

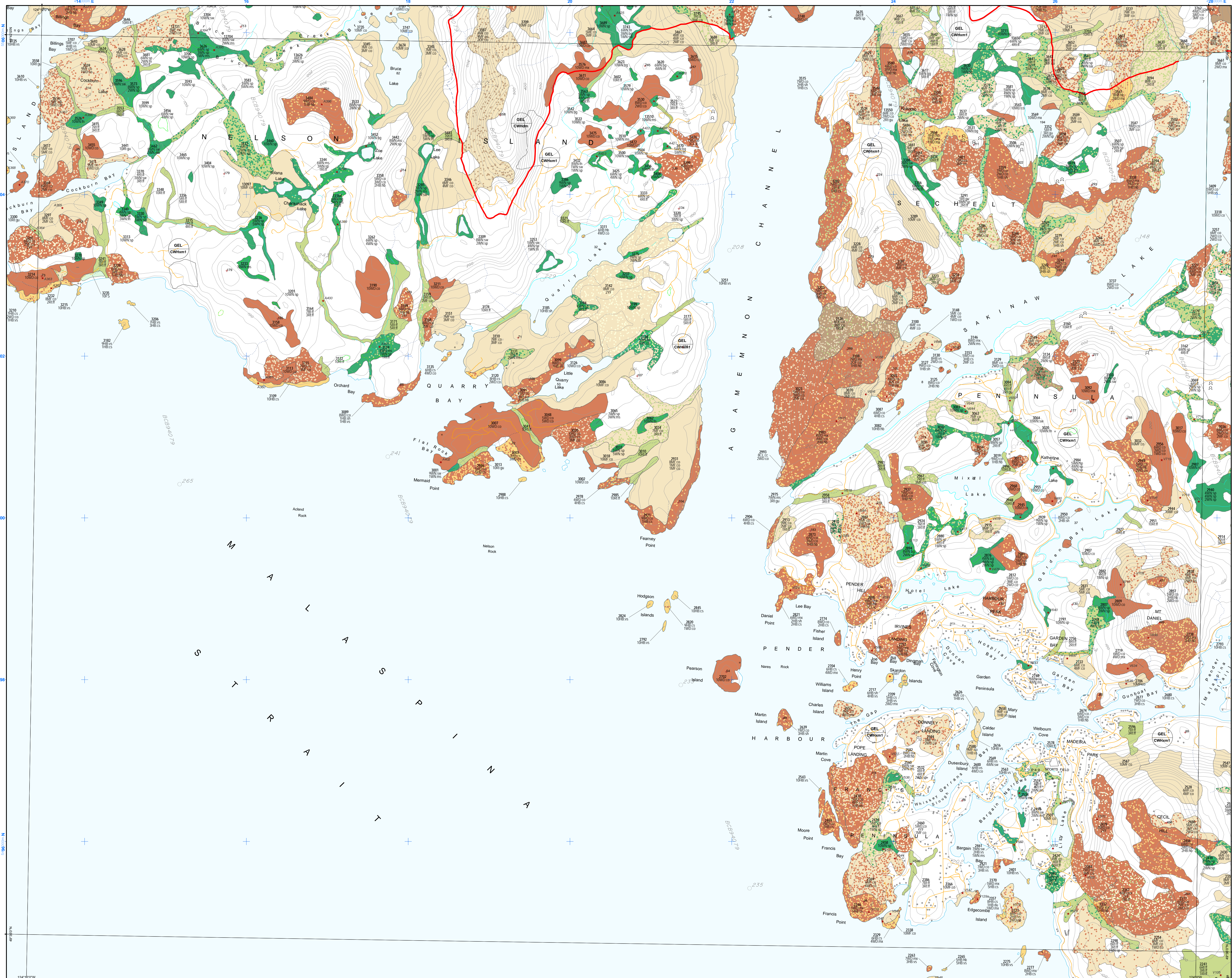
Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Labels



Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory of the Sunshine Coast and Adjacent Islands



Table of Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Labels with columns for Ecosystem Class, Subclass, and Map Code.



Sensitive Ecosystems

Sensitive ecosystems are fragile and/or rare, or are ecologically important because of the diversity of species they support.

Old Forest (OF): Conifer-dominated dry to moist forest types, structural stage 7 (see table), generally >50yrs. Subclasses: of (conifer dominated) - greater than 75% coniferous species.

Woodland (WD): Dry open forests, generally between 10 and 30% tree cover, can be conifer or mixed conifer and shrubs. Subclasses: wo (conifer dominated) - greater than 75% coniferous species.

Herbaceous (HB): Non-forested ecosystems less than 10% tree cover, generally with shallow soils and often with bedrock outcrops. Subclasses: hb (herbaceous) - central concept of the category, non-forested, less than 10% tree cover.

Riparian (RI): Areas adjacent to water bodies (rivers, lakes, ocean, wetlands) which are influenced by factors such as erosion, sedimentation, flooding and/or subterranean irrigation due to proximity to the water body. Subclasses: ri (low bench floodplain) - flooded at least every other year for moderate periods of growing season.

Wetland (WN): Areas that are saturated or inundated with water for long enough periods of time to develop vegetation and biological activity adapted to wet environments. Subclasses: wg (open water) - standing or flowing water less than 2 m deep, transition between deep water bodies and other wetland ecosystems.

Cliffs (CL): Very steep slope, often exposed bedrock, may include steep sided sand bluffs, habitat for rare species. Subclasses: cl (steep cliffs) - steep cliffs.

Other Important Ecosystems: Other important ecosystems have high biodiversity values.

Mature Forests (MF): Usually conifer-dominated, occasionally deciduous, dry to moist forest types, structural stage 6, generally >50yrs. Subclasses: mf (conifer dominated) - greater than 75% coniferous species.

Seasonally Flooded Agricultural Fields (FS): Annually flooded cultivated fields or hay fields; important migrating and wintering waterfowl habitat.

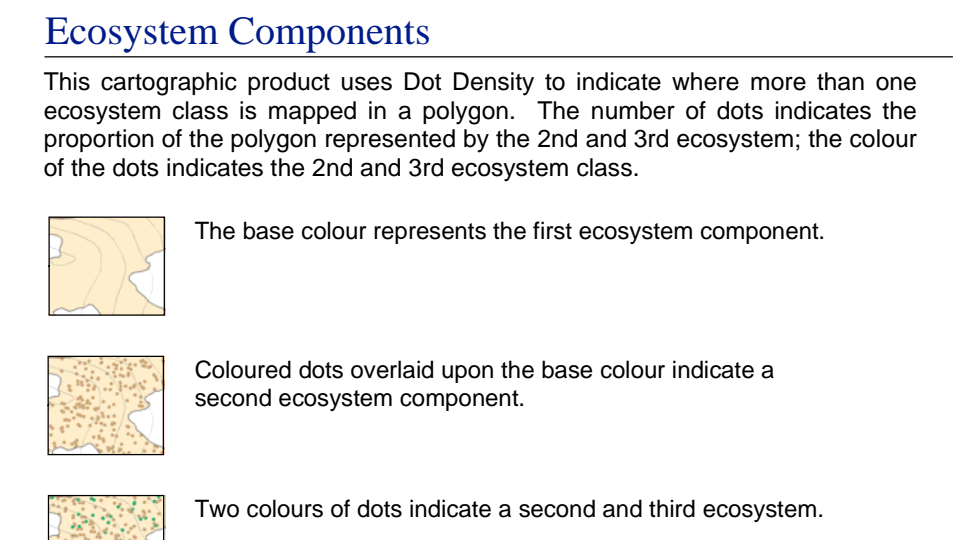
Other Mapped Ecosystems: Other mapped ecosystems occur in mosaic with sensitive ecosystems and are not possible to delineate separately at the mapping scale.

Young Forests (YF): Limited to areas of young forest dispersed among sensitive and other important ecosystems.

Polygon Label: Indicates a field sample was completed but was not mapped.

Some polygon labels will have class and subclass repeated up to three times. This is not an error; it reflects the variability in site units and structural stages occurring within a polygon.

Ecosystem Components: The cartographic product uses Dot Density to indicate where more than one ecosystem class is mapped in a polygon.



Biogeoclimatic Units: CDFM Coastal Douglas-fir Moist Maritime Subzone, CWHM1 Coastal Western Hemlock Eastern Wet Maritime Variant, etc.

Ecosystems: GEL Georgia Lowlands Ecosystem, SOG Strait of Georgia Ecosystem, QJF Outer Fiordland Ecosystem, SPR Southern Pacific Ranges Ecosystem.

Map Symbols: Polygon Boundary, Biogeoclimatic Boundary, Ecosystem Boundary, etc.

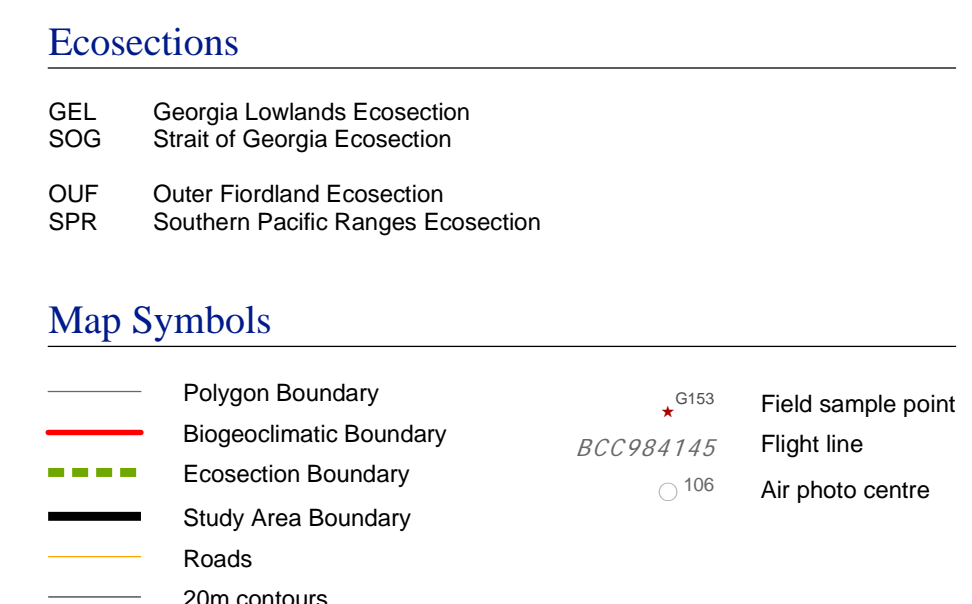
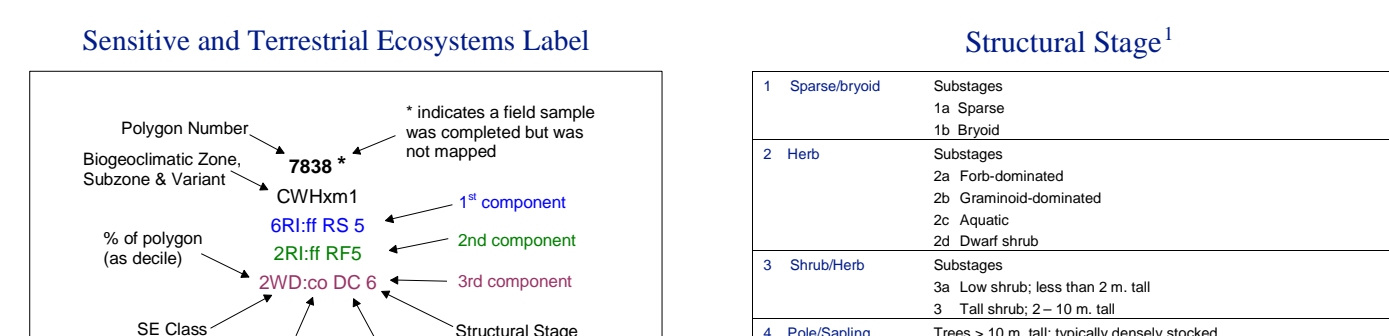


Table of Terrestrial Ecosystem Map Codes and Site Unit Names, listing codes like CDFM, CWHM1, etc.



What is a Sensitive Ecosystem? For the purpose of this study, an ecosystem is considered to be a portion of the landscape with relatively uniform dominant vegetation.

Rationale: Ecologically significant lands and important wildlife habitats are fast disappearing throughout the lowlands surrounding the Strait of Georgia. Intense development pressures fuelled by population and economic growth have fragmented and degraded many terrestrial ecosystems.

Methodology: The mapping methods are based on the Vancouver Island SEI project and the Resources Information Standards Committee (RISC) Standard for Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping (TEM) in BC.

Plan and implement all development activities in a manner that will not adversely affect or disturb the sensitive ecosystem. Consult a qualified professional to interpret the ecological inventory data and work to incorporate design that maintain the functions and values of the natural ecosystem.

Property owner: learn more about the natural values of your land, including the location of any sensitive ecosystems. Find out how to protect, maintain, and enhance those values.

Developer: consider a design for your project that is creative and flexible to protect and enhance sensitive ecosystems. Treat low and neighbouring green spaces as increase market values.

Acknowledgments: Environment Canada (Canadian Wildlife Service) and the B.C. Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management (MSRM) jointly managed this project.

A decision-maker (such as a politician or resource manager) ensure that protection of remaining sensitive ecosystems is a priority at all levels, and support programs, plans and operational activity that will help protect sensitive ecosystems.

