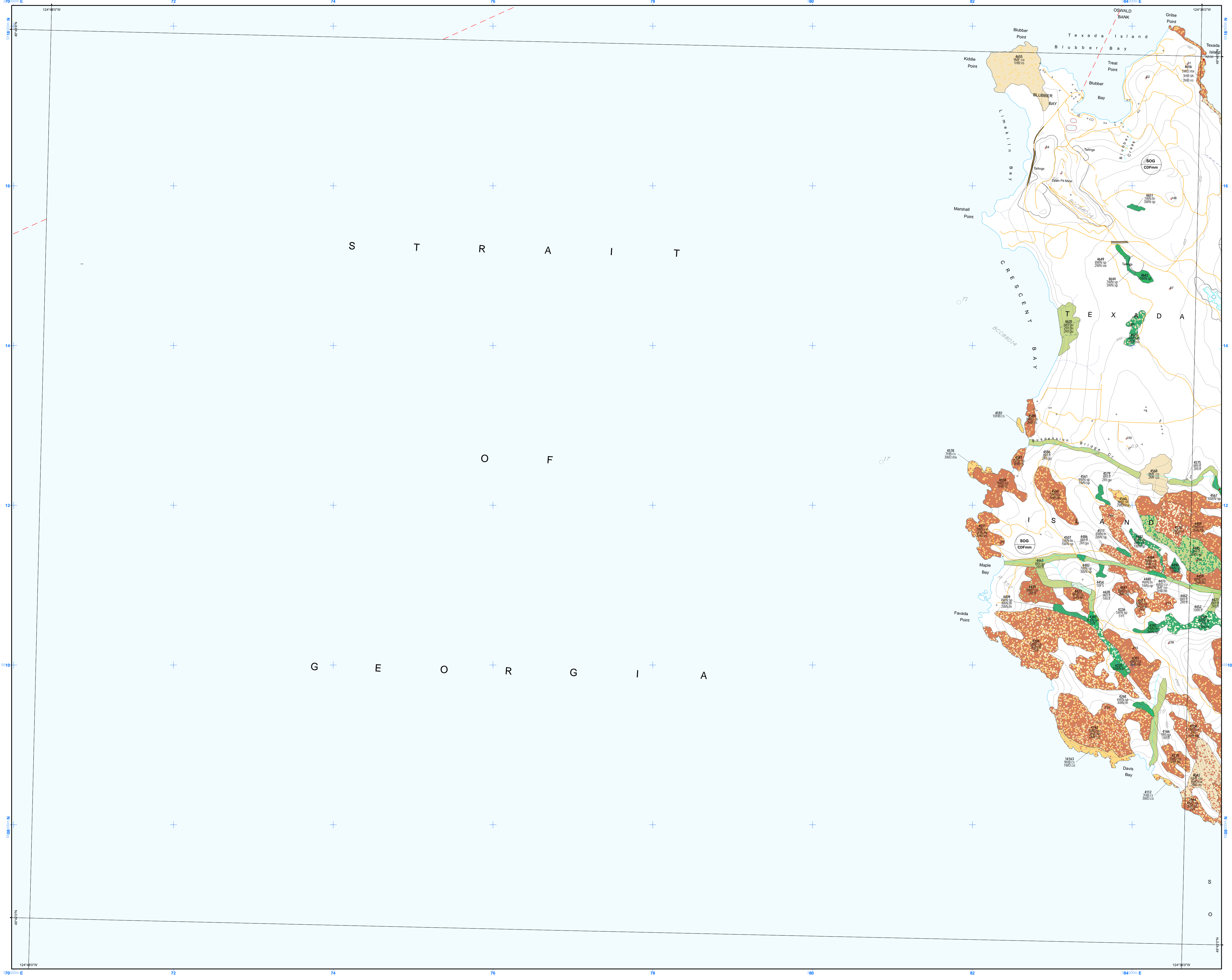


Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Labels



Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory of the Sunshine Coast and Adjacent Islands



Structural Stages 1, Terrestrial Ecosystem Map Codes and Site Unit Names. Includes a legend for structural stages and a detailed table of ecosystem codes.

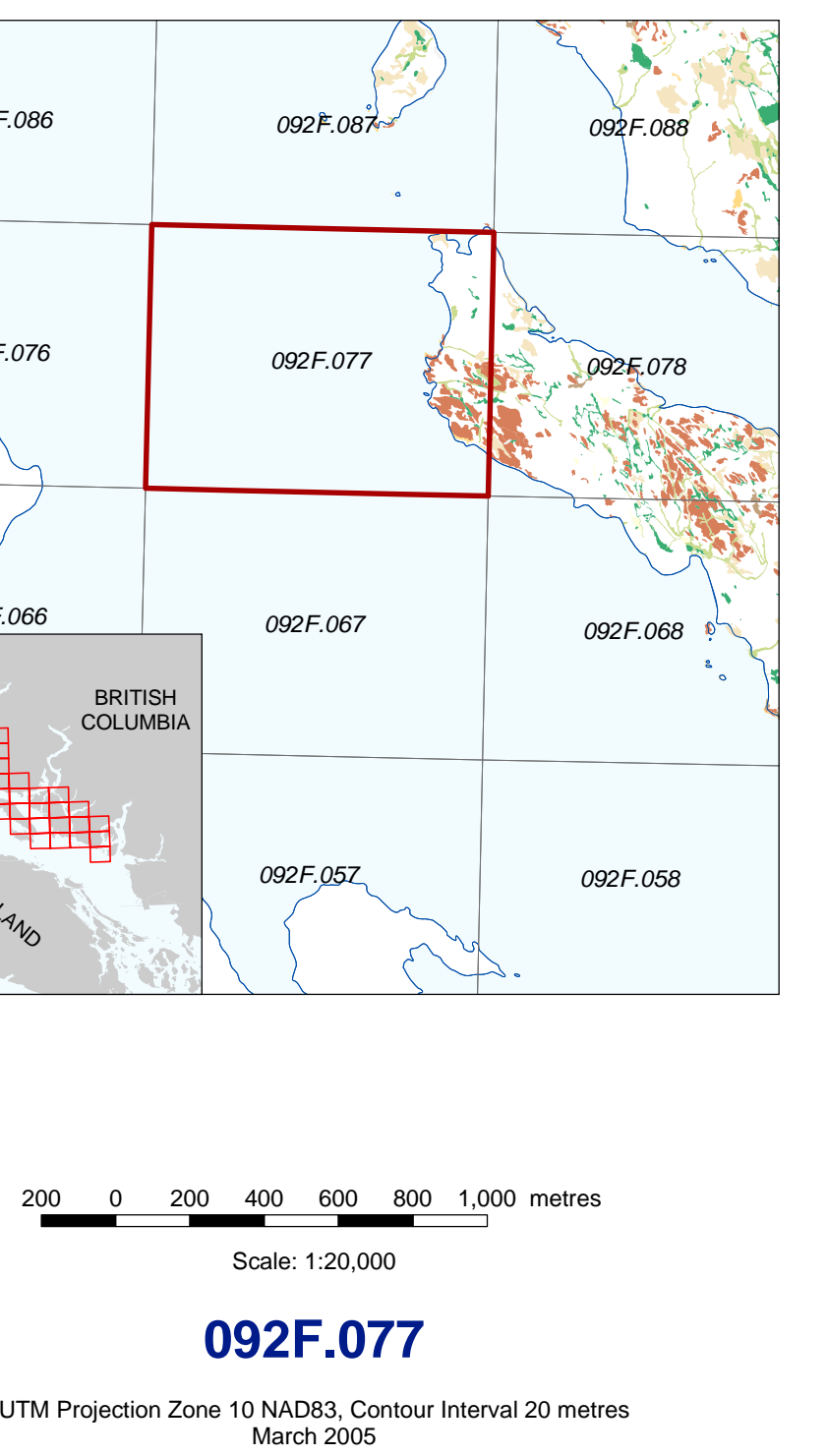
What is a Sensitive Ecosystem? For the purpose of this study, an ecosystem is considered to be a portion of the landscape with relatively uniform dominant vegetation.

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 designs that maintain the functions and values of the natural ecosystem.

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



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 >50% cover.

Woodland (WD): Dry open forests, generally between 10 and 30% tree cover, can be conifer dominated or mixed conifer and shrubs.

Herbaceous (HB): Non-forested ecosystems less than 10% tree cover, generally shallow soils, often with exposed bedrock.

Riparian (RI): Areas adjacent to water bodies (rivers, lakes, ocean, wetlands) which are influenced by factors such as erosion, sedimentation, flooding and/or subterranean intrusion due to proximity to the water body.

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.

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

Mature Forests (MF): Usually conifer-dominated, occasionally deciduous, dry to moist forest types, structural stage 6, generally >50% cover.

Seasonally Flooded Agricultural Fields (SF): 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: CDFMm Coastal Douglas-fir Moist Maritime Subzone, CWH1m Coastal Western Hemlock Eastern Very Dry Maritime Variant.

Ecosystems: GEL Georgia Lowlands Ecosystem, SOG Strait of Georgia Ecosystem.

Map Symbols: Polygon Boundary, Biogeoclimatic Boundary, Ecosystem Boundary, Study Area Boundary.