

File: 18830-00/Mid-term Timber Supply Guidance

AUG 25 2006

To: MOFR Regional Executive Directors
MOFR District Managers
MOFR HQ Branch Directors
BC Timber Sales Managers
MOE Regional Managers
Rod Davis, Director of Biodiversity Branch, MOE
Doug Routledge & Archie McDonald, COFI
Brian McNaughton, Federation of BC Woodlot Association

From: Jim Snetsinger, Chief Forester



Re: Interim research report on the "Abundance of Secondary Structure in Lodgepole Pine stands affected by the Mountain Pine Beetle"

Attached please find the document *Abundance of Secondary Structure in Lodgepole Pine Stands Affected by the Mountain Pine Beetle* by K.D. Coates, C. DeLong, P.J. Burton and D.L. Sachs.

The purpose of the attached document is to raise the level of awareness of our ability to affect mid-term timber supply through harvesting practices. In the context of mountain pine beetle harvesting, the mid-term is generally defined as the time from when the accelerated AAC is adjusted downward from the present uplifts. One strategy for mitigating mid-term timber supply in forests affected by the pine beetle is the protection of attacked pine stands that currently have sufficient secondary structure to potentially make them viable for harvest in the mid-term. Secondary structure in pine beetle damaged stands are canopy and sub canopy trees expected to survive the attack along with seedlings, and saplings.

I requested that the above-referenced report be prepared on this issue and although it is an interim report, the recommendations are worthy of consideration in planning harvesting operations. This report and my previous guidance on structural retention in MPB salvage areas is part of a broader strategy to develop mitigation plans to minimize pine losses while minimizing declines in mid-term timber supply to help maintain a healthy forest industry.

The interim report provides information on the abundance of secondary structure in lodgepole pine-leading stands types (greater than 50% pine overstory) within Sub-Boreal Spruce biogeoclimatic units of three north central interior Forest Districts: Nadina, Vanderhoof and Prince George. In the future we hope to expand this analysis to other ecological units and Forest Districts affected by the pine beetle epidemic.

In the attached document you will find:

- the proportion of pine-leading stands that have sufficient secondary structure now to reasonably expect a mid-term harvest opportunity in the future; and
- projected future volumes of stands with good secondary structure when left to recover naturally after a beetle attack;
- information on the density of seedlings and saplings and the basal area of secondary structure currently found in pine-leading stand types across north central B.C.;
- information on how secondary structure varies across biogeoclimatic units of the Sub-Boreal Spruce zone in north central BC;

My purpose in providing this report is to share information with other forest professionals on how we might mitigate mid-term timber supplies by prioritizing harvest activities based on the abundance and acceptability of secondary structure.

I recommend that forest professionals consider the following strategies which are outlined in the report:

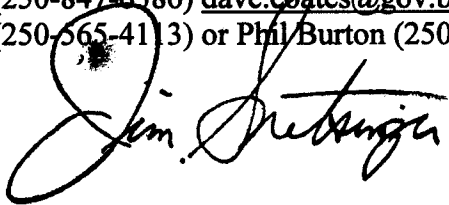
- direct as much harvest as possible into high risk pine stands that are under attack and have poor secondary structure; and
- retain or carefully partial salvage attacked stands that have sufficient secondary structure that makes them viable in the mid-term.

In addition to expanding this work to other affected areas, there are three other issues that require further study in order to assess how effective a strategy of retaining secondary structure will be for mitigating mid-term timber supply in beetle affected areas: 1) how to effectively predict the location of stands with secondary structure, 2) to determine the minimum threshold of secondary structure needed to reasonably have a mid-term harvest opportunity and 3) to project future growth rates of stands with varying abundances of secondary structure. We hope to address these issues and to undertake stand- and landscape-scale modelling to examine how different harvesting practices will affect mid-term timber supply.

MOFR Regional Executive Directors

This document is posted on the Ministry of Forests and Range - Forest Practices Branch website. http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/mountain_pine_beetle/stewardship/

Questions or comments concerning this document should be address to Dave Coates (250-847-6386) dave.coates@gov.bc.ca, Craig DeLong craig.delong@gov.bc.ca (250-565-4113) or Phil Burton (250 960-6130) pburton@nrcan.gc.ca

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Snetsinger". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jim Snetsinger
Chief Forester

Attachment

cc: Tim Sheldon ADM Operations Division
Dave Peterson ADM BC Timber Sales
Van Schofield, Executive Director, ABCFP
Linda Michaluk, Executive Director, Applied Biology