

Conservation Rankings
The conservation ranking process was used to evaluate and highlight the relative value of sensitive ecosystems in the North and Central Okanagan using a number of data sources: Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping (TEM), Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI), Vegetation Resource Inventory (VRI), wetlands and riparian features, grasslands, and elevation and aspect based on the TRIM DEM.

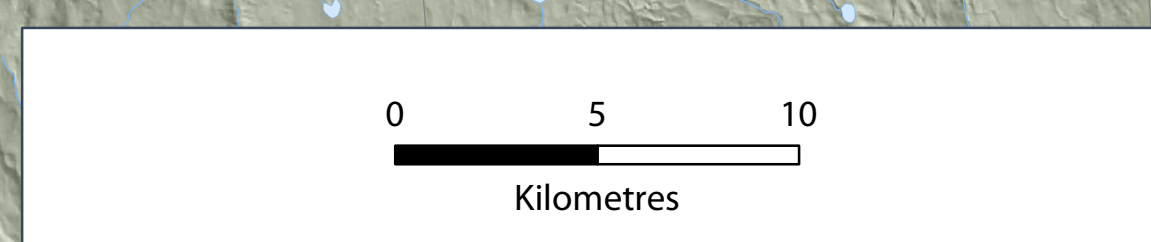
Applying Conservation Rankings to SEI Polygons
All units mapped in the SEI were linked (using BEC site series or ecosystem name) to the appropriate ecosystem in the Conservation Framework; B.C.'s approach for maintaining the biodiversity and conserving species and ecosystems. Focus was given to ecosystems scoring high under the goals of 'Proactive conservation' and 'Maintaining B.C.'s native biodiversity'. Sensitive Ecosystem Ranks were used to confirm or reconcile the TEM rank, based on expert consensus.

Weighted average:
SEI Value is the relative ecosystem value based on SEI category, incorporating sensitivity, rarity, general condition (i.e., level of disturbance), and wildlife values. Because each SEI polygon may consist of varying proportions of up to three different ecosystem types, a weighted average was calculated based on the share of area represented by a particular ecosystem type. A polygon with a weighted average of 10 would consist entirely of ecosystem types with a conservation ranking of 10. A polygon with a weighted average of 3.8 would consist of predominantly urban/residential land uses with a small percentage of a more sensitive ecosystem type. The weighted averages were then grouped into four classes as per the table below.

Conservation Rankings Map Classes		
Class	Class range*	Significance
Very High (Class 1)	7.0 - 10.0	locally & provincially significant ecosystems; critical importance to rare/wildlife species
High (Class 2)	3.0 - 6.9	ecologically important based on ecosystem rarity and sensitivity and/or value to rare wildlife
Moderate (Class 3)	0.067 - 2.9	low to moderate ecological value or importance as wildlife habitat
Low (Class 4)	0 - 0.066	little to no inherent ecological value or importance as wildlife habitat

*Based on the weighted rank

Applying Conservation Rankings to VRI Polygons
Where TEM and SEI data were not available, the conservation ranking was based on the attributes present in the VRI (leading tree species and age, biogeoclimatic variant and land cover code, cross-walked with similar TEM units) and other datasets. Riparian areas (modeled from the TRIM DEM and Freshwater Atlas hydrological features) and wetlands received a conservation rank of 1 (very high). All grasslands (from the GCC grassland mapping) were assigned a conservation rank of 1 to factor in the relative rarity of these ecosystems (e.g., BGxh, PPhx and IDfxh) in the province.



Data sources:
Ministry of Forests and Range, Ministry of Environment, TRIM, Regional District of Central Okanagan, Regional District of North Okanagan, Grasslands Conservation Council of B.C., Makonis Consulting

Scale: 1:187,500¹
Projection: BC Albers NAD 83
Written scales are approximate and are based on a 36 x 48 inch paper size.

Produced by: **CASLYS CONSULTING**

Produced for: **Okanagan Conservation Program**

October 31, 2012

Legend

- Study Area
- Electoral Area/Municipal Boundary
- Regional District Boundary

Hydrology

- Stream
- Intermittent stream
- Subsurface Flow
- Lake/Major River

Transportation

- Overgrown
- Gravel Class 1
- Gravel Class 2
- Paved
- Arterial
- Railroad
- Highway

Conservation Ranking

- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Low