

**REGISTRATION FORM**  
**PURSUANT OF PART 10, ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**  
**SECTION 49 OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ACT**

**Name of Undertaking:** Forest Management District 9 and 16 (Planning Zone 7)  
Five Year Operating Plan 2017-2021

**Proponent:** (i) Department of Fisheries, Forestry, and Agrifoods  
Forest Service of Newfoundland and Labrador

(ii) Assistant Deputy Minister

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**The Undertaking:** (i) Nature of Undertaking  
  
To conduct forestry activities (harvesting, silviculture and primary road construction) from 2017 to 2021 in Forest Management Planning Zone 7.

(ii) Purpose/Rationale/Need for Undertaking

This undertaking will enable the Forest Services Branch to harvest approximately 526,357 m<sup>3</sup> of core landbase timber, construct approximately 26 kilometres of forest access road construction and undertake appropriate Silviculture prescriptions.

This undertaking is necessary to maintain and/or expand the existing commercial industry and allow domestic harvest for home heating.

## **Description of Undertaking:**

### **(i) Geographic Location**

Planning Zone Seven encompasses Forest Management Districts 16 and 9. It extends from Deer Lake in the west to Cat Arm in the north and includes all of the Baie Verte Peninsula. Major towns located within the zone include Deer Lake, Hampden, Sops Arm, Springdale, and Baie Verte. District 16 is administered from Pasadena while District 9 is administered from Springdale with depots in Baie Verte and Millertown. The overview and operational maps in the plan outline the general and exact locations of the zone.

### **(ii) Physical Features**

The topography of the area is varied ranging from coastal lowlands to broadly rolling uplands to undulating plateaus to hilly, mountainous regions. Bogs with wooded ridges can be found throughout.

### **(iii) Operation**

Commercial harvesting will be carried out manually and with shortwood harvesters and forwarders and domestic harvesting will be done by chainsaw with extraction by snowmobile and ATV. Roads will be constructed using excavators and/or bulldozers and silviculture will be carried out using brushsaws, pottiputkis, shovels and prescribed burning tools where required. All buffer requirements and operations will be carried out in accordance with the Environmental Protection Guidelines for Ecologically Based Forest Resource Management and the Forestry Act. Operations will commence upon approval of undertaking and continue yearly until 2021.

### **(iv) Occupants**

Loggers, equipment operators, truckers, sawmillers, silviculture workers and domestic cutters.

**Approval of the Undertaking:**

Commercial and domestic cutting permits as well as operating permits will be required from the District Forest Management Offices.

**Schedule:**

This plan is scheduled to commence upon approval and end on December 31, 2021.

Oct 31, 2016

Date

Ivan Dounton  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Mr. Stephen Balsam  
Forestry Services Branch

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This five year operating plan covers the period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2021 and represents the second iteration that incorporates new provincial planning requirements. In the past, there were five major planning documents; the provincial sustainable forest management strategy, the district strategy document, the five year operating plan, the annual operating plan, and the past annual report. This new planning framework has eliminated the district strategy document; however, its former contents are now split between the provincial sustainable forest management strategy and the five year operating plan. Sections that are provincial in scope such as carbon, global warming and criteria and indicators are now included in the provincial sustainable forest management strategy while sections that are more descriptive or depict local conditions such as values, forest characterization and ecosystem description are moved to the five year operating plan. Linkages between strategies from the provincial sustainable forest management strategy and on the ground activities in the five year operating plan will be provided where applicable.

Another major change to the planning process is the creation of eight planning zones on the island which are based primarily on ecoregion composition. Districts 9 and 16 are adjacent and share common ecoregion characteristics and collectively form Planning Zone Seven. The requirement for submission to the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency (FAA) and for environmental assessment is one five year operating plan for each owner in each zone. In this zone there will be one submission by the Crown and one by Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Limited. The past requirement was one five year operating plan by each owner in each district. Throughout this five year plan, references will be made to Districts 9 and 16 individually but when combined they will collectively be referred to as Planning Zone Seven or the zone. Open house meetings for this zone are located in Pasadena for District 16 and Springdale for District 9. This document will try to fully integrate presentation of information and discussion for crown land in the zone, where possible. This will be done by combining statistics and other information from each district and reporting for the zone. However, tables and figures will be constructed such that information for individual districts will be available if a breakout is required. Discussion and

information will be presented separately for each district where warranted based on unique and distinct differences in scope and content. The more descriptive sections of this plan will be generic in nature and give information for the entire zone as well as some broad comparative statistics.

Finally, this document will attempt to build on previous documents and on efforts of previous plans. Information will be updated as required or new sections will be added if any new information is available.

# 1. Description of the Land Base

## 1.1. General

### 1.1.1. Location

Planning Zone Seven encompasses Forest Management Districts 16 and 9 (Figure 1). It extends from Deer Lake in the west to Cat Arm in the north and includes all of the Baie Verte Peninsula. Major towns located within the zone include Deer Lake, Hampden, Sops Arm, Springdale, and Baie Verte. District 16 is administered from Pasadena while District 9 is administered from Springdale with depots in Baie Verte and Millertown.

### 1.1.2. History

The natural resources of the zone have played a major role in the well being of the residents. Since the earliest settlement, the forest and fish resources were the mainstay of the economy. Generally, settlement occurred around the coastal areas where the fishery was prevalent. Initially the forest was used as a source of fuelwood as well as construction materials for houses and fishery related items (stages, lobster pots, boats etc.). Sawmills developed to supply the local demand for lumber and construction timber and there was a small export market for pulpwood. In the interior of the zone, logging towns such as Howley and Deer Lake developed as a result of the pulp and paper mill in Corner Brook. Today pulpwood and pulp chips are shipped to the mill in Corner Brook. As well, there is a major integrated sawmill in Hampden that produces lumber for both the local and export market and pulpchips which are sold to Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Limited (CBPPL).

### 1.1.3. Ownership

There are two major ownerships in the zone; Crown and (CBPPL) (Figure 2). Crown land accounts for 46 percent of the area and is located around the extremities of the zone. Corner Brook Pulp and Paper timber rights account for 54 percent of all land holdings.

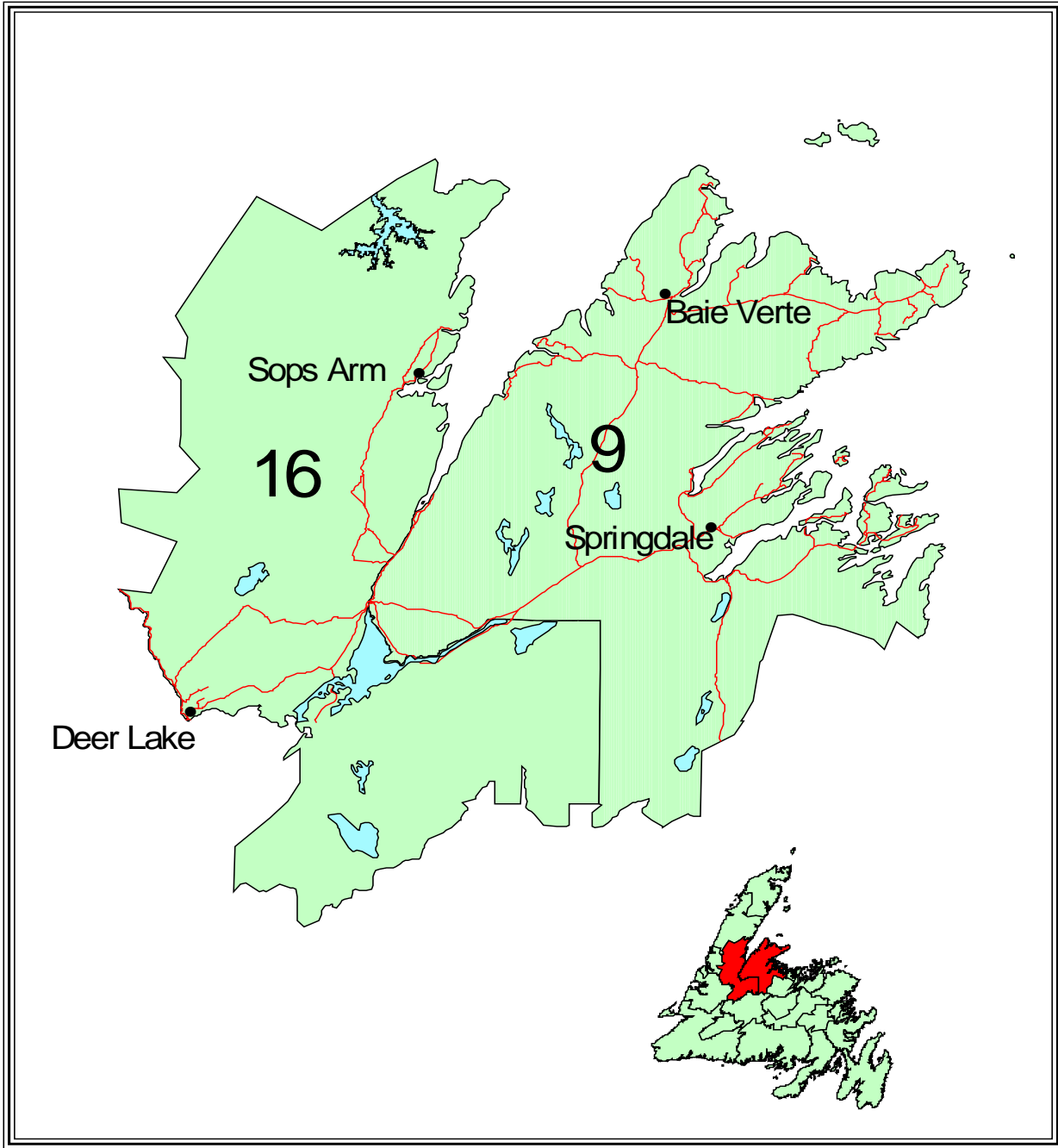


Figure 1. Location of Planning Zone 7

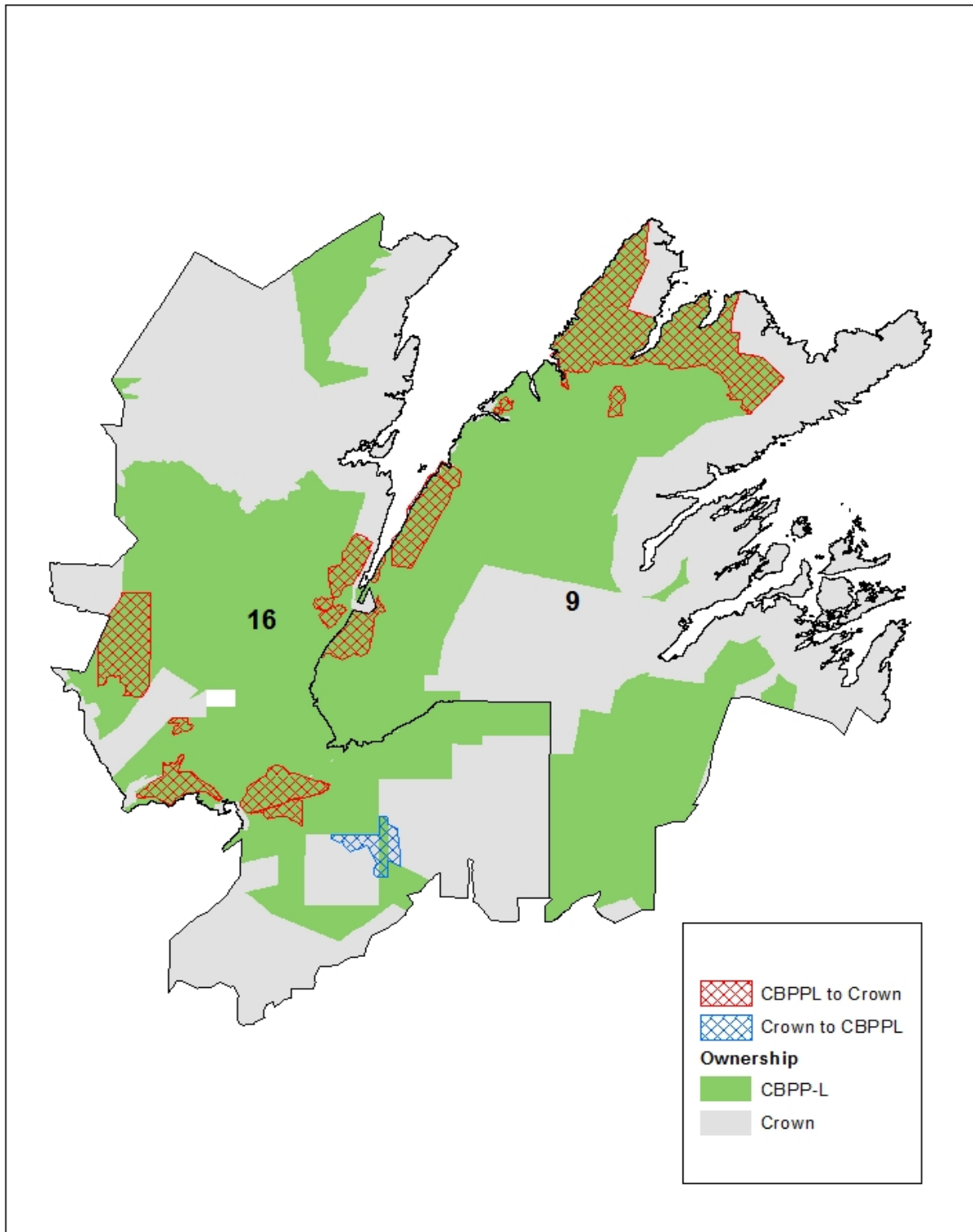


Figure 2 Ownership map of Planning Zone 7 showing transfers and exchanges

The timber holdings are in the form of long term licenses that are not due to expire until 2037.

Within these ownerships there have been a number of exchanges and transfers between the Crown and CBPPL that are mutually beneficial to both parties (Table 1) (Figure 2). The CBPPL to Crown transfers and exchanges provide a sawlog supply for commercial operations and a firewood supply near communities for domestic cutters.

**Table 1 Exchanges and transfers in Planning Zone 7**

District	Type	Expiry Date(s)
16	CBPPL to Crown	2019-2021
16	Crown to CBPPL	2021
9	Crown to CBPPL	none
9	CBPPL to Crown	2019-2021

## 1.2. Physical

### 1.2.1. Topography and Hydrology

The topography of the area is varied ranging from coastal lowlands to broadly rolling uplands to undulating plateaus to hilly, mountainous regions. Bogs with wooded ridges can be found throughout.

The northern part of District 16 includes the southern extent of the Long Range Mountains while in the southern portion the Topsails form several prominent hills that rise above undulating



plateaus that extend over 460 meters above sea level. The northern edge of these plateaus is dissected by a number of valleys. Between these two extents lies a large lowland region extending northeast from Deer Lake.

The coastal areas of District 9 are hilly and mountainous with flat areas of bog containing woody ridges. These areas fall steeply into the lowland and coastal areas forming a rugged coastline. The central and southern portions of this district consist of broadly rolling uplands with low, parallel, northeasterly trending ridges.

The area contains several large drainage basins which flow in a general easterly or northerly direction and empty into the Atlantic Ocean. The main exception is in the southwest portion of District 16 which forms the upper reaches of the Humber River watershed and empties into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Other prominent rivers include the Main, Indian River, South Brook and Taylors Brook. These rivers have sources from lakes along their courses plus other feeder streams and ponds. Other small streams and ponds feed directly from the higher elevations into the ocean. Major watersheds include the Humber, Main, South Brook and Indian River.

### 1.2.2. Geology

The area is underlain by areas of contrasting geology and varying mineral potential. Five different geological terrains are exposed at various locations

The oldest rocks in the zone consist of metamorphic rocks (gneisses) that are part of the ancient Canadian Shield and are approximately 1.2 billion years old. These rocks have been intruded by younger granite and gabbroic rocks. They are referred to as the Long Range Complex or the Long Range Inlier. This complex forms the core of the Great Northern Peninsula and is exposed in the northwestern part of District 16.

Sandstone, limestone and marble overlie the basement rocks of the Long Range Complex. These are of Cambrian to Ordovician age and correlate with similar rocks that form an extensive

carbonate platform that was deposited along the ancient margin of the North American continent. Within District 16, these rocks are exposed in the Great Coney Arm area and southwards close to the Jackson's Arm - Sop's Arm highway.

Rocks of oceanic affinity are exposed between Coney Head and Frenchman's Cove and extends to the southwest as narrow thrust slices. These rocks consist of gabbro to granite and deformed basaltic, volcanic and sedimentary rocks. They are of Cambrian to Ordovician age and were thrust from the eastern oceanic area westwards over the ancient continental margin. Correlative rocks occur within the oceanic terrain southwest of Grand Lake.

Terrestrial volcanic and sedimentary rocks overlie the Cambro-Ordovician platformal and oceanic rocks in the Sop's Arm area in the west and between Springdale and Grand Lake in the southeast and are of Silurian age. The volcanic rocks consist of rhyolitic and basaltic flows, tuffs and braccia. The sedimentary rocks are widespread in the Sop's Arm area and consist of conglomerates, sandstones, silt stones and shales. Southwest of Springdale, sedimentary rocks are less widespread and consist of red sandstones and pebble conglomerates. These volcanic and sedimentary rocks were deposited in a sub-aerial to shallow sub-aqueous environment in large caldera complexes. Equivalent granitic rocks occur in the Topsails area and probably were sub-volcanic magma chambers that fed the overlying volcanic pile.

The youngest rocks are of Carboniferous age and occupy the central part of the zone. They extend southwards from White Bay through the area between Deer Lake and Grand Lake. This area is known as the Deer Lake Basin. The rocks consist of red, grey and brown sandstones, conglomerates, shale and limestones. They were deposited in a non-marine environment on lakes and rivers.

The whole area has been glaciated by an ice sheet in the Wisconsin age. On the whole, erosion by the glaciers has exceeded deposition and the greater part of the upland areas consist of ice scoured bedrock exposures, thinly littered with stones and boulders ranging from rhyolite and porphyry to granite gneiss and greenstone.

In the lowland areas there is however, a considerable amount of drift deposit. This occurs chiefly in the form of till consisting of the harder rocks such as granite, rhyolite, diorite, and quartzite. It is, therefore, full of large stones and boulders as this material has been resistant to mechanical abrasions and chemical weathering. There are, however, considerable deposits of marine deltaic, lacustrine, and outwash materials in the lower valleys of the major rivers. In some areas, till deposits composed largely of slate, shale, and sandstone occur. These materials have been pulverized and weathered and are far less stony than deposits composed of harder rock.

### 1.2.3. Soils

The soils of the area can be identified by three separate modes of deposition: morainal (till), glaciofluvial/fluvial (water deposited), or organic (bogs/fens).

The majority of the soils in the zone have developed on morainal tills. These soils range in thickness from thin veneers over bedrock to thick extensive deposits. The textures range from silty loam to loamy sand and are usually stony. These soils are found throughout the area with the thinner veneers usually found in the higher elevations such as the Whites River/Silver Mountain areas. The predominant soil classification of these tills would be orthic humo ferric podzols and in poorly drained areas, gleyed orthic humo ferric podzols. In areas such as the Topsails, ortstein humo ferric podzols (cemented) are common.

Other soils have developed on glaciofluvial/fluvial deposits with greatest occurrence being in the Sandy Lake/ Grand Lake areas. The textures range from coarse sand to sandy loam and can be stone free to very stoney. The predominant soil classification associated with these types of deposits would be ortstein humo ferric podzols as well as orthic humo ferric podzols. Where poor drainage occurs these soils will be “gleyed.”

Organic depositions occur throughout the entire zone. These deposits vary in depth from less than one meter to more than five meters. They are derived from sphagnum moss and sedges. The

most common organic deposits are blanket bogs and sloping fens. The predominant soil classification is typic fibrisols and terric mesisols.

In addition to the mineral and organic soils, some areas can be referred to as rockland. Rockland consists of very shallow soils (< than 10 cm.) and exposed bedrock, enough to be dominant over the soils.

#### 1.2.4. Climate

The climate of the area is variable as a result of differences in topography and the proximity to the sea. January mean temperatures average about -14 °C, and July mean temperatures range from over 15.5°C in the valleys to less than 13°C in the mountains. The frost-free period averages 110 days at lower elevations. The growing season (mean daily temperature above 6°C) is more than 160 days at Deer Lake and less than 130 days in the mountains, and begins between May 10 and 30. Annual precipitation ranges from 1020 to 1400 mm and is lowest in the Deer Lake valley. Summer rainfall normally accounts for 250-300mm while the balance is snow. Generally, snowfall on the Baie Verte Peninsula is the highest in the zone, 5.0 to 6.0 meters compared to 3.0 to 3.5 meters in the southern part. The average potential evapotranspiration ranges from less than 430 to more than 510 mm.

The forests in the zone are directly related to climatic influences. The Baie Verte Peninsula has mostly balsam fir forest because of the abundance of moisture. The southern part has mainly black spruce and hardwoods due to drought and fires. The central part of the zone forms a transition area between of these two extremes with a mixture of these two main species plus white birch and trembling aspen. (from Meades, 1990)

## 1.3. Ecosystems

### 1.3.1. Forest Ecosystems

An ecosystem is a community of interacting and interdependent plants, animals and microorganisms, together with the physical environment within which they exist (adapted from Perry, 1994). It is important to remember that within an ecosystem the interactions between the biotic and abiotic components are at least as important as the component themselves. Another critical characteristic of ecosystems is their overlapping boundaries. While each is definable in time and space, and distinguishable from adjacent ecosystems, each is intimately integrated with other local ecosystems. Additionally, each local ecosystem is nested within increasingly larger ecosystems. The scale at which an ecosystem is viewed is contingent on the species or abiotic characteristic under consideration. While planet Earth represents the ultimate global ecosystem, complex ecosystems also exist under fallen logs and rocks.

A forest ecosystem, as the term implies, is an ecosystem dominated by tree cover. At the coarsest level, the forests of Planning Zone 7, like all forests on the island, form part of the boreal forest ecosystem. The boreal forest is a green belt which spans much of the northern hemisphere. It stretches from the Atlantic shores of Scandinavia through Russia, across Alaska, through the mid latitudes of Canada until it reaches the Atlantic Ocean again in Newfoundland and Labrador. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the boreal forest is the phenomena of periodic, catastrophic stand replacement natural disturbances such as fire and insect outbreaks which typically give rise to uniform, even aged forests dominated by a few tree species.

The tree species which characterize the Canadian boreal forest include black spruce, white spruce, balsam fir, eastern larch, trembling aspen, white birch and jack pine. All of these, with the exception of jack pine, commonly occur on the Island. However, by far the dominant species are black spruce and balsam fir; together they represent more than 90 percent of the growing stock on the island. Spruce is most abundant in north central Newfoundland where a climate

characterized by relatively dry, hot summers has historically favoured this fire-adapted species. In western Newfoundland the climate is somewhat moister and fires are far fewer in this region resulting in the ascendance of balsam fir, a species which is poorly adapted to fire.

### 1.3.2. Ecoregions and Subregions

Damman 1979, defined ecoregions as areas where comparable vegetation and soil can be found on sites occupying similar topographic positions on the same parent material, provided that these sites have experienced a similar history of disturbance. Thus, an ecoregion cannot be defined in isolation from the physical landscape, but vegetation toposequence, vegetation structure, floristic composition, and floristic distributions can provide the primary criteria. According to Damman, nine ecoregions are represented in Newfoundland. Each of these is further divided into subregions (also known as ecodistricts) All of the Newfoundland ecoregions and subregions contain many of the same ecosystem variables. It is the dominance and variance of these variables (e.g., vegetation and climate) that determine their classification.

Figure 3 depicts Planning Zone 7 relative to Damman's ecoregion classification system. The North Central Subregion of the Central Newfoundland Forest encompasses the majority of District 9 and a large portion of District 16. The North Shore Forest Ecoregion covers the remainder of District 9 primarily in a narrow band along the north and east coasts of the Baie Verte Peninsula. The Western Newfoundland Forest, Northern Peninsula Forest and Long Range Barrens Ecoregions cover the remainder of District 16.

Table 2 depicts the percentage of the ecoregions and subregions that are represented in the zone. It describes each ecoregion and subregion as a percentage of the total in the Province as well as the relative importance within each District and in both Districts combined. For example, District 9 contains 22 percent of the Northcentral Subregion of the Central Newfoundland Forest Ecoregion in the Province. As well, 82 percent of the District is located within this ecoregion.

The following is a detailed description of each ecoregion and subregion (from Meades, 1990) in both Districts.

### 1.3.2.1. The Central Newfoundland Ecoregion

This ecoregion is located in the north-central part of the Island with a small outlet near Bay D'Espoir. The topography is gently rolling to hilly with most elevations between 150 and 450Meters. It has the most continental climate in insular Newfoundland with the warmest summers and coldest winters. It has the least wind and fog of any ecoregion and a growing season of 140-160 days and average precipitation of 900-1300mm.

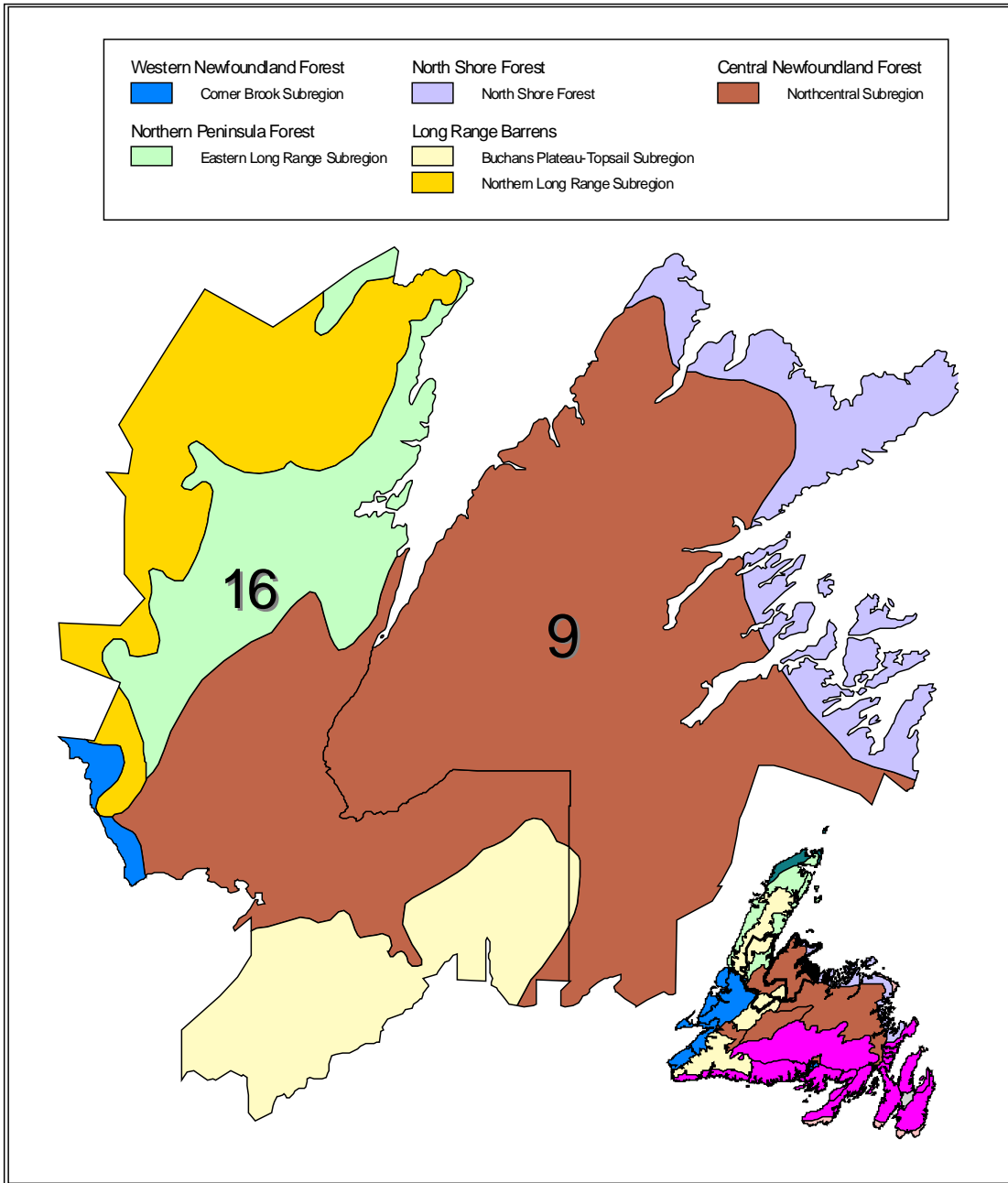


Figure 3 Ecoregions and subregions of Planning Zone 7.



**Table 2 Percentage of ecoregions and subregions in Planning Zone 7**

Name of Ecoregion and Subregion	Total Area in Province (ha)	Percentage of Total Area in Districts			Relative Percentage of Ecoregion and Subregion in Districts		
		9	16	Total	9	16	Combined
Western Newfoundland Forest Corner Brook Subregion	515637	0	13	13	0	9	5
Northern Peninsula Forest Eastern Long Range Subregion	268059	0	56	56	0	23	11
North Shore Forest	550622	19	0	19	11	0	8
Long Range Barrens Buchans Plateau-Topsail Subregion	369811	<1	38	38	1	19	11
Northern Long Range Subregion	689562	0	24	24	0	23	12
Central Newfoundland Forest North Central Subregion	2310742	22	9	31	82	31	53

This ecoregion is heavily forested and is the most distinctly boreal part of the Island. Balsam fir, black spruce, and to a lesser extent white birch are the dominant tree species. There is an extensive fire history thus fire origin stands of black spruce and white birch cover extensive areas particularly in the northern and eastern portions. Trembling aspen forms local stands after fire but is restricted to the central and northern portion.

Hylocomium-balsam fir is the zonal forest type and is dominant in areas not disturbed by fire. Kalmia-black spruce and pleurosium-balsam fir forests are also common. The kalmia-black spruce-lichen forests, which occur on outwash sands and gravels, are unique to this ecoregion. Red pine also occurs but is restricted to extremely dry sites.

### 1.3.2.1.1. North Central Subregion

The North Central Subregion has the highest maximum temperatures, lowest rainfall, and highest forest fire frequency on the Island. The subregion extends from Clarenville to Deer Lake with a

mostly rolling topography of less than 200 meters. The history of fire is evident by the pure black spruce forest with white birch and aspen stands that dominate the subregion.

### 1.3.2.2. Northern Peninsula Ecoregion

This ecoregion differs from most other forested parts of the Island by the shortness of the growing season, 110-150 days compared to 145-170 days for other areas. The frost-free period is comparable to most other areas and somewhat better than in central Newfoundland. Precipitation is lower, but, because of low summer temperatures and a shorter growing season, soil moisture supply is probably adequate at most times. The soils are comparable to those of western Newfoundland. Limestone underlies most of the region, with acidic rocks more common on the eastern side of the Great Northern Peninsula.

Balsam fir is the dominant forest cover except at high elevations (300-400 m) on the eastern side of the peninsula where black spruce appears to be a natural component of the stands. There is very little fire history in this ecoregion. White pine, red maple, yellow birch and trembling aspen are conspicuous by their absence. One of the most obvious changes is the replacement of speckled alder by green alder, satiny willow and balsam willow in swamps. Also tall shrubs such as mountain-holly, wild raisin and rhodora are sparse or lacking in the scrub bog-border forests. Silviculturally, they are similar to western Newfoundland with hardwoods rather than ericaceous shrubs being the most common brush problem on understocked cutovers. Skunk currant, swampy red currant and red-osier dogwood appear to be a more common component of seral vegetation on cutovers. Raspberry is also very abundant in the early years of succession.

#### 1.3.2.2.1. Eastern Long Range Subregion

This subregion includes the productive but inaccessible forest on the eastern slopes of the Long Range Mountains up to 450 m elevation. The forests tend to be somewhat open balsam fir-black spruce mixtures. The tree line decreases towards the northern end of the subregion.

### 1.3.2.3. Long Range Barrens Ecoregion

This ecoregion comprises the highlands which extend from the southwestern coast to the northern part of the Northern Peninsula. It consists of three distinct subregions, the Southern Long Range, the Buchan's Plateau-Topsails, and the Northern Long Range. They are separated by areas of more or less continuous forest. Fire is of little importance, and has played no role in the formation of these barrens. Cool summers and cold winters are typical of this ecoregion. It has a relatively short growing season due to the persistence of the heavy snow cover late into spring.

This area is covered by mostly barren vegetation with shallow, ribbed fens and tuckamoor dominating the landscape. Sheep laurel heath is the predominant dwarf shrub vegetation and covers large areas. Arctic-alpine vegetation is common on all highlands and exposed sites. Snow bank species like moss heather, mountain sorrel and dwarf bilberry are common in areas with persistent snow cover. Forests dominated by balsam fir occur only in deep, sheltered valleys. Extensive areas of black spruce tuckamoor occur on slopes and in valleys.

#### 1.3.2.3.1. Buchan's Plateau-Topsails Subregion

A small part of the Buchan's Plateau-Topsails subregion occurs in District 16. The northern extensions of the Topsails and possibly White Bay Downs are also part of this subregion. Most of the ecoregion is barren. Dwarf shrub heaths, shallow patterned peatlands, and areas with low "Krummhotz" or tuckmoor dominate the landscape. Small patches of forest occur in some sheltered valleys.

#### 1.3.2.3.2. Northern Long Range Subregion

The northern portion of District 16 is encompassed by the southern extent of this subregion. The best developed snow bank vegetation occurs in this subregion. Mountain alder thickets are

characteristic of alluvial soils in deep valleys. Many northern plant species occur in the forested valleys.

#### 1.3.2.4. Western Newfoundland Ecoregion

This ecoregion just touches District 16 and is characterized by a humid climate with a relatively longer frost-free period. It contains some of the most favourable sites for forest growth although there is considerable variation due to altitude and proximity to the coast. The dryopteris-hylocomium-balsam fir forest type is the zonal forest for this region. The zonal soils are nutrient rich humic podzols with a very dark podzolic B horizon due to humus enrichment. The absence of prolonged dry periods appears to have excluded fires from all but the coarsest textured soils. Consequently, balsam fir rather than black spruce is the dominant forest cover. Yellow birch is common and it displays its best growth in protected valleys below 200m elevation. This species also occurs in less vigorous forms in the Maritime Barrens and Avalon Forest Ecoregions, but it is absent at higher elevations and north of Deer Lake. Red maple is also most common and robust in this ecoregion.

As a general rule overstocking is a more common silvicultural problem than understocking in western Newfoundland. Localized regeneration failures can occur in forests with a very dense fern and herb stratum such as the rubus-balsam fir and the dryopteris-balsam fir forest types. On these types, hardwoods, particularly mountain maple on seepage slopes, can form semi-stable thickets. These thickets may eventually develop into hardwood forest types. The development of ericaceous heath after logging or fire is only observed on very small areas of coarse textured till. This is in stark contrast to central Newfoundland where succession to kalmia heath is a common occurrence. The Western Newfoundland Ecoregion is subdivided into six subregions.

##### 1.3.2.4.1. Corner Brook Subregion

This subregion is characterized by hilly to undulating terrain from Bonne Bay to Stephenville and east to Grand Lake. The parent materials in this subregion are dominated by slates and limestone till. Areas with calcareous till are distinguished by the occurrence of light colored

marl deposits around ponds and in valleys. The parent material consists of shallow, stony silt loam underlain by limestone bedrock or calcareous basal till. The rugged topography is dominated by the taxus-balsam fir and dryopteris-rhytidiadelphus-balsam fir forest types.

The hilly, non-calcareous terrain in this subregion is dominated by shallow loamy soils over shale bedrock. However, the shallowness of the till does not adversely affect forest growth since nutrient rich seepage waters are held in the rooting zone by bedrock or a fragipan layer. The steep topography is dominated by the dryopteris-balsam fir forest and supports some of the most productive stands in Newfoundland.

#### **1.3.2.5. North Shore Forest Ecoregion**

This ecoregion includes the coastal zone along the north side of the Island extending from the Bonavista Peninsula to the tip of the Baie Verte Peninsula. This ecoregion is mainly forested and black spruce stands are common. Increased wind exposure causes a decrease in the quality and height of the forest towards the coast therefore coastal headlands are dominated by barrens. Overall, vegetation is similar to the Central Newfoundland Ecoregion, however, white spruce is more abundant and aspen is less common.

The topography is irregular along the coast with many bays and inlets extending inland and is rolling to hilly. Elevations in this ecoregion are highest on the Baie Verte Peninsula reaching 315 m. The climate is the driest on the Island with warm coastal summers and cold winters. High summer temperatures can cause moisture deficiencies. The growing season is approximately 150 days and precipitation ranges from 900-1200 mm.

## 1.4. Ecosystem Dynamics

### 1.4.1. Ecosystem Condition and Productivity

As with other parts of the Newfoundland and Labrador's boreal forest, those of Planning Zone 7 have evolved in concert with a history of fire, insect attack and subsequent wind throw. Human intervention in this forest has been extensive and widespread with a resultant significant impact on current landscape patterns.

Landscape patterns determine the variety, integrity, and interconnectedness of habitats within a region. These landscape patterns are a direct result of the relationship between physical landforms and soils, disturbance history, and relationships among various species that make up the ecosystem communities. These factors, while listed separately for clarity, are unavoidably interrelated. Landscape patterns play a pivotal role in determining the current conditions and health of forest ecosystems. These variables are evaluated in terms of productivity, stability and resilience.

Another important role determining the condition of a forest is change. Forests are an ever evolving entity, resisting stagnation, and constantly moving through their cycles of life, death, and renewal. The process of change over time is the essence of nature itself. It has been nature's underlying storyline since time began, and will continue to be until time ends.

The main forces of change in our natural forest ecosystems are disturbance and succession. A definition of disturbance would indicate that it initiates a change in a community structure which often ends up in the replacement of one set of species by another. However, replacement is not always the end result (e.g., a species like black spruce is aided in germination by disturbances like forest fire).

Disturbances range from the fall of a single tree, to the destruction of thousands of hectares by forest fires. While disturbances may be very destructive, they can often rejuvenate ecosystems and diversify landscapes.

Succession involves changes in both community composition and in the ecosystem structure and process. Succession is the orderly change whereby the dominant species is replaced by another species, then another etc. until a new dominant species establishes a relatively stable community.

The following sections will discuss each of these concepts in more detail as they relate to the ecosystems of Planning Zone 7. For the most part this section will be descriptive and explanatory in nature. Specific examples of strategies and linkages to the Provincial Sustainable Forest Management Strategy will be detailed in subsequent sections.

#### 1.4.1.1. Productivity

Productivity is the accrual of matter and energy in biomass. In simple terms, primary productivity is the sum total of all biomass produced through photosynthesis. Secondary productivity occurs when this “primary” biomass is ingested and is added to that organism’s biomass. Since secondary productivity is directly dependant on primary productivity, it is this primary productivity component that drives the system.

The level of primary production is dependant on the ability to produce biomass. This in turn is dependent on landscape features, soil, climate etc. In general terms, the more productive (ability to grow trees) a site is, the higher level of primary productivity. For example a forested stand would have a higher primary productivity than a bog or a good site would have a higher potential than a poor site.

Overall, the landscape in Planning Zone 7 has approximately 50 percent productive forest. As well, the relative proportion of site types is 10 percent good, 70 percent medium and 20 percent

poor with a mean annual increment (MAI) of 2.6, 1.7, and, 0.8 m<sup>3</sup>/ha/yr respectively. The distribution of productive sites across the landscape and range of productivity within these sites is largely dependent on landscape patterns, climate, and soils.

The more productive areas of the zone occur in the lowlands. These areas have deeper soils and less exposed bedrock. The landscape patterns are more consistent and the growing season is longer. In the northern part of District 16 and along the coast in District 9 the soils are shallower with bedrock at or near the surface. The terrain is much rougher and the growing season is shorter (130 as opposed to 160 days).

In practice, it is nearly impossible to measure the amount of biomass produced in an ecosystem, or the energy consumed in the process. However, in the Provincial Sustainable Forest Management Strategy, criteria and indicators to monitor productivity have been identified. One method outlined is tracking mean annual increment in m<sup>3</sup>/ha/yr of tree species by ecoregion. This can be readily measured over time and manipulated through silviculture treatments or affected by poor harvesting practices which increase soil compaction. An example of secondary productivity is the number of moose per unit area. One must also recognize the forests inherent biological limits however, when attempting to measure or manipulate site productivity.

#### 1.4.1.2. Resilience

Ecosystem resilience reflects the ability of the ecosystem to absorb change and disturbance while maintaining the same productive capacity and the same relationships among populations. Healthy forest ecosystems maintain their resilience and adapt to periodic disturbances. The renewal of boreal forest ecosystems often depend on these disturbances. Resilience is characterized by the forest's ability to stabilize vital soil processes and maintain succession whereby the system is returned to a community composition and the productivity level is consistent with the ecosystems physical constraints. To a large degree, a forest ecosystems' resilience is controlled by properties such as climate, parent soil, topography and flora.



The potential for populations to recover from low levels following disturbance by having adequate regeneration capacity and a balanced distribution of forest types and age classes provides a reliable measure of resilience at the landscape level. Indicators include the percent and extent of area by forest type and age class and the percentage of disturbed areas that are successfully regenerated. Resilience is determined by measuring and monitoring these parameters. Forest activities must be carefully planned to not upset the natural balance and lower an ecosystem's resilience. An example is harvesting on the more fragile sites where steep slopes and shallow soil over bedrock increase the potential of site degradation beyond repair.

### 1.4.1.3. Stability

Nature is constantly changing and going through the unending processes of disturbance, growth, senescence, and decay. Therefore, stability of a forest ecosystem does not refer to one fixed position without variation. Ecosystem stability is more accurately defined as the maintenance of ecosystem changes within certain boundaries and the functional continuation of important potentials and processes such as energy capture.

There are three levels of stability; species stability, structural stability, and process stability. Species stability is the maintenance of viable populations or meta-populations of individual species. Structural stability is the stability of various aspects of ecosystem structure such as food web organization or species numbers. Process stability is the stability of processes such as primary productivity and nutrient cycling. To put stability in perspective, it must ensure that the system does not cross some threshold from which recovery to a former state is either impossible, (extinction) or occurs only after long time periods or with outside inputs (eg. loss of topsoil)

Some indicators of stability which can be monitored are: area of forest converted to non-forest use, area, percentage and representation of forest types in protected areas, percentage and extent of area by forest type and age class, and change in distribution and abundance of various fauna.

These indicators can be measured and monitored to ensure stability is maintained and to evaluate the impact, if any, of forest activities on ecosystem stability.

#### 1.4.1.4. Disturbance Regimes and Successional Patterns

There are four main driving forces that cause disturbance in the boreal forest. As stated in section 1.4.5, harvesting accounts for the majority of disturbance in the zone and occurs on a regular and consistent basis. Fire and insect damage are the other two major disturbances and occur on a more irregular or cyclic basis. With the exception of a major atypical windstorm, wind throw usually occurs after a stand is weakened by some other agent like insects. For this reason successional patterns after insect damage and wind throw will be discussed together. The following is a brief synopsis of successional patterns after each major disturbance type by forest type, site type, and ecoregion.

##### 1.4.1.4.1. Harvesting

Regeneration patterns in the black spruce type after harvesting is generally back to the black spruce type with a minor component of balsam fir and some white birch on the better sites. There is a higher component of black spruce regeneration in the Central and Long Range Barrens Ecoregions (CLRBE) than in the Western and Northern Ecoregions (WNE). There is substantial regeneration failure in this forest type with average not sufficiently restocked (NSR) rates at 25 percent in CLRBE and 45 percent in WNE. Another general trend is that the poorer the site quality the higher the NSR rate. These sites would be candidates for planting with black, white, or Norway spruce. An exception to this trend occurs when the pre harvest crown density is class 2 or denser. On these areas, black spruce layering is prevalent and is responsible for the majority of stocking. In some instances where balsam fir does regenerate on black spruce sites it becomes very chlorotic at a young age and is highly susceptible to attack from the balsam woolly adelgid.

In the balsam fir types, regeneration success back to balsam fir is much higher averaging 75 percent in CLRBE and 85 percent in WNE. Regeneration rates to balsam fir are higher on the poor sites and fall off somewhat as site quality increases. There is also some regeneration to black spruce and softwood hardwood mixed wood types with the former being more prevalent in the CLRBE. Regeneration failure is relative constant across all ecoregion types at 10 percent.

Regeneration pattern in the mixed wood types is generally back to mixed wood that is dominated by balsam fir and white birch. In the CLRBE there is a larger component of black spruce regeneration after harvesting than in the WNE. There is a higher component of white birch regeneration after harvesting in types that had a higher percentage of hardwood before harvest. As well, the better the site class the more hardwood regeneration. Regeneration failure on the mixed wood types is highest in poor sites and lowest on the better sites.

There are few pure hardwood stands in the zone. Harvesting of these sites has only recently been occurring with the development of a value added hardwood industry therefore regeneration patterns are unknown. Anecdotal evidence from domestic cutting in these types indicates that they will regenerate to mixed wood types dominated by balsam fir and white birch.

#### 1.4.1.4.2. Fire

Since black spruce is a fire adapted species, it is not surprising that it is the most prolific regeneration species after fire across all forest types, site types and ecoregions within the zone. It regenerates as pure stands or in combination with white birch. Balsam fir is conspicuously absent after fire because most advanced regeneration in the under story is killed by the fire. Black spruce regeneration is somewhat correlated with the amount present in the pre fire stand. Generally, the higher the component of black spruce in the original stand, the higher the percentage of regeneration to black spruce. In mixed wood stands a higher component of white birch and sometimes trembling aspen is present after fire. Fire in pure hardwood stands can sometimes

regenerate to trembling aspen in certain areas. Regeneration failure after fire is on average 20 percent across all forest types and is higher as sites get poorer.

#### 1.4.1.4.3. Insect

Balsam fir is highly susceptible to insect attack from the hemlock looper, balsam woolly adelgid, balsam fir sawfly, and spruce budworm whereby black spruce is hardly impacted by these insects. For this reason, stands with a high component of balsam fir are more susceptible to insect attack and subsequent wind thrown.

Mature balsam fir types usually regenerate to balsam fir or to balsam fir hardwood mixtures. Disturbance by insect kill in young balsam fir stands can cause succession to white spruce. Regeneration patterns in mixed wood types usually depend on the type of mixture. If black spruce is a component then it will persist and form part of the new stand. Otherwise balsam fir and balsam fir/hardwood mixtures regenerate after insect attack. Regeneration failure occurs approximately 20 percent of the time particularly if pure stands of immature balsam fir are killed.

#### 1.4.2. Biodiversity

Biodiversity is a term used to describe the variety of life on earth. A basic definition of biodiversity includes the variety of animals, plants and microorganisms that exist on our planet, the genetic variety within these species and the variety of ecosystems they inhabit.

Some scientists estimate the total number of species on earth between two and 100 million, however, the best estimate is considered to be within the range of 10-30 million. This is remarkable considering only 1.4 million species have actually been given names. The largest concentration of biodiversity on the planet is found in the tropical areas of developing countries. Small areas of rainforest often contain species that are found nowhere else on earth. Mishandling

even small tracts of land could lead to extinction of several species, one of which may hold the key for the prevention or cure of some disease.

While the boreal forest does not have the extent of biodiversity that some of the equatorial regions possess, Canada does have just over 70 000 species of plants, animals, and micro organisms in its boreal and other forest regions. An equivalent number remain un-described or unreported by science. While the boreal forest has less diversity of large plants than many other forest regions, it has greater biological diversity in some micro organisms. For example, the boreal forest has fewer tree species than the tropical rainforest but 500 times as many mycorrhizal fungi. Despite the large number of organisms contained within the boreal forest, only five percent are actually plants and vertebrates. The other 95 percent remain largely unrecorded and unstudied. As a result, we need to conduct more surveys and studies and manage with caution so that species are not inadvertently wiped out.

Biodiversity provides such essential services for humans as climate control, oxygen production, purification of freshwater supplies, carbon dioxide removal from the atmosphere, soil generation, and nutrient cycling. Without the species that provide these processes, humanity would be unable to survive.

There have been several international initiatives during the 1990's directed at developing strategies to protect Earth's biodiversity. Canada signed the *United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity* in 1992 at the Rio de Janeiro earth summit. All governments at both the federal and provincial level have agreed to meet these objectives through implementation of the 1995 *Canadian Biodiversity Strategy: Canada's Response to the Convention on Biodiversity*.

The three components of biodiversity are species diversity, genetic diversity, and ecosystem diversity.

### 1.4.2.1. Species Diversity

Species diversity describes the overall range of species in a given area or ecosystem. Species are groups of animals, plants, and micro organisms capable of producing fertile offspring. An example would be all breeds of domesticated dogs are of the same species, while dogs and cats are members of different species. Species extinction is the most dramatic and recognizable form of reduced biodiversity; habitat loss the most drastic in terms of far reaching effect. The prevention of species extinction is a key factor in the conservation of biodiversity. Changes in species population levels indicate the potential for serious changes in ecosystem integrity.

### 1.4.2.2. Genetic Diversity

Genetic diversity describes the range of possible genetic characteristics found within and among different species. Hair and eye colour, weight and height, are examples of genetic diversity found in humans. Genetic diversity within species is the foundation of all biodiversity. Assessing genetic diversity does not mean tracking every gene in the zone's forest. Responsible planning should design and implement measures which maintain or enhance viable populations of all forest vegetation species and which use the genetic diversity of commercially important species to a maximum benefit. The genetic diversity of commercially important species can also be managed to increase economic benefit from some portions of the landscape while allowing other portions to provide greater social and ecological values. Genetic diversity is the basis by which populations (flora and fauna) can adapt to changing environmental conditions.

### 1.4.2.3. Landscape Diversity

Ecosystem diversity describes the range of natural systems found throughout a region, a country, a continent, or the planet. Wetlands and grasslands are examples of ecosystems in Canada. A

complex and intricate mix of plants, animals, micro organisms and the soil, water, and air they occupy create virtually limitless ecosystems around the world.

A forest interspersed with barrens, marshes, lakes and ponds provides for diversity across the landscape. Each ecoregion in the province should have representative areas protected which displays the diversity where such exists. These areas can serve as a benchmark from which to measure and guide management decisions. These representative areas protect the integrity of the ecoregion and are vital for guiding management actions. As benchmark areas, they will illustrate the multi-species mosaic that planning actions must maintain. One unique aspect of landscape diversity in Planning Zone 7 is the presence of an old growth forest in the northern part of District 16.

As stated, specific examples of on the ground actions in support of these concepts will be presented throughout the plan.

## 1.5. Forest Characterization

### 1.5.1. Land Classification

Table 3 displays the land classification broken down by ownership and district for Planning Zone 7. The total mapped land area in the zone is approximately 1.2 million hectares. There is also around 30000 hectares in District 16 that is not mapped but will be during the next inventory cycle. There are four basic categories that currently represent how the land is classified; productive, non productive, non-forest and fresh water. The ratios across ownerships in each district are fairly consistent with some minor variations. Individual break outs by district and owner are shown in Table 3. Figures 4 and 5 displays the relative percentages of each major land class category in each district with all ownerships combined.

In general, District 9 has 55 percent of its total land area in the productive forest category while District 16 has 38 percent. The higher the percentage of productive forest generally means that the forest is more contiguous and not as fragmented by bog, scrub and water. This has implications for harvesting and road building costs which are generally higher when the forest is more fragmented. Another point is that the Forest Service is now classifying scrub by site, height and density class as new inventories are completed. This information will be invaluable in determining which scrub areas are marginally productive or can meet some other non-timber objective.



**Table 3 Land classification by district and ownership in hectares for Planning Zone 7.**

Land Class	Ownership				Total		
	Crown		CBPPL		9	16	Total
	9	16	9	16			
disturbed	5199	6345	7575	6241	12674	14448	27122
age class 1	35285	11881	51597	30354	86882	42235	129117
age class 2	31338	6483	28541	15253	59879	21736	81615
age class 3	14647	3536	26748	19905	41395	23440	64835
age class 4	19662	3534	12657	14119	23319	17753	41072
age class 5	26448	6355	20137	9375	46585	15730	62315
age class 6	17320	26739	17285	10403	34605	37142	71747
age class 7	10377	35531	22959	23272	33336	58804	92140
<b>Total Productive</b>	<b>151214</b>	<b>100505</b>	<b>187497</b>	<b>128932</b>	<b>338711</b>	<b>229437</b>	<b>568148</b>
softwood scrub	52703	115636	72093	98424	124796	214062	338858
hardwood scrub	2054	549	2743	2436	4797	2985	7782
<b>Total Non-Productive</b>	<b>54757</b>	<b>116185</b>	<b>74836</b>	<b>100864</b>	<b>129593</b>	<b>217049</b>	<b>346642</b>
rock barren	12311	7672	5552	3360	17863	11033	28896
soil barren	3455	18941	9325	6635	12780	25581	38361
bog	18581	35225	48814	33721	67395	68944	136339
cleared land	1594	1091	1324	1222	2918	2313	5231
agriculture land	355	1477	79	389	434	1866	2300
residential	1698	519	459	448	2157	967	3124
right of ways	502	240	518	1042	1020	1282	2302
miscellaneous	44	304	66	112	110	416	426
<b>Total Non Forested</b>	<b>38540</b>	<b>65472</b>	<b>66138</b>	<b>46929</b>	<b>104678</b>	<b>112401</b>	<b>217079</b>
Fresh Water	18683	21494	28488	21970	47171	43355	90526
<b>Total All Classes</b>	<b>263194</b>	<b>303111</b>	<b>356959</b>	<b>298630</b>	<b>620153</b>	<b>602241</b>	<b>1222394</b>

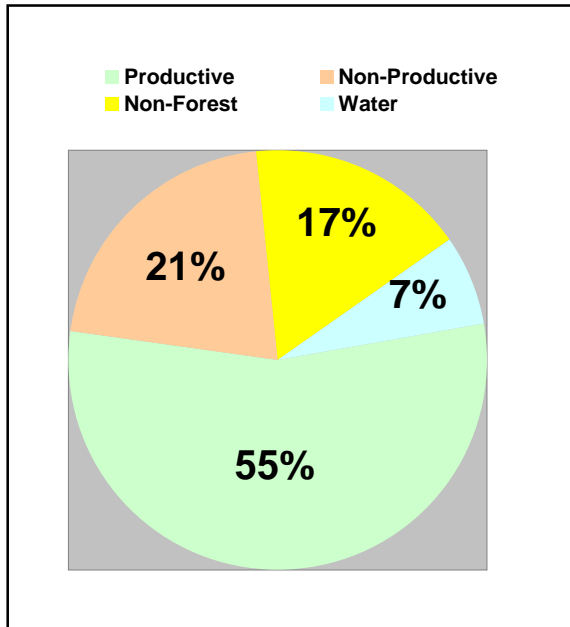


Figure 4 Land class breakout for all ownerships in District 9

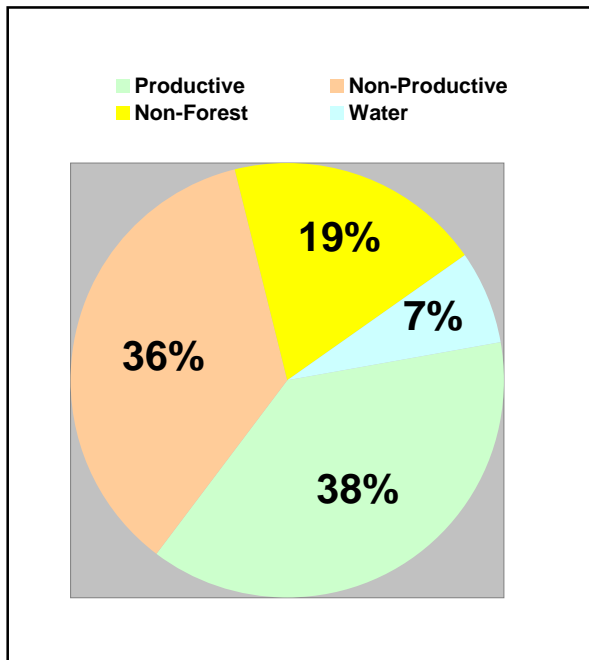


Figure 5 Land class breakout for all ownerships in District 16

## 1.5.2. Age Class

Individual tree ages in a stand can all be the same after fire or planting however, in most cases the ages vary. Foresters describe ages in terms of age classes which generally encompass 20 years. The age classes present in the zone are regenerating (age class 1, 0-20 years), immature (age class 2, 21-40 years), semi-mature (age class 3, 41-60 years), mature (age class 4, 61-80 years), and over mature (age class 5, 81-100 years), (age class 6, 100-120 years), (age class 7, 120+ years). The combined age class distribution in each district for the entire productive forest is shown in Figures 6 and 7. In general terms, the more balanced the age class distribution in a district, the higher the potential even flow sustained yield of timber can be because continuous timber supply is limited by the age class with the lowest area. The age class structure for District 9 has an abundance of area in the younger age classes with a slight dip at age class 4. All the other age classes are relatively balanced at 40 000 ha. The age class structure for District 16 is typical of that of the island with an abundance of area in the young and old age classes with a dip in the intermediate age classes. The age class structures for both districts are skewed toward CBPPL because that owner controls 58 percent of the area. Age class structures by owner and district will be discussed in more detail in each pertinent five year plan. The age class structures for Crown land in Districts 9 and 16 as well as strategies to rectify any imbalances or impacts on wood supply of poorly structured age classes will be presented in Section 3 of this plan.



Figure 6 Age class distribution for all ownerships in District 9



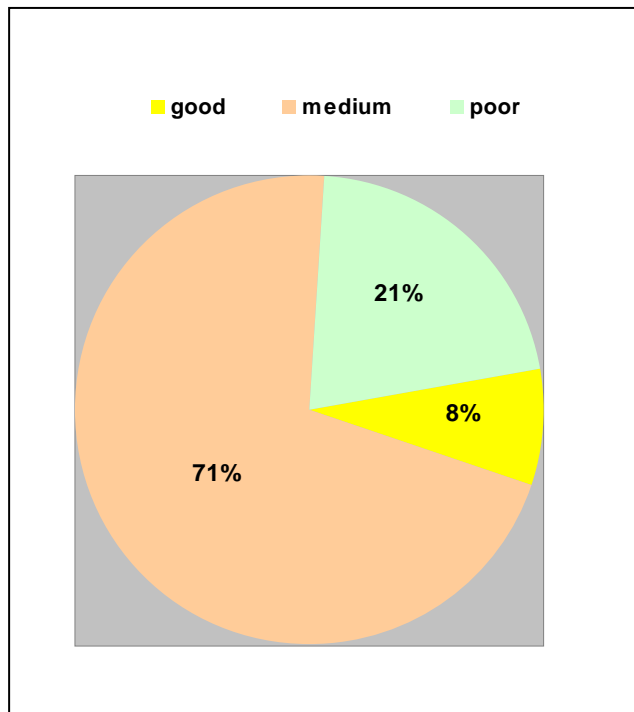
Figure 7 Age class distribution for all ownerships in District 16

### 1.5.3. Site Class

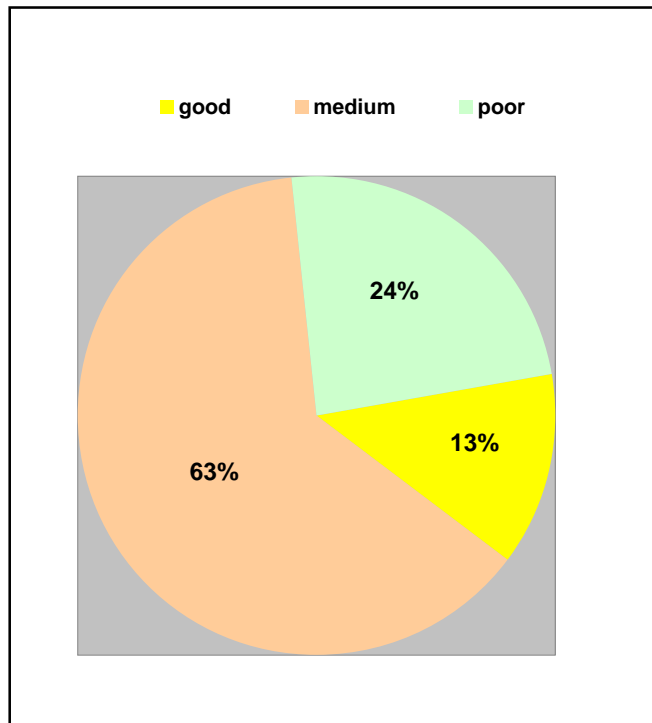
The productive forest in the zone is further sub-divided along a gradient of productivity ranging from poor to high site class. The site class is determined through air photo interpretation supplemented with field checks and is based primarily on the sites ability to produce timber. Site

capability is determined on a number of factors some of which include soil fertility, moisture regime and geographic (slope) position. Generally the balsam fir and softwood hardwood working groups occupy the better sites in the zone. The black spruce working groups dominate the very dry and very wet areas that are of poorer site quality.

The distribution of area of all ownerships combined by site class for each district is shown in Figures 8 and 9. This percentage distribution holds relatively true for individual ownerships with the exception of District 9 whereby the Crown has a higher proportion of poor sites and ACI has a higher proportion of goods sites. On average, good sites are capable of producing > 2.6 m<sup>3</sup>/ha/yr, medium sites 1.7 m<sup>3</sup>/ha/yr, and poor sites 0.8 m<sup>3</sup>/ha/yr.



**Figure 8 Site class breakdown for all ownerships in District 9**



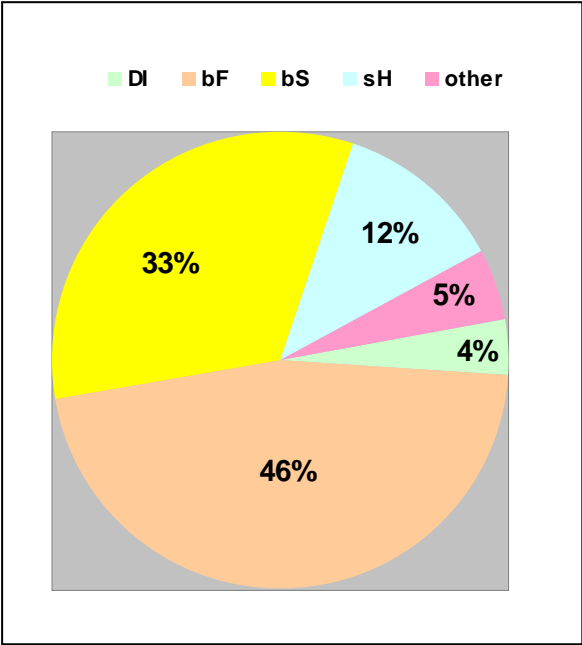
**Figure 9 Site class breakdown for all ownerships in District 16**

#### 1.5.4. Species and Working Group

Working group describes the dominant tree species present in a forest stand. This species may occupy 100 percent of crown closure of a stand or may be present in association with other species. The working group designation describes the stand in general terms based on the prevalent species whereby species composition describes specifically, the relative proportion of each individual tree species that make up a stand.

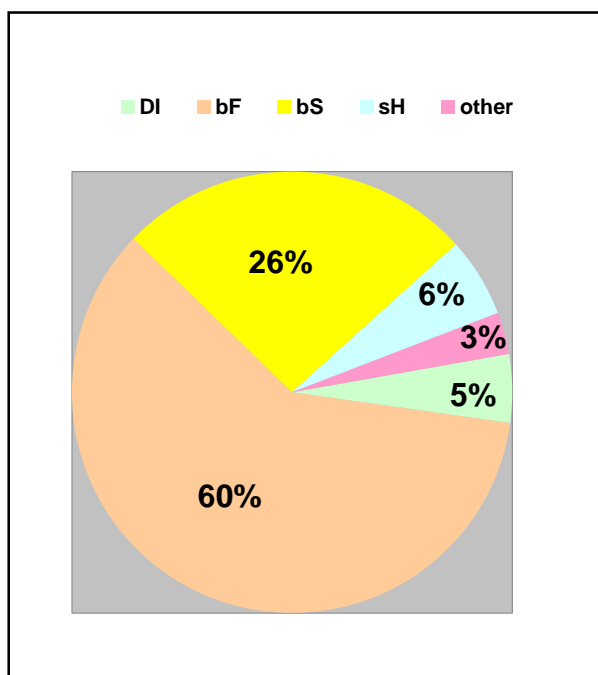
In the zone, the softwood working groups dominate accounting for over 90 percent of the productive forest. Balsam fir (bF) is by far the most prolific accounting for 60 percent of the working groups in District 16 and 46 percent in District 9 (Figures 10 and 11). Balsam fir can occur in pure stands or in association with one or more of black spruce, white spruce, white birch, trembling aspen, or larch in varying species compositions. The black spruce (bS) working

group is the second most abundant accounting for 26 and 33 percent in Districts 16 and 9 respectively. As with balsam fir, black spruce can occur as pure stands or in association with other species listed above. Softwood hardwood working groups occupy six and 12 percent of the productive forest area in Districts 16 and 9 respectively. This working group occurs as varying mixtures of fir, spruce, birch and aspen. The hardwood softwood (hS), and white birch (wB), trembling aspen (tA), white spruce (wS) and jack pine (jP) working groups occupy less than five percent of the productive forest in both districts. Approximately five percent of the productive forest is classed as disturbed (DI). Disturbances include harvesting, which accounts for most of the total, insect damage, fire, wind throw, and flooding. The relative percentages hold true for all ownerships in both districts.



**Figure 10 Working group breakdown for all ownerships in District 9**





**Figure 11 Working group breakdown for all ownerships in District 16**

### 1.5.5. Forest Disturbances

In the past 20-25 years approximately 150 000 ha have been disturbed by some means in the zone which represents 25 percent of the total productive forest. Harvesting has accounted for the largest portion of this disturbance at approximately 130 000 ha. Insect damage has occurred on over 10 000 ha with 10 percent in light (0-25 percent mortality), 10 percent in moderate (26-50 percent mortality), 10 percent in severe (51 -75 percent mortality) and 70 percent in extreme (76+percent mortality). Fire has disturbed over 11 000 ha, mainly in District 9 in the late 1980's and early 1990's. There has been a slight amount of mortality due to blow down. This usually occurs after another disturbance (like insect damage) has weakened a stand.

The main forest insects which have affected forests in the zone are the hemlock looper (1949, 1961, 1962, 1969, 1986-88, 1995, 1996), the spruce budworm (1956, 1978-80 to present at lower levels), the balsam woolly adelgid (1963, 1970-present) and the birch casebearer (1970-present).

To aid in the control of the hemlock looper, a chemical spray program was initiated in 1969. Since then the aerial application of insecticides has been used regularly as a management tool to control insect pests of balsam fir. In more recent years chemical insecticide use has been dropped in favour of the more environmentally benign bacillus thuringiensis (bT), a naturally occurring, biological control agent. Despite the use of insecticides, the hemlock looper, spruce budworm, and balsam fir sawfly continue to pose a significant threat to the forests of the zone due to the dominance of balsam fir. New infestations are likely to develop over the next 20 years. The balsam woolly adelgid also poses a threat to balsam fir. The dynamics of this insect and its potential impact on the forests, particularly in District 16, will be discussed a later section on silviculture prescriptions.

## 2. Past Activities

### 2.1. District 9

#### 2.1.1. Harvesting

##### 2.1.1.1. Commercial

Tables 4 and 5 summarize the commercial harvest in District 9 on crown and CBPP limits for 2012-2016. Commercial and domestic harvest was approximately 33 percent of the AAC for the period.

**Table 4 Summary of commercial harvest in District 9 on Crown land for 2012 to 2016**

District: 9		Core			Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood	
2012-2016		AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	Operational	Regulatory
<i>Swid</i>	2012	44772	10129					3367	
	2013	44772	11238					877	
	2014	44772	3326					0	
	2015	44772	15303					11999	
	2016	44772	20000					500	
	<i>Sub-total</i>								
		Core			Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood	
		AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	Operational	Regulatory
<i>#wid</i>	2012	3028	906					4790	
	2013	3028	1000						
	2014	3028	1065						
	2015	3028	0						
	2016	3028	500						
	<i>Sub-total</i>								
<b>District Total</b>									

**Table 5 Summary of commercial harvest in District 9 on CBPP limits for 2012 to 2016**

District: 9		Core				Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood		
2012-2016		AAC	Commercial	Deviation	Total	AAC	Commercial	Deviation	Total	Operational	Regulatory
Sw'd	2012	155800	785								2064
	2013	155800	11000								708
	2014	155800	4826								2239
	2015	155800	1887								903
	2016	155800	500								500
<b>Sub-total</b>											
District: 9		Core				Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood		
2012-2016		AAC	Commercial	Deviation	Total	AAC	Commercial	Deviation	Total	Operational	Regulatory
#w'd	2012	4200	666								2893
	2013	4200	491								2664
	2014	4200	2325								832
	2015	4200	1410								0
	2016	4200	1200								0
<b>Sub-total</b>											
<b>District Total</b>											

### 2.1.1.2. Domestic

Tables 6 and 7 summarize the domestic harvest in District 9 on Crown land and CBPPL limits for 2012 to 2016

**Table 6 Summary of domestic harvest in District 9 by Crown for 2012 to 2016**

District: 9		Core				Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood		
2012-2016		AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	Operational	Regulatory
Sw'd	2012	36000	27522								
	2013	36000	22321								
	2014	36000	26100								
	2015	36000	25685								
	2016	36000	25000								
<b>Sub-total</b>											
District: 9		Core				Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood		
2012-2016		AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	Operational	Regulatory
#w'd	2012	2000									6971
	2013	2000									6165
	2014	2000									4185
	2015	2000									3074
	2016	2000									3000
<b>Sub-total</b>											
<b>District Total</b>											

**Table 7 Summary of domestic harvest in District 9 on CBPPL limits for 2012 to 2016**

District: 9 2012-2016		Core				Operational (Available)				Non-AAC Wood
		AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	Operational/Regulatory
Swd	2012	155800	6032							150
	2013	155800	5689							0
	2014	155800	6120							285
	2015	155800	5127							738
	2016	155800	5500							500
<b>Sub-total</b>										
		Core				Operational (Available)				Non-AAC Wood
		AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	Operational/Regulatory
Hwd	2012	4200								
	2013	4200								2430
	2014	4200								
	2015	4200								3518
	2016	4200								3000
<b>Sub-total</b>										
<b>District Total</b>										

## 2.1.2. Silviculture

Table 8 summarizes the completed silviculture treatments for the past planning period.

**Table 8 Summary of silviculture treatments on in District 9 from 2012 to 2016**

Treatment Type	Area (ha)	
	Proposed	Treated
Pre Commercial Thinning	1849	0
Site Preparation CBPPL	700	80.47
Site Preparation Crown	300	355.53
Planting CBPPL	0	116.38
Planting Crown	0	436.39
Commercial Thinning	0	0

Cone Collection	0	0
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### 2.1.3. Road Construction

Table 9 summarizes forest access road construction in District 9 for the period 2012-2016.

**Table 9 Summary of access roads constructed in District 9 from 2012 to 2016**

Roads	
Proposed	Constructed (km)
33.5	23.1

### 2.1.4. Natural Disturbance

#### 2.1.4.1. Fire

District 9 has had a very infrequent fire history due to its relatively long winters and abundant precipitation. There were no significant fires during the last planning period.

#### 2.1.4.2. Insect

There was minimal insect activity in the last 5 years.

### 2.1.5. District 16

## 2.1.6. Harvesting

### 2.1.6.1. Commercial

Tables 10 and 11 summarize the commercial harvest in District 16 on crown and CBPPL limits for 2012-2016. Commercial and domestic harvest approximately 40 percent the AAC for the period.

**Table 10 Summary of commercial harvest in District 16 by Crown for 2012 to 2016**

District:16		Core			Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood
2012-2016		AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	Operational/Regulatory
Swed			36600			430		28370
				36600			430	28370
<b>Sub-total</b>			<b>36600</b>	<b>36600</b>		<b>430</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>28370</b>
District:16		Core			Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood
2012-2016		AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	Operational/Regulatory
Hwd						150		250
							150	250
<b>Sub-total</b>						<b>150</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>District Total</b>			<b>36600</b>	<b>36600</b>		<b>580</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>28620</b>

**Table 11 Summary of commercial harvest in District 16 on CBPPL limits for 2012 to 2016**

District:16		Core			Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood
2012-2016		AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	Operational/Regulatory
Swed			114430					
				114430				
<b>Sub-total</b>			<b>114430</b>	<b>114430</b>				
District:16		Core			Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood
2012-2016		AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	AAC	Commercial Deviation	Total	Operational/Regulatory
Hwd						1800		
							1800	
<b>Sub-total</b>						<b>1800</b>	<b>1800</b>	
<b>District Total</b>			<b>114430</b>	<b>114430</b>		<b>1800</b>	<b>1800</b>	

## 2.1.6.2. Domestic

Tables 12 and 13 summarize the domestic harvest in District 16 on Crown and CBPPL limits for 2012 to 2016

**Table 12 Summary of domestic harvest in District 16 by Crown for 2012 to 2016**

District:16		Core				Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood		
2012-2016		AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	Operational	Regulatory
Swd			17,250		17,250		3,291		3,291		8,051
	<i>Sub-total</i>		17,250		17,250		3,291		3,291		8,051
		Core				Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood		
		AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	Operational	Regulatory
#wd							3,806		3,806		1,420
	<i>Sub-total</i>						3,806		3,806		1,420
<b>District Total</b>			17,250		17,250		7,097		7,097		9,471

**Table 13 Summary of domestic harvest in District 16 on CBPPL limits for 2012 to 2016**

District:16		Core				Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood		
2012-2016		AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	Operational	Regulatory
Swd			9,725		9,725		1,917		1,917		
	<i>Sub-total</i>		9,725		9,725		1,917		1,917		
		Core				Operational (Available)			Non-AAC Wood		
		AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	AAC	Domestic	Deviation	Total	Operational	Regulatory
#wd							2,145		2,145		
	<i>Sub-total</i>						2,145		2,145		

## 2.1.7. Silviculture

Table 14 summarizes the completed silviculture treatments for the past planning period.



**Table 14 Summary of silviculture treatments in District 16 from 2012 to 2016**

Treatment Type	Area (ha)	
	Proposed	Treated
Pre Commercial Thinning	N/A	N/A
Site Preparation	671 ha	362.25 ha
Planting (Crown)	700.8 ha	640.59 ha
Planting (CBPPL)	136.31 ha	136
Commercial Thinning	N/A	N/A
Cone Collection	0	120 Sacks NS

## 2.1.8. Road Construction

There were no primary forest access roads proposed or completed for the last five years. All roads constructed were secondary or tertiary.

**Table 15 Summary of primary access roads constructed in District 16 from 2012 to 2016**

Roads	
Proposed	Constructed (km)
0	0

## 2.1.9. Natural Disturbance

### 2.1.9.1. Fire

District 16 has had a very infrequent fire history due to its relatively long winters and abundant precipitation. There were no significant fires during the last planning period.

### 2.1.9.2. Insect

There was minimal insect activity in the last 5 years.

## 3. Timber Supply Analysis

### 3.1. Introduction

The province reviews its timber supply every five years in order to account for any changes in forest land base, growth rates, and management strategies. This schedule is consistent with the Forestry Act, 1990, which established management by forest management district and mandates that a wood supply analysis be completed every five years. The result of this analysis is a new set of annual allowable cuts (AAC's) for each forest management district. These AAC's are defined as the maximum annual rate at which timber can be harvested at a sustainable level indefinitely into the future (in reality, the AAC figures are applicable for a period of 160 years into the future and not infinity). Annual allowable cuts must be calculated on a district basis, however when "rolled up" provide us with the annual allowable harvest level for the island

### 3.2. Guiding Principles and Policy Direction

The key underlying principles that guided this analysis were: (i) the AAC must be sustainable; (ii) the level of uncertainty (risk) associated with the AAC must be minimized by using empirical information wherever possible; (iii) there must be conformity between information and assumptions used in the analysis and actions and decisions taken on the ground; (iv) the analysis must be consistent with other forest values and objectives; and (v) the timber supply calculation must consider economic factors, not solely the physical supply of timber.

In concert with establishing sustainable timber harvest levels, legislation requires that harvesting not exceed the established AAC's. Likewise, government's policy is to optimize forest industry opportunities from the sustainable fiber supply. Government also requires consultation be conducted during the timber analysis. In this analysis, public input was achieved through the district managers and, in some cases, planning teams. The forest industry was consulted directly throughout the process. As well, there was a 30 day consultation process whereby a draft of the gross AAC's and methodology was published on the government web site for public review and comment.

### 3.3. Factors Affecting Timber Supply

The forests of insular Newfoundland are very variable in terms of age distribution. Typically, there are significant amounts of mature/over-mature forest and regenerating forest, and limited intermediate aged forests. This imbalance is not unusual in a boreal forest where cyclic catastrophic disturbances are common.

The insufficient amount of intermediate age forest on the island is one of the most important factors influencing AAC's therefore it is the basis for many of our forest management strategies. Essentially a matrix of measures is employed which is designed to fill the gap in the age structure. These range from an aggressive forest protection program to keep the mature and over-mature stands alive as long as possible so that they can be harvested before they collapse naturally, harvesting programs that attempt to exclusively target the oldest stands first in order to minimize the harvesting pressure on the naturally weak intermediate age classes, and thinning of the regenerating forest so that it becomes operable at an earlier age.

Another important aspect of the province's forest that poses a challenge to forest managers is the natural fragmentation of the resource. The province's landscape is carved by many ponds, bogs, rivers, streams, and rock outcrops resulting in relatively small pockets of timber scattered across the landscape. This makes the determination of an economic timber supply very challenging given that each stand has unique economic characteristics.

Arguably the most important factor affecting present and future AAC's is the land base. The land base available for forest activity is constantly being eroded by other users. There is an approximate correlation between AAC and land base in that a one percent loss of land base represents a one percent drop in AAC. It is important therefore that we minimize loss to the forest land base and continue to explore ways to grow more volume on the existing land base to mitigate this loss.

### 3.4. Timber Supply Analysis

In 2014, the Forest Service began another review of the provincial timber supply which was completed in 2016. Consistent with department's vision, the analysis was structured to determine sustainable timber supplies while respecting a multitude of social, economic and environmental objectives. Timber supply, in this context, refers to the rate at which timber is made available for harvesting on a sustainable basis.

The determination of supply (represented as AAC's) involved the use of computer models that forecast the sustainability of possible AAC levels. These models require three basic inputs. First, a description of the current state of the forest (forest characterization and availability), second, the growth rates associated with the current forest, and third, the management strategies applied to the forest. To arrive at these basic inputs requires careful and detailed consideration of a broad range of both timber and non-timber values. More specifically, the following was considered in determining the sustainable timber supply.

#### 3.4.1. Forest Characterization

To get a current description of the forest resource (or stock), the province has invested significant resources into creating and maintaining a Provincial Forest Inventory. An estimate of forest stock is kept current through an update program which is conducted each year to account for all natural

and man-made disturbances such as fire, insects, and harvesting, and any enhancement programs such as tree planting and pre-commercial thinning. Also, each stand in the forest inventory is updated to reflect any yield changes that may have occurred since the previous inventory update.

### 3.4.2. Land Availability

The updated Forest Inventory was reviewed and classified at the stand level on the basis of the availability of each stand for harvest. The classification system consists of two broad classes; core - available for harvest under normal conditions, and operationally constrained (OC) - has restrictions for harvesting due to economic constraints. The OC has been further subdivided into a) can be harvested with reasonable economic restrictions (expensive wood) and b) highly unlikely to be harvested under current economic conditions. Only the former portion of OC is used to calculate an AAC for that category. The categories associated with the portion of OC land, which are deemed unavailable for harvest, incorporates a broad range of timber and non-timber values. These values include:

#### 3.4.2.1. Non-Timber Related

Consideration of these non-timber values had a direct impact on provincial AAC's. It is obvious that as the amount of productive forest land available for timber management drops, so too will the AAC. With the current restrictions, the AAC land base (area where harvesting operations can occur) is only 17% of the total landmass on the island or 66% of the total productive forest land base. In any one year, less than 1% of the productive forest land base is influenced by harvesting operations.

##### 3.4.2.1.1. No-Cut Buffer Zones

The province has guidelines that require all water bodies (visible on a 1:50,000 map sheet) be given a minimum 20 meter (from waters edge) uncut buffer. In addition to these legislated water

buffers, District Ecosystem Managers, in consultation with planning teams, have increased buffer zone widths beyond the 20 meter minimum to protect special values such as; salmon spawning areas, cabin development areas, aesthetic areas, wildlife habitat, outfitting camps, etc.

#### 3.4.2.1.2. Protected Areas

All established and proposed protected areas under the Natural Areas Systems Plan are removed from the AAC calculations.

#### 3.4.2.2. Timber Related

Compounding the effect of downward pressure on the AAC, the department also reduces the AAC's by taking into account other potential losses of timber:

##### 3.4.2.2.1. Insect/Fire/Disease Losses

The department reduces AAC's to account for anticipated future losses resulting from insects, disease and fire using historical information.

##### 3.4.2.2.2. Logging Losses

Surveys of recent harvested areas are conducted each summer throughout the province to determine the quantity and quality of fiber remaining. The estimates of loss from these surveys are used to reduce the AAC.

##### 3.4.2.2.3. Operational Constraints

Areas that are inaccessible (surrounded by bogs or hills), timber on steep slopes, and low volume stands are removed from the core AAC calculation up front. Also, significant adjustments are applied to the provincial forest inventory for stands deemed operable in the timber analysis but left unharvested within operating areas. The reasons for this are linked to the character of Newfoundland's forests; low volume, steep slopes, rough terrain, and excessively wet ground conditions etc.

Again, all these timber and non-timber related issues are applied directly in the AAC calculation to ensure harvest levels do not exceed the sustainable level. With the introduction of new values and the broader application of current values, the pressure on future AAC's will continue to increase. These factors and their impacts on timber supply will be further discussed in section 3.5.

### 3.4.3. Growth Forecasting

A key requirement for forecasting future wood supply is an understanding of how forest stands grow and develop through time. That is, as a forest stand develops, how much merchantable (i.e. harvestable) volume does it carry at any given point? These yield forecasts (referred to as yield curves) are required for each type of forest stand (called a stratum) comprising the forest under consideration. In Newfoundland there are dozens of distinct forest strata for which separate yield curves are required. These are defined by the tree species in question (e.g., balsam fir, black spruce), the site quality (e.g., good, medium, poor), the geographic region (e.g., the Northern Peninsula, Western Newfoundland) and other factors likely to affect yield.

Yield curves are a key element in a wood supply analysis. In fact, the validity, or "usefulness", of the wood supply analysis is determined by the truth, or "correctness", of the yield forecasts. While there is no way of predicting with certainty how stands will actually grow in the future, care must be taken to ensure that the yield projections used are realistic and reasonable. Respecting the sensitivity and importance of these forecasts, the FAA has directed a large

portion of its resources and time into developing realistic yield curves. Two growth models were used, one for projecting stand development under natural conditions and the other for projecting growth under managed (i.e., silviculturally enhanced) conditions. Tree and stand development data generated from the FAA's forest inventory program were used to make stand growth predictions. These projections were then checked against empirical data from thousands of temporary plots established throughout the island. If the projections varied from the real life evidence, the curves were adjusted to make them more accurate.

In this analysis, yield curves were developed on an ecoregion basis. As well, special yield curve sets were developed for defined geographic areas with demonstrated uniqueness. These included areas where chronic insect activity is ongoing and areas that have unique growth characteristics.

### 3.4.4. Management Strategies

With the current state of the forest described and the yield forecasts developed, the next step was to design a management strategy for each sector of the forest. The key objective was to maximize long term AAC while at the same time taking into account other forest values. This involved developing strategies that minimize fiber losses, and enhance forest sustainability.

#### 3.4.4.1. Harvest Flow Constraints

An even-flow harvest constraint was used in the analysis to maximize the sustainable harvest level. This strategy produced the maximum even flow harvest but resulted in less than optimum economic use of the forest resource. If no even flow constraint is used and harvest levels are permitted to fluctuate in response to market value, the overall economic potential of the forest will increase. However, the lower economic potential is offset by stability in mills and employment. .



### 3.4.4.2. Spatial Analysis

A major improvement in the wood supply analysis is the introduction of manual harvest scheduling. In earlier analyses the harvest scheduling was an automated process where the software picked the stands to be harvested over the 25 years based on user supplied criteria. While this approach was an improvement over previous wood supply analysis where no harvest scheduling was done, the software used cannot realistically know all the operational restrictions within a forest management district. In the manual process, the on the ground conditions that restrict harvesting are accounted for when a spatial harvest schedule is defined. The proposed harvest schedule is then played back through the modeling software to see if it is sustainable and see if non-timber objectives are met. In most case, this harvest schedule has to go through several cycles before an acceptable harvest schedule could be found. The spatial arrangement of areas for timber harvesting is especially challenging in this province because of the natural fragmentation of our forests. This model provided forest planners with the ability to mimic realistic timber harvest schedules based on current practices and to identify other forest stands that are not as accessible for harvesting.

Manual harvest scheduling has several major benefits. First, it fosters the long term sustainability of our AAC's by mimicking current harvest practices and accounting for actual on the ground conditions that delay or restrict the harvesting of stands. These restrictions, which were previously unaccounted for, have made our past AAC's higher than was realistically sustainable. Secondly, the mapped 25 year harvest schedules build credibility into the forest management process. A common misconception is that the province is running out of wood and soon will not be able to support existing forest industries. Every stand that will be harvested over the next 25 years must already be in the second (20-40 years old) or third (41-60) age class and can be easily identified and highlighted on the harvest schedule maps. Being able to see the wood that will be harvested in the future will help reassure people that the resource is being used in a responsible manner. Next, harvest scheduling will help integrate the management of other forest resource values into timber management planning. All forest values can be tied directly to discreet forest areas, and these forest areas can be the link that allows the many different forest

values to be managed simultaneously. The forested areas needed for each resource can be mapped and potential conflicts can be addressed before they become an issue. Finally, the harvest schedule maps developed for the wood supply analysis can be a starting point for the 5 year planning process, especially the first two periods. The harvest schedule maps, if done correctly, can help reduce the work of the 5 year planning process. One point to note is that harvest scheduling is only done for the core land base. The operationally constrained AAC, for the most part, is opportunistic at best and is harvested only if extra effort is applied. It is not scheduled because of the uncertainty of obtaining extra funding for access and harvesting.

#### 3.4.4.3. Planning Horizons

Given the province's commitment to long term sustainability of our forest resource, timber supplies were projected 160 years (equivalent to two forest rotations) into the future to ensure actions and strategies applied today will result in a sustainable forest in the future. Long term planning is fundamental in timber supply forecasting.

#### 3.4.4.4. Operable Growing Stock Buffer

The province imposed an operable growing stock constraint in the analysis to ensure the sustainability of calculated timber supplies. The constraint imposes a condition that in any period there must be a minimum operable growing stock of two times the harvest level on the landscape. In other words, for every hectare that is harvested another harvestable hectare must exist on the landscape. The requirement for a growing stock buffer is based on a number of factors. First, several of our non-timber objectives are not explicitly accounted for in our planning process and therefore will require a growing stock buffer to achieve them. Second, we are unable to follow optimum harvest schedules explicitly due to operational restrictions on harvesting. Third, the province is not willing to assume high risk with the sustainability of the

timber supply. For these reasons a growing stock constraint of two times was used. This constraint was used in concert with harvest scheduling to help map out a reasonable harvest for the next 25 years.

#### 3.4.4.5. Old Forest Targets

Consistent with our ecosystem policy, the province introduced into the analysis an old forest target that at least 15 percent of forests be older than 80 years. There is approximately one percent of the productive landbase disturbed by harvesting each year. This initiative was designed to provide a coarse filter approach to maintaining representative forest structure. It ensures the presence of certain amounts of old forest across the landscape into the future. With advances in modeling, this target can now be tracked across a district rather than a single ownership. This has resulted in this strategy being less restrictive than the last analysis. As well, the site class distribution of the older forest reserve is being examined in an attempt to make it representative of each ecoregion and subregion.

#### 3.4.4.6. Operability Limits

Operability limits are the time windows in which forest management actions such as harvesting can be undertaken within forest stands. Stand growth development as measured in stand merchantable timber volume and individual piece size of trees determine a stands readiness for harvest. In some young stands, one can have acceptable harvest volumes, but still have trees that are too small to harvest. In the 2006 wood supply analysis both stand volume and tree size were used to determine the earliest age when a stand could be initially harvested. In addition to determining the absolute earliest age a stand can be harvested, it was recognized that not all stands on the same site develop exactly the at the same rate. A small portion of a stand develops faster (10 percent); a small portion will lag behind (30 percent); with the bulk of the stand type (60 percent) representing the average condition. The ending operability limits or the last age in which a stand can be harvested before it becomes too old to harvest is solely determined on a

minimum stand volume of between 60 to 80 m<sup>3</sup>/ha, after which that stand does not have enough volume to make it economical to harvest. It should be noted that while the operability limits define the extreme end points of when stands can be harvested, very few stands are ever harvested at these extreme points. In order to meet other non-timber objectives and in order to maximize the total volume of wood harvested the model schedules stands to harvest somewhere inside the operability limit window.

#### 3.4.4.7. Silviculture

Silviculture is one of the main forest management tools available to forest managers when they are analyzing the many different future forests that are generated using the wood supply modelling software. The silvicultural actions use in the 2016 analysis include; 1) precommercial thinning of balsam fir, black spruce, and softwood hardwood stands, 2) full plant of any areas that do not regenerate naturally with either white spruce, black spruce, or Norway spruce, and 3) gap planting of either black spruce or balsam fir stands with either white spruce or black spruce. Gap plant is the filling of “holes” within stands that have inadequate natural regeneration of either balsam fir or black spruce. The thinning levels (ha) for districts 9 and 16 used in the analysis were 25 and 0 ha respectively. The planting levels (ha) for districts 9 and 16 used in the analysis were 100 and 75 ha respectively.

### 3.5. Inventory Adjustments

One of the limitations of the current wood supply model is its inability to account for volume depletions outside of what is reported for harvesting operations. The model produces a gross merchantable volume (GMV) figure which needs to be adjusted to account for volume losses as a result of; fire, insects and disease, timber utilization practices and the presence of stand remnants. In previous analyses the lack of province wide digital stand information, the absence of computer tools and the small number of people involved with the wood supply analysis, resulted in a high degree of uncertainty around values derived for each depletion. It was

recognized that a need existed to study each component more intensely and to expand the time frame and staff responsible for such an analysis. Such was the task of the Forest Engineering and Industry Services Division whose staff, over a seven year period, completed an analysis of the individual components.

### 3.5.1. Fire

An estimate of productive area loss as a result of fire was based on an analysis of the historical fire statistics maintained by the FAA. The fire and insect deduction for operations in both District 9 and District 16 was 2 percent.

### 3.5.2. Insects

An aerial mortality survey was completed on areas with historically high insect infestations. This information along with a GIS analysis of areas salvaged enabled the FAA to determine the amount of productive area lost to insect mortality each year. These numbers were in turn reviewed by district managers and adjustments were made for local conditions. The fire and insect deduction for operations in both District 9 and District 16 was 2 percent.

### 3.5.3. Yield Comparison

Information for this adjustment was derived by comparing the anticipated volume from an operating area by using the yield curves and operability limits as specified in the timber supply analysis with the actual volume that was attained after harvesting. The difference between the anticipated harvest volume and the actual harvest volume is the deduction applied for yield. The yield deduction for both District 9 and 16 was 16 percent

The total inventory adjustment for both District 9 and 16 was 18 percent

## 3.6. Results

### 3.6.1. District 9

Table 11 summarizes the result of the 2016 timber supply analysis results for District 9. There was a slight decrease in the AAC due to rationalization of the available timber stands in the District. In this current wood supply a number of small isolated stands were removed from the landbase to reflect a more realistic picture of stands that could be possibly harvested.

**Table 16 Annual Allowable Cut results for 2016 for Crown Land District 9**

Core Softwood (m3)	Operationally Constrained Softwood (m3)	Softwood Domestic (m3)	Core Hardwood (m3)	Operationally Constrained Hardwood (m3)	Hardwood Domestic (m3)
38,376	1968	53874	2542	0	0

#### 3.6.1.1. Sensitivity Analysis

In the 2016 timber supply analysis, a number of management objectives like, reserve of operable growing stock, 81+ forest targets, and operability limits were used. Since these were new, a significant effort was put into sensitivity analysis to determine the impact of these objectives. The more sensitive objectives were thoroughly evaluated and subcommittees were formed to gather more information to refine any assumptions used. These refined assumptions were used as a basis for this analysis therefore little sensitivity analysis is needed.

The silviculture targets used were 100 hectares of planting and 25 hectares of thinning. While doing maximum silviculture would give an increase in AAC, operational and monetary

constraints render this option unrealistic. Similarly, increased yield would give a higher AAC, but current yield curves have been constructed using the best available data so a further increase in unwarranted. Lowering the operability limits would also increase the AAC. This would represent a significant and unwarranted risk however, if stands situated at the lower end of operability are not operationally ready when queued for harvest.

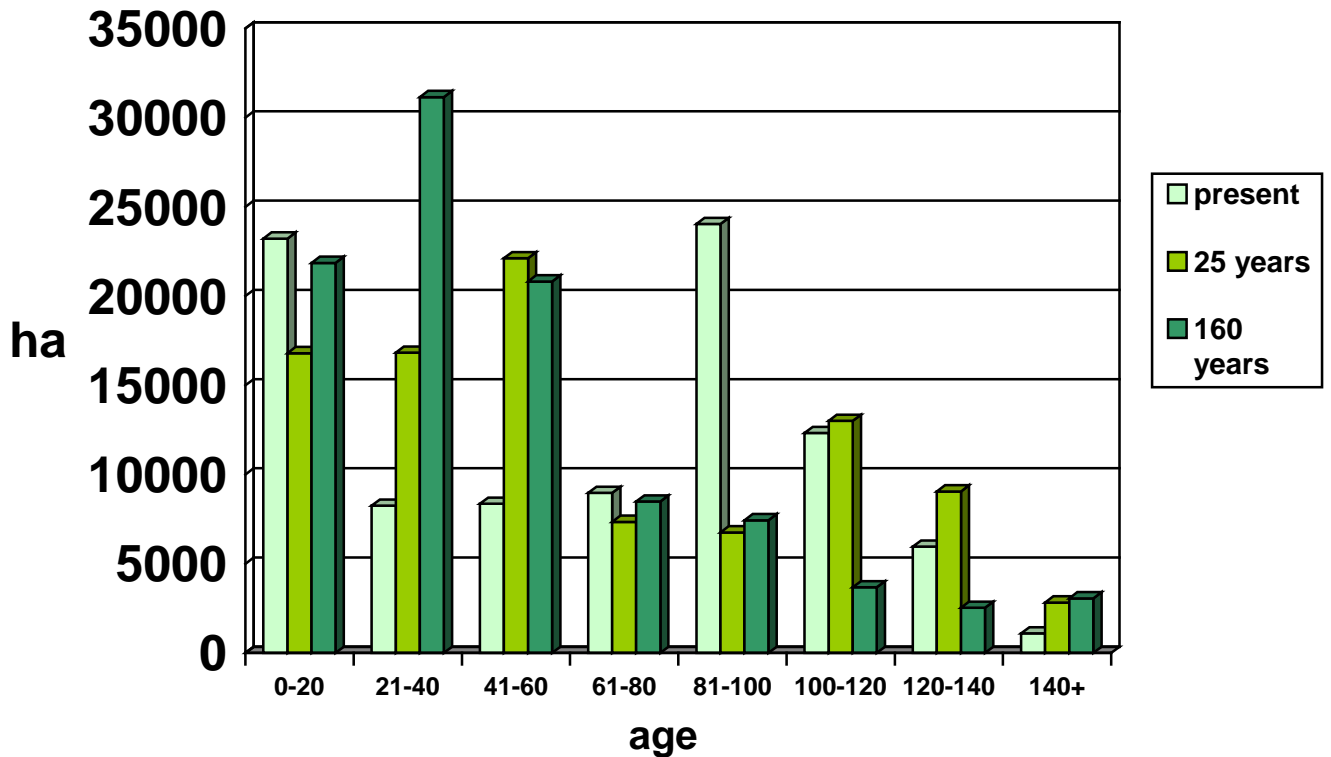
The 81+ target was not constraining for this analysis. The 15 percent target was maintained or exceeded for the full analysis period. The harvest scheduling was the most constraining objective. This is due mainly to the natural fragmentation of our forest and to the limitations in baseline data when describing the forest. This limitation is due to the way we describe the forest into 20 year age classes and the way the model uses 5 year age classes.

There has been a slight improvement to the inventory adjustments from the last analysis. Since these adjustments are used to convert from gross to net AAC there is a direct relationship eg. a one percent drop in inventory adjustment represents a one percent gain in net AAC. For this reason a significant effort must be made to keep this adjustment to a minimum.

### 3.6.1.2. Forest Composition and Structure Change

A positive advancement with the use of computer models is the ability to track the forest through time. This ability allows the user to evaluate the effects of management activities on the structure of the forest at any point in the simulation period. For this analysis, age and species composition through working group was tracked at three time intervals 1. time 0 (current forest) 2. time 25 (after the 25 year harvest schedule) and 3. time 160 (at the end of the simulation period).

Figure 12 shows the change in total forest age on Crown land in District 9 by 20 year age classes for the simulation period. The age distribution in all classes is well distributed throughout the



**Figure 12 Change in age class structure in on Crown Land District 9 for the 160 year simulation period.**

three comparison periods during the simulation. There are shifts in age classes from period to period as a result of natural progression as stands age, however, overall representation is balanced. The 81+ forest target ensures that the forest will be well represented in all age classes through time.

There is insignificant change in the balsam fir, black spruce, softwood hardwood, and hardwood softwood working groups as a result of forest management activities on Crown Land for the next 25 years. There is an approximate 25 percent decrease in the balsam fir working and corresponding 25 percent increase in the black spruce working group at the end of the simulation period however. The major reason for this is that the planting program is geared toward spruce. This change takes place slowly however because we are only planting 100 hectares per year.



There is also a decrease in the hardwood dominated stands at the end of the simulation period. This change must be monitored and corrective action taken if we are to continue to move into the management of hardwoods and preserve species diversity.

### 3.6.2. District 16

Table 12 summarizes the result of the timber supply analysis for District 16. There has been an increase of approximately 33 percent in the overall softwood AAC from the 2011 analysis. This can be directly attributed to a new inventory.

**Table 17 Annual Allowable Cut results for Crown Land District 16.**

Core Softwood (m3)	Operationally Constrained Softwood (m3)	Softwood Domestic (m3)	Core Hardwood M3	Operationally Constrained Hardwood (m3)	Hardwood Domestic (m3)
14596	54940	18696	205	82	205

#### 3.6.2.1. Sensitivity Analysis

The sensitivity analysis for District 16 is the same as that listed in section 3.6.1.1 for District 9 with the same results. The silvicultural inputs for planting and thinning are 75 and 0 ha respectively.

#### 3.6.2.2. Forest Composition and Structure Change

Figure 13 shows the change in total forest age on Crown land in District 16 by 20 year age classes for the simulation period. The age distribution in all classes is well distributed throughout the three comparison periods during the simulation. There are shifts in age classes from period to period as a result of natural progression as stands age, however, overall representation is balanced. The 81+ forest target ensures that the forest will be well represented in all age classes through time. Of particular note is the decrease in the area in the 81-100, 100-120, and 120-140 age classes and increase in the 140+ age class at the end of the simulation period. This is a result of the OC stands in the Main River not being harvested and tracking along their yield curves. There is a special set of yield curves developed for the Main River area which reflect the unique nature of the gap replacement forest as described in section 1.5.2.3.1. These curve “flat line” in volume after 140 years and continue on in perpetuity which simulates the forest of the area that never breaks up. Normally, after stands are harvested they are regenerated and revert back to the first age class.

As with Crown Land in District 9, there is very little change in area of all working groups over the first 25 years of the simulation period. There is however an approximate 25 percent increase in the balsam fir working group and a corresponding decrease in black spruce at the end of the simulation period. This is particularly worrisome given the ever increasing presence of balsam woolly adelgid mentioned earlier. This trend will need to be monitored and perhaps a more aggressive planting program with spruce is needed to mitigate this shift and if we are to preserve species diversity.

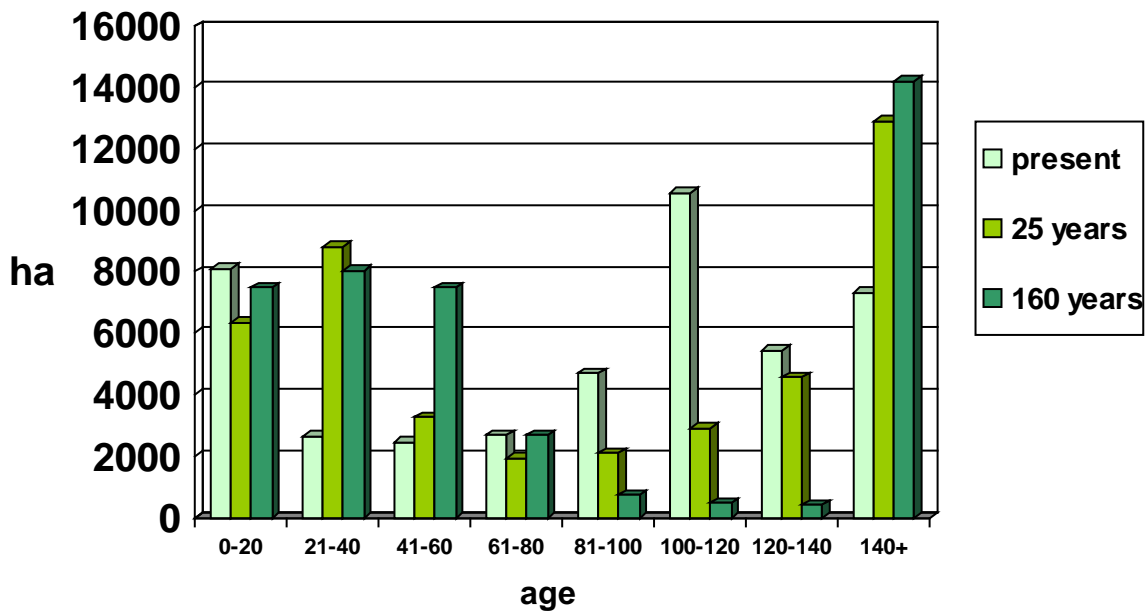


Figure 13 Change in age class structure on Crown Land in District 16 for the 160 year simulation period.

## 4. Values

### 4.1. Guiding Principles of Sustainability

There are five guiding principles of overall sustainability; environmental, economic, political, social, and cultural sustainability.

Environmental sustainability looks directly at ecosystem health, both now and in the long run. Ecosystem health is determined by such factors as ecosystem integrity, biodiversity, productive capacity, and resiliency as previously discussed. The five year operating plan must ensure that these factors are intact or there would be very few values left to manage.

Economic sustainability demands that forest resources be managed and distributed efficiently and equitably among the stakeholders, within the capacity and limits of the forest ecosystem.

Economic development has been given top priority by many of Newfoundland's people and their representative, the government. This will probably remain the case until the economy improves. However, economic development should not proceed without the incorporation of the other factors into the decision making process.

Political sustainability refers to the goals and management objectives being applicable, administrable, and practical. These goals and objectives must then maintain these qualities well into the future with the aid of public input and support.

Social sustainability means fairness and equity to all stakeholders. The forest management strategy should not jeopardize the basic needs of the public; therefore, public involvement and awareness, participation, and decision-making clout are a necessity.

Cultural sustainability is attained by applying Newfoundland's culture to the planning process. A forest management strategy cannot be successful without allowances within the strategy for traditional access and use of the land. For generations, many of Newfoundland's public has had free range in our pristine wilderness, a fact that can not be ignored when planning for the zone.

All are key interlocking components and each must be maintained if sustainable development is to be achieved.

## 4.2. Value Description

The forest ecosystems of the zone provide a wide range of values to different individuals and groups. These include consumptive values such as timber products, hunting, trapping, sport fishing, and berry picking, and non-consumptive values like skiing, snowmobiling, hiking, and bird watching. Also, there are intrinsic and intangible values such as a feeling of wilderness and peace which some people describe as spiritual. Although difficult to spatially describe or quantitatively measure, these spiritual values are considered to be a product or an accumulation of all values. Other values such as

water quality, parks and protected areas etc. provide for the protection of the forest ecosystems which can enhance the other values listed above.

Many of the values in the zone were identified by this or previous planning teams. Presentations of pertinent information on each value by knowledgeable individuals or groups provided stakeholders with relevant information to make informed decisions. Other values, while not specifically outlined by the planning team, are also identified and discussed to provide a more complete description of the range of values found in the zone. The following represents a framework for characterizing values in a clear and consistent manner. This approach consists of three components:

### **Characterization**

- Description: Why the value is important, types of activities, intensity, spatial extent, employment, etc.
- Data in support: Statistical references.

### **Critical Elements**

- Forest Features: Elements at risk from harvesting or enhanced by harvesting (viewscales, adjacency to water, mountains, habitat, wilderness ambiance, road access, etc.)

### **Guiding Principles**

A guiding principle is defined as "a fixed or predetermined policy or mode of action". These 'modes of action' would be implemented in the five year plan in the form of:

1. policies that should be in place to protect or enhance the resource value;
2. methods for negotiation or inclusion of other stakeholders in resolving potential conflicts;
3. special management provisions/strategies - such as buffer zone consideration, temporal operating periods, modified harvesting, or a best management policy; and/or

4. models and/or forecasting strategies to determine economic contribution, biodiversity impact, or community sustainability

Each individual value was discussed both at the strategic and operational level. Strategic level information (characterization, critical elements, and guiding principles) are the focus of discussion in this section. They provide a mechanism to resolve conflicts that might arise throughout or after the five year planning process. Where possible, the physical location of the value on the landscape (operational level) was also identified during the discussion of each value. This will help facilitate the preparation of the five year operating plan by identifying potential areas of conflicting use early into the process.

In many instances, the EPG's (Appendix 1) form the guiding principles for a value. Quite often the spatial extent or location of all values is not known (eg., raptor nests). Specific guidelines are still listed in order to provide a direction or course of action when and if these values are encountered.

## 4.2.1. Biotic Values

### 4.2.1.1. Big Game

#### 4.2.1.1.1. Moose

**Characterization:**

Moose are not native to the island. A pair was introduced to Gander Bay in 1878 and two pairs were introduced to Howley in 1904 (Northcott, 1980). Today, moose are distributed throughout the island and the population is estimated to be about 125,000 - 140,000.

Currently, moose are managed on an area/quota system in the province. The island is divided into 50 management areas and license quotas are set annually for each area. Quotas are set based

upon the management objective for each area (i.e., whether it is desired that the population increase, decrease or stabilize). Generally, if an area has too high of a moose population, managers will increase quotas to bring down the population in order to prevent damage to the habitat. However, if the habitat is in good condition, and the area could support more animals, future quotas may be increased. All or portions of moose management areas 3, 4, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 41 are located within the zone.

**Critical Elements:**

Harvesting is not expected to have a negative impact on moose populations in the zone because moose prefer the early seral stages of a forest and generally do well in areas after harvesting.

#### 4.2.1.1.2. Caribou

**Characterization:**

Caribou is the only native ungulate species on the island (Northcott, 1980). Prior to the railway being built in 1898 the population was approximately 100 000 animals but by 1930 the population had declined to about 10,000 animals. Between 1980 and 2000 the number of caribou has increased considerably on the island with a population estimated at 90,000 – 100 000 animals. In the past few years however populations have declined significantly with Planning Zone Seven being no exception. All or portions of caribou management areas 62, 66, 69, 78, and 78 are located in the zone.

**Critical Elements:**

It is unclear how forestry activities in the immediate vicinity of calving areas during the calving period may have an impact on caribou populations. Recent studies and anecdotal information has indicated that harvesting restriction zone around caribou calving zones may be significantly larger than first thought. It has also been shown that as roads are constructed and access is

improved into remote areas, there is generally an increase in the number of animals which are killed due to road-kill and poaching

#### 4.2.1.1.3. Black Bear

##### **Characterization:**

The black bear is native to the island and is found in forested areas (Northcott, 1980). Currently, the number of black bears occurring on the island is not known but is crudely estimated to be about 6 - 10,000 animals (Christine Doucette, Pers. Comm.). All or portions of black bear management areas 3, 4, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 41 are located within the zone.

##### **Critical Elements:**

- den sites for winter hibernation;
- forest cover

##### **Guiding Principles:**

##### ***Big Game Management Strategy (moose, caribou and black bear)***

Management of big game species in the province is accomplished by a planning process in which a Big Game Management Plan is prepared annually by the Wildlife Division (WD) of the Department of Environment and Conservation. This process takes into consideration information provided by the public and wildlife and forestry staff. Each year the WD reviews all relevant data, such as recent census work, information provided on license returns, and jawbone or skull data and makes decisions on types and numbers of licenses of each species in each management area. Management of big game in the zone will continue to be addressed through this process.

##### *Moose*



Mature stands of timber serve as moose shelter or moose yards and will be identified in consultation with the Wildlife Division.

### *Caribou*

- In areas where caribou utilize lichens, a minimum amount of forest which supports these lichens should be maintained for caribou.

Because the caribou population has experienced a decline in the past, the WD in conjunction with forestry division and industry has identified important caribou habitat areas which were incorporated into a document produced by WD entitled *Forest Management Guidelines for Woodland Caribou for the Island of Newfoundland 2007*. Since that time new information has been collected from radio collared animals which suggest that usage of the habitat and dispersion across the landscape is different from the original thinking. This data will be used to develop a new set of caribou guidelines.

### *Bear*

A 50-metre, no-cut, treed buffer must be maintained around known bear den sites (winter) or those encountered during harvesting. This distance will be reviewed when the EPG's are updated. Den sites must be reported to the WD.

## 4.2.1.2. Furbearers

### **Characterization:**

A number of furbearers occur in the zone the more prominent of which include red fox, beaver, otter, muskrat, short-tailed weasel, red squirrel, mink, coyote, and american marten (will be discussed in more detail in next section). Of these, red squirrel, mink and coyote are not native.

### **Critical Elements:**

- water quality maintenance;

- riparian buffer zones along aquatic areas;
- maintaining a mosaic of forest age and development classes
- snags and coarse woody debris (denning, nesting sites, etc.)

### **Guiding Principles:**

#### ***Fur Bearer Management Strategy:***

Recommendations concerning the management of furbearer species are developed annually, upon consultation with provincial trappers, Newfoundland and Labrador Trappers Association, general public, and departmental staff. Like the big game management plan, the fur management plan reviews the status of each fur bearer species annually and addresses the season dates and lengths, and if necessary closure of areas (or no open season). Management of all fur bearing species in the zone will continue to be managed through this process.

#### ***Environmental Protection Guidelines:***

To protect beaver habitat, all hardwoods within 30 metres of a waterbody occupied by beaver are to be left standing during harvesting operations.

### **4.2.1.3. Species of Interest**

#### **4.2.1.3.1. American Marten**

##### **Characterization:**

Before 1900, American marten ranged over most of the forested areas of the island, however in 1934 numbers had declined significantly and marten were only found in limited regions. (Bergerud, 1969). In 1986, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) assessed the Newfoundland population of the American marten and the species was listed as threatened. Revisions in 1996 and 2000 resulted in an uplisting to endangered due to further declines. Habitat loss, trapping and incidental snaring are possible reasons for the marten

population decline. The status of marten has been upgraded from endangered to threatened in 2007 because new population estimates were stable and distribution of marten was increasing. The American marten (island population) is listed as threatened under both the federal *Species at Risk Act* and provincial *Endangered Species Act*.

Since the initiation of the live-trapping program, it has been revealed that Main River, Little Grand Lake and Red-Indian Lake are high-density marten areas on the island. Based on this information, it is important that marten habitat be protected in these areas. Furthermore, it is important that some remnant stands of old growth (80+) forests be left throughout the zone and provision made to have connectivity (i.e., unbroken corridors of forest) between such stands. To accomplish this, a landscape approach to habitat management was initiated by the Forest Service in 1999. This involved working with stakeholders to identify critical or potential marten habitat, locating possible corridors, and identifying areas which would not be cut in the near future. This initiative has been ongoing since that time. To identify all factors affecting marten survival, stakeholders from the Canadian Forest Service, WD, Corner Brook Pulp and Paper and the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency sit on the Newfoundland Marten Recovery Team. The primary functions of the Recovery Team are to prepare and periodically revise the recovery plan for American marten in Newfoundland and to provide advice to Government on species recovery. The recovery plan may include short and long-term population goals and outlines actions required to reach recovery goals. The team has identified critical marten habitat and is in the process of determining what forestry activities should be permitted within the boundaries of critical habitat. The team is also investigating the best way to approach long-term landscape level planning for marten recovery.

**Critical Elements:**

- sufficient habitat to support a viable population of marten;
- areas of known marten populations remain closed to trapping
- only allow use of legal snare wire types

**Guiding Principles:**

Critical marten habitat has been identified. The development and evolution of the marten habitat suitability model in recent years has been a useful tool in identifying potential marten habitat and evaluating potential impacts of harvesting on this habitat and resultant changes to population levels. Continued development and refinement of this model will provide a more reliable means of evaluating impacts of harvesting on marten habitat in the future.

Early indications from Brian Hearn's work with the harvest schedule indicate that there is abundant suitable habitat in districts tested and that the amount will increase over the next 10 years, even if the full harvest schedule is implemented. Work is now underway to extend this analysis to 20 years. Anecdotal evidence also seems to suggest that snaring and trapping may be the main impediments to marten recovery. Maintenance of appropriate forest habitat is also integral to the long-term recovery of this species. More testing of the model needs to be undertaken especially on the distribution of suitable habitat and on the occupancy of this habitat.

The current timber supply model is constructed in such a way that analysis of marten critical habitat can be evaluated at the landscape level to determine any impacts on timber supply. Recommendations resulting from any of these ongoing initiatives will be incorporated into harvesting prescriptions as required. The development and evolution of the marten habitat suitability model in recent years has been a useful tool in identifying potential marten habitat and evaluating potential impacts of harvesting on this habitat and resultant changes to population levels. Continued development and refinement of this model will provide a more reliable means of evaluating impacts of harvesting on marten habitat in the future.

A draft of a new recovery plan for marten is currently being developed but is not available during this planning phase

#### 4.2.1.3.2. Rare Plants

##### **Characterization:**

Approximately 300 plant species, or about a quarter of all plant species on the island of Newfoundland, are considered to be rare and are found in 20 or fewer locations. Rare plants are often found in habitat types that are themselves rare or at least fairly restricted. While the limestone barrens of the Great Northern Peninsula are the best-known rare plant habitat, other habitats with high rare plant diversity exist in Zone 7 and other areas of the island.

Most of the rare plant species throughout Newfoundland are inhabitants of fairly open habitats, such as river gravels, salt marshes, wetlands, aquatic habitats and barrens; all areas where no forestry operations are practiced. The known rare plant distribution is very much a reflection of survey effort, which is mostly limited to a strip about a kilometre wide adjacent to major roads. Only a few botanists have ventured onto the forest resource roads, therefore most rare plant locations in Zone 7 likely remain undiscovered. Many areas of Districts 9 and 16 appear to be devoid of rare plants, but it is likely that they have never been visited by botanists. Many riparian areas have potential for rare plants, and could be impacted as stream crossings are constructed for new forestry roads.

Currently, in Zone 7, there are no listed Endangered, Threatened, or Vulnerable Species. However as rare plant sites are identified in areas selected for harvesting, mitigating measures will be developed in consultation with the Wildlife Division.

##### **Critical Elements:**

- quarrying and road construction
- logging and extraction using heavy equipment
- mechanical site preparation

- all terrain vehicle traffic

**Guiding Principles:**

- To ensure that rare and endangered plant species present in the zone do not become extinct because of forest management operations.
- To protect rare plant habitat
- To educate field staff on the locations and importance of rare plants
- Encourage domestic harvesting in the winter
- Work with the IFWD to develop mitigative measures in areas where rare plants occur.

### 4.2.1.3.3. Waterfowl

#### 4.2.1.3.3.1. Harlequin Duck

**Characterization:**

The eastern North American population of harlequin duck was listed as endangered in Canada in 1990, however, in May of 2001 the status was changed to special concern. In Newfoundland these birds breed along clear, turbulent rivers, in Labrador and on the Northern Peninsula. These birds winter along the east coast at Cape St. Mary's. In District 16, harlequins have been reported by the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) in the Upper Humber River (at a density of 0.051 females/km of river). Although no harlequins have been seen in the Main River area to date, it is thought the upper reaches of this river may contain suitable habitat.

**Critical Elements:**

- Buffered rivers near or around waterfowl breeding, moulting, and staging areas.

**Guiding Principles:**

CWS recommend that a 100 metre buffer zone be left on any river where harlequins are found as well as, in the upper reaches of the Main River, which potentially could support breeding harlequins. On all other stretches of the Main River, a treed buffer of at least 30 metres should be maintained for other waterfowl species utilizing the area. This is in agreement with the Department's Environmental Protection Guidelines which state that a minimum 30 metre, no-cut, treed buffer will be maintained from the high watermark in waterfowl breeding, moulting, and staging areas.

#### 4.2.1.3.3.2. Other Waterfowl

**Characterization:**

District 16 contains two very valuable areas for waterfowl in Newfoundland - the Upper Humber and Main River areas.

The Upper Humber Wetlands Complex has long been recognized to contain valuable breeding, nesting, brood-rearing, and/or staging habitat for a variety of waterfowl species. Surveys of the Upper Humber conducted by the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) in 1989 revealed that ring-necked duck was the most frequently observed waterfowl species, followed by black duck, common goldeneye, Canada goose, green-winged teal, blue-winged teal, northern pintail, and common merganser. Birchy Basin was found to be the most productive waterfowl area, followed by Neds Steady, Gales Bottom, and the Adies Pond area.

A Stewardship Agreement exists between the Provincial Government, CBPPL, and Ducks Unlimited Canada for the protection and enhancement of approximately 25,000 hectares of waterfowl habitat in this area. Enhancement activities carried out in the area included replacing the old dam at Birchy Basin with a newer water control structure equipped with a fishway in 1993. The water control structure now stabilizes water levels throughout the Basin and helps maintain an estimated 1,000 acres of critical waterfowl and salmon rearing habitat (Northland

1986).

The Main River area is also known to support a variety of waterfowl species. Black duck, green-winged teal, blue-winged teal, red-breasted mergansers, and goldeneye have been reported in the area. High concentrations of Canada geese have been reported in the Big Steady of Main River. The Big Steady is reported to be an important staging, breeding, brood-rearing, and molting area for the geese and other waterfowl species. It has been estimated that there is about 200 ha of suitable waterfowl habitat near the Big Steady and that the grasslands, southwest of Paradise Pool, are major concentration areas for the birds.

**Critical Elements:**

- maintenance of habitat
- disturbance of waterfowl during the brood rearing, breeding, and staging period

**Guiding Principles:**

- a 50-metre treed buffer will be established around designated sensitive waterfowl areas. As well, no forestry activities are recommended during the brood rearing, breeding, and staging period
- a minimum 30-metre, no-cut, treed buffer must be maintained from the high water mark in other waterfowl breeding, molting, and staging areas.

#### 4.2.1.3.3.3. Other Species

Other species, particularly the red crossbill, are currently listed as endangered. The Newfoundland Forest Service currently has a representative that sits on the recovery team for this species. Any recommendations for modified forestry activities for this species will be developed by the team and will be followed by the Forest Service.



#### 4.2.1.3.4. Water Resources

##### **Characterization:**

The protection of water resources has emerged as a major issue in recent years both nationally and provincially. Events such as the E.coli 0157 outbreak in Walkerton, Ontario, our own Triahalomethane (THM) controversy, and numerous incidents of giardiasis in community water supplies have heightened public awareness on water issues. While much of the current focus is directed toward drinking water, it is also recognized that an equal importance must be attached to waters which have other beneficial uses. Human impacts both locally and globally have the potential to impair water for future uses.

In Planning Zone 7, water is used beneficially for numerous purposes. There are 34 communities within the zone which have water supplies. Thirty one of these supplies are protected under the province's Protected Water Supply Program and the remaining three are categorized as unprotected although still monitored by the program. Recreational waters within this zone are used for activities such as fishing, boating and as a water supply source for numerous cabin owners. Industrially, waters within the zone are primarily used for hydroelectric production at Cat Arm, Deer Lake and Rattle Brook and for irrigation on agriculturally developed land, primarily in the Cormack and Green Bay areas with smaller hobby type farms dispersed throughout the zone.

Human activity on the land has the potential to alter water quality and water quantity. Commercial forest harvesting is the predominant activity and occurs throughout the zone. Hydroelectric development has resulted in several river diversions. There is a vast array of roads associated with the harvesting and traditional access routes as well as newly constructed roads which dissect the unit. Mining operations within the zone are limited to mostly small quarrying operations associated with road construction. Some exploration activity for hydrocarbons, dimension stone and base metals has occurred sporadically throughout the region

##### **Critical Elements:**

Forest management activities such as road construction, use and maintenance, timber harvesting, and silviculture may substantially alter the quality of water draining from watersheds as well as other defining characteristics such as stream hydrology, sediment loadings, stream characteristics, and aquatic discharges from municipalities. Careless storage and handling of fuels by industrial and recreational users, stream diversions and agricultural operations are other examples.

**Guiding Principles:**

There are numerous protective measures listed in the Environmental Protection Guidelines under the broad categories of road construction, stream crossings, road abandonment, fuel oil handling and storage, support services and structures, harvesting, silviculture, and protected water supply areas. The EPG's are listed in their entirety in Appendix 1 and specific guidelines under the above sections can be found there.

## 4.2.2. Human Values

### 4.2.2.1. Timber Resource

**Characterization:**

One of the major resource values of the forest ecosystem is the harvesting of timber to provide forest products. Historically timber has been harvested since the first inhabitants settled in the zone. Initial uses were mainly domestic in nature to supply timber to build houses, fishing sheds and equipment and for heating and cooking. With the increase in population, more commercial uses have arisen to supply lumber and pulp and paper products. The zone supports an annual allowable cut (AAC) on Crown land of approximately 108000 m<sup>3</sup> in District 9 and 88000 m<sup>3</sup> in District 16.

Domestic harvesting still provides fuelwood to heat many homes and sawlog material for residential house construction in the zone. In fact, the latter domestic use is one of the reasons why this Province has the highest rate of home ownership in the country. There are approximately 2000 permits issued on Crown land in District 9 and 400 permits in District 16. Approximately 1500 domestic permits are issued on CBPPL limits in the zone as well. Commercial activity accounts for the majority of the harvest by the Crown in the zone. Commercial activities provide many jobs in harvesting, sawmilling, trucking, pulp and paper manufacturing and related spin off industries for local residents. There are in excess of 150 direct jobs created by the industry with an estimate of nearly twice that many in spin off industries.

Silviculture treatments are important to the forest resource of the zone because they ensure a vigorous and healthy forest is maintained. Forest renewal activities are critical because they ensure that the productive land base is maintained by planting areas that are not sufficiently restocked. Forest improvement activities help improve and enhance the growing stock which can reduce harvest cost, enhance forest product options and increase sustainable timber supply. There is approximately \$300 000 spent on silviculture in the zone each year creating more than 30 seasonal jobs.

Timely access to timber is critical to planning any forestry operations. Primary, secondary and tertiary roads form an integral part of operating areas and are used after timber extraction is completed for recreational purposes. In excess of \$1 000 000 is spent by the Crown to construct forest access roads each year in the zone.

Protection of the forest from various disturbances is also a major characteristic of resource management. Because of the long insect history in the zone, protection through integrated pest management techniques is an important activity. While fire has not been a major disturbance, protection is still critical since a large fire can potentially be devastating. Protection of other resource values through modification of activities and enforcement is also important.

### **Critical Elements:**

The overall objective is to ensure the AAC is calculated using the latest information while taking into account other resource values and conducting environmentally sound operations. This is achieved by

- maintenance or enhancement of productive land base
- planting of non-regenerating areas
- minimizing loss of land base to other users
- minimize losses to fire, insect and disease
- timely access road construction
- enhancement of younger age classes through thinning to correct age class imbalance
- maintain both a sawlog and pulpwood industry in the zone through timber exchanges

### **Guiding Principles:**

- enforcement of forestry act, regulations, guidelines and policies
- minimize loss of productive land base through spatial and temporal compromises and continuous dialogue with other resource users
- education (staff, public, operators)
- aggressively conduct silviculture, access road, and protection activities
- implement best management practices. The *Environmental Protection Guidelines for Ecologically Based Forest Resource Management* outline courses of action and mitigative measures for forest activities. These EPG's are outlined in their entirety in Appendix 1 with some highlighted subject areas listed below.
- garbage disposal
- fuel storage
- mineral soil exposure
- buffer requirements
- road and bridge construction
- silviculture and harvesting activities

#### 4.2.2.2. Agriculture

##### **Characterization:**

There is substantial agriculture industry in the zone, an industry with considerable potential to expand and provide increased economic benefits to the local area. Commercial agriculture is concentrated in Cormack, Reidville, Howley, Kings Point, Rattling Brook, and Green Bay and the agriculture products produced represent a significant portion of the total agriculture industry in the province. Most of the major farming activities in the province are represented in the zone. In the livestock sector, dairy, beef, sheep and fur contribute approximately \$5.0 million total farm gate value to the provincial output. The crop industry which consists of vegetables, small fruit, forages, Christmas trees and greenhouses production contribute another half million dollars to the total provincial farm gate value.

##### **Critical Elements:**

Surveys indicate that approximately five percent of the soils in the province are suitable for agriculture. It is not possible to identify and plan all sites for future agriculture use and often there is a conflict with other land uses particularly forestry because these sites are of high growing capability. Although a suitable land base is the first critical element necessary for a successful agriculture operation, markets and the interest of individuals are also prime factors in the development and location of future farms. In the spirit of managing the ecosystem for multiple benefits, provisions must be given for the agriculture industry to expand. This is particularly important for areas outside established agriculture areas.

##### **Guiding Principles:**

Lands designated for forest management can include areas with high potential for agriculture. Consequently, the forest landholders will work with the Department of Agriculture to determine

if opportunities exist for an exchange between agriculturally viable forest areas with unsuitable agriculture land within the Agriculture Development Areas.

The agriculture leasing policy initiated in 1976 ensures that new or existing land allocated for agriculture continues to be used for agriculture. The leases have no provision for fee simple grants and must be used exclusively for agriculture purposes.

The following will provide guidance for the development of agriculture within the zone:

- Home gardening leases should be confined to areas already developed for this activity.
- New agriculture leases should include a business plan approved by the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency.
- Wood harvested on agriculture leases shall be completed under a crown cutting permit.
- Where possible, existing commercial forest operators should be encouraged to work with farmers to clear new land for development.

#### 4.2.2.3. Mining

##### **Characterization:**

In Planning Zone 7 there is a diverse geological environment which hosts a wide variety of both metallic and industrial minerals including, but not restricted to; copper, nickel, lead, bitumen, granite, gneiss, marble, gold, asbestos, silver, iron, limestone molybdenum, uranium and thorium. There is also granite with dimension stone potential.

In District 16 alone there are over 800 mineral exploration claims staked and registered; the majority being for metallic mineral potential with expenditures in the hundreds of thousands. Exploration activities during this period consisted of prospecting, geological mapping, grid line-cutting, geochemical surveys, ground and airborne geophysical surveys, mechanized trenching and diamond drilling. In addition, there are a large number of active quarries in the zone which generate significant royalties. These figures are included to illustrate the significant contribution that mining has to the local and provincial economy.

**Critical Elements:**

To minimize the impact of mining and mineral exploration upon the forest ecosystem while providing a source of energy and aggregate material.

**Guiding Principles:**

Harvesting timber for prospecting lines must meet the same rigor as commercial harvesting. The mining industry will enact best management practices to ensure little to no impact on ecosystem values.

**Guiding Principles:**

- Ensure that quarries and open-pit mines are rehabilitated. The organic overburden should be stockpiled and stored in a manner so that it can be used to rehabilitate the site.
- Avoid planning silviculture activity in areas adjacent to mines or quarries.
- Make every attempt to extract timber harvested as part of exploration and development. If timber can not be feasibly extracted using conventional means then timber shall be piled so that it may be extracted during winter months by snowmobiles.
- Mineral exploration that proposes to explore or develop within a silviculturally treated area must be undertaken with minimal disturbance and provide compensation as required
- Mineral exploration and/or development on mineral licenses within the zone will not be impeded. Specific proposed harvesting activities are identified in the annual operating plan.
- Quarry permits are required for aggregate material taken outside of the road ROW for purposes of road construction
- When forest activities have been completed, road/bridge rehabilitation and decommissioning plans will be identified in the AOP and made available to the Mines branch at their request
- Non-compliance with exploration permits will be passed to the District Manager and submitted to Mines Division, Dept. of Natural Resources.

#### 4.2.2.4. Historic Resources

**Characterization:**

The provincial archeology office (PAO) is the agency responsible for the management and protection of archaeological sites and artifacts in Newfoundland and Labrador. This program is carried out under the Historic Resources Act which ensures that developments with potential to have adverse impacts on historic resources are investigated and monitored by a qualified archaeologist through archaeological impact assessments.

Archaeological sites are non-renewable resources and play a vital role in understanding our heritage. It is important to professionally record as much information as possible at an archaeological site in order that one may fully understand its history. In order to do this properly the site must not be disturbed. Very often, archaeological sites are small, spatially bounded units, therefore protecting these resources usually do not have an adverse impact on forestry activities.

Archaeological surveys have been carried out in several areas within the zone over the past 20 years. Many areas still remain to be surveyed so there is potential for other historic resources to be found in the zone. To date there are 19 known archaeological sites within District 16 and over 90 in District 9.

Archaeology is very important for our tourist industry. Archaeological excavations and interpretive sites draw thousands of visitors each year to this province. The preservation and interpretation of archaeological sites will continue to benefit the tourism industry in this province for years to come. Thousands of tourists from all over the world visit our archaeological sites each year and the numbers continue to increase, i.e. Ferryland alone saw 16,500 visitors in 2000.

Archaeology projects provide many seasonal jobs and many of these people are successful in obtaining employment in archaeology and conservation for longer periods of time. By calling for archaeological impact assessments on projects which have potential to negatively impact historic resources the PAO is providing jobs for consulting archaeologists in the province. New businesses are created as a result of archaeological projects. These businesses include bed and breakfasts, boat tours, restaurants and gift shops.



**Critical Elements:**

Major threats to historic resources are projects involving activities which disturb soil layers and/or provide unintended public access to the archaeological resources. Forestry activities such as construction of access roads and bridges, harvesting and mechanical site preparation have the potential to destroy historic resources.

While forestry activities can have adverse impacts on historic resources there are also beneficial effects. When impact assessments are carried out and new sites found, it adds to our understanding of Newfoundland and Labrador's heritage. When archaeological sites are discovered through impact assessments these resources are protected from damage or destruction and preserved.

**Guiding Principles:**

Any project involving land-use has the potential to adversely impact historic resources, therefore it is important that the Provincial Archaeology Office be involved at the planning stage in order to ensure that mitigative measures to protect historic resources are developed at the earliest possible time.

In order that known archaeological sites and potential unknown sites are protected from forestry activities buffer zones will be necessary in some areas whereas archaeological assessments may be required in others. Known archaeological sites must be avoided and buffers will be required around them. Buffers will also be required along all rivers and ponds, as well as along the coastline where there is potential for archaeological resources to be found.

Occasionally there are accidental discoveries made of historic resources. In the event that this does happen, activities should cease in this area and contact be made immediately with the Provincial Archaeologists at 729-2462

#### 4.2.2.5. The Greater Gros Morne Ecosystem

##### **Characterization:**

The primary role of Canada's national parks is to maintain ecological integrity. Although enshrined in policy for many years, this role has recently been given prominence in legislation by the passing of the Canada National Parks Act in October 2000. The Report of the Panel on Ecological Integrity of Canada's National Parks (February 2000) noted that parks all across the country (including GMNP) are under threat from stresses both within and outside the national parks. Ninety percent of forested parks are under stress from external forestry activities.

The primary challenge for national parks in maintaining their ecological integrity is that most parks are part of larger ecosystems and the area set aside for the parks is not large enough to protect the full integrity of that ecosystem. Large-scale changes on the landscape surrounding parks can isolate the park ecologically creating an "island". Parks Canada must work with adjacent land managers in striving to achieve its mandate.

Biodiversity goes beyond the range of wildlife and plant species to include the range of habitats and landscapes. Loss of special habitats such as the old-growth forest and associated species may impair the ecological integrity of GMNP in ways that are not currently understood.

While ecological integrity has prominence regarding the management of national parks, legislation and policy dictate broader responsibilities for national parks. These include providing opportunities for Canadians and others to have high-quality experiences in a natural setting. Currently, 61 percent of GMNP is classified as Zone II - Wilderness. The eastern area of this zone borders on District 16. The Long Range Traverse, a 3-4 day hike within GMNP, currently has a reputation as a high-quality wilderness experience due to its remoteness and difficult access. Increased access, as a result of forestry operations within District 16, threaten this wilderness quality. The presence of the American marten has been noted in the northern and southern areas of the park. Those sighted in the south are not closely connected with a core population and are likely "dispersers" from either the Little Grand Lake/Red Indian Lake or

Main River populations. Habitat connectivity with these other core populations may be critical to long term survival of marten in GMNP.

**Critical Elements:**

- to maintain ecological integrity:
- to maintain native biodiversity and natural processes.
- to maintain viable wildlife populations

**Guiding Principles:**

The long-term effect on the park's ecological integrity can rarely be isolated to one cause and is more often due to the effects of many activities. For that reason it would be important to assess the cumulative environmental effects of all activities as part of the forest management planning process.

- maintain species composition as well as the age structure and ecological functions of the various forest-types across the landscape over the long term.
- maintain proportion of interior forest (mature forest >250 m from an “edge”)
- maintain landscape connections between the park and the surrounding landscape. This would require effective, permeable movement zones between populations and/or critical habitats.
- manage and operate according to the precautionary principle, particularly as it relates to species at risk.
- ensure landscape characteristics are maintained that allow marten to achieve their habitat requirements at the landscape scale. This could mean ensuring forest management practices allow for a continuous distribution of marten habitat and home ranges to the park boundary. A conservative approach that preserves future options should be adopted until the marten guidelines are fully developed.

#### 4.2.2.6. Newfoundland T’Railway

A large section of the Newfoundland and Labrador T’Railway Provincial Park lies in the zone and has an impact on forestry operations. The former CNR right of way, which varies from 25 to 100 feet each side of the center line, is the main route for the T’Railway with some minor deviations. It provides for an all season, multi-use recreation corridor developed and managed

with Parks and Natural Areas Division in conjunction with the T’Railway Council to maximize adventure tourism and recreational opportunities.

The T’Railway is protected for the present and future enjoyment of the public as part of the system of provincially designated parks and natural areas. The *Provincial Parks Act* provides the legislative framework for the administration and management of the T’Railway.

The T’Railway constitutes the province’s contribution to the Trans Canada Trail System. The T’Railway is a linear park that is approximately 850 km in length. It is used primarily by snowmobile and all terrain vehicle owners. Other new or historical uses such as commercial and domestic harvesting, quarry and mining access and cabin access are also allowed with a special permit.

### **Critical Element**

- protection of the historical landscape integrity of the T’Railway corridor
- preservation of the scenic quality along the corridor
- control of land usage adjacent to the T’Railway

### **Guiding Principles:**

- coordination of activities with various other agencies responsible for land management outside the T’Railway corridor to ensure that the integrity of the park is maintained
- build partnerships with other stakeholders and user groups such as communities, industry and recreational organizations for the long term maintenance and development of the T’Railway
- in an attempt to preserve the natural value of the T’Railway, other land management agencies are requested to maintain a 100 m buffer along the right of way and to consider viewscales in their harvesting and development plans.
  - where access is required from the T’Railway, all roads shall be 100 meters away from the track before a landing or turnaround is constructed.
  - where feasible and possible, harvesting using the T’Railway shall try and avoid peak snowmobile and ATV seasons.

#### 4.2.2.7. Parks and Protected Areas

##### **Characterization:**

The mission statement of the provincial Natural Areas Program is to protect, in an unimpaired condition, large wilderness areas, representative examples of all of the province's ecoregions including their natural processes and features, and rare natural phenomena, so as to preserve the diversity and distinctiveness of the province's rich natural heritage and to support an ecologically sustainable future for the benefit of present and future generations.

There are several different types of conservation areas in the province that contribute to the provincial system of protected areas, as recognized by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. Wilderness Reserves and Ecological Reserves are established via the *Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act*. Wilderness Reserves are generally large (>1000 km<sup>2</sup>) and are designed to protect complete ecological systems. Ecological Reserves may be established to protect representative samples of each of the province's natural regions (ecoregions) with a mid-sized reserve (50-1000 km<sup>2</sup>), or to protect exceptional natural features, occurring in an area <10 km<sup>2</sup>, such as rare species or areas of unusual biological richness. Provincial Parks, established under the *Provincial Parks Act*, do play a conservation role but are primarily established as sites for outdoor recreation and nature-based education. Wildlife Reserves may be established under the *Wildlife Act* for the protection of specific species or habitats, and public or Crown Reserves may be established for conservation reasons under the *Lands Act*. Finally, National Parks such as Terra Nova, Gros Morne and Torngat Mountains are established under the federal *National Parks Act*.

The benefits of protected areas are to preserve biodiversity, provide areas for scientific research, provide opportunities for environmental education, provide standards against which the effects of development can be measured, and provide natural venues for recreation, enjoyment of nature and ecotourism.

There are five existing protected areas within the Zone 7 planning area: West Brook Ecological Reserve and NL T' Railway, Sir Richard Squires Memorial, Main River Waterway and Flatwater Pond Provincial Park.

### **Critical Elements:**

- preservation of biodiversity
- maintenance of protected area integrity
- maintain natural processes and features
- act as control areas against which an assessment of forest management activities elsewhere on the landscape may be made

### **Guiding Principles:**

- the type of activities encouraged or permitted within the different protected areas in the province depends entirely on the type of protected area and the reasons for its establishment
- generally all non-consumptive activities are permitted; educational activities and scientific research within protected areas generally require a permit and are encouraged
- in most protected areas, new development is prohibited, such as mining activity, hydroelectric projects, forestry activity, agriculture activity, roads and trails and cabins and new structures; legislation for Wildlife and Crown Reserves is generally more flexible than the other Acts.
- a 500 m no roads buffer is to be maintained around all existing and proposed protected areas to reduce access and resulting damage from motorized vehicles
- where forestry operations are within one kilometre of provisional and ecological reserves, wilderness reserves or provincial parks, modified operations may be necessary and any amendments to the forest plan within that buffer should be brought to the attention of the managing agency

## **4.2.2.8. Outfitting**

### **Characterization:**

The outfitting industry has been an integral component of the tourism industry in Central Newfoundland since the early 1900's. This region has always been a popular hunting and fishing

destination because of the pristine environment and abundance of fish and wildlife species. There are many outfitters operating within the boundaries of the zone that operate and maintain main and/or line camps. These operations provide seasonal employment for many local individuals.

An economic impact study conducted in 1995 by the Department of Industry, Trade and Technology suggests that a big game license has a net economic impact of \$6864. By approximating this value at \$7500 for 2011, it is possible to estimate the economic contributions of this industry: approximately 300 licenses \* \$7500 / license = \$2.25 million. The many trout and salmon destinations in the zone also make fishing an important economic contributor.

Over the past 10 years, a significant number of traditional hunting and fishing facilities have diversified into the non-consumptive areas of the tourism industry. Such activities include but are not limited to: snowmobiling, dog sledding, kayaking, canoeing, nature viewing, hiking, and wildlife photography. The ability to diversify has positively impacted the viability of outfitting operations and as such, increasing numbers of operators are considering these opportunities. Diversification can lengthen seasons of operation, increase and lengthen employment, and reduce dependency on a single sector of the tourism industry. Pristine wilderness settings are necessary for many of these types of diversification.

### **Critical Elements:**

Remote outfitting camps are dependent on their remoteness. Forest access roads inevitably impact the ability of a camp to maintain its remote status. Increasing accessibility through increased access roads can also lead to increased hunting and fishing pressures in a given area. This can in turn lead to decreased success rates of tourists. This is of particular concern since Newfoundland is often the hunting destination of choice due to success rates upwards of 80 percent. An increase in access roads also tends to lead to increased cottage development that in turn can have an impact on both remoteness and game availability.

While clients of big game and fishing outfitters are primarily interested in hunting or fishing experiences, they also show a great respect and admiration for pristine conditions and a healthy looking landscape. The landscape view experienced by clients plays a large role in leaving a lasting impression of the province. The view also has a direct impact on repeat client bookings and recommending the destination to others. Viewscapes become even more important once outfitters begin diversification into non-consumptive tourism activities. With these activities, there is no trophy to bring home and that which is taken away is that which has been experienced by the senses (i.e. sights, sounds, smells, etc.).

In some cases, past harvesting practices has resulted in increased levels of garbage (skidder tires, abandoned buses, heaps of oil containers, etc.). This can be frustrating for outfitters who concentrate on not leaving permanent marks on the landscape. Possible erosion caused by hillside logging and heavy equipment use is also a concern - particularly due to its possible effects on water quality for fish habitat.

### **Guiding Principles:**

It is necessary that no harvest buffer zones be left around outfitting camps that are agreed to by all parties involved. Buffer zones can be difficult to negotiate due to varying ranges of activity from operator to operator. Some operators make use of areas that are 8 to 10 kilometers away from their camps.

- consideration should be given to decommissioning roads and bridges (where possible) after harvesting is completed. This will eliminate damage to the hunting area by reducing the possibilities of increased hunting pressure. When roads are in use actively for harvesting purposes, access to hunters should be restricted or limited.
- harvest in the winter whenever possible. Winter roads are less passable in summer and fall and will help to reduce traffic. These roads will also be cheaper and easier to decommission.
- construct new roads as far away from existing outfitting camps as possible. The benefits of this are obvious. Harvesting should be restricted around hunting and fishing camps during their season of operation. At these times, harvesting should occur as far away as possible from outfitters.
- forest operations should be carried out in compliance with existing regulations
- efforts should be made to ensure that the integrity of the view from outfitter cabins is maintained when conducting forest operations.



- forest operations should ensure that whatever is brought into an area is removed from the area once harvesting is complete.

#### **4.2.2.9. Recreation**

##### **Characterization:**

The greater White Bay area has outstanding scenery, interesting topography, and opportunities for viewing wildlife and flora in a natural setting. These elements represent a small list of reasons why the zone is used extensively for recreational purposes. Hiking, skiing, canoeing and snowmobiling are major recreational activities in the area. Non-timber recreational values are expected to play an increasing role in forest management practices.

Canoeing and kayaking on the Main and Indian Rivers, the Alexander Murray and many other hiking trails, numerous ski and snowmobile trails, and excellent hunting and fishing areas highlight some of the recreational opportunities in the zone.

##### **Critical Elements:**

###### *Wilderness*

Backcountry recreational activities are dependent on the existence of natural pristine wilderness areas. The temporary removal or alteration of this pristine wilderness through forest harvesting practices will result in a decrease in these recreational activities for some period of time.

###### *Accessibility*

An increase in forest access roads will inevitably increase the amount of accessibility to remote areas. This in turn will increase the amount of traffic in an area (both vehicular and pedestrian) and decrease the value of the experience for many recreational activities.

###### *Viewscapes*

The majority of individuals who are involved in recreational activities are concerned about viewscales. Many of the recreational activities occur because of a particular viewscale. The destination for many individuals is a result of the viewscale in that particular region.

### **Guiding Principles:**

To prevent negative ecological effects and to ensure a positive experience, access and levels of recreational activities can be monitored. Public surveys can be used to measure the experiences and the levels of recreation occurring in the zone.

#### *Wilderness*

Forest operations should avoid wilderness areas where high concentrations of recreational activities occur. If operations are necessary, stakeholder meetings could prevent conflicts through temporal scheduling.

#### *Limiting Accessibility*

Decommissioning of forest access roads could be a possible option when harvesting operations are completed. Harvesting should be conducted using winter forest access roads where possible. Winter roads create less traffic and require less effort to decommission.

#### *Viewscape*

In areas where high concentrations of recreational activities occur, aesthetic views should be maintained using landscape design techniques where possible, when conducting forest operations. This is especially relevant in areas where the recreational activities are occurring because of the aesthetic view. Reforestation of areas with high aesthetic values should occur without delay in returning the site to a forested condition.

### **4.2.2.10. Tourism**

#### **Characterization:**

The tourism industry in Newfoundland and Labrador is based on our natural and cultural resources. Protection of these resources is critical for our industry to survive and grow. We currently have the resources to compete internationally with tourist destinations, however, competition for the international traveler is high in the tourism marketplace. The tourism industry in Newfoundland and Labrador has experienced significant growth since 1997. Tourism has been contributing between \$580 million and \$700 million annually to the provincial economy. Government tax revenue from tourism in 1998 was estimated to be \$105 million. The worldwide growth of tourism at rate of 41 percent, the national growth of 25 percent and the provincially growth of 33 percent indicates tourism is Newfoundland and Labrador's best opportunity for economic diversification and growth.

There are many excellent tourist destinations in the zone. The Main River (designated as Canadian Heritage River), Gros Morne National Park, Fleur de Lys soapstone quarry (National Historic Site), Baie Verte self guided geology tours, and Deer Lake insectarium are examples of the more prominent tourist attractions.

**Critical Elements:**

- viewscape
- accessibility
- wilderness ambiance
- remoteness

**Guiding Principles:**

Work with GMNP and tourism operators to implement strategies to minimize the visual impact of harvesting operations on the aesthetic values associated with viewscales. By bringing together GMNP, CBPPL, NFS, and the tourism operators, strategies will be discussed, negotiated, and implemented to provide a balance between harvesting and the values associated with tourism. If required, the Forest Service, CBPPL, local Town Councils, Parks Division and other relevant groups will get together to examine the viewshed issues where applicable in the zone.

## 5. Mitigations

This plan was submitted to all relevant government departments for comment. General comments by relevant government department are listed below. Specific mitigations by operating area are detailed in the district sections below and on the operating area sheets.

### 5.1. District 9

Site specific mitigations arising from concerns identified during the planning process and from other regulatory agencies are identified on the summary sheets accompanying each operating area in Appendix 2. As well, guiding principles which outline procedures to follow should an unforeseen conflict arise have been identified for each value in Section 4. Highlights of the mitigative measures are:

#### **a) Protected Water Supply Areas**

Any harvesting in PWSA's will be done under a Development permit from Water Resources. Forest Service will work with the Town of Westport, at their request, to allow limited domestic harvesting in the Westport PWSA.

#### **b) Newfoundland & Labrador Snowmobile Federation Licenced Trails**

Domestic wood cutting areas will have a 20 meter no harvest buffer on snowmobile trail and commercial harvesting in winter will not impede trail usage.

#### **c) Salmon Rivers**

Minimum 20 meter buffer however various rivers have varying size buffers up to 100 meters on Indian River.

#### **d) Caribou**

Operating Area CC09001, Seal Bay – The proposed harvest area is within core caribou areas for spring calving/post-calving. Commercial harvest activities are to take place outside of the calving/post-calving period and 30% of overmature forest be maintained.

#### **e) Cabins**

Any issues with cabins in the operating areas will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Forest Service will consult with Lands Division on location of remote cabins in other operating areas. Standard buffer is 20 m

#### **f) Stewardship Areas**

The following operating areas are within Stewardship Management Units and Stewardship Zones

CC09005 (Long Pond)  
CC09006 (Airstrip)  
CC09007 (Burnt Berry)  
CC09008 (Mic Mac Pond)

Any areas that overlap the Stewardship Management Unit will be removed from the operating area maps (both Domestic and Commercial). The Town of Springdale and the Stewardship Section of the Wildlife Division will be contacted to discuss applicable mitigations within the Stewardship Zone

#### **g) Hiking Trails**

20m no cut buffer on Hiking Trails

#### **h) T’Railway**

100 meter no cut buffer on T’Railway

#### **k) Private Land**

Forest Service will consult with Crown Lands on location of private land in operating areas. There will be no harvesting on private land without the permission of the landholder

#### **l) Sensitive waterfowl area**

A minimum 50 meter no cut buffer will be maintained around Salt Pond and 20 m buffers on all other waterbodies. No activities in area during breeding, brood rearing and staging periods.

### **m) Rare plants**

Rare plants occur within the District Wildlife Division will be consulted to determine any mitigative requirements.

### **n) Mines**

- Should future quarry or mineral resource developments or exploration programs (i.e. new quarry development, existing quarry expansion, new mine development, quarry materials exploration, mineral exploration) be considered by Forestry as having the potential to cause a significant impact on the forest resource and forest resource users, then Forestry should work closely with the Mines Branch and the proponent to ensure that mutual impacts are minimized.

### **o) Viewscapes**

Forest Service, where operationally feasible, will implement strategies to provide a balance between forest harvesting and the non-timber values identified by Tourism.

## **5.2. District 16**

Site specific mitigations arising from concerns identified during the planning process and from other regulatory agencies are identified on the summary sheets accompanying each operating area in Appendix 3. As well, guiding principles which outline procedures to follow should an unforeseen conflict arise have been identified for each value in Section 4.

Decommissioning of roads and particularly bridges has been an issue raised by DFO. There has been a number of water crossing structures identified throughout the zone where safety has become or is becoming an issue due to age and condition. Concern has been expressed that randomly removing these structures will limit access to some stakeholders. While no decommissioning has explicitly been identified in this five year operating plan, it is still the intent of the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency to decommission/replace water crossing structures starting in 2012. With the exception of any major catastrophic event, any structures that are scheduled for decommissioning will be identified in the annual operating plan. Any yearly

decommissioning plans will be reviewed with DFO and circulated to the planning team. If necessary, the planning team can meet to review the annual operating plan prior to implementation to discuss and mitigate concerns with water crossing structures that are scheduled for decommissioning.

Highlights of the mitigative measures are:

#### **a) Caribou**

**CK1601 – White’s River:** The proposed harvest area is within core caribou areas for spring calving/post-calving. Commercial harvest activities are to take place outside of the calving/post-calving period and 30% of overmature forest be maintained. No new road access.

**CC1602 – Deadwater Brook:** The proposed harvest area is within core caribou areas for spring calving/post-calving. Commercial harvest activities are to take place outside of the calving/post-calving period and 30% of overmature forest be maintained. No new road access.

**CK1603 – Cormack South:** The proposed harvest area is within core caribou areas for spring calving/post-calving, summer, fall and winter.

**CK0937 – Hampden Highway:** The proposed harvest area is within core caribou areas used during the calving/post-calving and summer period. Commercial harvest activities are to take place outside of the calving/post-calving period and 30% of overmature forest be maintained. No new road access.

#### **b) Viewscape**

**CC1612 - White Hills** Limit the harvesting along Route 430 to lessen the visual impacts of cutting with a no cut buffer of 300 meters from Route 430.

**CK1613 - Crooked Feeder:** Maintain a 200 m no cut buffer on a CBPPL house located south of the rail bed

**CK0937 - Hampden Highway:** A viewscape analysis was completed and a harvesting plan was designed, developed and implemented to minimize any adverse visual impacts along Route 421.

Forest Service, where operationally feasible, will implement strategies to provide a balance between forest harvesting and the non-timber values identified by Tourism.

**c) T’Railway**

**CK1613 – Crooked Feeder, CK1615 – Howley, CK 1616 – Goose Steadies:** Maintain a 100m buffer on the T’Railway. Domestic cutting permits will include the following statement: “If using equipment other than ATV’s or snowmobiles for wood extraction, you should contact the Parks and Natural Areas of the Department of Environment and Climate Change to see if a permit is required

**d) Fish Habitat**

**CK1604 – Clam Pond, CC1605 - Saltwater Pond:** Maintain a 50 m buffer along Saltwater Brook and adjacent ponds.

**CC1621 - Jacksons Arm Ridge:** Maintain a 100-meter no-cut buffer along Big Arm Brook.

**e) Archaeological sites**

**CC1605 – Saltwater Pond, CC1606 - Spear Cove Pond, CC1608 - Grassy Cove, CK1623 – Cat Arm Road , CK0939 - Chouse Brook and CK0940 - Beaches.** These areas may contain archeological sites. A 100 meter no cut buffer will be maintained along the coastline.

**f) Protected Water Supplies**

**CC1618 - Pinksens Road, CC1620 - Sops Arm/Jacksons Arm:** A Certificate of Approval from Water Resources Division will be obtained prior to any permits being issued inside the PWSA.

**CC1617 – Hampden:** No commercial activity will occur inside the Hampden PWSA

**g) Private Land**

Forest Service will consult with Crown Lands on location of private land in operating areas. There will be no harvesting on private land without the permission of the landholder

**h) Cabins**

**CK1601, CC1609, CC16010, CC1612, CK1604, CC1605, CC1618, CC1621 and CC1623:**

There will be a 20 m buffer on remote cabins in these operating areas. District staff will work closely with the cabin owners to minimize any potential adverse impacts on water quality and water fowl habitat.

**i) Snowmobile Trail**



**CK1601, CC1602, CC1612 and CK1613:** There will be a 20 m buffer on managed snowmobile trails in these operating areas,

#### **j) Municipal boundary infilling**

Forest Service will work with communities on any issues surrounding forest activities within municipal boundaries.

#### **k) Mines**

- Should future quarry or mineral resource developments or exploration programs (i.e. new quarry development, existing quarry expansion, new mine development, quarry materials exploration, mineral exploration) be considered by Forestry as having the potential to cause a significant impact on the forest resource and forest resource users, then Forestry will work closely with the Mines Branch and the proponent to ensure that mutual impacts are minimized.

#### **l) Stewardship management units**

**CK1613:** The Junction Brook Bog management unit is delineated as a no cut zone with a 50 meter no cut buffer around the management unit.

#### **m) Outfitters**

Recommend that consultations take place with Taylor's Brook Outfitting and Mobile Outfitters Ltd: Outfitters were invited to the open house public consultations on September 14, 2016.

#### **n) Agrifoods**

**CC1602:** The proposed harvest area is alienated for agriculture use. Once harvesting activities are concluded, the Agrifoods Development Branch will be consulted prior to any planned silviculture operations.

## **6. Public Consultation Process**

### **6.1. Planning Objectives**

Forest Resource managers in Canada are striving for a society that successfully integrates economic, environmental and social considerations into all resource-related decision making.

Since the early 1990's, there has been a country-wide shift from single resource management to a

more comprehensive approach of forest ecosystem management. Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) must be balanced in light of social, economic, and environmental issues. In the context of SFM, this shift has resulted in a move from the traditional narrow focus of timber management, to incorporate non-timber values into the management planning framework. Another term that has become closely associated with SFM is “sustainable development” or in this case “sustainable forests”, which not only takes into account the social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits of the present, but those of future generations as well. Involvement of Interested Stakeholders into the five-year planning process is recognized by the Forestry Services Branch as a key component to achieving sustainable development.

As a result of the 1995 Environmental Preview Report, the Forestry Services Branch adopted an adaptive management planning process, which has three objectives:

1. Establish a productive planning framework to include all stakeholders. An effective planning framework must have information and issues defined at the beginning of the process.
2. Learn more about forest ecosystems while they are being actively managed (i.e. adaptive management). Adaptive management incorporates strategies which help us learn about the forest ecosystem and to deal with uncertainties.
3. Establish an ecosystem approach to forest management which integrates the scientific knowledge of ecological relations and limits of growth with social values. This will help to attain the goal of sustaining natural ecosystem integrity and health over the long term.

Adaptive management makes decisions based on input from interested stakeholders and establishes a continuous learning program. The adaptive approach allows us to communicate, share information and learn about forests being managed. This sharing of information, both old and new, then provides the flexibility necessary to adjust to changes and to set new goals. Such interaction is an absolute necessity for a subject as complex as an ecosystem

## 6.2. Stakeholder Involvement

Since the mid 1990's, for each five-year plan, the Forestry Services Branch embarked upon a rigorous public consultation process involving a series of meetings spanning a number of months at an established venue, where interested stakeholders could discuss a range of forest management issues at an operational level.

With respect to the strategic level, in 2014, the Forestry Services Branch released a 10- year Provincial Sustainable Forest Management Strategy (PSFMS) Document (2014-2024), which emerged through wide consultation with citizens of the Province. The 2014-2024 PSFMS builds on the strengths of the previous strategy plans and uses a landscape-scale planning approach to implement the progressive and innovative ecological policies required for Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). The strategy builds on the strengths of the many modern and high-quality forest management programs that are currently being implemented in this province to ensure a vibrant and competitive forest industry.

Taking into account the many five-year plans successfully implemented within the province since the mid 1990's through public consultation processes and the recent PSFMS developed through public consultations, The Forestry Services Branch strives to improve its methods to garner advice from the public while also mitigating land-use conflicts. To this effect, as new five-year plans are being developed and implemented provincially, relevant issues raised from previous planning processes are considered the foundation the new plans.

In 2016, in addition to transferring issues/concerns/mitigations from previous planning processes, a revised approach of stakeholder involvement for the development of this plan was implemented. Known interested stakeholders from previous planning processes were engaged on a "one-on-one" basis to evaluate potential activity prior to the plan submission to the Environmental Assessment Process. The results of stakeholder involvement are identified in the Mitigations in Section 5.

In addition to the “one-on-one” meetings there was a public meeting held in both District 9 and District 16.

There were 2 formal meetings held

- September 14, from 2pm-8pm at the Pasadena District Office
- September 13, from 2pm-7pm at the Springdale Tourist Chalet

There were no major concerns to mitigate from the public meetings.

## 7. Management Objectives and Strategies

The overarching goal is to manage the forests of the zone in a sustainable manner. The *Provincial Sustainable Forest Management Strategy 2003* defines sustainable forest management as:

**"to maintain the long-term health of forest ecosystems while providing ecological, economic and cultural opportunities for the benefit of present and future generations."**

Specific objectives and strategies employed to work toward achieving sustainable forest management are outlined below.

### 7.1. Harvesting

As previously stated, the forest in the zone is part of the boreal forest which is characterized as being disturbance driven resulting in the formation of relatively even aged stands. The clearcut silvicultural system most closely emulates this natural disturbance pattern and therefore is the most preferred method employed for harvest. The size, shape, arrangement and juxtaposition of clear cut areas vary across the landscape depending on localized topography and terrain conditions. A modification of the clearcut system takes place in domestic areas whereby the cuts are relatively small and disbursed resulting in the creation of a range of age and development classes.

### 7.1.1. Commercial

Section 3 outlines the general approach for the timber supply analysis and outlines the specific results for all districts in the zone. The model used to calculate the annual allowable cut is a spatial optimization model which outlines a specific course and timing of actions. The harvest schedule outlines the specific forest strata to be harvested and the timing of such harvest. The districts must follow this schedule as closely as possible in order to maintain the validity of the AAC.

The older unalienated timber that is in the worst condition and losing volume fastest is targeted as a high harvest priority. Younger stands that have been damaged by insects and disease also receive high priority. In managed stands, this priority changes to allow for a faster rotation on good sites that have been silviculturally treated.

There is an insufficient supply of timber on Crown Land, particularly sawlogs, to supply the current sawmill industry. To help alleviate this problem the Crown has negotiated a series of transfers and exchanges with CBPPL (Section 1.1.3) in order to secure a stable supply of timber for these mills. With this arrangement, the sawmills utilize the sawlog material from these areas and sell the pulpwood and pulp chips (sawmills residue) to CBPPL. As well, these operators trade pulpwood from their Crown cutting permits with CBPPL for sawlogs which also increases their supply.

*Specific commercial strategies are as follows:*

- utilize irregular cut block sizes that follow contours and natural boundaries where possible
- consider maintenance of unharvested corridors between harvest blocks to act as wildlife travel corridors
- vary buffer widths to protect other values (ie. larger buffers on salmon rivers)
- where possible, utilize winter harvest on wet and sensitive sites

- maintain current size and distribution of clear cuts
- use landscape design techniques to mitigate viewshed impacts on areas of concern
- keep losses through timber utilization to a minimum (< 6 m<sup>3</sup>/ha)
- continue to encourage and pursue transfers and exchanges with paper companies to ensure sawlog supply for local sawmills.

## 7.1.2. Domestic

The harvest of domestic fuelwood and sawlogs occurs from three main sources in the zone; from designated domestic cutting blocks on Crown land, from cutover clean up on Crown and Industry limits, and from landing and roadside clean up on both Crown and Industry limits. For the designated cutting blocks, the harvest scheduling and priorities apply, however it may not always be practical to follow. Domestic cutting blocks are generally established near communities where concentrations of timber that is eligible for harvest exist. Mixed within these blocks may be timber that normally would not be scheduled for harvest in the planning period. Ideally, each individual domestic cutter would be issued their own cutting block which would ensure harvest of optimal stands. This is not practical however and domestic cutters are allowed to cut anywhere within the designated area provided that immature timber is not harvested. For this reason, the optimal harvest schedule may not always be followed in domestic areas. Utilization of cutover residue, dead timber and scrub areas which are not part of the timber supply analysis, more than makes up for this difference however.

*Specific domestic strategies are as follows:*

- target low volume stands that have poor commercial harvest chances
- encourage use of under utilized species (birch, larch and aspen)
- target dead and insect damaged stands that are beyond commercial salvage.
- where possible, target alienation Class 3 lands that have low commercial potential
- in areas of high domestic demand, limit volume allocation in designated cutting areas and encourage alternate sources (birch, cutovers, landings, scrub etc)
- monitor stands harvested in domestic cutting areas for compliance to the harvest schedule and change areas available for harvest to reflect this schedule

## 7.2. Silviculture

Section 1.4.1.4 describes the regeneration patterns of the major tree species by each disturbance type and generally by ecoregion. On average, there is a 20 percent regeneration failure rate (NSR) across all disturbance types. Generally, areas that do not regenerate naturally are renewed by some combination of site preparation and planting or gap planting. Areas that are regenerated are left to develop naturally. In the case of balsam fir which is a prolific regenerator and usually forms an overstocked stand, some form of thinning is usually applied to improve the growth and development characteristics of the regenerating stand. In recent years however, particularly in District 16, there is concern about the type (species) of regeneration because of the increased presence of balsam woolly adelgid in the area. In these areas regeneration to balsam fir may not necessarily be acceptable on certain site types. As well, on certain sites in District 9, particularly in the Seal Bay area, balsam fir has been regenerating on black spruce sites and often forms the majority of available stocking. This regeneration is “off site” and often becomes chlorotic and stagnates at an early age. Prescriptions to deal with these problems will be presented in sections to follow.

### 7.2.1. Forest Renewal

Since maintenance of the forestry landbase is crucial, forest renewal treatments are the most important silviculture technique in the zone. Forest renewal silvicultural treatments are designed to ensure that a new forest is established after disturbance by harvesting, insect, wind or fire. In most regions of the Province these prescriptions normally involve some form of treatment to prepare the site to accept planted seedlings. Due to the increasing presence of Balsam Woolly Adelgid in the zone, a greater percentage of the harvested disturbed sites are being scheduled for prescribe burning prior to planting. Planting, whether full planting or gap planting is done to ensure stocking of desired species is at acceptable levels.

Additionally treatment of sites with herbicides that have been overgrown with hardwoods and other herbaceous species has been done to reduce this competition and make the site more accessible and suitable for planting. Herbicide usually reduces the competition for a few years to allow planted seedlings to get established and “get the jump” on the non crop tree species that occupy the site. Herbicides, while used sparingly, are sometimes a necessary tool to help establishment of a new forest particularly on the better sites.

Complete regeneration failure requiring full planting is rare in the zone because of the excellent regeneration capabilities of balsam fir. When it does happen however, the site is prepared, if necessary, and planted with mainly black or white spruce and to a lesser extent Norway spruce or white pine. There is also some gap planting required in the zone. This treatment is designed to increase the stocking on sites that have not regenerated to sufficient levels. Gap planting is done with the same species as above, and, coupled with the natural regeneration already present on site result in a mixed softwood forest.

Where possible, seedlings are grown with seed from local seed sources. A seed orchard has been established at Pynns Brook to produce seed from plus trees collected throughout the Province. Plus trees are trees that normally demonstrate superior growth and physiological characteristics. The majority of the planting stock is now from improved seed collected from provincial seed orchards. The ultimate goal is to establish plantations with seedlings that have superior growth characteristics and thus increase yield and maintain genetic diversity.

Exotic species have been planted in trials at some locations in the zone, (eg. Japanese larch at Pynns Brook) however, it is not anticipated that they will form any substantive proportion of the planting program in the future.

Surveys and anecdotal information indicate that hardwoods form a significant portion of stand composition after planting. This is especially true on scarified areas because scarification promotes hardwood establishment.



## 7.2.2. Forest Improvement

Forest improvement prescriptions are designed to treat existing, established forest stands in an attempt to enhance development. These treatments usually involve thinning overstocked balsam fir stands at either a young age 10 -15 years (precommercial thinning) or an intermediate age 25 - 35 years (commercial thinning)

Precommercial thinning reduces density levels on overstocked areas in order to maximize volume increment and operability (piece size) in the shortest period of time. Trees removed are not of merchantable size and are left behind to return the nutrients to the site. In the zone, balsam fir is usually thinned to favour any spruce that may be in the stand. In this way a mixed softwood stand is produced (depending on the original density of spruce) which is more diverse and less susceptible to insect infestation. As well, any hardwood species that are not in direct competition with spruce or fir are left to increase the biodiversity of the stand. Surveys conducted on precommercially thinned areas many years after treatment have shown that a very large portion of the plots in the treated areas contain hardwoods. In recent years the precommercial thinning program has dropped significantly. This trend is expected to continue.

Commercial thinning is done on older balsam fir stands and is designed to capture any mortality that would normally occur in the stand through self thinning. The trees harvested are of commercial size and are extracted and utilized. The remaining trees are left to grow, free from competition and are harvested when mature. By salvaging this eminent mortality a higher yield can be obtained in these stands. As with precommercial thinning, spruce and hardwoods are left where possible to increase the stand diversity. This treatment has been used sparingly in the zone however.

Both types of thinning will produce large diameter stems in a shorter time period which should increase the percentage of merchantable volume in stands that is suitable for sawlog material.

*Specific strategies:*

- ensure regeneration of areas disturbed by harvest, insect, wind and fire to prevent loss of productive land base
- use thinning techniques in young stands to increase stand development, reduce rotation age, and increase the percentage of sawlogs in stands
- where possible, promote species mixes particularly with spruce and hardwoods to reduce susceptibility to insect attack and increase biological diversity
- where possible, use seedlings grown from local seed sources to protect genetic diversity
- ensure levels of planting and thinning used in the wood supply analysis are achieved
- work towards pre harvest planning to identify areas with potential balsam woolly adelgid problems so that alternate silvicultural prescriptions, such as prescribed burning, can be promptly employed

### 7.3. Access Roads

Timely access to harvesting areas is the key to successful implementation of harvesting plans. Roads also provide access for other recreational values such as hunting, fishing, skiing, berry picking and hiking. Roads can also have a negative impact both from an environmental perspective (loss of productive land base) and other value perspective (access near remote outfitting lodges).

As a general principle from both an environmental and cost perspective, the minimal amount of road will be built to effectively harvest available timber. As well, roads are constructed to standards (minimum right-of-way and driving surface etc.) that are as low as possible but still access the timber in a safe and effective manner. Forwarding distances are maximized to the economic limit to minimize the amount of road constructed. These principles ensure that the minimum amount of road is built and that loss of productive land base and environmental disturbance are minimized.

In sensitive and wet areas, winter harvesting and road construction are encouraged and are often the only option. This minimizes environmental disturbance and provides access to areas that would otherwise be left unharvested.

In many instances forest access roads “open up” new areas which are then subject to cabin development (often illegal). They also provide access to remote areas where outfitting businesses operate. This generally leads to competition for hunting areas between local and “sport” hunters and may detract from the “remote” designation of the lodge. In such instances cabin development should be controlled to limit local access. Road decommissioning may also be considered, depending on cost and mitigation of conflicting uses for that road.

The nature of the current wood supply, particularly in District 9, is that harvestable areas or stands are becoming smaller and more scattered. Achievement of the allocated harvest is contingent on accessing these areas and stands therefore more roads are needed to access this timber. It is imperative that additional funding sources become available to construct these roads if we are to maintain this harvest level. Failure to secure additional road monies will result in potential decreases in commercial timber allocation.

*Specific strategies:*

- where possible, build winter roads to access sensitive and wet areas
- minimize amount of road built by maximizing forwarding distances
- use minimum road standard to safely and effectively match the logging chance
- work with appropriate agencies (crown lands) to control cabin development
- consider road decommissioning on roads near remote outfitting lodges and other areas of concern where requested and where feasibly possible
- explore all avenues to secure funding for road construction and encourage operators to build their own roads in exchange for royalty reductions

## 7.4. Forest Protection

### 7.4.1. Insects and Disease

As indicated in section 1.5.5, insects have been a major natural disturbance factor in the zone. The main tree species, balsam fir, is susceptible to most of the major insects we have including spruce budworm, hemlock looper, balsam fir sawfly, and balsam woolly adelgid. In the past, severe mortality has occurred resulting in massive salvage efforts. In recent years, quality standards at local pulp mills have changed to require a timely supply of fresh, green timber. As a result, the window to salvage insect damaged timber is now one to two years after mortality. On a positive note, access to most areas has increased and improved allowing for quicker reaction to salvage insect mortality.

Populations of hemlock looper and balsam fir sawfly were building in the early 2000's and resulted in a treatment program in 2002 and 2003. Since that time the populations of these insects have been in decline. The balsam woolly adelgid seem to be moving eastward into District 16 in increasing proportions causing growth problems in young balsam fir stands.

As outlined in the harvesting and timber supply analysis sections our timber supply is based on following a rigid predetermined harvest schedule and minimizing inventory deductions (of which insect damage is a portion). In the event of a major insect infestation, salvage efforts may change harvest priorities and thus the optimal harvest schedule may not be followed. If insect damaged stands cannot be harvested in a timely manner, an additional harvest in the form of unsalvaged mortality may occur resulting in inventory deductions that are higher than anticipated. In both eventualities, deviations from harvest schedules and inventory adjustment levels will have to be closely monitored to ensure that the validity of the AAC calculations is not compromised.

*Specific strategies:*

- use silvicultural techniques at the stand level to alter species mix and increase stand vigor to make stands less susceptible to insect attack
- where possible, use harvest scheduling techniques to alter species mix across the landscape to avoid “setting the table” for severe insect infestation
- use species conversion techniques, where possible, to convert adelgid susceptible balsam fir to other less susceptible species
- in conjunction with Provincial and Federal initiatives, use pertinent and approved biological and chemical insecticides such as BTK, Mimic, Neemix4.5 and NeabNPV (virus)
- in cooperation with Provincial insect and inventory divisions, monitor and measure adelgid infested stands to help refine yield curves to be used in the next timber supply analysis

### 7.4.2. Fire

As outlined in previous sections, most of the zone has little fire history due to the relatively abundant rainfall and above average snowfall, however, some portions of District 9 has had a higher frequency. A fire in an unusually dry year can have devastating effects on the forest however and can exacerbate an already tight wood supply situation. The zone can minimize the risk of a serious fire by maintaining a highly trained, efficient and effective fire control program and by minimizing the risk in forest stands through maintenance of health and vigour.

*Specific strategies:*

- use silvicultural treatments and protection from insects to increase health and vigour of stands
- maintain fire control capabilities by both the Crown and Industry.
- where possible, promote species mixes in stands to minimize risk

### 7.4.3. Windthrow

Wind throw usually occurs in stands that are old and decrepit or in stands that have been predisposed by some other disturbance such as insects and disease. To minimize the effects of blow down, stands will be managed to promote health and vigour mainly through silvicultural treatments and protection from insects.

*Specific strategies:*

- avoid thinning in areas with high wind damage potential (hilltops on high elevations etc.)
- maintain forest in healthy vigorous condition through silvicultural treatments and protection from insects
- design cut blocks to follow contours and natural boundaries to minimize risk of windthrow to residual forest

## 7.5. Information and Education

Information and education is one of the key elements to providing for more active and effective participation in the planning process at all levels. Through interaction with various user groups and the general public a better understanding of each others values and positions is gained. The more we know about each others values and where these values are located on the landscape the better the ability to mitigate any potential impacts of harvesting on these values. For example, learning where a cabin is located can help planners when selecting areas for harvest and provide a contact to discuss impacts and mitigations.

Many comments were made during the planning team meetings about the good exchange of information and ideas that occurred. It is through such forums that information can be shared which will provide a basis for more effective and informed participation in such processes. Other such vehicles for information and education which will be actively pursued are:

### *Specific strategies:*

- field trips (e.g. CBPPL woodlands tour, mill tours)
- school visits
- open houses
- commercial operator environmental training programs
- information meetings
- training courses
- seminars
- general day to day contact

## 8. Proposed Activities

### 8.1. District 9

#### 8.1.1. Harvesting

In District 9 the majority of the harvest is scheduled for commercial purposes. This is due to nature of the landbase which was originally designated for industrial purposes. In most other traditional crown districts the landbase is located near the coast where there are many communities and the domestic demand is high. In District 9 there are few communities and the domestic demand is lower. There is sufficient domestic timber allocated to meet the demand.

The AAC for district 9 will not be exceeded in this planning period

##### 8.1.1.1. Commercial

The timber scheduled for commercial harvest in the district is overmature with some small pockets of mature dispersed throughout. This proposed harvest approximates the harvest schedule that was used to determine the AAC in Section 3. The allocated operating area and associated harvest volumes represent as much as two times the actual proposed harvest (Table 18). The purpose of including more volume than is actually proposed is to allow for operational flexibility and inventory deviations within operating areas without having to constantly amend the plan.

**Table 18 Proposed commercial harvest in District 9 for 2017-2021**

District:				Softwood Volume m <sup>3</sup>				Hardwood Volume m <sup>3</sup>					
Operating Area	Name	Tenure	Area	Core	Operational Constraint	Sub-total	Non AAC wood		Core	Operational Constraint	Sub-total	Non AAC Wood	
							Operational	Regulatory				Operational	Regulatory
CC09001	Seal Bay	Crown	1160	110000									
CC09002	Penney's Brook	Crown	733	20000									
CC09003	Wellman's Steady	Crown	916	7000									
CC09004	Bob's Head	Crown	459	21000									
CC09005	Long Pond	Crown	119	6000					3000				
CC09006	Airstrip	Crown	79	5000									
CC09007	Burnt Berry	Crown	124	10000									
CC09008	Mic Mac Pond	Crown	34	2400									
CC09009	17 Mile Grade	Crown	108	5000									
CC09012	Oxford's Grade	Crown	1612	75000					5000				
CC09013	Indian River	Crown	101	2400					5000				
CC09014	Pittman's Pond	Crown	195	10000									
CC09015	Fish Hatchery	Crown	154	10000									
CC09016	Middle Arm Ridge	Crown	461	6000									
CC09017	Bear Pond	Crown	271	3000									
CC09018	Burlington	Crown	89	750									
CC09022	Cat Path	Crown	112	4000									
CC09024	Goat Pond	Crown	67	2500									
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>6794</b>	<b>300050</b>					<b>13000</b>				
CK09010	Goodyear's Cove	CBPPL	229	500					6000				
CK09011	Rocky Pond	CBPPL	376	500					5000				
CK09019	Six Mile Valley	CBPPL	109	10000									
CK09020	East Pond	CBPPL	152	15000									
CK09021	28 Ridge	CBPPL	2394	75000									
CK09023	Ming's Bight	CBPPL	275	5000									
CK09025	Western Arm	CBPPL	190	500					5000				
CK09037	Hampden Highway	CBPPL	784	50000									
CK09539	Chouse Brook Road	CBPPL	336	6000									
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>4845</b>	<b>162500</b>					<b>16000</b>				
<b>Totals</b>													

### 8.1.1.2. Domestic

Table 19 outlines the proposed domestic harvest. Harvesting will occur in designated domestic cutting areas and is generally conducted on a small patch cut system. All domestic cutting is done under permit which has conditions attached that outline the species, volume, location and utilization standards to be employed. Most cutting occurs in fall and winter with extraction by snowmobile or ATV. Domestic permit allocation is 23 m<sup>3</sup>. In remote parts of the district not covered by any operating areas, domestic permits may be issued to remote cabin owners for firewood to heat their cabins as requested.



**Table 19 Proposed domestic harvest in District 9 for 2017 to 2021**

District:				Softwood Volume m <sup>3</sup>					Hardwood Volume m <sup>3</sup>				
Operating Area	Name	Tenure	Area	Core	Operational Constrained	Sub-total	Non AAC wood		Core	Operational Constrained	Sub-total	Non AAC Wood	
							Operational	Regulatory				Operational	Regulatory
CC09501	Upper Indian Pond	Crown							200				
CC09502	Indian River	Crown		4552					200				
CC09503	Sheffield Lake	Crown							100				
CC09505	Hamilton's Pond	Crown		597								100	
CC09506	West Pond	Crown		6375								1125	
CC09507	South Brook	Crown		5232								172	
CC09508	Green Bay South	Crown		19000					500			4500	
CC09509	Sunday Cove Island	Crown		11400								1275	
CC09510	Hall's Bay	Crown		9300								1875	
CC09511	Little Bay	Crown		14200								1100	
CC09512	Rattling Brook	Crown		2000								375	
CC09513	King's Point	Crown		850								150	
CC09514	Middle Arm	Crown		14813								2625	
CC09515	Nipper's Harbour	Crown		4756								525	
CC09516	Nipper's Harbour Jct	Crown		1698								75	
CC09517	Cape John	Crown		7338								1223	
CC09518	LaScie Highway North	Crown		13861								2310	
CC09520	Fleur De Lys	Crown		7882								1313	
CC09524	Western Arm	Crown		203								33	
CC09526	Skull Hill	Crown		100								20	
<b>Sub-Total</b>				<b>124157</b>					<b>1000</b>			<b>18796</b>	
<b>Totals</b>													
CK0904	Otter Pond	CBPPL										500	
CK09519	Baie Verte East	CBPPL		9852									
CK09521	Baie Verte West	CBPPL		12502								2626	
CK09522	Osbourne's Pond	CBPPL		611								101	
CK09523	Westport	CBPPL		4690								826	
CK09525	Beaver Pond	CBPPL		1698								283	
CK09527	South Pond	CBPPL										3737	
CK09528	Long Steady Pond	CBPPL										815	
CK09529	Dawes Pond	CBPPL										815	
CK09530	Joe Glode's	CBPPL										815	
CK09531	Ketche's Pond	CBPPL										543	
CK09532	Sop's Lake	CBPPL		1500								2174	
CK09533	Gull Pond	CBPPL										100	
CK09534	Flatwater Pond	CBPPL										1291	
CK09535	Rambler	CBPPL										883	
CK09536	Westport Road North	CBPPL										2921	
CK09537	Westport Road South	CBPPL										1834	
CK09538	Wild Cove Pond	CBPPL										407	
CK09539	Chouse Brook Road	CBPPL		1200									
CK09540	Beaches	CBPPL		5200									
<b>Sub-Total</b>				<b>37253</b>								<b>20671</b>	
<b>Totals</b>													

### 8.1.2. Silviculture

There are two silviculture prescriptions scheduled for the next five years; planting/gap planting including site preparation where required, and pre commercial thinning. Planting is designed to return a site to a minimum stocking level with the desired species, mainly spruce. There is full

planting when there is complete natural regeneration failure and gap planting when a site has some desired regeneration but not enough to meet minimum stocking standards. Precommercial thinning is prescribed to reduce the density on overstocked regeneration so that growth can be concentrated on the remaining crop trees and thus reduce the time to harvest.

As stated in previous sections, there is a growing problem with balsam woolly adelgid in District 9. This insect affects balsam fir trees by severely reducing growth rates and therefore reducing the productivity of some sites to a point where commercial viability is questionable. The silviculture program in the next five years will be designed to mitigate the impacts of this insect on sites dominated by balsam fir. The use of prescribed burning is increasing in District 16 to sanitize adelgid sites and prepare them for planting. The problem with this insect is relatively new however, and the extent of affected areas and rate of spread is unknown. For this reason it is extremely difficult to identify specific areas for treatment at this time. Potential silvicultural treatment areas need to undergo reconnaissance and or intensive surveys to determine the severity of attack of this insect. These surveys will be conducted during this five year period but until they are completed, specific locations and treatment amounts cannot be identified. There has been silviculture prescriptions developed however, which will be implemented for specific on the ground conditions. These prescriptions are described below.

Immature and regenerating stands have been identified within operating areas. If the regenerating species is balsam fir, then the presence of adelgid will be evaluated using reconnaissance surveys. Damage evaluation will be based on damage class as described in Table 20. If presence of adelgid is non existent or light (Codes 1 and 2,) then the balsam fir stands will be considered for precommercial thinning, however, if presence of adelgid is Code 3 or higher in the areas, the stands will be left to develop naturally. In the timber supply analysis, 25 ha of precommercial thinning per year were used to calculate the AAC on Crown land. This represents a minimum amount and it is likely that a larger area will be treated in the next five years. The increasing adelgid presence however, will see the precommercial thinning program diminish over time in favour of planting.

Areas that are scheduled for commercial harvest or have been recently harvested have been identified on the operating area maps and are candidates for planting or gap planting to black or white spruce. These areas will undergo reconnaissance and or intensive regeneration surveys to determine the need for planting and the presence of adelgid. If adelgid damage is greater than Code 2 in adjacent stands then balsam fir will not be considered an acceptable regeneration species. These areas will be either full planted or gap planted to bring them up to minimum stocking levels to spruce. Site preparation using either mechanical means or prescribed burning will be employed on suitable sites that have impediments to planting. There were 100 ha of planting per year used in the analysis to calculate the AAC on Crown land however, it is anticipated that a larger area will be planted during the next five years

**Table 20 Insect Damage Assessment**

Code	Damage Class	Description
1	undamaged	normal branch, no visible symptoms of attack
2	light	node swelling indistinct, apparent only at close examination
3	light to moderate	node swelling distinct, some stunting or distortion present
4	moderate	distortion prominent, branch tip inhibited, thinly foliated
5	moderate to severe	as in moderate but terminals and some branches bare from tips up to 30 cm or up to one half the length of short branches
6	severe	as in moderate but terminals and some branches bare for more than 30 cm or more than one half the length of short branches
7	dead trees	inner bark brown at breast height and symptoms or signs of adelgid attack present

### 8.1.3. Primary Access Roads and Bridges

Table 21 outlines the forest access roads scheduled to be constructed in District 9 in the next five years to access timber for commercial purposes.

**Table 21 Forest access roads scheduled to be constructed in District 9**

Operating Area		Construction/ Reconstruction	Length (km)	Water Crossings	
Name	Number			Culvert	Bridge
Seal Bay	CC09001	Construction	7.1		
Penney's Brook	CC09002	Construction	3.4		
Wellman's Steady	CC09003	Construction	1.0		
Bob's Head	CC09004	Construction	1.0		
Long Pond	CC09005	Construction	2.7		1
Airstrip	CC09006	Construction	4.7	1	
Burnt Berry	CC09007	Construction	4.5		
Mic Mac Pond	CC09008	Construction	1.1		
Goodyear's Cove	CK09010	Construction	1.2		
Rocky Pond	CK09011	Construction	4.0		
Oxford's Grade	CC09012	Construction	4.5		
Indian River	CC09013	Construction	6.0		
Six Mile Valley	CK09019	Construction	2.3		
28 Ridge	CK09021	Construction	14.7		
Ming's Bight	CK09023	Construction	1.0		
<b>Sub-total</b>			<b>59.2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

All roads will be built to the specifications of the Class C-2 standard and all pertinent EPG's will be followed. In addition, secondary, operational and winter access roads and upgrading of existing road will be required and will be submitted in the annual operating plan prior to the year that they are planned to be built. As well, referrals will be sent to all relevant agencies (including DFO and Water Resources Division) before any construction is initiated.

## 8.1.4. Activities in Protected Water Supply Areas

In operating areas where operations are scheduled to occur in protected water supply areas (PWSA), there are wider buffers established inside these PWSA and the pertinent EPG's will be attached to any commercial or domestic permits issued for these areas. There will be continuous monitoring inside these areas and buffers will be flagged to ensure compliance with the guidelines. In addition, approval under the Water Resources Act must be obtained annually by the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency before any commercial or domestic harvesting commences inside the PWSA.

## 8.1.5. Environmental Protection

### 8.1.5.1. Fire

Wildfire has not been prevalent in the district in the past number of years and as a result there have been little merchantable volume lost. There have been major fires in the past however, so the district must remain vigilant in its fire suppression program to ensure any future losses are minimized.

There are fire crews and equipment stationed at Springdale and Millertown in the fire season whose direct responsibility is fire protection. In addition, support, equipment and manpower at both the regional and provincial level is available should the need arise. There are air tankers stationed at Deer Lake and Gander and helicopters in Gander that are available for initial attack.

### 8.1.5.2. Insect and Disease

Monitoring and protection programs for insects and disease is done are coordinated by the forest protection division in Corner Brook. District staff are always available however to provide assistance in detection, monitoring, and protection against insects and disease.

### 8.1.5.3. General Environment

The environmental protection guidelines form the basis for protecting the environment from the effects of forest activities. Commercial forest activities can have a significant environmental impact if not conducted properly. The guidelines are designed to provide site specific measures to ensure that these impacts are avoided. Highlights of measures to avoid these impacts include no activity buffer zones, modification of harvesting design and equipment, avoidance of sensitive site during critical periods, consultation with other regulatory agencies and of course, monitoring. Specific measures that govern each forestry activity are detailed in Appendix 1.

### 8.1.6. Surveys

Utilization surveys will be conducted on both commercial and domestic cutovers to ensure loss of merchantable timber is minimized. The district will work in conjunction with the Industry Services Division in Corner Brook to implement a yield comparison study to compare the expected volume in an operating areas to those actually attained. The results of this survey will help refine the inventory deduction described in Section 3.

As previously mentioned, reconnaissance and intensive regeneration surveys will be conducted on commercial cutovers created during the next five years as well as those created in the past five years to determine the need for planting. As well, reconnaissance surveys will be done on regenerating stands to determine the suitability for precommercial thinning.

## 8.1.7. Information and Education

The district will continue its attempt to educate the general public to ensure meaningful and effective consultation and input can be attained. This will be accomplished through planning team fieldtrips and meetings, school presentations, open houses, annual participation with the Teacher Institute, meetings and National Forest Week activities.

## 8.2. District 16

### 8.2.1. Harvesting

In District 16 the core productive landbase has been partitioned for commercial and domestic purposes. There is a relatively small commercial harvest due mainly to the fragmented nature of the landbase which has led to logistical scheduling challenges. Most of the domestic harvest is concentrated in close proximity to communities and consequently has placed considerable pressure on the drain of the resource near them. These commercial and domestic challenges have been addressed through negotiating several timber exchange and transfer agreements with Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Limited.

The AAC for district 16 will not be exceeded in this planning period.

#### 8.2.1.1. Commercial

The timber scheduled for commercial harvest in the district is overmature with some small pockets of mature dispersed throughout. This proposed harvest approximates the harvest schedule that was used to determine the AAC in Section 3. The allocated operating area and associated harvest volumes represent as much as two times the actual proposed harvest (Table 22).

**Table 22 Proposed commercial harvest in District 16 for 2017 to 2021**

District:				Softwood Volume m <sup>3</sup>				Hardwood Volume m <sup>3</sup>					
				Core	Operational Constrained	Sub-total	Non AAC wood Operational Regulatory	Core	Operational Constrained **	Sub-total	Non AAC Wood Operational Regulatory		
Operating Area	Name	Tenure	Area										
C1602	Deadwater Brook	Crown	1465	55,000		55,000				500	500		
C1605	Saltwater Pond	Crown	550	7,000		7,000				750	750		
C1606	Spear Cove	Crown	430	5,000		5,000				200	200		
C1607	Giles Pond	Crown	65	1,750		1,750				50	50		
C1608	Grassy Cove	Crown	2040	4,000		4,000				50	50		
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>4,550</b>	<b>72,750</b>		<b>72,750</b>				<b>1,550</b>	<b>1,550</b>		
CK0937	Hampden Highway	CBPPL	2950	50,000		50,000				1200	1200		
CK0939	Chouse Brook	CBPPL	970	6,000		6,000							
CK1601	White's River	CBPPL	6480	60,000		60,000				750	750		
CK1603	Cormack South	CBPPL	230	5,000		5,000							
Ck1604	Clam Pond	CBPPL	3860	90,000		90,000				500	500		
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>14,490</b>	<b>211,000</b>		<b>211,000</b>				<b>2,450</b>	<b>2,450</b>		
<b>Totals</b>			<b>19,040</b>	<b>283,750</b>		<b>283750</b>				<b>4,000</b>	<b>4,000</b>		
** All Hardwood is Residual													

The purpose of including more volume than is actually proposed is to allow for operational flexibility and inventory deviations within operating areas without having to constantly amend the plan.

### 8.2.1.2. Domestic

Table 23 outlines the proposed domestic harvest Harvesting will occur in designated domestic cutting areas and is generally conducted on a small patch cut system. All domestic cutting is done under permit which has conditions attached that outline the species, volume, location and utilization standards to be employed. Most cutting occurs in fall and winter with extraction by snowmobile or ATV. Domestic permit allocation is 23 m3. In remote parts of the district not covered by any operating areas, domestic permits may be issued to remote cabin owners for firewood to heat their cabins as requested.



**Table 23 Proposed domestic harvest in District 16 for 2017 to 2021**

District:				Softwood Volume m <sup>3</sup>				Hardwood Volume m <sup>3</sup>					
Operating Area	Name	Tenure	Area	Core	Operational Constrained	Sub-total	Non AAC wood		Core	Operational Constrained **	Sub-total	Non AAC Wood	
							Operational	Regulatory				Operational	Regulatory**
C1608	Grassy Cove		2030	100		100							
C1609	Cormack ADA North	Crown	7090					2,300					400
C1610	Cormack ADA South	Crown	6510					2,300					400
C1612	White Hills	Crown	2650	4,100		4,100				700	700		
C1617	Hampden	Crown	1780	2,400		2,400				400	400		
C1618	Pinkson's Road	Crown	2340	4,900		4,900				800	800		
C1619	Otter Trap Brook	Crown	270	4,000		4,000				700	700		
C1620	Sop's/Jackson's Arm	Crown	6290	12,300		12,300				2100	2100		
C1621	Jackson's Arm Ridge	Crown	1210	1,100		1,100				200	200		
C1622	Rattling Brook	Crown	1030	200		200							
C1623	Cat Arm Road	Crown	1940	300		300							
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>33140</b>	<b>29,400</b>		<b>29,400</b>		<b>4600</b>		<b>4,900</b>	<b>4,900</b>		<b>800</b>
CK0939	Chouse Brook	CBPPL	7220	1,000		1,000				200	200		
CK0940	Beaches	CBPPL	2610	4,400		4,400				800	800		
CK1604	Clam Pond	CBPPL	3650	400		400				100	100		
CK1611	Reidville	CBPPL		4,400		4,400				800	800		
CK1613	Crooked Feeder	CBPPL	5160	5,600		5,600				1000	1000		
CK1614	Junction Brook	CBPPL	550	2,700		2,700				500	500		
CK1615	Howley	CBPPL	1890	2,400		2,400				400	400		
CK1616	Goose Steadies	CBPPL	6970	1,500		1,500				300	300		
CK1612	Clam Pond	CBPPL	3650	400		400				100	100		
CK1624	Doucer's Brook	CBPPL	370	2,600		2,600				500	500		
<b>Sub-Total</b>			<b>65210</b>	<b>25,400</b>		<b>25,400</b>				<b>4,700</b>	<b>4,700</b>		
<b>Totals</b>			<b>98350</b>	<b>54,800</b>		<b>54800</b>		<b>4600</b>		<b>9,600</b>	<b>9,600</b>		<b>800</b>

\*\* All Hardwood is Residual

## 8.2.2. Silviculture

There are two silviculture prescriptions scheduled for the next five years; planting/gap planting including site preparation where required, and pre commercial thinning. Planting is designed to return a site to a minimum stocking level with the desired species, mainly spruce. There is full planting when there is complete natural regeneration failure and gap planting when a site has some desired regeneration but not enough to meet minimum stocking standards. Precommercial thinning is prescribed to reduce the density on overstocked regeneration so that growth can be concentrated on the remaining crop trees and thus reduce the time to harvest.

As stated in previous sections, there is a growing problem with balsam woolly adelgid in District 16. This insect affects balsam fir trees by severely reducing growth rates and therefore reducing

the productivity of some sites to a point where commercial viability is questionable. The silviculture program in the next five years will be designed to mitigate the impacts of this insect on sites dominated by balsam fir. The use of prescribed burning is increasing in District 16 to sanitize adelgid sites and prepare them for planting. The problem with this insect is relatively new however, and the extent of affected areas and rate of spread is unknown. For this reason it is extremely difficult to identify specific areas for treatment at this time. Potential silvicultural treatment areas need to undergo reconnaissance and or intensive surveys to determine the severity of attack of this insect. These surveys will be conducted during this five year period but until they are completed, specific locations and treatment amounts cannot be identified. There has been silviculture prescriptions developed however, which will be implemented for specific on the ground conditions. These prescriptions are described below.

Immature and regenerating stands have been identified within operating areas. If the regenerating species is balsam fir, then the presence of adelgid will be evaluated using reconnaissance surveys. Damage evaluation will be based on damage class as described in Table 24. If presence of adelgid is non existent or light (Codes 1 and 2,) then the balsam fir stands will be considered for precommercial thinning, however, if presence of adelgid is Code 3 or higher in the areas, the stands will be left to develop naturally.. The increasing adelgid presence however, will see the precommercial thinning program diminish over time in favour of planting.

Areas that are scheduled for commercial harvest or have been recently harvested have been identified on the operating area maps and are candidates for planting or gap planting to black or white spruce. These areas will undergo reconnaissance and or intensive regeneration surveys to determine the need for planting and the presence of adelgid. If adelgid damage is greater than Code 2 in adjacent stands then balsam fir will not be considered an acceptable regeneration species. These areas will be either full planted or gap planted to bring them up to minimum stocking levels to spruce. Site preparation using either mechanical means or prescribed burning will be employed on suitable sites that have impediments to planting. There were 75 ha of planting per year used in the analysis to calculate the AAC on Crown land however, it is anticipated that a larger area will be planted during the next five years.

**Table 24 Insect Damage Assessment**

Code	Damage Class	Description
1	undamaged	normal branch, no visible symptoms of attack
2	light	node swelling indistinct, apparent only at close examination
3	light to moderate	node swelling distinct, some stunting or distortion present
4	moderate	distortion prominent, branch tip inhibited, thinly foliated
5	moderate to severe	as in moderate but terminals and some branches bare from tips up to 30 cm or up to one half the length of short branches
6	severe	as in moderate but terminals and some branches bare for more than 30 cm or more than one half the length of short branches
7	dead trees	inner bark brown at breast height and symptoms or signs of adelgid attack present

### 8.2.3. Primary Access Roads and Bridges

There are no forest access roads scheduled to be constructed in District 16 in the next five years. However, secondary, operational and winter access roads and upgrading of existing road will be required and will be submitted in the annual operating plan prior to the year that they are planned to be built. As well, referrals will be sent to all relevant agencies (including DFO and Water Resources Division) before any construction is initiated.

### 8.2.4. Activities in Protected Water Supply Areas

In operating areas where operations are scheduled to occur in protected water supply areas (PWSA), there are wider buffers established inside these PWSA and the pertinent EPG's will be

attached to any commercial or domestic permits issued for these areas. There will be continuous monitoring inside these areas and buffers will be flagged to ensure compliance with the guidelines. In addition, approval under the Water Resources Act must be obtained annually by the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency before any commercial or domestic harvesting commences inside the PWSA.

## 8.2.5. Environmental Protection

### 8.2.5.1. Fire

Wildfire has not been prevalent in the district in the past number of years and as a result there have been little merchantable volume lost. There have been major fires in the past however, so the district must remain vigilant in its fire suppression program to ensure any future losses are minimized.

There are fire crews and equipment stationed at Pasadena and Corner Brook in the fire season whose direct responsibility is fire protection. In addition, support, equipment and manpower at both the regional and provincial level is available should the need arise. There are air tankers stationed at Deer Lake and Gander and helicopters in Pasadena that are available for initial attack.

### 8.2.5.2. Insect and Disease

Monitoring and protection programs for insects and disease is done are coordinated by the forest protection division in Corner Brook. District staff are always available however to provide assistance in detection, monitoring, and protection against insects and disease.

### 8.2.5.3. General Environment

The environmental protection guidelines form the basis for protecting the environment from the effects of forest activities. Commercial forest activities can have a significant environmental impact if not conducted properly. The guidelines are designed to provide site specific measures to ensure that these impacts are avoided. Highlights of measures to avoid these impacts include no activity buffer zones, modification of harvesting design and equipment, avoidance of sensitive site during critical periods, consultation with other regulatory agencies and of course, monitoring. Specific measures that govern each forestry activity are detailed in Appendix 1.

### 8.2.6. Surveys

Utilization surveys will be conducted on both commercial and domestic cutovers to ensure loss of merchantable timber is minimized. The district will work in conjunction with the Industry Services Division in Corner Brook to implement a yield comparison study to compare the expected volume in an operating areas to those actually attained. The results of this survey will help refine the inventory deduction described in Section 3.

As previously mentioned, reconnaissance and intensive regeneration surveys will be conducted on commercial cutovers created during the next five years as well as those created in the past five years to determine the need for planting. As well, reconnaissance surveys will be done on regenerating stands to determine the suitability for precommercial thinning.

### 8.2.7. Information and Education

The district will continue its attempt to educate the general public to ensure meaningful and effective consultation and input can be attained. This will be accomplished through planning

team fieldtrips and meetings, school presentations, open houses, annual participation with the Teacher Institute, meetings and National Forest Week activities.

## 9. Plan Administration

### 9.1. Monitoring

Monitoring of planned activities at the operational level is critical to ensure objectives and operations are carried out in a manner consistent with various guidelines and provincial and federal legislation.

All harvesting activity is regulated using a permitting system and all activities are inspected and monitored on the ground by conservation officers to ensure compliance with the Forestry Act and regulations, cutting permit conditions, and Environmental Protection Guidelines. Permit holders and contractors are also subject to financial penalties if work does not meet specifications. Conservation officers conduct inspections on a weekly or monthly basis depending on the level of activity. These inspections may entail surveys such as utilization assessment to ensure compliance with permit conditions.

### 9.2. Amendments

Due to the dynamic nature of forest activities, amendments are often required because of changes in the forest, operational realities, imposition of additional requirements or guidelines, or some other unforeseen circumstance. These changes to the five year operating plan must be submitted as amendments and approved before they are implemented. There are two types of possible amendments for this plan, one that can be approved internally by the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency and one that must be submitted to the Environmental Assessment Division for public review. Changes to this plan can be approved by the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency if they are:

-within one kilometer of an operating area described in the five year operating plan, an additional area for timber harvesting that is, in total, not more than 50 hectares in each year of the plan

- within a forest management district, an additional areas for silviculture treatment of not more than 20 percent of the total operating area described in the five year operating plan over the five year term of the plan
- within an operating area described in the five year operating plan, not more than one kilometer, in total, of new primary forest access road in addition to existing and proposed primary forest access road in each year of the plan
- adjacent to an operating area described in the five year operating plan, not more than half a kilometer, in total, of new primary forest access road in each year of that plan.

Changes that are not covered by the above must be submitted for Environmental Assessment (EA) in the form of an amendment to the five year operating plan. Prior to approval through EA, the amendment has to be approved by the Ecosystem Management Division of the Forest Service.

Amendments will be reviewed by the monitoring committee if the District Manager deems that they represent a significant change to the plan.

## 10. Literature Cited

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## **Appendices**