



Sensitive Aquatic Ecosystem Development Permits

The intent of this brochure is to assist in preparing an Aquatic Ecosystem Development Permit (DP) application.

Purpose of Aquatic Ecosystem Development Permits

The Aquatic Ecosystem DP Area is designated for the purpose of protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity and for the protection of development from hazardous conditions. Development proposals within an Aquatic Ecosystem DP Area typically require issuance of a DP before development begins and land is disturbed or altered.

Where are Aquatic Ecosystem DP Areas Located?

Aquatic Ecosystem DP Areas are designated in the RDCO [Official Community Plans \(OCP\)](#) or in the [Joe Rich Rural Land Use Bylaw \(RLUB\)](#). You can determine if your property is located within a DP Area by using the RDCO Mapping resource, DP Area website, or by contacting the RDCO Planning Services Department:



(250) 469-6227



planning@rdco.com



Mapping:
<https://gis-rdco.hub.arcgis.com/>

DP Areas:

<https://www.rdco.com/en/business-and-land-use/development-permit-areas.aspx>

Establishment

The Aquatic Ecosystem DP Area was established through the identification of watercourses, riparian areas, wetlands, and broadleaf woodlands utilizing a combination of field inventory, interpretation of provincial TRIM (Terrain Resource Inventory Mapping) data, field surveys, and documentation of riparian locations.

Objectives

The Aquatic Ecosystem DP Area is established to meet the following objectives:

- Protection of ecological attributes and socio-economic values that is common to all Aquatic Ecosystems;

- To protect, restore and enhance Aquatic Ecosystems (water, wetland, riparian, and broadleaf woodland);
- To protect Aquatic Ecosystems through the use of buffers;
- To protect water quality and quantity;
- To protect fish populations, fish habitat and vital wildlife functions such as a travel corridors, place of refuge, water source, fish habitat, and a breeding habitat; and
- To protect development from hazardous conditions, such as flooding.

Exemptions

In Aquatic Ecosystem DP Areas, a DP must be approved before land is subdivided; construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or structure; or alteration or clearing of land (including but not limited to grading, blasting, preparation for the construction of services or roads). A DP is required unless an exemption applies. Exemption details can be found in the DP sections of

the applicable OCP or Joe Rich RLUB.

Professional Reports

Depending on the location and type of proposed development, professional reports may be required before a development permit can be issued. All professional reports submitted with a DP application must comply with the RDCO [Terms of Reference for Professional Reports](#).

Bonding

When landscaping and/or remedial work is a condition of the DP, the owner or agent shall provide a security deposit in the amount of 125% of the estimated cost of the prescribed works (including monitoring), prior to issuance of the DP. The amount shall be determined by the qualified professional preparing technical reports for the application.



Public Input

The Regional District has three (3) advisory groups, which provide comments on various applications. These comments are considered when making a decision by the Regional Board. Members of an advisory group are appointed by the Regional Board based on their background of civic activity, interest, or expertise.

Applications may be referred to one or more of the following advisory groups:

- Advisory Planning Commission (APC)
- Agricultural Advisory Commission (AAC)
- Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC)

How Long does the Application Process Take?

DP applications typically take 8 to 10 weeks to proceed through the evaluation and approval process.

Please note, additional information may be requested during the process, which may increase the application processing time. An applicant can considerably reduce any delays by supplying prompt replies with complete information. If Regional Board Review is required for the application, the process typically takes 3-4 months.

The DP Process

Discuss the Proposal with Staff
Staff can provide application forms and information.

Preliminary Design Discussion
Discuss initial ideas and drawings with staff in order to better understand the requirements and expectations

Application Reviewed
Staff, relevant agencies, and public advisory commission(s) are asked to provide comments on the proposal. Staff then prepares a report to the Regional Board or Director of Community Services for their consideration.

Consideration of the DP Application by Either the Regional Board or Director of Community Services

- Approve the DP
- Not approve the DP
- Defer a decision pending more information or clarification

If Approved, the DP is Officially Granted

- The DP will contain certain requirements and specifications that the development must meet. The applicant is notified and the Regional District registers the DP on the title of the affected property
- If applicable, the applicant can now proceed to the Building Permit application process