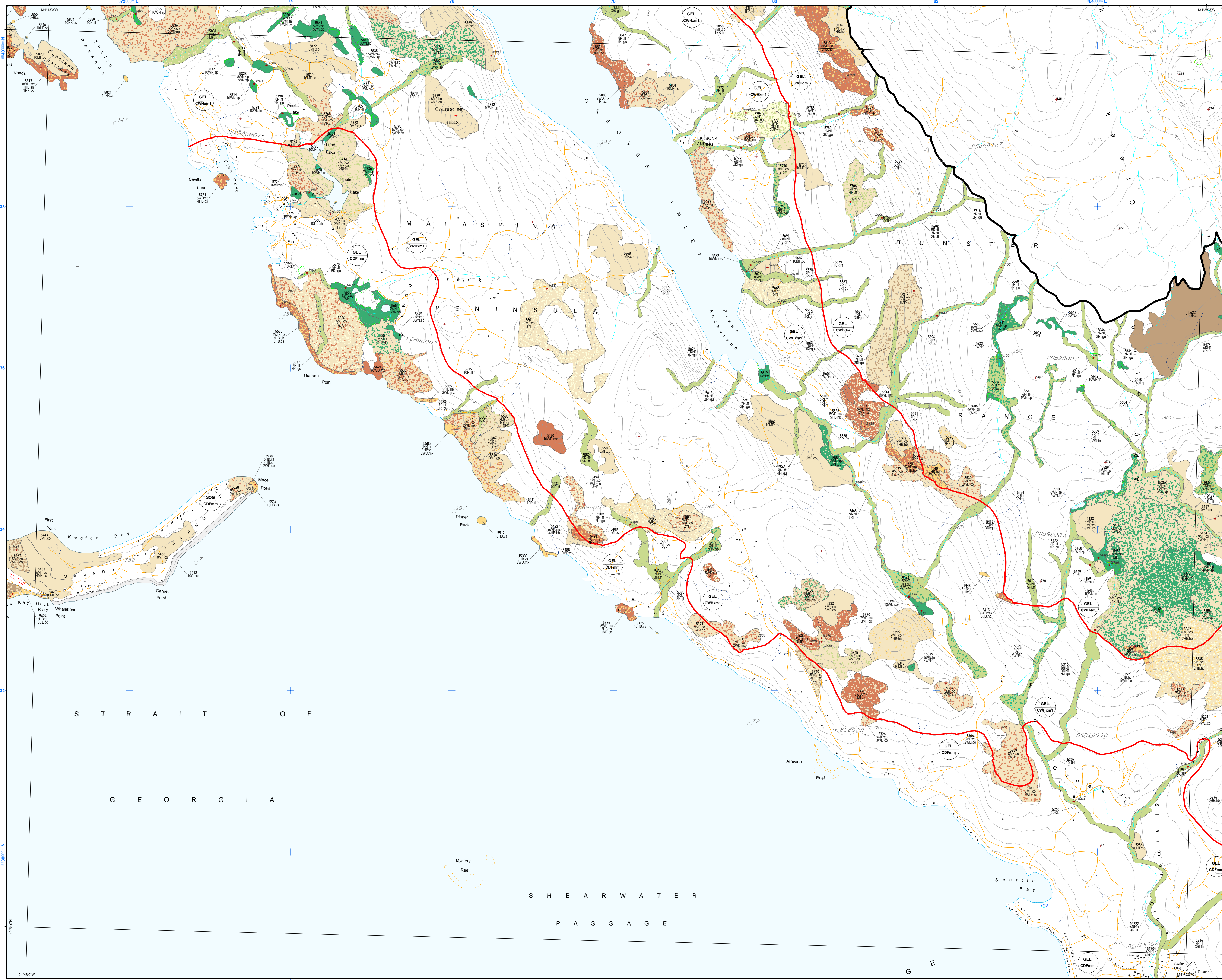


Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Labels



Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory of the Sunshine Coast and Adjacent Islands



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 >500yrs. Subclasses: of (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-forest openings, often with shallow soils and bedrock outcroppings. Subclasses: co (conifer dominated) - greater than 75% coniferous species

Herbaceous (HB):

Non-forest ecosystems less than 10% tree cover, generally with shallow soils and often with bedrock outcroppings. Includes large openings with or without areas of coastal heathland, sometimes vegetated with grasses and herbs, sometimes low shrubs, and moss and lichen communities on rock outcrops. Subclasses: nb (non-forest) - central 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

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. Structural stages 1-7. Subclasses: fl (low bench floodplain) - flooded at least every other year for moderate periods of growing season; plant species adapted to extended flooding and aeration, low soil stresses 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, including water tables, tidal influences or poor drainage conditions. Subclasses: bg (bog) - nutrient poor wetland on organic soils (sphagnum peat), water sources predominantly from precipitation; may be tree or shrub dominated

Chiffs (CL):

Very steep slope, often exposed bedrock, may include steep sided sand bluffs, habitat for rare species. Subclasses: ec (coastal cliff) - 2° component

Other Important Ecosystems

Other important ecosystems have high biodiversity values. Subclasses: mf (mature forest) - usually conifer-dominated, occasionally deciduous, dry to moist forest types, structural stage 6, generally >500yrs, > 25% of total vegetation cover

Mature Forests (MF):

Usually conifer-dominated, occasionally deciduous, dry to moist forest types, structural stage 6, generally >500yrs, > 25% of total vegetation cover. Subclasses: co (conifer dominated) - greater than 75% coniferous species

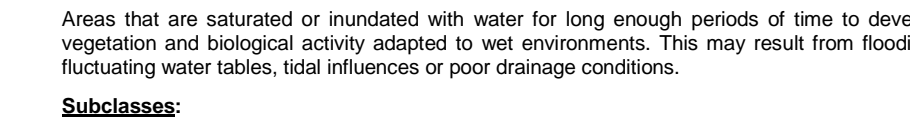
Seasonally Flooded Agricultural Fields (FS):

Annually flooded cultivated fields or hay fields; important migrating and wintering waterfowl habitat. Subclasses: fs (flooded) - periodically saturated but not inundated with water, organically enriched mineral soils; grasses, sedges, forbs and forbs dominate

Other Mapped Ecosystems

Other mapped ecosystems occur in mosaic with sensitive ecosystems and are not possible to delineate separately at the mapping scale. Subclasses: yf (young forest) - limited to areas of young forest dispersed among sensitive and other important ecosystems

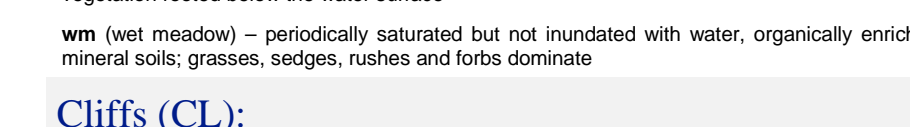
Polygon Label



Some polygon labels will have class and subclass repeated up to three times. This is not an error; it reflects the variability in site uses 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 Ecosystems Labels on the left side of the map provide details about site units mapped in each polygon.

Ecosystem Components

This cartographic product uses 2nd 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.

Biogeoclimatic Units

- CD1FM Coastal Douglas-fir Moist Maritime Subzone
CWH1M Coastal Western Hemlock Eastern Very Dry Maritime Variant
CWH2M Coastal Western Hemlock Dry Maritime Subzone
CWH3M Coastal Western Hemlock Submontane Very Dry Maritime Variant

Ecosystems

- GEL Georgia Lowlands Ecosystem
SOG Strait of Georgia Ecosystem
QLF Outer Fjordland Ecosystem
SPR Southern Pacific Ranges Ecosystem

Map Symbols

- Polygon Boundary
Biogeoclimatic Boundary
Ecological Boundary
Study Area Boundary
Roads
20m contours
TRM Streams
Additional streams
Intermittent/Perennial Stream
Drainage Route

Table with 4 columns: Structural Stage, Subclass, and details for various ecosystem types like Old Forest, Woodland, etc.

Table with 4 columns: Terrestrial Ecosystem Map Codes and Site Unit Names, listing codes like CD1FM, CWH1M, 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.

Purpose The purpose of the Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory (SEI) of the Sunshine Coast is to identify, classify and map sensitive terrestrial ecosystems along the coastal lowlands (including the adjacent islands) from Howe Sound to Desolation Sound.

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.

Data Limitations The SEI is a tool to alert decision makers to the existence of sensitive ecosystems, however when land-use changes are proposed detailed site-level assessments are necessary.

Plan and implement all development activities in a manner that will not adversely affect or disturb the sensitive ecosystem.

What you are: A property owner: learn more about the natural values of your land, including the location of any sensitive ecosystems.

A volunteer: participate in educational programs, conservation fundraising, or in programs to remove invasive species.

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

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