TFL 23

Caribou Field Assessment Report

Halcyon

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Submitted to:
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BACKGROUND

The Halcyon Planning Unit is depicted in Figure 1. This report is on the reconnaissance-level field assessments conducted in September and October of 2006.

Field sampling procedures followed those reported previously by Hamilton and Leitch (2004). Arboreal lichen was estimated according to Armleder et al (1992). Results were recorded on standardized Wildlife Habitat Assessment (WHA) field forms (RIC 1998). Field surveys included recording evidence of caribou use, caribou habitat value and other wildlife observations.

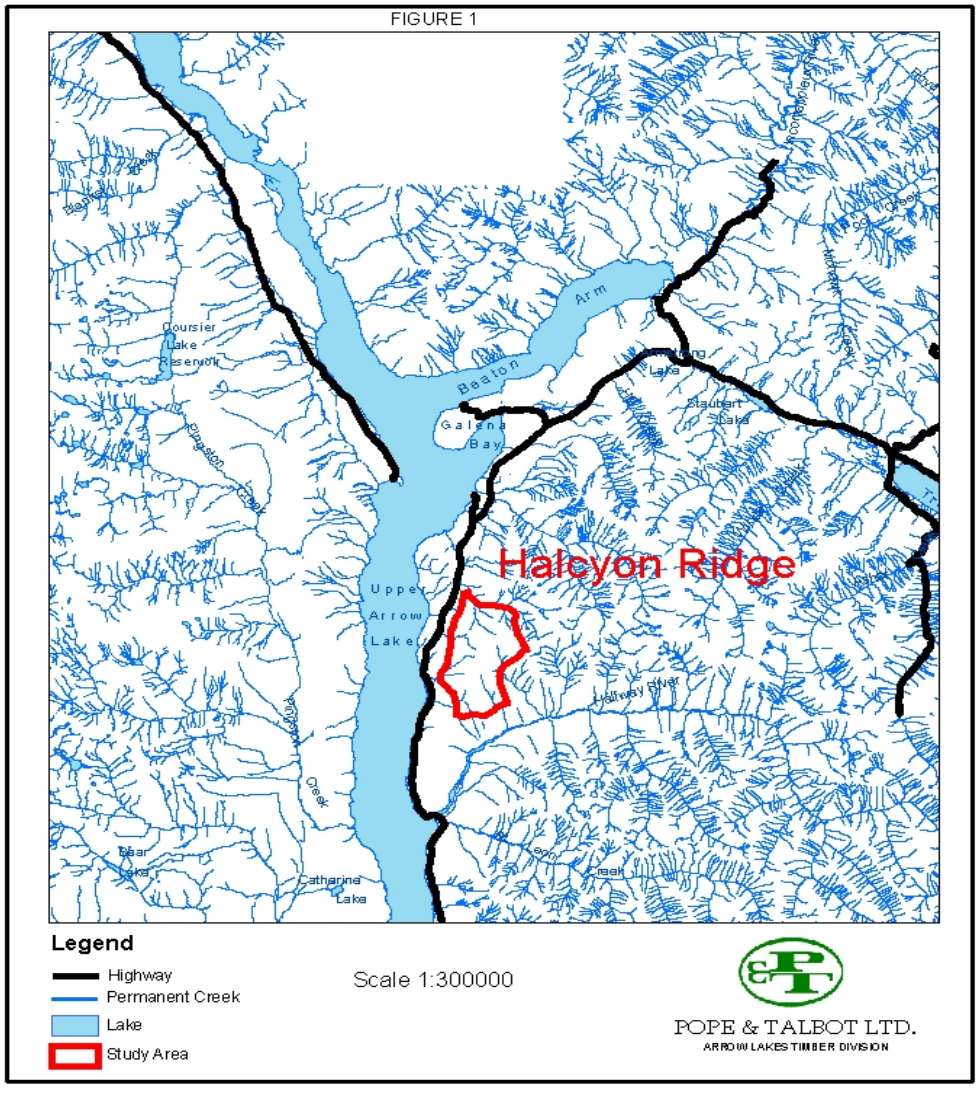

Figure 1: Halcyon Planning Unit

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On September 3rd and October 13th we conducted two reconnaissance-level caribou habitat surveys on Halcyon ridge. The routes traversed are illustrated in Figure 2. A total of 4 caribou habitat evaluations were completed. Copies of the WHA field cards are provided in Appendix 1.

There is no telemetry locations in the vicinity of the area surveyed (Figure 2). Besides plots 1 & 2 the ecosystem-based habitat suitability model results are consistent with those derived in the field (Hamilton and Wilson 2003). Plots 1 & 2 had a lower field rating for spring summer and fall compared to the model. This was mainly due to the lack of herbaceous vegetation.

Evidence of Use:

There was evidence of caribou use in the vicinity of plot 1 & 2, with caribou pellets along the game trail north of the logging blocks. There was no evidence of caribou use in the vicinity of plots 3 & 4 (i.e., outside plot and inside ecosystem unit).

Habitat Evaluation:

Table 1 provides a summary of the field-based caribou habitat suitability ratings. Winter habitat value was generally moderate for throughout the study area. The spring summer habitat values were low throughout the study area.

Table 1: Caribou Habitat Suitability Ratings at 4 plot locations on Halcyon Ridge.

SEASON OF USE	CARIBOU HABITAT SUITABILITY RATINGS			
	Plot 1	**Plot 2**	**Plot 3**	**Plot 4**
Early winter	3	2	4	3
Late Winter	4	4	2	2
Spring	5	4	5	5
Summer/Fall	5	3	4	4

High = Class 1; *Moderately High* = Class 2; *Moderate* = Class 3; *Low* = Class 4; *Very Low* = Class 5; and, *Nil* = Class 6.

Other Species:

Deer, bear and moose were abundant throughout the study area.

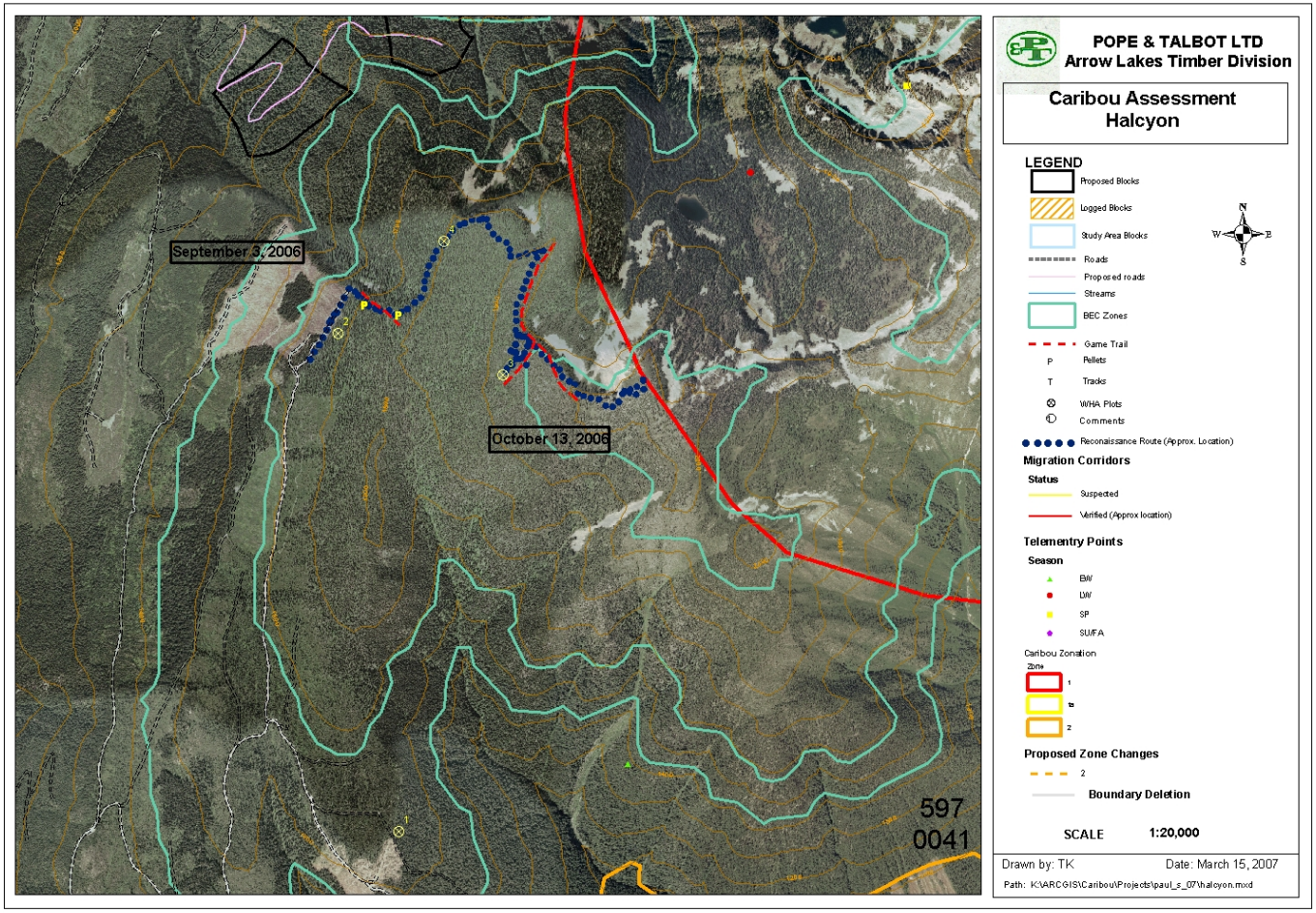

Figure 2: Halcyon Survey Area Indicating Survey Transect Lines, Wildlife Habitat Assessment Plot Locations and TFL 23 Caribou Management Zones.

Plot 1: Lichen mainly on dying balsam

Plot 2: Open stand of spuce balsam, very grown in with rhododendron.

Plot 3: Dry site high amount of lichen for late winter.

Plot 4: Dying pines contributing to litter fall.

References Cited

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