

Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Labels

Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory of the Sunshine Coast and Adjacent Islands


TERMINAL FOREST PRODUCTS LIMITED

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 by moist forest types, structural stage 7 (see table), generally >250yrs.

Subclasses:

co (conifer dominated) - greater than 75% coniferous species

Woodland (WD):

Open forests, generally between 10 and 30% tree cover, can be conifer dominated or mixed conifer and arbutus stands; because of open canopy, will include non-forested openings, often with shrubs and bedrock outcroppings.

Subclasses:

co (conifer dominated) - greater than 75% coniferous species

mx (mixed conifer and deciduous) - a minimum of 25% cover of either group is included in the total tree cover

Herbaceous (HB):

Non-forested ecosystems (less than 10% tree cover), generally with shallow soils and often with bedrock outcroppings; includes large openings within forested areas, coastal headlands, steep slopes, talus slopes and herb fields, sometimes low shrubs, moss and lichen communities.

Subclasses:

hb (herbaceous) - general concept of the category, non-forested, less than 10% tree cover, generally shallow soils, often with exposed bedrock, predominantly a mix of grasses and forbs, also lichens and mosses

ca (coastal herbaceous) - all hb but influenced by proximity to ocean, wind-swept shoreline and slopes, salt marsh vegetation, grasses and herbs, some rock outcrops, moss and lichen communities

vs (vegetated shoreline) - low-lying rocky shoreline, soil pockets in rock cracks and crevices, salt marsh vegetation, generally with 20% vegetation cover

sp (spur) - finger-like extension of beach, comprised of sand or gravel deposited by longshore drift; low to moderate cover of salt-tolerant grasses and herbs

ds (dune) - ridge or hill, or beach area created by windblown sand; may be more or less vegetated depending on depositional activity, beach dunes will have low cover of salt-tolerant grasses and herbs

sh (shrub component) - > 20 % of total vegetation cover is shrub cover, with grasses and herbs

Riparian (RI):

Areas adjacent to water bodies (rivers, lakes, ocean, wetlands) which are influenced by factors such as erosion, sedimentation, flooding and/or submergence due to proximity to the water body; structural stages 1 - 7.

Subclasses:

fl (low bench floodplain) - flooded at least every other year for moderate periods of growing season; plants specifically adapted to extended flooding and abrasion, low or tall shrubs most common

fm (medium bench floodplain) - flooded every 1-4 years for short periods (10-25 days); deciduous or mixed forest dominated by species tolerant of flooding and periodic sedimentation, trees most common

fh (high bench floodplain) - only periodically and briefly inundated by high waters, but lengthy subsurface flow in the rooting zone; typically conifer-dominated floodplains of larger coastal rivers

fr (fringe) - narrow linear alongsides along open water bodies (rivers, lakes and ponds) where there is no floodplain, irregular flooding

ga (gully riparian) - watercourse is in a steep sided V-shaped gully

ri (riparian) - watercourse is large enough to represent >10% of the polygon

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. This may result from flooding, flooding and sedimentation, or groundwater saturation.

Subclasses:

bg (bog) - nutrient poor wetland, on organic soils (sphagnum peat), water source predominantly from precipitation, may be treated as dry meadow

fr (flooded) - vertical linear peat pond where ground water inflow is the dominant water source, open water channels common; dominated by sedge, grasses and mosses

ma (marsh) - wetland with fluctuating water table, often with shallow water, usually dominated by sedges, grasses and aquatic plants, may contain some shrubs and sedges

sw (swamp) - very rich wetland on mineral soils or with an organic layer over mineral soil, with gently flowing or seasonally flooding water table; woody vegetation

aw (shallow water) - standing or flowing water less than 2 m deep, transition between deep water and emergent vegetation, may be seasonal (i.e. bogs, swamps, fens, etc.), often with vegetation rooted below the water surface

wm (wet meadow) - periodically saturated but not inundated with water, organically enriched mineral soils, grasses, sedges, rushes and forbs dominate

Cliffs (CL):

Very steep slope, often exposed bedrock, may include steep sided sand bluffs; habitat for rare species and nesting birds.

Subclasses:

co (coastal cliffs)

ir (interior 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 >80yrs > 25 ha, or buffering sensitive ecosystems.

Subclasses:

co (conifer dominated) - greater than 75% coniferous species

mx (mixed conifer and deciduous) - a minimum of 25% cover of either group is included in the total tree cover

Seasonally Flooded Agricultural Fields (FS):

Anually 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

Some polygon labels will have class and subclass repeated up to three times. This indicates that one site unit may be mapped as multiple polygons occurring within a polygon. More than one site unit can be correlated to a SE class and subclass. Polygon labels on the map do not include the site units. The Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystem Labels on the left side of the map provide details about the sites mapped in each polygon.

Ecosystem Components

This cartographic product uses Dot Density to indicate where more than one ecosystem class is mapped in a polygon. The number of dots indicates the proportion of the polygon represented by the 2nd and 3rd ecosystem; the colour of the dots indicates the 2nd and 3rd ecosystem class.

The base colour represents the first ecosystem component.

Coloured dots overlaid upon the base colour indicate a second ecosystem component.

Two colours of dots indicate a second and third ecosystem.

Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Label
Structural Stage¹

Polygon Number	* Indicates if field sample was completed but was not mapped
Biogeoclimatic Zone, Subzone & Variant ²	BCWH1
% of polygon (as decimal)	1.00
SE Class	SOG CWH1
SE subclass	Macaque
Structural Stage	Structural Stage 1

The example label above indicates the SOG and TEM attributes assigned for polygon 7038. The polygon occurs in the Coastal Douglas-fir Biogeoclimatic Zone, Subzone 1, Variant BCWH1. The polygon is 100% SOG CWH1 Macaque. The structural stage is 1.

¹ In the assessment of structural stage, structural classes or age criteria are considered relative to the date of the information source.

² * In the assessment of structural stage, structural classes or age criteria are considered relative to the date of the information source.

Abbreviations from Standard for Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping in British Columbia (TRC 1998).

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