

VARIABLE RETENTION:

- No opening in variable retention is greater than four tree lengths long by four tree lengths wide without intercepting a “forest edge”.
 - Tree length = the height of co-dominant trees in the stand being retained.
 - “Forest Edge” is defined as any change in forest cover (e.g. a clump of trees, a plantation, a full standing forest of advanced second-growth or merchantable trees, and a stand of dispersed retention trees, etc)
- To be true variable retention and non-clearcut, the net harvest area must have greater than 50% (by area) of “forest edge influence”.
 - “Forest edge influence” is defined as the distance from the edge of the non-harvested trees into the harvested area that is equal to the height of the trees either in the adjacent non-harvested area or from the aggregate or dispersed retention within the harvest block itself.
- By definition, each variable retention block must have a minimum of 10% undisturbed retention in aggregates (area) or about 5% dispersed individual tree retention (basal area) in each harvest area.
- Variable retention can be achieved by implementing any one (or a combination of) several silviculture harvest systems. The system chosen will depend on the stand “dynamics”, tree species, and geo-physical features of the forest site: