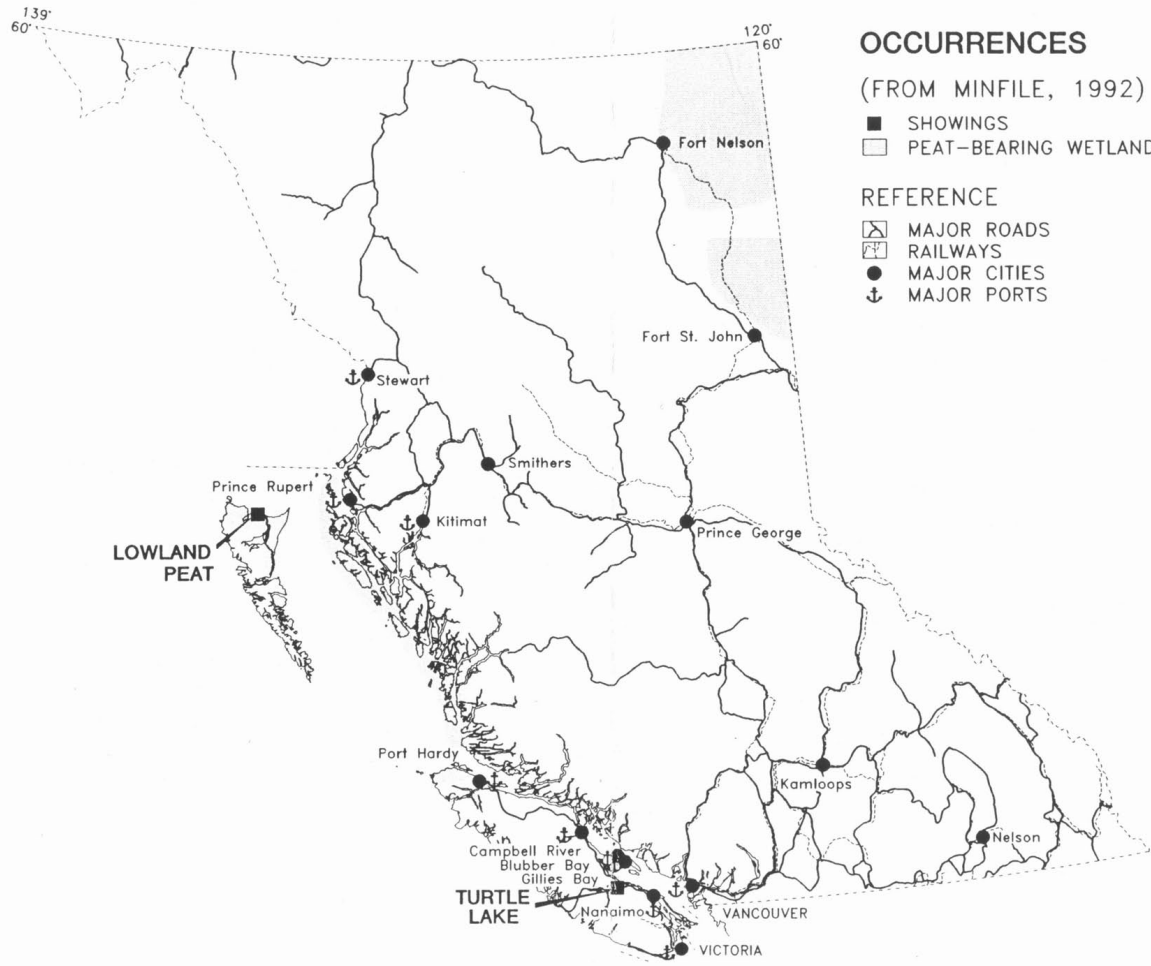




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OCCURRENCES

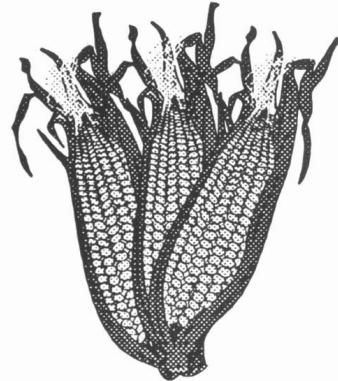
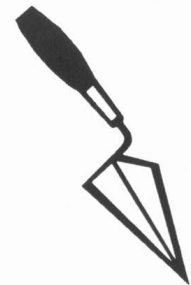
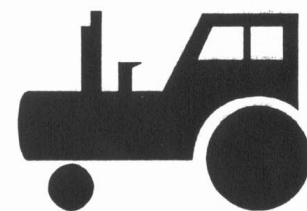
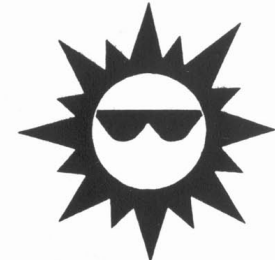
(FROM MINFILE, 1992)

- SHOWINGS
- PEAT-BEARING WETLANDS (>50%)

REFERENCE

- ⊠ MAJOR ROADS
- ⊞ RAILWAYS
- MAJOR CITIES
- ⚓ MAJOR PORTS

PEAT: GOOD GROWING



INVENTORY/RESOURCES

■ Peatlands are wetlands in which organic accumulations (peat) are at least 40 centimetres thick. They form where dead vegetation accumulates faster than it decays.

■ Organic soils throughout much of British Columbia have developed in depressions on the landscape.

■ The northern portion of British Columbia contains the most significant areas of peatland.

■ The largest deposits occur in the northeast, occupying extensive tracts of level or depressional ground in the Peace River and Fort Nelson lowlands.

■ The full extent of the deposits in the northeast is unknown.

■ Extensive peat accumulations also occur along the northwest coastline from the north end of Vancouver Island to the border with Alaska. They consist mainly of flat and slope bogs located on the Queen Charlotte Lowland, on the flat mid-coast islands in the Nootka Sound area and near Prince Rupert.

■ On Vancouver Island and the adjacent mainland coast, peatlands are mainly undifferentiated organics and fens which are usually small and isolated.

■ Interior peatlands are usually smaller but occur in clusters. They consist mainly of fens, sedge or brown moss dominated organics and undifferentiated organics.

■ Most organic deposits of the Lower Fraser valley are moderately to well decomposed, sedge dominated peatlands.

■ Peat deposits in British Columbia are estimated to cover in excess of 48,000 Square kilometres (Maynard, 1988).

WORLD PEAT RESOURCES
(after Kivinen and Pakarinen, 1980)

Country	Peatland Area (ha x 10 ⁶)	Peat Production (Tonnes x 10 ³)		
		Fuel Peat	Moss Peat	Total
Canada	170	-	488	488
U.S.S.R.	150	80 000	120 000	200 000
U.S.A.	40	-	800	800
Finland	10	3 100	500	3 600
U.K.	1.6	50	500	550
Ireland	1.2	5 570	380	5 950
West Germany	1.1	250	2 000	2 250

PRODUCTION

■ Presently, there is no commercial peat harvesting carried out in British Columbia.

■ The Fraser delta, notably Burns bog, was the only peat producing area and is now depleted.

■ Peat mining, for horticultural uses, occurred in the Fraser delta for over 40 years ending in the mid-1980s.

RESERVES

■ Data for British Columbia show the total peatland area to be 1.3 million hectares which is 1% of the Canadian total and also about 1% of the total land base of the province.

■ Maps showing the distribution of peat landforms are readily available as Open File 1988-33, published by the Geological Survey Branch.

INFORMATION SOURCES

Maynard, D.E. (1988): Peatland Inventory of British Columbia; B.C. Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Open File 1988-33

MARKETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

■ About 90% of the peat produced in Canada is exported.

■ Currently, eastern Canada exports peat worth \$10 million to Japan and \$250,000 to Australia.

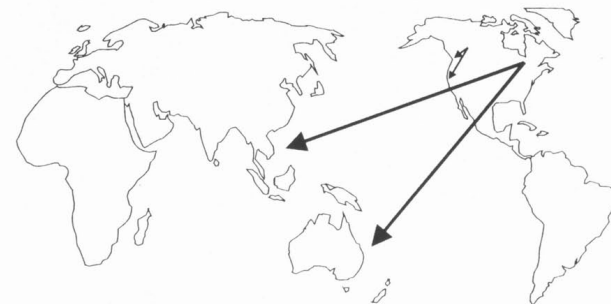
■ California imports peat from Alberta.

■ Horticultural demand for peat in British Columbia is supplied by imports from other Canadian provinces, mainly Alberta.

■ British Columbia's peatlands may have a competitive advantage in these markets.

■ Potential uses of peat are mainly as a fuel, as a horticultural product or in situ soil for agriculture.

■ The extensive peatlands on the northwest coast and in the northeast contain peat acceptable for horticultural uses.



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