

Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Labels



Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory of the Sunshine Coast and Adjacent Islands

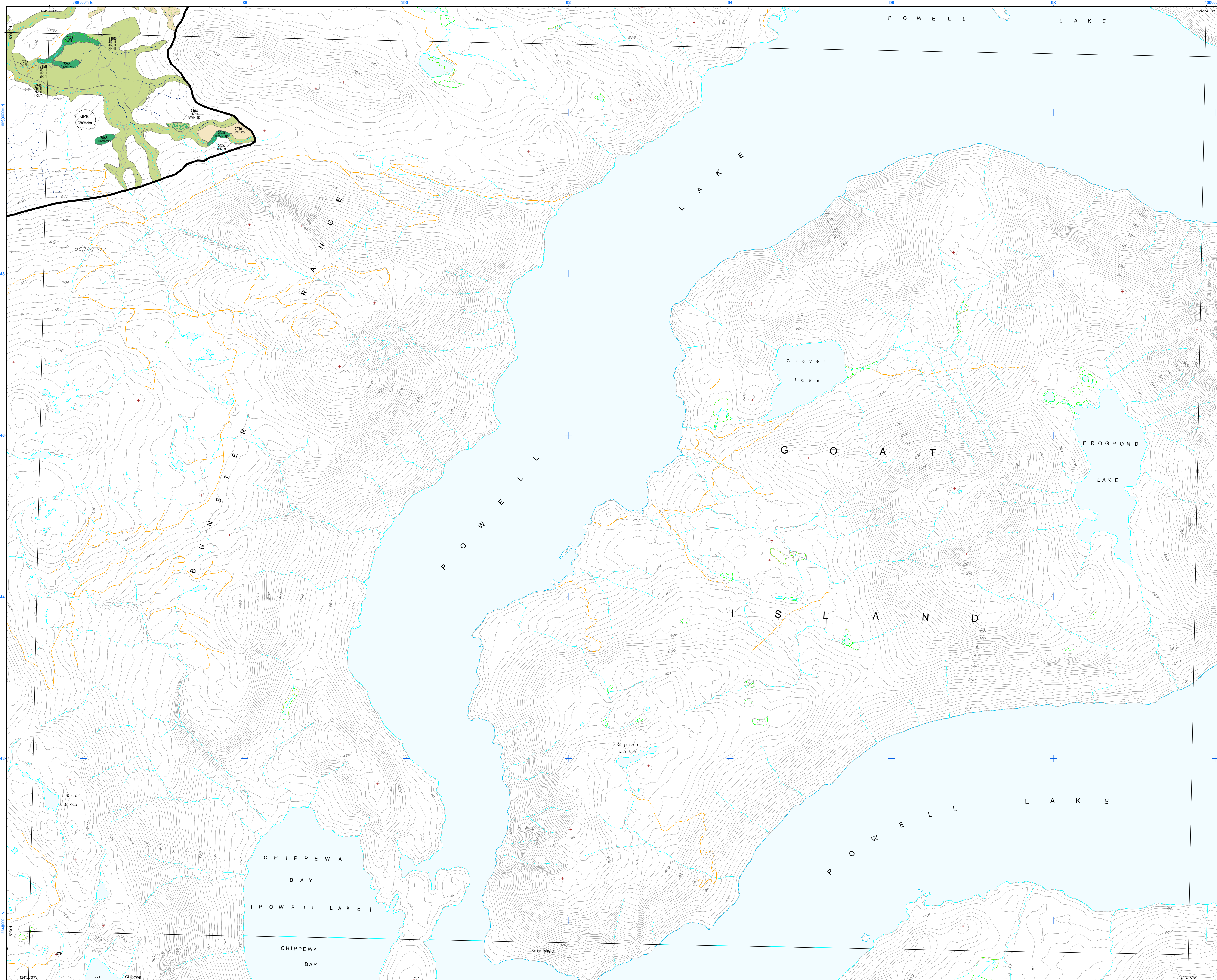


Table with 2 columns: Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Label and Structural Stage 1. It lists various ecosystem types and their corresponding structural stages.

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.

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.

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

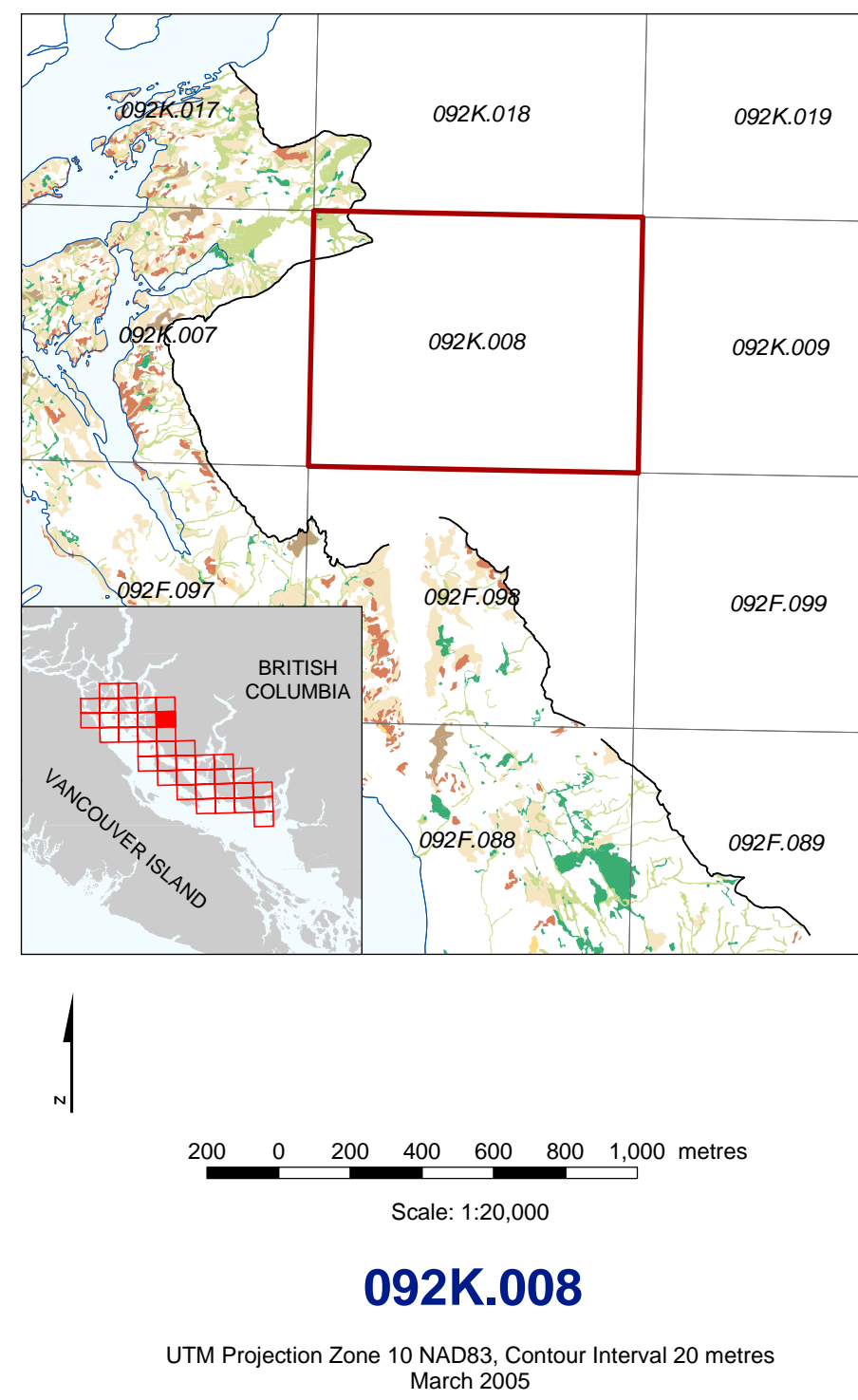
Table with 2 columns: Terrestrial Ecosystem Map Codes and Site Unit Names. It lists various ecosystem codes and their corresponding site unit names.

Rationale Ecologically significant lands and important wildlife habitats are fast disappearing through the lowlands surrounding the Strait of Georgia.

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.

A decision-maker (such as a politician or resource manager) ensure that protection of sensitive ecosystems is a priority at all levels.



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 deciduous.

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

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 hills, habitat for rare species.

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 >200yrs, or 20% of buffering sensitive ecosystems.

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 Polygon Number indicates a field sample was completed but was not mapped.

Some polygon labels will have class and subclass indicating the density to indicate where more than one ecosystem class is mapped in a polygon.

Ecosystem Components The base colour represents the first ecosystem component.

Biogeoclimatic Units Coastal Douglas-fir Moist Maritime Subzone, 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.