAs function to provide reserves for old growth forest-dependent species across the landscape. The areas were selected to meet old seral criteria over time, while minimizing impacts on timber supply.

The goal of the old growth forest objective is to manage for the retention of areas that are appropriately sized, contain, or can recruit specific structural old growth forest attributes, and represent the range of ecosystem types found across the Lakes South planning area. Limited operations within them are allowed to provide flexibility and minor improvements of locations, while assuring that the overall effectiveness of old forest conservation in the area is not diminished.

It is important to note that where other objectives overlap with Old Growth Management Areas, those objectives continue to apply.

The old growth forest objective in this document takes direction from the Lakes District Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP). Specifically, Objective 43 from the LRMP states, “Maintain biodiversity at the ecosystem, species, and genetic levels through the application of ecosystem management principles”. Relevant management strategies state:

- 43.7 Develop and implement an old growth management strategy which establishes, throughout the district, Old Growth Management Areas (OGMAs) dominated by old tree cover and containing most of the structure, function, microclimatic conditions and biota associated with old forest, including interior forest conditions. Within OGMAs, maintain old growth and interior forest conditions, and provide a representative cross-section of ecosystem types occurring in the District.
- 43.8 Generally, the old growth management strategy will take advantage of existing old forest within special resource management areas, habitat linkages, riparian and lakeshore reserves, and forest harvesting land base exclusions. Where sufficient old forest is not available, OGMAs may be recruited from other age-class and/or resource management categories.

In the event that there are future planning processes, the existing legal objectives will be re-examined to ensure the overall socio-economic balance anticipated by the Lakes District Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), or a subsequent process, is maintained.

The old forest establishment targets in Table 1 specify the proportion of the old seral target that must be met in spatial OGMAs. These establishment targets were identified by the expert panel involved in the original Lakes South SRMP process. The targets were modified from those found in the Biodiversity Guidebook by the expert panel so that they could be met both spatially and aspatially across the land base, and to recognize the contribution to biodiversity from wildlife tree patches and riparian zones.

## **Primary Roles and Responsibilities of Agencies**

### Ministry of Forests and Range (MoFR)

- MoFR will undertake tenure administration and compliance and enforcement consistent with legal OGMA objectives.
- MoFR forest health specialist will provide advice on the forest health risks associated with infestations in OGMAs as a basis for determining whether an OGMA amendment to permit sanitation harvesting is warranted.
- MoFR will provide responses to referrals regarding changes to approved OGMAs.

### Ministry of Environment (MoE)

- MoE will oversee government-wide strategies and initiatives for biodiversity management, including overall effectiveness monitoring in relation to that strategy.

### Ministry of Agriculture and Lands - Integrated Land Management Bureau (ILMB)

- ILMB is responsible for identifying, establishing, monitoring, and amending OGMAs as required.