

Implementation Policy

This policy provides guidance for the implementation of the provincial order for non-spatial old growth objectives.

1. Definitions

In this policy

“**Minister**” means the Minister of Sustainable Resource Management,

“**Order**” means the Order Establishing Provincial Non-Spatial Old Growth Objectives, and

“**Landscape Unit Planning Guide**” (“LUPG”) means the document entitled Landscape Unit Planning Guide and dated March, 1999.

2. General

- a) Old forest retention objectives should be achieved by following the relevant procedures in the Landscape Unit Planning Guide (LUPG).
- b) Old forest retention objectives in the Order apply to all Crown land in a landscape unit, and to private land in a tree farm licence. In accordance with the direction in the LUPG, old forest retention objectives do not apply to woodlot licenses. See pages 13-26 of the LUPG for a detailed discussion on how to prepare the data set for the purposes of applying the old forest retention objectives.
- c) Implementation of the Order should be informed by the best available technical and science-based information, with new information being utilized as soon as practicable.
- d) Biogeoclimatic information used for the purposes of the Order must be endorsed by the Regional Director of SRM.

3. Potential reduction of old forest retention in low biodiversity emphasis areas

As outlined in provision A5 in the Order, old forest retention may be reduced by up to 2/3 in landscape units with low biodiversity emphasis (referred to in the LUPG as “drawn down by 2/3”) to the extent necessary to address timber supply impacts.

As indicated in the LUPG, the old forest retention percentages shown in Tables 1-4 of the Order will be reduced to 1/3 in all landscape units with low biodiversity emphasis, except where a timber supply analysis carried out in association with the Timber Supply Review process has determined that conserving more than 1/3 will not cause timber supply impacts.

4. Recruitment

- a) Recruitment strategies must reflect the strategies outlined in the LUPG or in land use plans approved by the Minister of SRM or designate.
- b) In intermediate and high emphasis landscape units, the intent is to capture the entire old forest objective immediately. However, where old forest retention objectives cannot be met immediately in these units due to:

- insufficient amounts of old forest; or
- forest health or catastrophic events

a recruitment strategy must be prepared to recruit the full objective amount of old forest in the shortest possible timeframe, consistent with the objectives set out in the Order and strategies outlined in the LUPG.

- c) Where, under provision A5 in the Order, a reduction (i.e., “draw down”) in the percent old forest retention has occurred, it is recommended that a strategy be developed as soon as reasonably possible, and that the strategy ensure the full objective amount of old forest is in place consistent with the objectives set out in the Order and the strategies and timeframes for low biodiversity emphasis outlined in the LUPG.
- d) An alternative strategy for recruitment than that outlined in the LUPG in low intermediate and high may be proposed provided the strategy:
 - maintains or improves benefits for old forest conservation;
 - is endorsed by, or reflects any specific policy direction of, the Minister or delegate; and
 - it can be shown that the intent of b) or c) would be better met.

5. Use of younger forests to meet old forest objectives

- a) For the purposes of provision A6 of the Order, in intermediate and high emphasis areas younger age classes (preferably age classes 6, 7 and 8 but potentially younger) may be used to comprise the old forest objective. Where younger age classes are substituted it must be demonstrated that the younger stands are of equal or better conservation value.
- b) The policy outlined in 5(a) will not apply to low biodiversity emphasis landscape units that have been drawn down by 2/3. In such cases the remaining 1/3 old forest must be retained with no opportunity for substituting younger stands¹.

6. Draft old growth management areas

Where the Minister or delegate has identified or approved draft old growth management areas (OGMAs) under provision A8 of the Order, the draft OGMAs should be considered in, and submitted with, any forest development plan or forest stewardship plan.

¹ This clause does not apply to Okanagan and Merritt areas.