

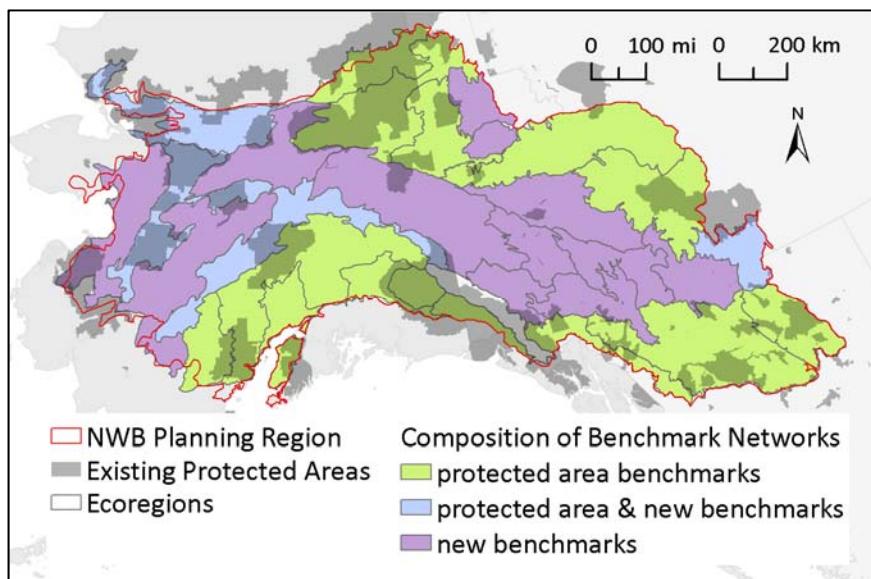
New Research and Products to Support Pro-Active Conservation Planning in the Northwest Boreal LCC

The Northwest Boreal LCC (NWB LCC) envisions a dynamic landscape that maintains functioning, resilient boreal ecosystems and associated cultural resources. To support this vision, the NWB LCC has partnered with the BEACONS Project to implement a new approach to conservation planning, including the identification of ecological benchmarks to support implementation of active adaptive management in the northwest boreal region.

Within an adaptive management framework, benchmark areas serve as references for detecting and understanding the influence of human activity on ecological systems. They support identification of management practices that sustain the wide-range of environmental, cultural, and economic values associated with the northwest boreal region, and help to manage risk.

The design of ecological benchmarks considers landscape condition, natural disturbance (e.g., fire), terrestrial and hydrologic connectivity, representation of landscape variability and focal species habitat, and resilience to climate change. Candidate benchmark areas can be further evaluated based on cultural and socio-economic values, or other attributes of interest.

The NWB LCC region has high potential for the establishment of a comprehensive benchmark network, with contributions from existing protected areas. Benchmark networks were identified for 30 ecoregions, intersecting the region, and there are numerous network options to select from.



November 2017

Product release and webinar
Visit www.nwblcc.org for details.

New Products

- **Reports** on the identification of benchmarks and use of focal species in the design and selection of benchmark networks.
- **Transboundary datasets** associated with fire, hydrology, various landscape measures (e.g., land cover, gross primary productivity), and climate change, available for download.
- **Habitat layers** for 10 priority species and species guilds.
- **Shapefiles** of benchmark options can be downloaded by land use planners or others for use in regional conservation planning.
- **Website** with interactive maps and tables for exploring benchmark options in relation to landscape measures, climate change, and focal species, and links to associated documentation and downloadable datasets.
- **Ranking tables** that assess the relative suitability of benchmarks with regards to climate change resilience and focal species. Users have the flexibility to re-rank benchmark options using selected characteristics.



For more information, contact: Kim Lisgo (klisgo@ualberta.ca) or Fiona Schmiegelow (fschmiegl@ualberta.ca)
www.beaconsproject.ca