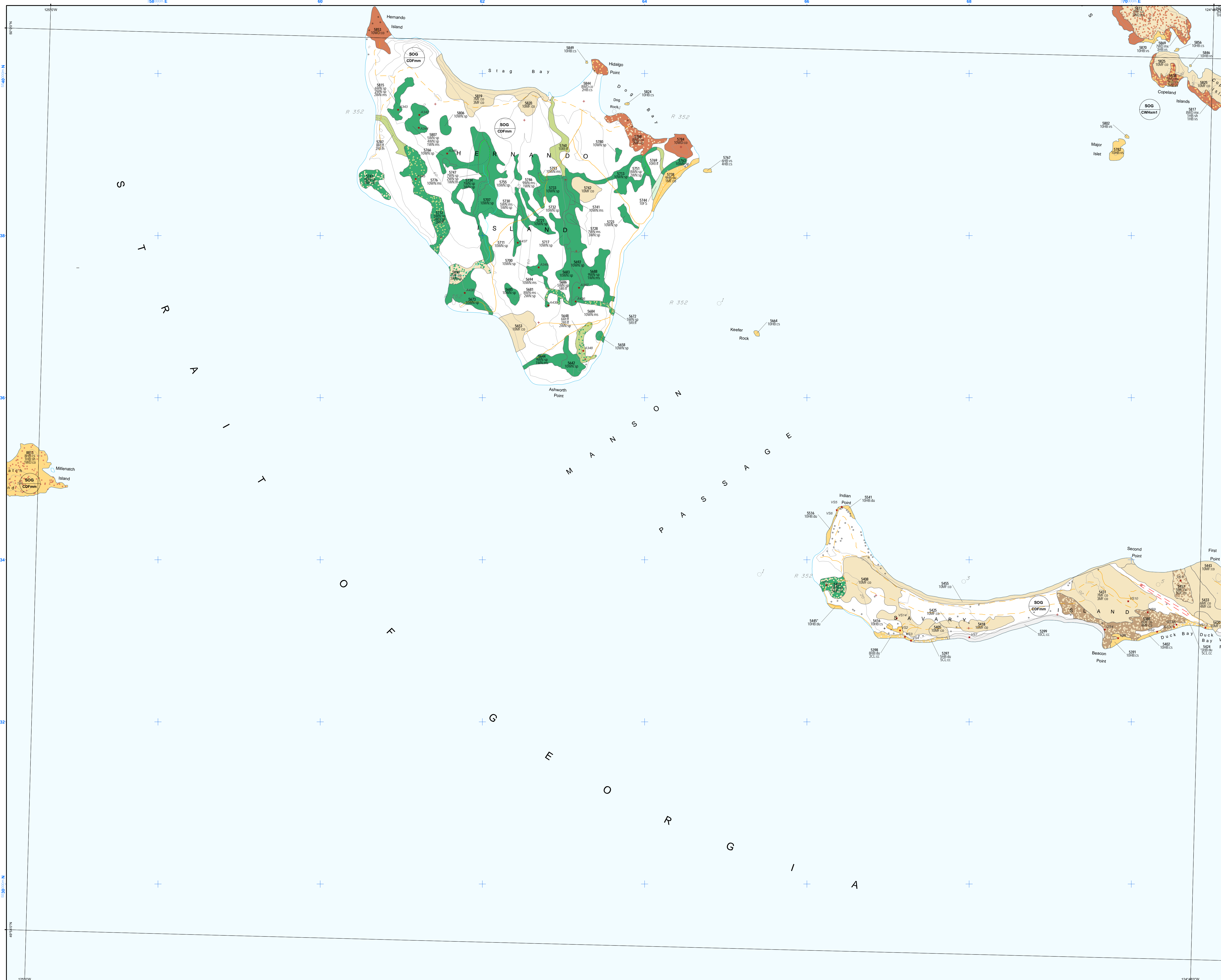


Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Labels



Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory of the Sunshine Coast and Adjacent Islands



Structural Stages 1-7, Terrestrial Ecosystem Map Codes and Site Unit Names, and Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Label legend.

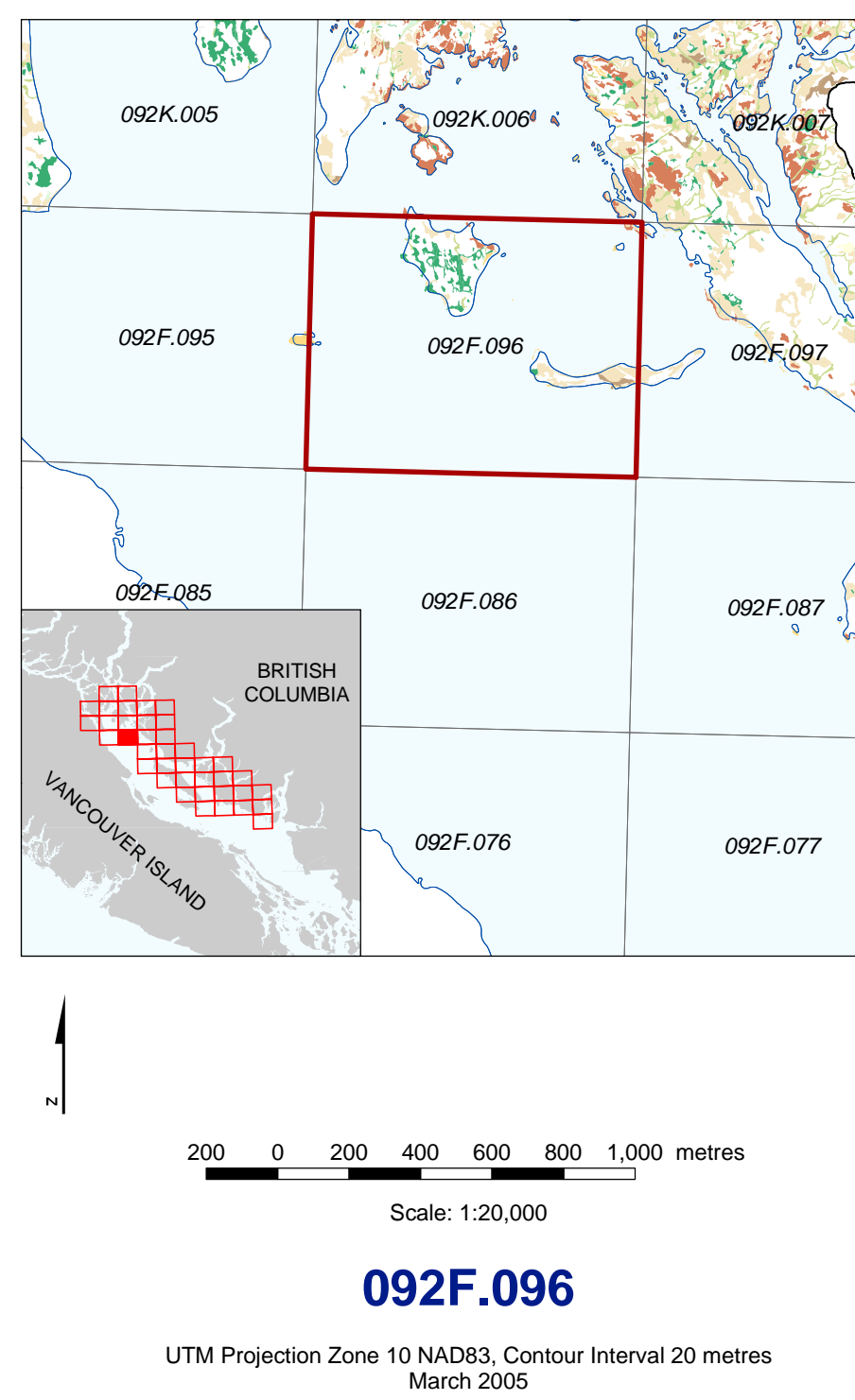
What is a Sensitive Ecosystem? For the purpose of this study, an ecosystem is considered to be a portion of the landscape with relatively uniform dominant vegetation.

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 Inventory 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.

A 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.



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 >250yrs. Subclass: oo (conifer dominated) - greater than 75% coniferous species

Woodland (WD): Dry open forests, generally between 10 and 30% tree cover, can be conifer dominated or mixed conifer and deciduous, because of open canopy, will include non-forested openings, often with shallow soils and bedrock outcroppings. Subclass: oo (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 outcroppings. Includes large openings with scattered areas of coastal heath, sometimes vegetated with grasses and herbs, sometimes low shrubs, and moss and lichen communities on rock outcrops. Subclass: oo (conifer dominated) - greater than 75% coniferous species

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. Structural stages 1-7. Subclass: R (low bench floodplain) - flooded at least every other year for moderate periods of growing season, plant species adapted to extended flooding and abrasion, low or all shrubs most common

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, fluctuating water tables, tidal influences or poor drainage conditions. Subclass: Wg (open) - nutrient poor wetland on organic soils (sphagnum peat), water source predominantly from precipitation, may be tree or shrub dominated

Cliffs (CL): Very steep slope, often exposed bedrock, may include steep sided sand bluffs, habitat for rare species. Subclass: ec (erosional cliffs) (ie island 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 >20yrs, >20% of total vegetation cover

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 Legend: 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. 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 site units mapped in each polygon.

Ecosystem Components The 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.

Biogeoclimatic Units CWH1m Coastal Douglas-fir Moist Maritime Subzone CWH1n Coastal Western Hemlock Eastern Very Dry Maritime Variant CWH1o Coastal Western Hemlock Dry Maritime Subzone CWH1w Coastal Western Hemlock Submontane Very Wet Maritime Variant

Ecosystems GEL Georgia Lowlands Ecosystem SOG Strait of Georgia Ecosystem QJUF Outer Fjordland Ecosystem SPR Southern Pacific Ranges Ecosystem

Map Symbols Polygon Boundary Biogeoclimatic Boundary Ecosystem Boundary Study Area Boundary Roads 20m contours TRM Streams Additional streams Intermittent/Intermittent Stream Drainage Route