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FOREST INSECT AND DISEASE SURVEY **PEST REPORT**

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MOUNTAIN PINE BEETLE INFESTATIONS IN THE KITWANGA AND KISPIOX RIVER AREAS, 1972

R. J. Andrews and R. D. Erickson

Aerial surveys in 1970 disclosed an outbreak of mountain pine beetles in lodgepole pine stands near Weegett Creek. In 1971 the number of trees killed near Weegett Creek had increased and scattered outbreaks were seen near Kitwanga, east along the Skeena River to Hazelton and north of Kispiox Village along the Kispiox River to Kline Lake. During aerial surveys in 1972, a general expansion was noted in and adjoining all previously recorded infestations. The stand type in the infested areas is predominantly mature lodgepole pine mixed with spruce and/or western hemlock and deciduous species.

In August 1972 cruises were run at Weegett Creek north of Kitwanga, and near Sammon Lake, and Date Creek in the Kispiox River Valley. Prism plots were established at two chain intervals along three strips (110 to 130 chains long). Trees tallied averaged 11 and 13 inches dbh.

An engraver beetle, *Ips* sp., a secondary pest, was associated with the mountain pine beetle. Red-topped trees bore some mature engraver beetle larvae associated with mountain pine beetle damage. Parent adults, eggs and first instar larvae of both species were present in the attacked trees with green foliage i.e. 1972 attack. Some trees at each of the three locations bore adults that were "pitched out" or smothered by

the heavy sap exudation. Such trees appear to have been particularly attractive to Ips sp.

The following table shows the percentage of healthy and beetle-attacked lodgepole pine stems in the prism plots, and the year of attack:

Location	Total no. stems	Percentage			
		Healthy	Beetle-attacked		
			1972 (Green)	1971(Redtop)	Older(Grey)
Weegett Cr.	273	41	14	30	15
Sammon L.	151	36	22	23	19
Date Cr.	181	60	14	4	21

The cruises established the fact that the outbreak of mountain pine beetle continues as an important destructive epidemic in the mature lodgepole pine stands of Prince Rupert Forest District. It is likely to continue at about the same rate in 1973.