



**NOTICE – INDICATORS OF THE AMOUNT, DISTRIBUTION AND ATTRIBUTES OF WILDLIFE HABITAT REQUIRED FOR THE WINTER SURVIVAL OF UNGULATE SPECIES IN THE FORT ST. JOHN 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 St. John Timber Supply Area, excluding the Muskwa Kechika Management Area, and those persons working under the Fort St. John Pilot Regulation.

Schedule 1

**Fort St. John Timber Supply Area**

**Ungulate Species:**

Rocky Mountain elk, Mule deer, Mountain goat, Boreal caribou, Northern Caribou.

**Amount:**

1) Rocky Mountain elk, Mule deer, Mountain goat, northern caribou (Graham and Pink Mountain herds), and boreal caribou

A maximum of 54268 ha, not exceeding an impact to the timber harvesting landbase of:

- 3126 ha for Rocky Mountain Elk;
- 2083 ha for Mule deer;
- 4168 ha for Mountain Goat;
- 8336 ha for northern caribou
- 3126 ha for boreal caribou

**Distribution:**

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

- winter ranges for elk within the following RMZs:
  - i. Major River Corridors (Beaton R., Halfway R., Lower Graham R.)
  - ii. Special Management (Peace River Corridor, Crying Girl)
  - iii. Agriculture/Settlement
  - iv. Enhanced Resource Development (Aikman/Deadhorse, Upper Cameron)

- v. General Management (Farrell Creek)
- winter ranges for Mule deer within the following RMZs:
  - i. Major River Corridors (Beaton R., Halfway R.)
  - ii. Special Management (Peace River Corridor)
- winter ranges for Mountain goat within the following RMZ's:
  - i. Special Management (Sikanni Chief R.)
  - ii. Major River Corridors (Buckinghorse R., Sikanni Chief R.)
  - iii. General Management (Trutch, Jedney)
- winter ranges for the northern caribou ecotype (Graham and Pink Mountain herds) within the following RMZ's:
  - i. Special Management (Graham South, Crying Girl)
  - ii. Major River Corridors (Lower Graham R., Sikanni R., Buckinghorse R.)
  - iii. Enhanced Resource Management (Kobes)
  - iv. General Management (Bluegrave – Horseshoe, Two-Bit, Grassy - Minaker)
- winter ranges for boreal caribou ecotype within the following RMZ's:
  - i. General Management (Chinchaga, Jedney, Osborn)

#### **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 layers) and thermal cover (coniferous forest stands).
- 2) Topographic features: warm aspect (135° to 284°) slopes of 15° to 45° (Class 1) or 45° to 70° (Class 2); low elevations (< 1000 m) for Class 1 habitat; mid- to high elevations (<2000 m) for Class 2 habitat.
- 3) Winter forage species: graminoids; forbs; shrubs (preferred species include willow spp., pasture sage, Saskatoon, prickly rose, high-bush cranberry, soopolallie); and conifers, mosses and lichens to a lesser extent.
- 4) Foraging habitat: warm aspects; prescribed burn areas; open, grassy slopes; early seral vegetation communities dominated by preferred winter foraging species.
- 5) Snow interception cover: coniferous stands at least 10 m in height with a canopy closure 60-90%

- 6) 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) Mule Deer**

- 1) Critical stand structure features: early seral foraging habitat interspersed with deciduous leading to coniferous leading forests.
- 2) Topographic features: moderate to steep warm aspect (135° to 284°) slopes (40-100%); low elevation (<1000m).
- 3) Winter forage species: trees and shrubs (preferred browse species include aspen, willows, Saskatoon, red-osier dogwood, choke cherry, bearberry, dwarf birch, rose, juniper and snowberry); graminoids; and forbs.
- 4) Foraging habitat: moderate to steep warm aspect slopes (40-100%); prescribed burn areas; open, grassy/low shrub dominated slopes; early seral vegetation communities dominated by preferred winter foraging species.
- 5) Snow interception cover: coniferous stands at least 10 m in height with a canopy closure 60 - 90%.
- 6) Thermal/security cover: vegetative or topographic features (e.g. warm aspect slopes); structurally complex forest stands for security (e.g. mature – old forest stands with dense shrub understorey); dense young stands (> 10 m tall) and old forest stands for thermal.

## **III) Mountain Goat (Canyon)**

- 1) Topographic features: within canyons, escape terrain comprised of bluff/cliff habitat that provide good visibility and sufficiently rugged terrain to be inaccessible to predators; slopes > 100% preferred.
- 2) Winter forage species: graminoids; forbs; lichen; and conifers.
- 3) Foraging habitat: mature coniferous forest, herbaceous to low shrub communities; feeding goats within 50 m of escape terrain; all goats within 400 m of escape terrain.

## **IV) Northern Caribou (Graham herd)**

- 1) Critical stand structure features: sub-alpine habitat – mature/old coniferous leading stands in the ESSF biogeoclimatic (BEC) zone; abundance of arboreal and terrestrial lichens; well-developed shrub layer.

- 2) Topographic features: steep, windswept slopes and alpine ridges (sub-alpine/alpine); elevation >1400 m.
- 3) Winter forage species: terrestrial and arboreal lichens; conifers, shrubs and graminoids to a lesser extent.
- 4) Foraging habitat: combination of windswept alpine and high elevation coniferous dominant forests (ESSF BEC zone) where there is an abundance of terrestrial and arboreal lichens.
- 5) Thermal/escape cover: topographic features to put distance between predators/moose and caribou, use of sub-alpine and alpine for overwintering habitat.

#### **V) Northern Caribou (Pink Mountain herd)**

- 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) 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.