



**NOTICE – INDICATORS OF THE AMOUNT, DISTRIBUTION AND ATTRIBUTES OF WILDLIFE HABITAT REQUIRED FOR THE WINTER SURVIVAL OF UNGULATE SPECIES IN THE FORT NELSON TIMBER SUPPLY AREA**

This notice is given under the authority of section 7(2) of the *Forest Planning and Practices Regulation* (B.C. Reg. 14/04) and 9(3) of the *Woodlot Planning and Practices Regulation* (B.C. Reg. 21/04).

The following notice includes indicators of the amount, distribution and attributes of wildlife habitat required for the winter survival of the ungulate species outlined in Schedule 1.

This notice applies as specified within the Fort Nelson Timber Supply Area, excluding the Muskwa Kechika Management Area.

Schedule 1

**Fort Nelson Timber Supply Area**

**Ungulate Species:**

Rocky Mountain elk, Mountain goat, Stone's sheep, Boreal caribou, Northern caribou, and Moose

**Amount:**

A maximum of 248, 852 ha, not exceeding an impact to the timber harvesting landbase of:

- 813 ha for Rocky Mountain elk;
- 407 ha for Mountain goat and Stone's sheep;
- 407 ha for Boreal caribou;
- 1626 ha for Northern caribou; and
- 813 ha for Moose.

**Distribution:**

The amount of habitat referenced above must be distributed to provide:

- winter ranges for Mountain goat, Stone's sheep, and elk within the following Resource Management Zones (RMZs):
  - Muskwa River Corridor 28, Tenaka 9, Dunedin 6
- winter ranges for boreal caribou ecotype within the following RMZs:
  - Etsho 2, Klua 4
  - Petitot/Hay Rivers Corridors 12, River Corridors East 13
- winter ranges for northern caribou ecotype within the following RMZs:

Muskwa River Corridor 28, Caribou 5, Smith River Uplands 8

- winter ranges for moose within the following RMZs:
  - Beaver River Corridor 10, Liard River North Corridor 11, Petitot Hay River Corridors 12, River Corridors East 13, Smith Coal Rivers Corridor 14, Muskwa River Corridor 28
  - riparian areas within all other RMZs outside of the Muskwa Kechika Management Area and Parks and Protected Areas

**Attributes:**

**I) Rocky Mountain Elk**

- 1) Critical stand structure features: early seral foraging habitat interspersed with suitable security cover (e.g. dense forests with well developed shrub layer).
- 2) Topographic features: warm aspect (135° to 284°) slopes; valley bottom to mountain tops dependent on snow pack.
- 3) Winter forage species: graminoids; forbs; and to a lesser extent shrubs (preferred species include willow spp., prairie sage, Saskatoon, red-osier dogwood, water birch, dwarf birch, low-bush cranberry, prickly rose, high-bush cranberry, soopolallie, and aspen).
- 4) Foraging habitat: warm aspects; open, grassy slopes; early seral vegetation communities dominated by preferred winter foraging species; prescribed burn areas.
- 5) Thermal/escape cover: vegetative or topographic features (e.g. warm aspect slopes) coniferous stands >3 m tall and 100m wide; or structurally complex forest stands with high canopy closure (>70%); size range of 2.6 – 10.5 ha; structural stages 5, 6 and 7 in BWBS for security cover.

**II) Mountain Goat**

- 1) Topographic features: rock outcrops or cliffs that provide good visibility for vigilant goats and are sufficiently rugged to be generally inaccessible to predators; slopes >100% (preferred); feeding goats within 50 m of escape terrain; all goats within 400 m of escape terrain.
- 2) Winter forage species: graminoids; forbs; lichen; and conifers.
- 3) Foraging habitat: wind-swept ridges, steep cliffs and high elevation, open forests; herbaceous communities to low shrub communities within approximately 50 m of escape terrain; south to west facing slopes between 16° to 60°; low snow depth essential (< 45 cm).

- 4) Snow interception cover: open, mature coniferous habitats below tree line; caves overhanging ledges and the sheltered side of cliffs.

### **III) Stone's Sheep**

- 1) Topographic features: low- to high elevation (900 m to 2000 m); alpine ridges and mountains; Alpine Tundra; steep (>70% to >100 %) south to west-facing slopes; rugged terrain with windswept, vegetated slopes interspersed with rocky outcrops or cliffs.
- 2) Winter forage species: optimal plant communities include *Elymus-Agrpyron/Festuca* and *Dryas-Festuca*.
- 3) Foraging habitat: vegetated, windswept south to west-facing slopes interspersed with rocky outcrops/cliffs; foraging habitat bordered by parkland forests of Engelmann spruce and sub-alpine fir; all sheep within 500 m of escape terrain.

### **IV) Boreal Caribou**

- 1) Critical stand structure features: primarily in non-commercial large peatlands/muskegs (black spruce leading stands); limited use of commercial forest types.
- 2) Topographic features: low elevation (< 1,000 m); flat to rolling terrain.
- 3) Forage species: Terrestrial lichens; arboreal lichens to a lesser extent.
- 4) Foraging habitat: large peatlands/muskegs.

### **V) Northern Caribou**

- 1) Topographic features: low to high elevation (from approximately 500 m to >1,500 m); flat/gently sloping valley bottoms to steep sub-alpine/alpine habitat.
- 2) Forage species: terrestrial lichens (alpine habitat and low elevation forests) and sedges; arboreal lichens (sub-alpine habitat)
- 3) Foraging habitat: windswept snow-free areas in alpine; sub-alpine parkland (fir); sub-alpine forest (spruce/fir); valley bottom forest (pine).

### **VI) Moose**

- 1) Critical stand structure features: semi-open successional stages of forest habitat with an abundance of browse; preference for sub-climax stages of forest succession dominated by deciduous trees and shrubs (structural stages 3, 6 and 7).
- 2) Topographic features: early winter - low elevation valley bottoms (< 900 m) to high elevation sub-alpine/alpine (>1500 m) depending on snow pack; late winter – low

elevation (< 900 m) valley bottoms; flat to moderately sloped terrain (< 40%) moose move to lower elevations once snow depths exceed 40 cm; snow depths > 70 cm can restrict movement.

- 3) Forage species: shrubs (preferred species include willow spp., paper birch, red-osier dogwood, aspen); graminoids and forbs where available.
- 4) Foraging habitat: floodplains/riparian habitat; regenerating burns; cut blocks; other areas with abundant preferred browse.
- 5) Thermal/escape cover: dense patches of coniferous cover interspersed with foraging habitat; or young coniferous stands that allow solar radiation but cut the wind.