TRIAL SUMMARY

Title: The importance to wildlife of "planned skips" in operational herbicide treatments.

Officer in charge: Jerry Vakenti, Regional Pesticide Manager, MoE Skeena Region

Location: Pinkut Creek, Lakes Forest District

Objectives: This trial assesses the results of an aerial herbicide spray which leaves untreated strips ("planned skips") within a large, treated aspen clone; and which leaves small clones untreated within a larger treated block. Parameters measured are:
- a) density and abundance of songbird species breeding in young aspen clones
- b) general wildlife use
- c) changes in vegetation height and density attributable to herbicide use; and
- d) height, leader length and stem diameter of planted crop trees.

Information gained from this trial is intended to determine how much advantage (if any) there is for wildlife in leaving some aspen clones partially or wholly untreated, and whether such treatments will adequately meet silvicultural goals.

Progress: Working Plan and set-up completed. Some base measurements (pre-treatment) were taken; treatment scheduled for 1994 was deferred due to adverse weather conditions.


Report Distribution: As required.

* Suggested:
MoE Regional Habitat Biologists -- Prince George and Smithers
MoE Regional Pesticide Managers -- Prince George and Smithers
MoF Research Officers -- Prince George and Smithers
MoF Silviculture Officers -- Prince George and Smithers
MoF District Manager -- Lakes District
Forestry Supervisor -- Babine Forest Products, Burns Lake

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"Uncontinuous shrub and tree species and of firewood, grasses and total herbs in each of the subplots.

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   MoF District Manager -- Lakes District
   Forestry Supervisor -- Babine Forest Products, Burns Lake
WORKING PLAN FOR PINKUT CREEK ASPEN/VISION TRIAL

1. Title
   The importance to wildlife of "planned skips" in operational herbicide treatments.

2. Objectives
   This trial assesses the results of an aerial herbicide spray which leaves untreated strips ("planned skips") within a large, treated aspen clone; and which leaves small clones untreated within a larger treated block. Parameters measured will be:
   a) density and abundance of songbird species breeding in young aspen clones
   b) general wildlife use
   c) changes in vegetation height and density attributable to herbicide use; and
   d) height, leader length and stem diameter of planted crop trees.

   Information gained from this trial is intended to determine how much advantage (if any) there is for wildlife in leaving some aspen clones partially or wholly untreated, and whether such treatments will adequately meet silvicultural goals.

3. Location
   CP 151, Block 1 (Pinkut Creek), A16823 (Babine Forest Products), Lakes District, Prince Rupert Region.

4. Design and Layout
   The study area has three units, two of which contain several fairly small aspen clones, and one which contains one large clone. One of the small-clone units will be treated, the other will not. The large-clone unit will be treated, but the helicopter pilot will fly swaths which are too far apart to produce complete coverage, resulting in approximately 20% of the clone remaining untreated. All treatments will be helicopter aerial sprays, using an application rate of 4L/ha.

   Within each unit, six 50m-radius plots are established, each within or near one or more aspen clones. Location of these plots depends on location of aspen, but plot centres are at least 100m apart. Within each large plot, four 3.99m-radius subplots will be established, each 10m from the large plot centre.

   Songbird density and abundance is measured by point counts taken from large plot centres.
   General wildlife use is measured according to the "Method for monitoring wildlife in managed forests" (Hailer, 1991'), along transects joining each large plot centre.
   Vegetation height and density is measured as height and percent cover of each deciduous shrub and tree species and of fireweed, grasses and total herbs in each of the subplots.

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Crop tree response is measured as height, leader length and caliper of the two well-spaced crop trees closest to each subplot centre.

Plot and subplot centres are marked with wooden stakes; measured crop trees will be marked with metal pigtail stakes and flagging tape.

5. **Dates of treatment and assessment**
   Treatment units were originally scheduled for treatment in August 1994, as part of the Lakes District routine spray program. Adverse weather conditions necessitate delaying treatment until 1995. Pre-treatment observations were made in June-July for wildlife data; strictly speaking, these should be repeated in 1995. Vegetation assessments will be made in late summer 1995. Further assessments are intended for 1996, 1997 and/or 1998, and 2000.

6. **Summarize and Report**
   Establishment and baseline data interim report — Winter 1995/96
   Interim reports — Winter 1996/97; 1997/98/99
   Summary and final report — Winter 2000/01.

7. **Report Distribution**
   As required.
   * Suggested:
     MoE Regional Habitat Biologists — Prince George and Smithers
     MoE Regional Pesticide Managers — Prince George and Smithers
     MoF Research Officers — Prince George and Smithers
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