

## 4 Standards and Guidelines

Regional Sensitive Species by the Regional Forester. (Consult FSM 2670 and R10 supplemental directions for Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species.)

### III. *Habitat Improvement Planning*

- A. Identify habitat improvement projects to meet wildlife habitat and population objectives.
  - 1. Consider the following factors to assess habitat improvement project opportunities and priorities:
    - a) To meet state wildlife population objectives
    - b) To meet subsistence use needs
    - c) Existing habitat in poor condition compared to its potential
    - d) Habitat with a history of receiving high levels of use
    - e) Treatments with a favorable benefit/cost ratio.
  - 2. Use silvicultural practices, where applicable, to accomplish wildlife habitat objectives.

### IV. *Legacy Forest Structure*

- A. Objectives

The intent of the Legacy Standard and Guideline is to ensure that sufficient residual trees, snags, and clumps of trees remain in timber harvest units within value comparison units (VCUs) that have had concentrated past timber harvest activity and are at risk for not providing the full range of matrix functions (as shown in Section D), in order to meet the intent of the conservation strategy while providing flexibility to address on-the-ground implementation issues.
- B. Legacy Standard

In harvest units greater than 20 acres within VCUs identified in Section D, leave 30 percent of the entire unit (based on area) in legacy forest structure. For the purpose of this standard, the unit is defined as the original Logging System/Transportation Analysis (LSTA) boundary prior to field verification. Legacy forest structure should remain indefinitely after harvest and shall be tracked through the life of the next stand. Salvage logging of legacy trees is generally prohibited unless the rationale is clearly documented and the effects are clearly neutral or an improvement.
- C. Distribution and Composition of Legacy Forest Structure

Legacy forest structure should be arranged primarily in clumps. The intent of leaving legacy forest structure is to provide structure within the opening; therefore, clumps should be left well inside the unit, compatible with logging system capabilities. Clumps may be placed along the external yarding boundaries within harvest units in situations where cable logging systems make leaving residual trees in other parts of the unit impractical due to operational or safety considerations. Structure left within units for other resources counts towards the 30 percent, provided it meets the old growth stand characteristics below. Mapped TTRA stream buffers do not count toward the 30 percent. Legacy forest structure shall be representative of the existing old-growth stand characteristics, including age, size class, species composition, and structural components. Clumps and dispersed retention trees should include some of the largest, oldest live trees, decadent or leaning trees, and hard snags occurring in the unit.
- D. VCUs where the Legacy Standard Applies

This standard is to be applied in VCUs where 33 percent or more of the productive old growth has been harvested from 1954 to 2005, or VCUs where less than 33 percent has been harvested but more than 67 percent of the productive old growth is projected to be harvested by the end of the Forest Plan planning horizon (see glossary). There are 49 VCUs in this category; they are listed below by Ranger District:

Craig Ranger District	6100, 6200, 6210, 6240
Hoonah Ranger District	None
Juneau Ranger District	None
Ketchikan/Misty Ranger District	7360, 7380, 7560
Petersburg Ranger District	None

Thorne Bay Ranger District	5320, 5350, 5371, 5380, 5390, 5440, 5450, 5460, 5500, 5542, 5550, 5560, 5570, 5580, 5590, 5600, 5610, 5620, 5700, 5710, 5720, 5790, 5810, 5830, 5840, 5850, 5860, 5871, 5872, 5880, 5900, 5972
Wrangell Ranger District	4550, 4570
Sitka Ranger District	2930, 2990, 3070, 3120, 3130
Yakutat Ranger District	3620, 3640, 3670

Legacy Standards and Guidelines do not apply in other VCUs because they contain enough old-growth forest to provide habitat for old growth associated species. See Appendix D in the FEIS.

V. *Reserve Tree/Cavity-Nesting Habitat*

- A. Provide habitat for cavity-nesting wildlife species. The legacy forest structure standard and guideline considers snags and replacement snag needs for those VCUs at risk for not providing sufficient snags within the watershed. Other VCUs will have snags retained within the development LUDs because habitat will be maintained in riparian buffers, the beach fringe, old-growth habitat reserves, and other Non-development LUDs within the VCU.
  - 1. Retain reserve trees in all LUDs.
    - a) Retain reserve trees (which may be soft or hard snags) with a reasonable assurance of windfirmness, while meeting management objectives and considering safety needs for people and equipment. Use the Reserve Tree Selection Guidelines (R10-MB-215) for guidance.
    - b) Reserve trees do not need to be evenly distributed; clumped distributions are preferred.
    - c) Favor saving reserve trees away from roads to reduce loss from firewood gathering activity.
    - d) After timber harvest in an area, remaining reserve trees may be designated as wildlife trees and marked to make them illegal for cutting.
    - e) Retain live trees for future reserve tree recruitment.

VI. *Landscape Connectivity*

- A. Design projects to maintain landscape connectivity.
  - 1. The objective is to maintain corridors of old-growth forest among large and medium Old-growth Habitat reserves (Appendix K) and other Non-development LUDs at the landscape scale.
  - 2. During the environmental analysis for projects proposing to harvest timber, construct roads, or otherwise significantly alter vegetative cover, conduct an analysis at the landscape scale to identify blocks of contiguous old-growth forest habitat within large and medium reserves and other Non-development LUDs to determine whether forest connectivity exists among old-growth blocks in large and medium reserves and natural setting LUDs. Consider existing features of the old-growth strategy such as the beach fringe, small old-growth reserves, riparian buffers, or other lands unsuitable for development as contributing to maintaining connectivity among large and medium Old-growth Habitat reserves and Non-development LUDs. Use the following parameters to determine if a reserve is connected: a) only one connection is needed; b) the beach fringe serves as a connector; and c) the connection does not have to be the shortest distance between reserves. Where these features do not provide sufficient productive old-growth forest connectivity to meet the objective in 1 above, provide stands, where they exist, of productive old-growth forest or other forest that provides adequate wildlife habitat values (i.e., older young growth that provides adequate snow intercept for deer). Designed corridors should be of sufficient width to minimize edge effect and provide interior forest conditions. Consider elevation, natural movement corridors, length of corridor, tree heights, adjacent landscapes, and windthrow susceptibility in corridor design.