



FIDS PEST REPORT 95-22

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SUMMARY OF FOREST PEST CONDITIONS IN THE PRINCE RUPERT REGION, 1995

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This report briefly summarizes the activities of some of the more important forest pests currently active in the Prince Rupert Forest Region in 1995. A more detailed report of these and other pests will be available later in the year.

Aerial surveys, by FIDS, of the Kalum and Kispiox TSAs found **mountain pine beetle** infestations over 770 ha, a sharp reduction from the 1875 ha mapped the previous year. As in 1994, the most active infestations in the Kalum TSA were centered in the Aiyansh area, with scattered, spot attack east to the Cranberry River. In the Kispiox TSA, infestations expanded to 209 ha in the Sicintine River area, while scattered small infestations continued in the Cranberry area and along the Skeena River west of Kitwanga. Results of aerial surveys completed by the BC Forest Service for the three eastern TSAs are not yet compiled, but 1994 current attack levels indicated sustained levels in the Bulkley and Lakes TSAs and significant increases in the Morice TSA. As in the last few years the most significant infestations are centered in the Telkwa River Valley in the Bulkley TSA, in the Morrison Lake area of the Morice TSA and along the north shore of Eutsuk Lake in Tweedsmuir Provincial Park. **Pine needle cast** caused the discolouration of year-old pine needles in many scattered roadside areas in the Kalum TSA, especially east and north of Terrace and in the northern extremes of the Cassiar TSA, near the Yukon border.

Significant recent attacks to white and Sitka spruce by **spruce beetle** were seen again in the region. An aerial survey in the northwest corner of the Province again found numerous patches of recent mortality totalling nearly 5000 ha near the BC/Alaska

border in "Rainy Hollow" and in the upper Klemer and Kalsall river valleys. These infestations originated from ongoing beetle outbreaks in the lower Chilkat River drainage of adjacent Alaska. A first-time aerial survey within the newly-declared Tatshenshini Provincial Park found active infestations over more than 8000 ha in scattered patches of mature timber along the Tatshenshini River, from Detour Creek, south, almost to the confluence with the Alsek River. During aerial surveys of parts of the Cassiar TSA, 1291 ha of infestations were mapped, most were severe damage noted at the confluence of the Sutlahine and Inklin rivers. An infestation within the Morice River corridor in the southern Morice TSA expanded to cover approximately 2000 ha. The **yellow-headed spruce sawfly** continued to defoliate ornamental spruce in several spots in Terrace, and was also active this year in Kitimat. Some trees continue to be removed due to unsightly appearance caused by several years attack. **Spruce weevil** attacks continued in the Kalum TSA, with 41% current attack noted in a plantation near Cecil Creek and attacks at similar levels in many previously infested areas. In continued monitoring of the northerly progress of the weevil, no attacks were again noted at the Bell 1 crossing area and at Spruce Creek. The weevil's progress seems to be presently stalled in the Meziadin area.

Attacks by **balsam bark beetle** continued in almost all susceptible alpine fir stands, most notably in the north and south-central parts of the region. Over 3000 ha of balsam bark beetle mortality was mapped in the Kalum TSA, almost all of which occurred in the north part of the district in the Bell-Irving River drainage. In the Cassiar TSA, 579 patches of recently-killed trees were mapped over 15 595 ha. Numerous infestations were mapped along the Inklin, Sloko, Nakonake, Klappan and Little Klappan rivers, near Kinaskan and Natadesleen lakes, along Shakes Creek off the Stikine River, along the Iskut River to McLymont Creek and near Echo Lake, with less significant beetle activity noted in many other areas. In the Kispiox TSA, over 8800 ha of infestations were mapped in the Sicitine River drainage with a further 3600 ha mapped along the Kispiox River, Kuldo Creek and Kitwanga areas. Further data on total area affected for the region is pending completion of aerial surveys by BC Forest Service.

Green-striped forest looper lightly to severely defoliated about 700 ha of mostly western hemlock in an area above the Skeena River north of Kispiox.

A total of 40 **Pests of Young Stand (POYS)** surveys were completed to date in the region in locations ranging from north of Dease Lake to Ootsa Lake. Stands were primarily treated under the Forest Resource Development Agreements (FRDA I&II) between 1987 and 1993. Many of the surveyed plantations were naturally established stands that had been spaced, or rehabilitation sites that had been replanted. As in previous years, chief among the damaging agents in the stands were environmental factors such as wind and frost, and a broad array of biological pests, including spruce weevil in the spruce, stem and gall rusts in the pine and dwarf mistletoe in hemlock. Detailed survey summaries will be printed in both the regional reports and a special

FRDA report due out early in the new year. Stand-by-stand summaries will also be sent to District and Regional Forest Service offices.

No damage to newly-planted seedlings due to feeding by the **black army cutworm** was seen in 1995 for the third consecutive year, although feeding, primarily on fireweed was noted in three locations in the northern part of the Kalum district. Abundant early season fruiting bodies of the Rhizina root disease fungus were found at a Hunter Creek site not scheduled for planting this year.

Large aspen tortrix caused mostly moderate and severe defoliation of trembling aspen in 10 separate infestations totalling over 2145 ha. Defoliation was noted in the Cranberry River Valley (3rd consecutive year), and was mapped over 1290 ha near Kitsequecla. Small patches of light to severe defoliation were seen for the second consecutive year adjacent to Tyhee Lake in the Bulkley TSA and Burns Lake in the Lakes TSA. Extensive defoliation mapped in the Cassiar TSA last year did not recur. **Northern tent caterpillar** again caused severe defoliation of willows, wild rose and other shrub species over a broad area around Meziadin Lake, from south of Van Dyk camp to north of Taft Creek. Colonies were also noted along the Nass River in the Aiyansh area, but damage was minor. **Birch leafminer** caused severe defoliation of white birch over 223 ha in the Echo Lake area. **Poplar-and-willow borer** continued to infest roadside black cottonwood primarily in the Kitimat Valley and along the Skeena River to west of the Exstew River. The **Pacific willow leaf beetle** continued to skeletonize willow from Kitwanga north to beyond Cranberry Junction. An **unidentified deciduous pest** severely defoliated 1270 ha of trembling aspen at the south end of Teslin Lake. An **aspen leafroller** caused numerous patches of severe defoliation over a 400 ha area along the Skeena River at Devil's Elbow, and scattered patches of light-to-severe defoliation on Hungry Hill near Houston.

Porcupine damage was mapped over 650 ha in 56 locations during aerial overview surveys. Damage was recorded primarily in drainages along the Kalum Valley, especially along Erlandsen Creek, with some activity noted along Whitebottom Creek, Lone Wolf Creek and Wedeene River.

During aerial surveys **blowdown** was observed in 13 separate locations covering 210 ha, mostly near the Nass and Ishkheenickh rivers.
