

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

INFORMATION CONCERNING WILDLIFE HABITAT FOR THE WINTER SURVIVAL OF UNGULATE SPECIES IN THE MERRITT TSA

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 winter survival of ungulate species in the Merritt TSA. 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 sections 7(1) of the Forest Planning and Practices Regulation and 9(3) of the *Woodlot License Planning and Practices Regulation* (B.C. Reg. 21/04).

Merritt TSA

The information provided is based on the most current ungulate winter range modeling produced by MWLAP. The models are consistent with those used to identify winter ranges in the adjacent TSAs (Lillooet, Merritt and Okanagan). Government agency and stakeholder representatives have formed a TSA ungulate winter range subcommittee and have been refining all ungulate winter range areas and management direction using this information. The estimated date for completion of this process is April 2005.

1) Mule Deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*)

Amount:

The amount in the notice is based on the most current ungulate winter range modeling for mule deer in the Merritt TSA. It is intended that by managing for this amount that the habitat requirements of both Elk and Bighorn sheep will be addressed. The THLB impacts are from TSR 2 documentation.

Of the total amount included in the Notice 3000 ha of Mule deer winter range overlaps with woodlot boundaries.

Distribution:

Figures and spatial information (shapefiles) to support the amount and distribution statements 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/Ungulate_Winter_Range/Timber_Supply_Areas/Merritt_TSA/Supporting_Info/

Figure 1 shows the mule deer winter range mapping within the Merritt TSA current to June 2004 and the location of Elk winter range within the Merritt TSA.

Figure 2 shows the location of bighorn sheep winter range mapping.

Attributes:

1. Foraging habitat can be met by areas of high shrub productivity and/or stands that provide arboreal litter-fall, such as lichens and Douglas-fir needles and twigs. The former is provided in wetter sites, as well as, where early seral coniferous forests have not matured to the state as to where they out-compete shrubs for sunlight. The latter is provided in older aged coniferous stands. Mature, and older, Douglas-fir needles and twigs provide greater nutritional value litter-fall than other coniferous types (species and age). A variety of foraging habitats well distributed throughout the winter range best meets the needs of over-wintering ungulates.
2. Snow interception cover is defined as tree crown attributes that have the capability to intercept snow, and thereby reduce snow accumulations on the ground. As snow interception potential is variable dependent upon tree species, stand density, and crown shape and size, it is important to retain stems that will function in an optimum manner. Mature and intermediate aged Douglas-fir in clumps are best suited to meet this need. Larger clumps, or patches, with a high canopy closure are most appropriate in areas of higher snow falls.

2) Moose (*Alces alces*)

Amount:

The amount in the notice is based on the most current ungulate winter range modeling for moose in the Merritt TSA. It is not intended that the management of moose winter range will generate a timber supply impact.

Of the total amount included in the Notice 3759 ha of Moose winter range overlaps with woodlot boundaries.

Distribution:

Figures and spatial information (shapefiles) to support the amount and distribution statements 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/Ungulate_Winter_Range/Timber_Supply_Areas/Merritt_TSA/Supporting_Info/

Figure 2 shows the location of moose winter range mapping within the Merritt TSA.

Attributes:

1. Foraging habitat – large quantities of browse biomass are required to sustain wintering populations of moose. Woody brush species, including *Salix* spp., red-osier dogwood, and *Betula* spp., are favoured forage species. The Lillooet LRMP provides direction on forage management.
2. Cover – is important to moderate temperature extremes (thermal), moderate snow accumulations (snow interception) and provide security or reduced sight lines to

moose utilizing an area. The Lillooet LRMP provides management direction for the types and location of cover.

3) Mountain Goat (*Oreamnos americanus*)

Amount:

The amount in the notice is based on the most current ungulate winter range mapping for Mountain goat in the Merritt TSA. No THLB impact budget has been allocated through TSR to the management of winter range for Mountain Goat.

Of the total amount included in the Notice 186 ha of Mountain Goat winter range overlaps with woodlot boundaries.

Distribution:

Figures and spatial information (shapefiles) to support the amount and distribution statements 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/Ungulate_Winter_Range/Timber_Supply_Areas/Merritt TSA/Supporting_Info/](ftp://ribftp.env.gov.bc.ca/pub/outgoing/cdc_data/Approved_FRPR_sec7_WLPPR_sec9_Notices_and_Supporting_Info/Ungulate_Winter_Range/Timber_Supply_Areas/Merritt_TSA/Supporting_Info/)

Figure 1 shows the location of Mountain goat winter range mapping within the Merritt TSA.