

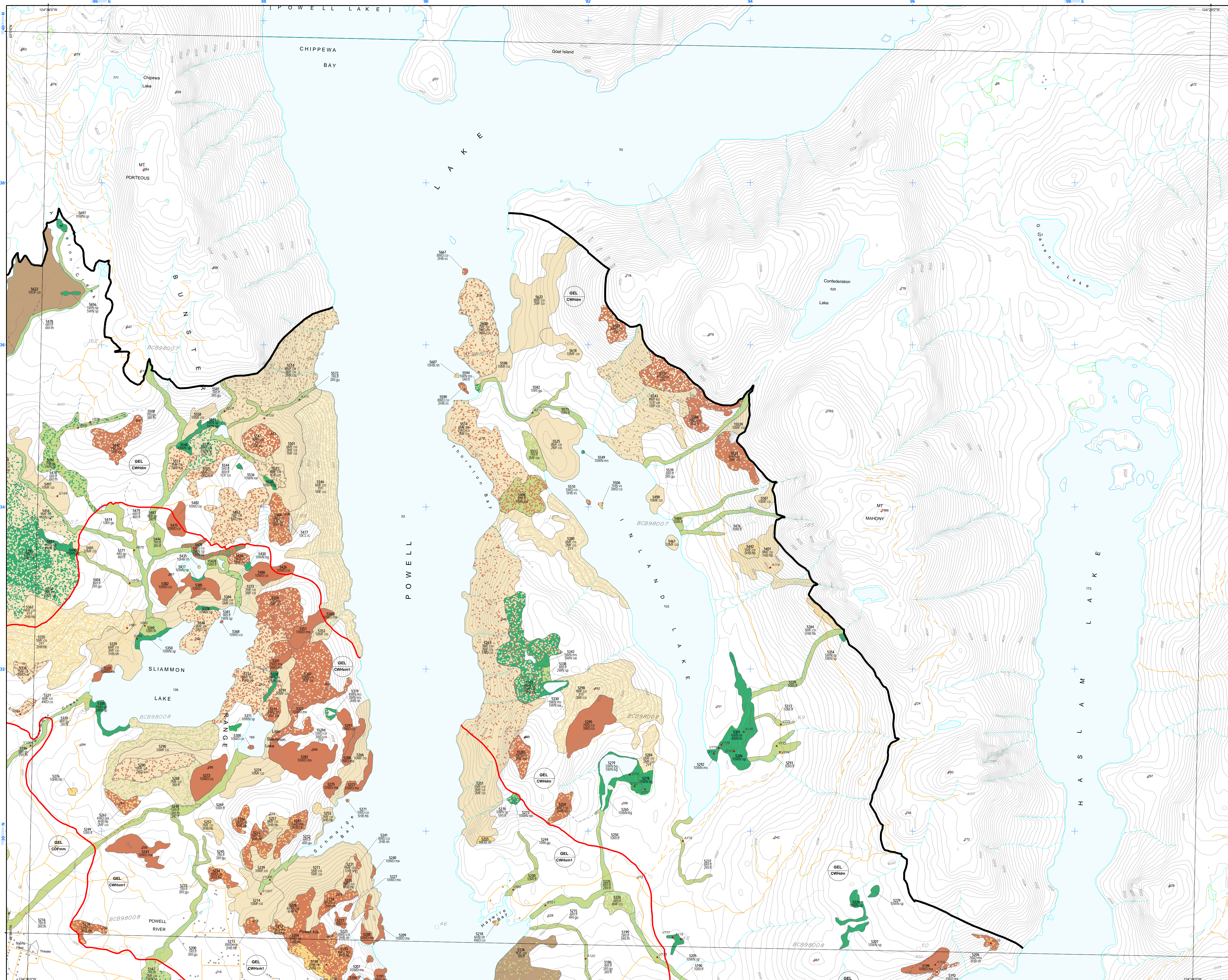
Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Labels



Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory of the Sunshine Coast and Adjacent Islands



Table with 4 columns: Ecosystem Code, Name, Description, and Notes. Lists various ecosystem types like Old Forest (OF), Woodland (WD), etc.



Sensitive Ecosystems

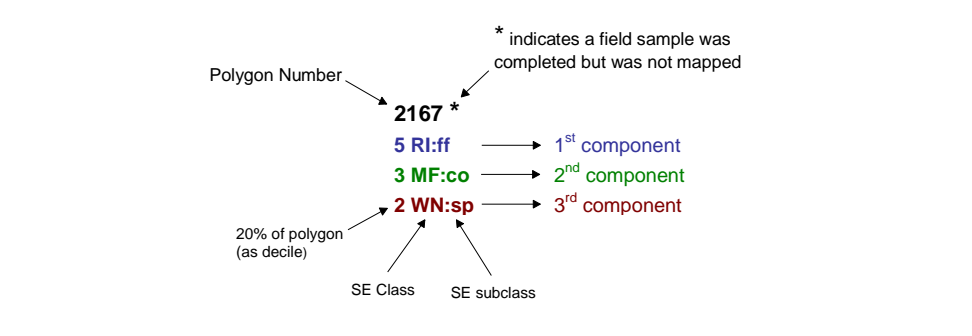
Sensitive ecosystems are fragile and/or rare, or are ecologically important because of the diversity of species they support.

- Old Forest (OF): Conifer-dominated dry to moist forest types, structural stage 7 (see table), generally >250yrs.
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 with shallow soils and often with bedrock outcrops.
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.

Other Important Ecosystems

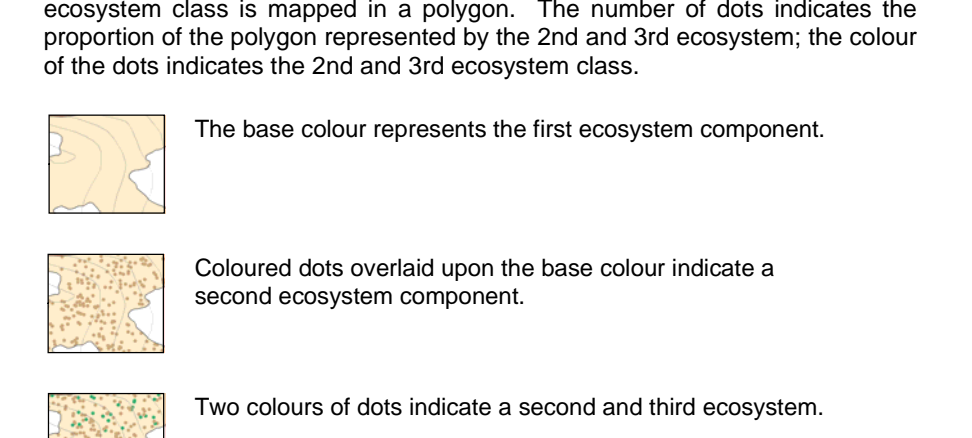
- Mature Forests (MF): Usually conifer-dominated, occasionally deciduous, dry to moist forest types, structural stage 6, generally >50yrs - >25 ha of buffering sensitive ecosystems.
Seasonally Flooded Agricultural Fields (FS): Annually flooded cultivated fields or hay fields; important migrating and wintering waterfowl habitat.
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 does not mean that 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 Ecosystems Labels on the left side of the map provide details about site units mapped in each polygon.

Ecosystem Components



Biogeoclimatic Units

- CDM Coastal Douglas-fir Moist Marine Subzone
CWH1 Coastal Western Hemlock Eastern Variant
CWH2 Coastal Western Hemlock Dry Maritime Subzone
CWH3 Coastal Western Hemlock Dry Maritime Subzone
CWH4 Coastal Western Hemlock Submontane Very Wet Maritime Variant

Ecosystems

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

Map Symbols

- Polygon Boundary
Biogeoclimatic Boundary
Study Area Boundary
Roads
20m contours
TRIM Streams
Additional Streams
Intermittent/Seasonal Stream
Drainage Route

Structural Stages 1-6 and Terrestrial Ecosystem Map Codes and Site Unit Names. Detailed tables for classification.

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 House 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 decisions are proposed detailed site-level assessments are necessary. For sites not field checked, the accuracy of the data depends heavily on the professional judgement of the mapper and the availability of source data.

What can be done to protect sensitive ecosystems? Direct and indirect impacts to these ecosystems can be avoided by: Retaining or creating vegetated buffers around sensitive ecosystems to isolate them from outside disturbance.

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 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. Encourage and facilitate the development and implementation of biodiversity conservation strategies.

Conduct an ecological inventory to identify the existing flora and fauna and to locate any threatened or endangered plant and animal species, plant communities, and habitat features needing protection.

Acknowledgments Environment Canada (Canadian Wildlife Service) and the B.C. Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management (MSRM) jointly managed this project. Major funding came from Environment Canada and MSRM as part of the Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative.

A volunteer participate in educational programs, conservation fundraising, or in programs to remove invasive species. A scientist use your expertise to help identify sensitive ecosystems, define sites that need to be addressed, formulate conservation plans, contribute to the development of conservation and management strategies and explain to other professionals and decision makers the importance of sensitive ecosystems.

