



MATERIAL SUPPORTING THE NOTICE, BUT NOT PART OF THE NOTICE.

**INFORMATION CONCERNING WILDLIFE HABITAT FOR THE SURVIVAL
OF SPECIES AT RISK IN THE SKEENA STIKINE FOREST DISTRICT**

This document is intended to provide background information and support to the legal framework of the Notice of indicators of the amount, distribution and attributes of wildlife habitat required for the survival of species at risk in the Skeena Stikine Forest District. This document is not part of the legal Notice. Its purpose is to provide additional information for consideration by delegated decision makers and by those persons required to prepare results and strategies consistent with section 7(1) of the Forest Planning and Practices Regulation or act in a manner consistent with section 9(3) of the *Woodlot Licence Planning and Practices Regulation*.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The 1% impact budget associated with the Identified Wildlife Management Strategy is directed at the short-term timber supply. For the purpose of this Notice the short-term timber supply budget represents the total mature timber harvesting land base (THLB) in age classes older than 80 years. Within the Skeena Stikine Forest District the short-term timber supply budget is equal to 6,565 ha. Current to August 1, 2004, there are no approved wildlife habitat areas (WHAs) in the forest district. Therefore, the remaining available budget is 6,565 ha. Table 1 summarizes the amount of area included in the Notice as well as the amount of area in approved WHAs and their respective impacts to the mature THLB.

The Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection has retained 6,215 ha of the 1% mature THLB impact budget for future wildlife habitat areas for Regionally Important Wildlife, plant communities and species, or new additions to the Identified Wildlife Management Strategy

The Skeena Stikine Forest District has little or no inventory on: Coastal Tailed Frog, Marbled Murrelet, Great Blue Heron, Sandhill Crane, Bull Trout or other red and blue-listed species and plant communities. The lack of data, have resulted in the lower priority species not having an amount included in the notice.

Indicators of amount, distribution and attributes included in the Notice are based on existing data, current knowledge of species distribution, inventory efforts, and species biology, including territory size and intraspecific competition. In many cases, comprehensive inventories have not been completed. Where inventory work or suitability mapping generates a different number of known occurrences and suitable habitat, the Notice may be amended to reflect a greater number of anticipated wildlife

habitat areas. Any amendment to the Notice will be consistent with the policy direction on timber supply impacts.

Information contained in the Notice is in addition to any direction for species at risk contained in the Kispiox LRMP Higher Level Plan order.

Species accounts for each of the species mentioned in the Notice can be obtained from the Identified Wildlife Management Strategy website:

http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wld/identified/iwms2004_index.htm

Table 1. Summary of mature THLB impacts for amounts included in the Notice and approved WHAs in the Skeena Stikine Forest District.

Species	Total Area (ha)	Estimated Mature THLB (ha)	Percent of 1% District Budget
Amounts in Notice			
Marbled Murrelet	Unknown*	350.0	5.3
Subtotal		350.0	5.3
No Approved Wildlife Habitat Areas			
Total		350.0	5.3

* The total for Marbled Murrelet does not include the amount of habitat in the non contributing landbase.

** The amount for Grizzly Bear was accounted for through TSR and therefore does not count against the 1% budget and is not shown in Table 1.

Figures and spatial information (shapefiles) to support the amount and distribution statements for species included in the Notices are included in the folders titled “Figures” and “Spatial Data” on the following ftp site:

ftp://ribftp.env.gov.bc.ca/pub/outgoing/cdc_data/Approved_FRPR_sec7_WLPPR_sec9/Notices_and_Supporting_Info/Species_at_Risk/Skeena_Stikine_FD/Supporting_Info/

Inclusion of draft and proposed Wildlife Habitat Area boundaries in the supporting information does not prejudice the review and comment that may be ongoing around these Wildlife Habitat Areas. Where Wildlife Habitat Areas have not been through the full review and comment process, MWLAP will continue to work with affected parties to address the Wildlife Habitat Area boundaries.

The following section is intended to clarify the amount, distribution and attribute statements in the legal Notice.

1) Marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*)

Amount:

The *Marbled Murrelet Letter of Clarification* outlines current policy for the management of Marbled Murrelet nesting habitat; establishment of Old Growth Management Areas, the available portion of the district 1% budget and the non-contributing landbase.

The Notice identifies 350 ha of mature timber harvesting landbase impact that is to be used to manage suitable nesting habitat. It is anticipated that this amount will address the timber supply impacts of 2 future wildlife habitat areas within the Skeena Stikine portion of the Northern Mainland Coast Marbled Murrelet Conservation Region, as well as compliment high quality smaller patches within the non-contributing landbase to provide high quality large polygons.

It is intended that suitable marbled Murrelet nesting habitat within the non-contributing landbase will be identified as per the Marbled Murrelet account in the Identified Wildlife Management Strategy. A model has been developed with the support of the Marbled Murrelet Recovery Team to identify potential suitable Marbled Murrelet nesting habitat at a coarse scale for the entire coast. Work is currently underway to field verify the model and test it's accuracy in different Marbled Murrelet Conservation Regions. This model serves as a useful tool for identifying potential habitat at a coarse scale, but should not be used to identify individual habitat polygons at an operational scale. Air-photo interpretation followed by aerial flight overviews continue to be the best methods for identifying suitable Marbled Murrelet nesting habitat. Additional models are being developed at a local scale to serve as more accurate predictors of suitable nesting habitat. Contact the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection for more information.

Landscape Unit Planning has not been completed for many of the Landscape Units within the Skeena Stikine Forest District. It is intended that forest tenure holders will work to identify old growth management areas that overlap suitable Marbled Murrelet nesting habitat consistent with the Landscape Unit Planning Guidelines and Marbled Murrelet habitat requirements outlined in the species account for Marbled Murrelet in the *Accounts and Measures for Managing Identified Wildlife* (Identified Wildlife Management Strategy Version 2004).

Distribution:

Figure 2 shows potential suitable nesting habitat as determined by the Marbled Murrelet Recovery Team habitat algorithm mapping, it should also be used as a source of information to identify distribution of suitable nesting habitat. More detailed region specific marbled murrelet habitat mapping can be obtained from the MWLAP Environmental Stewardship Division Smithers.

2) Grizzly Bear (*Ursus arctos*)

Amount:

The amount included for Grizzly Bear is based on habitat management requirements for Grizzly Bear from the Cassiar TSA and Cranberry TSA TSR 1/2 documents.

Areas of habitat defined for the Cassiar TSA (TSR2) — 2001

Species	Area (ha)	Forest (ha)	THLB (ha)	Non-Crown forest (ha)
Griz & Goat CWH	8 336	8 178	6	0
Griz Goat Moose ICH	8 127	8 068	1 693	0

Areas of habitat defined for the Cranberry TSA (TSR1) — 1997

Species	Old Forest	Green Up	Total Area (ha)	Forest Area (ha)	Non-THLB (ha)	THLB (ha)
Grizzly	Yes	No	2117	1198	1198	0
Grizzly	Yes	Yes	3643	3467	682	2785
Grizzly total			5759	4665	1880	2785

Attributes:

Cassiar TSA:

Forest cover constraint attributes are based on forest cover requirements for Grizzly Bear as per TSR 2 for the Cassiar TSA.

Forest cover requirements applied to habitat zones in the Cassiar TSA (TSR2) — 2001 (copies Table A-11, page 88 of the report)

Resource emphasis (landscape unit if applicable)	Maximum allowable disturbance (% area)	Green-up height (metres)	Green-up age (years)	Minimum retained area (%)	Minimum age for retention (years)
Grizzly bear and goat in CWH (GCWH)	20	3	24.0	30	250
Grizzly bear, goat and moose in ICH (GGMI)	25	3	20.7	30	250

Cranberry TSA:

Forest cover constraint attributes are based on forest cover requirements for Grizzly Bear foraging zone as per TSR 1 for the Cranberry TSA. This zone encompasses high value spring, summer and fall foraging habitat that is likely to be effected by forest management. Meeting nutritional requirements is the primary factor in habitat choice. Bears are highly mobile and are able to move great distances in short periods of time to utilise different food resources.

Key foraging habitats for grizzly bears are:

Spring. Low elevation/southerly aspects with early green up of forbs and grasses and the presence of ungulates (moose);

Summer. Cooler aspects/higher elevations with forbs, grasses and wetlands, (alpine and subalpine), early and mid summer berry crops (floodplains and deciduous);

Late summer/fall. berry crops and salmon runs. Berry crops tend to be in mid to high elevation burns and young to mid successional forests. The presence of security and thermal cover (dense conifer) near feeding areas is important.

Forest cover requirements for wildlife – Cranberry TSA, TSR1 (1997)

Zone	Green-up age (years)	Maximum per cent area younger than green-up age	Old-age forest (years)	Minimum per cent of area covered by old-age forest
Grizzly bear	20	30	100	10

Distribution:

Cassiar TSA

Spatial information not currently available

Cranberry TSA

Figure 1 shows the Grizzly Bear Foraging Zone over which the forest cover requirements were applied in TSR 1.

Future intent / additional information:

Grizzly Bear suitability mapping and complex zonation polygons have been produced for the Cranberry TSA. This is considered the best available information outlining grizzly bear habitat in the TSA. Two reports outlining this work are available on the ftp site.

They are titled:

- Kispiox PHM report v1b.doc
- Grizzly Habitat Complexes-Kispiox v2.doc

Both contain information for the Cranberry and Kispiox TSAs. MWLAP intends to proceed in the future with WHA establishment within policy limits consistent with this updated mapping.

3) Coastal Tailed Frog (*Ascaphus truei*)

Amount:

An amount for Tailed frog has not been included in the Notice. Tailed frogs are known to occur in the Forest District however inventory is poor outside of the Kispiox TSA and no spatial locations of tailed frog streams that would serve as future WHAs are known.

4) Northern Caribou (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*)

Amount:

An amount for Northern Caribou has not been included in the Notice. Mapping of calving, rutting and migration areas has not been completed.