

Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystem Development Permits

A guide to the Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystem Development Permit Requirements in the Regional District of Central Okanagan

(Accompanies the Guide “Development Permits: A Guide to the Development Permit Process”)

This Guide accompanies a full Brochure

This guide is intended to help in preparing an application for a Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystem Development Permit (DP). It does not answer general questions about DP's or processing the application. This Guide is a supplement to the Development Services Department Brochure, “**Development Permits: A Guide to the Development Permit Process**”. It is important to use the following information in conjunction with that brochure (available from Planning Staff or the Regional District website).



What is a DP area for Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystems?

The Central Okanagan basin of British Columbia is an area of great ecological significance within both the province of B.C. and Canada as a whole. It is an area with high biodiversity values, and many rare and endangered ecosystems, plant, and animal species. A ‘sensitive’ ecosystem is one that is ecologically fragile and/or is recognized as rare in the provincial landscape. Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystem DP's are to ensure development occurs in a way that respects and protects those ecosystems as much as possible.

Sensitive terrestrial ecosystems have been identified throughout the central Okanagan using a scientific method. There are a series of maps

called the Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) that show the location and types of sensitive ecosystems. These maps were the basis for the development of the Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystem DP area.

What are the guidelines for development in a Sensitive Terrestrial ecosystem DP area?

Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystem DP areas are defined in the text and maps of the applicable Official Community Plans (OCPs), or in the case of Joe Rich in the Joe Rich Rural Land Use (RLUB) Bylaw. Each type of DP area is defined in the section of the OCP (or RLUB) entitled “Development Permits” and has a corresponding set of Guidelines in the Appendix of the document.

Planning Staff can help identify the specific type of ecosystem(s) affected by the proposal by referring to the Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI). The DP Guidelines have different requirements for different ecosystems based upon the specific characteristics of each type of sensitive ecosystem.

There is a flow chart showing how to determine development permit application requirements in this guide.

Are professional reports required for Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystem DP applications?

Where the proposal cannot be altered to avoid the sensitive ecosystem or otherwise protect the sensitive ecosystem through methods such as covenants, or, where there is a need for greater review of the particular site, a professional report may be required.

The type of professional(s) that need to be involved are outlined in the development permit requirements of the applicable Official Community Plans (OCPs), or in the case of Joe Rich in the Joe Rich Rural Land Use (RLUB) Bylaw.



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Determining the specific type of professional to be involved and the extent of the professional report required for a particular proposal will be provided by Planning Staff. Staff can also provide a list of professionals who do this type of work or the applicant can choose a professional not on the list but having equivalent credentials.

Typically, a professional report would look at:

- The type, location and extent of the sensitive terrestrial ecosystem(s),
- The impact of the proposal and ways to limit impact,
- The means to protect the ecosystem(s) and the important attributes,
- Areas and methods of rehabilitation, and,
- Monitoring to ensure protection during development and the completion of requirements.

What happens if other DP's are required in addition to the Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystem DP?

It is possible that a property may have several development permits required for one proposal. For example, an industrial development may be in both a sensitive terrestrial ecosystem DP area as well as a DP area for the form, character and landscaping of the building.

It is important that the design of the proposal respond to all the different guidelines for each DP type.

The guidelines for different DP's are intended to be used for a variety of different proposals and different sites. Some resolution between overlapping guidelines for different types of DP's may be necessary. For example, the decorative landscaping around a new building may need to include the use of native Okanagan plants to enhance and protect a neighbouring ecosystem, or, the thinning of trees to reduce wildfire hazard may need to be done in a way that environmentally restores open woodland.

Typically the professionals involved, in consultation with Planning Staff and the applicant, merge the various guidelines into one design for the site. This one design, along with the professional reports required by the guidelines for any of the DP types, will form the basis of the application.

Determining DP Application Requirements

Determine if the particular proposal requires a Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystem DP according to the conditions in the bylaw

Planning Staff can help in interpreting the requirements. Staff can also provide advice about altering the proposal so that a DP will not be required; such as changing a site plan, or, protecting the ecosystem through some other method. Staff can also refer to maps and identify the type of sensitive ecosystem(s) involved.

Review the Guidelines for the Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystem DP.

The Sensitive Terrestrial Ecosystem DP Guidelines, along with the guidelines for any other required DP's, will form the foundation for evaluating the application.

Obtain professional reports and monitoring as required

Staff can help determine if a professional report is required as part of the DP application. The professional report must consider the DP guidelines. The professional report must consider the DP guidelines and identify where monitoring by a professional is required.

Review completed application with Planning Staff in the Development Services Department and submit for formal consideration

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