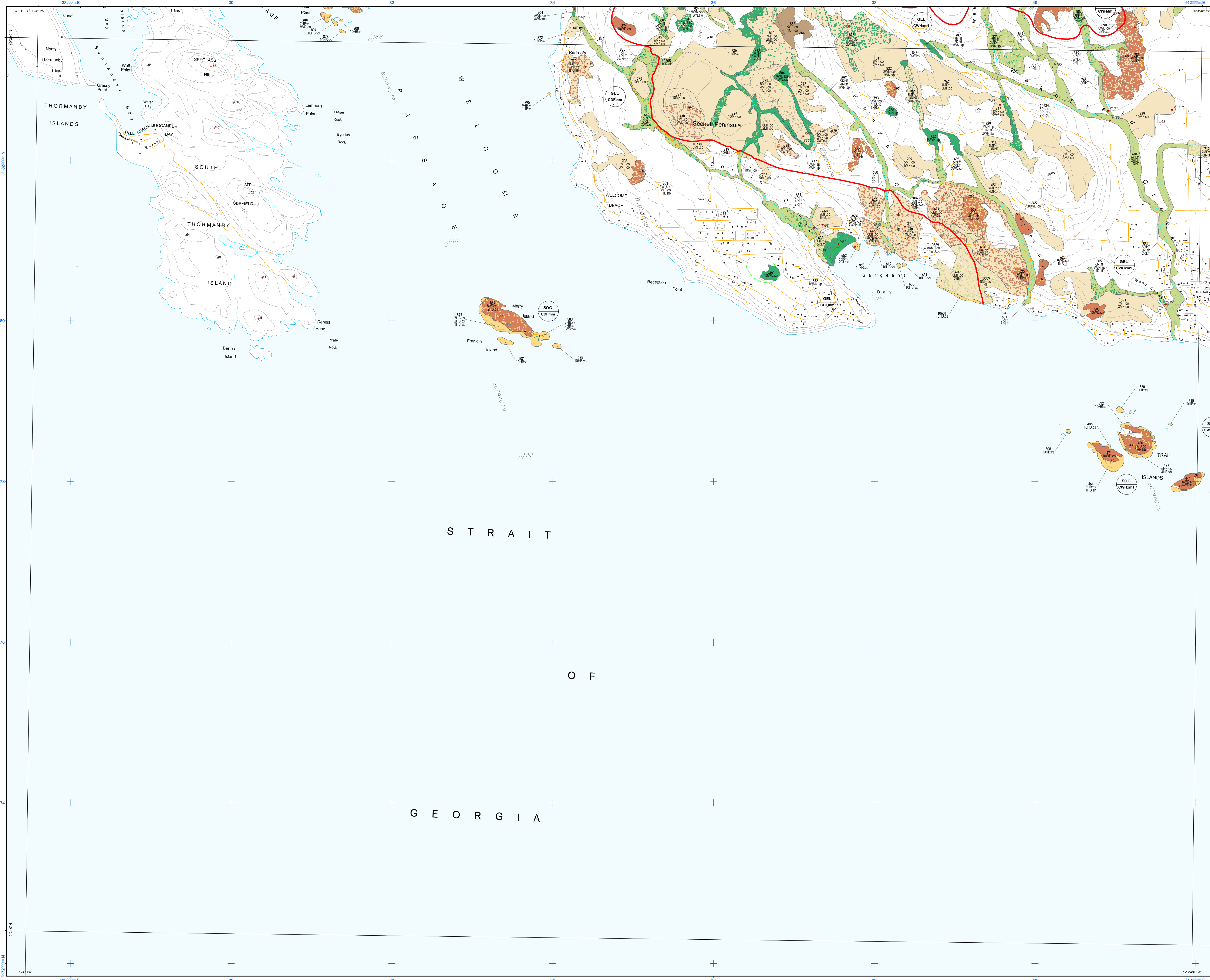


Sensitive and Terrestrial Ecosystems Labels



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 >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 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 irrigation...

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...

Mature Forests (MF): Usually conifer-dominated, occasionally deciduous, dry to moist forest types, structural stage 6, generally >50yrs, >25% 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: 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 structure occurring within a polygon.

Ecosystem Components: The cartographic product uses Dot Density to indicate where more than one ecosystem class is mapped in a polygon.

Biogeoclimatic Units: Coastal Douglas-fir Moist Maritime Subzone, Coastal Western Hemlock Eastern Very Dry Maritime Variant, etc.

Ecosystems: GEL Georgia Lowlands Ecosystem, SOG Strait of Georgia Ecosystem, QJF Outer Fjordland Ecosystem, SPR Southern Pacific Ranges Ecosystem.

Map Symbols: Polygon Boundary, Biogeoclimatic Boundary, Ecosystem Boundary, etc.

Table with columns for Structural Stage, Terrestrial Ecosystem Map Codes, and Site Unit Names. Includes detailed codes and descriptions for various ecosystem types.

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.

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.

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. Consult a qualified professional to interpret the ecological inventory data and 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.

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

Digitizing and Cartography: Bon Lee of Baseline Geomatics Inc. and AYS Environmental Consulting Ltd. GIS support: Tim Sienley, Steve Mosh and Mike Wolowicz (MSRM).

