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Abstract

Ecological descriptions of Pacific golden chanterelle (*Cantharellus formosus*) habitat and estimates of its extent in Haida Gwaii

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Ecologically based information on golden chanterelle (*Cantharellus formosus*) habitat is needed to guide decision making by forest managers. We described soils, plant communities, and stand characteristics of productive mushroom sites and used these features in a mapping exercise to estimate the extent of *C. formosus* habitat over a portion of the Haida Gwaii islands. Chanterelle sites were located at low elevations (approximately 100 m) on well-drained soils with silt loam to sandy loam textures and thin forest floors. Plant communities were sparse and characterized by low herb and shrub cover with extensive carpets of feathermosses. The stands were productive second-growth western hemlock and Sitka spruce, ranging in age from 35 to 50 years, and the sites were strongly mounded from extensive blowdown events or logging disturbances. The site and soil properties were consistent with the zonal (01) site series (western hemlock ? Sitka spruce - lanky moss) of the submontane variant of the wet hypermaritime Coastal Western Hemlock (CWHwh1) subzone. A preliminary assessment of *C. formosus* habitat around Skidegate Lake indicated approximately 1785 ha of mesic forests (equal to 21% of the assessed forest area) with a major portion covered by immature stands conducive to commercial picking. This information on the nature and extent of *C. formosus* habitat provides the first step in successful co-management of timber and mushroom resources.

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