

ECOSYSTEM CLASSIFICATIONS

Natural Ecosystems

Natural ecosystems in the Trust Area are usually remnant fragments of what once were much larger ecosystems. Most of the ecosystems captured in this mapping are considered by both the provincial and federal government to be fragile and/or rare. However, development pressures within the Trust Area continue to result in significant loss of these natural ecosystems.

OF

Old Growth Forest (OF):

Old Growth Forest ecosystems are structurally complex stands comprised mainly of shade-tolerant and regenerating tree species (>250 years old). The understory can include snags, coarse woody debris, in all stages of decomposition and a fully developed moss layer. Two sub-classifications of old forest are: coniferous (co) and mixed (mx) coniferous-deciduous.

MF

Mature Forest (MF):

Mature Forest ecosystems are characterized by establishment of shade-tolerant trees after the last disturbance (80-250 years old). The understory can be well developed as the canopy begins to open up but in Douglas-fir forests the understory is typically dry with few woody shrubs, forbs and grasses. Two sub-categories of mature forest are: coniferous (co) and mixed (mx) coniferous-deciduous.

HB

Herbaceous (HB):

Herbaceous ecosystems are non-forested ecosystems with less than 10% tree cover. They are typically found in areas of shallow soils and bedrock near shorelines and at the summit of hills and mountains. Five subcategories of herbaceous are: mixed (mx), coastal herbaceous (cs), vegetated shoreline (vs), shrub (sh), dunes (du) and spit (sp).

RI

Riparian (RI):

Riparian ecosystems occur adjacent to lakes, streams, gullies, canyons and rivers and may vary in width. Five sub-classifications are: high bench (fh), medium bench (fm), low bench (fl), fringe (ff) and gully (gu).

WN

Wetland (WN):

Wetland ecosystems are characterized by daily, seasonal or year-round water at or above the surface. There are six wetland sub-classes: bog (bg), fen (fn), marsh (ms), swamp (sp), shallow water (sw), and wet meadow (wm).

WD

Woodland (WD):

Woodland ecosystems are open stands of deciduous forests, composed of pure or mixed stands of Garry oak or mixed stand of arbutus and Douglas-fir. Mature big-leaf maple can also be found in sites designated as woodland. Woodlands may include non-forested openings, often with shallow soils and bedrock outcroppings. Two sub-categories of woodland are: broadleaf (bd) and mixed (mx) mixed broadleaf or mixed with coniferous stands.

LC

Lacustrine (LC):

Lacustrine ecosystems are freshwater ecosystems where total vegetated coverage of the total surface areas is less than 5%. There are two lacustrine sub-classes: lake (la) and pond (pd).

LT

Littoral (LT):

Littoral ecosystems are marine influenced ecosystems where total vegetated coverage of the total surface areas is less than 5%. There are two littoral sub-classes: mudflat (mu) and beach (be).

CL

Cliffs (CL):

Cliff ecosystems are steep, vertical or overhanging rock faces where sparse vegetation may occur in crevices or on ledges. There are two sub-classes: coastal cliffs (cc) and inland cliffs (ic).

Modified

Modified ecosystems are areas where there is human development or disturbance evident throughout the landscape. There are four classes in this category including: Young Forest, Rural, Agricultural and Developed. How these areas are maintained and developed can be crucial to the success of natural ecosystems. For example, Young Forest ecosystems will eventually become mature forest but in the meantime they provide buffer areas to natural systems and can provide corridors for species to move from one protected area to the next. Rural, Agricultural and Developed areas can also provide much needed habitat and can be part of enhancing the natural landscape.

YF

Young Forest (YF):

Young Forest ecosystems are coniferous dominated stands with an age range that varies between 0 and 80 years old. There are five Young Forest subclasses: coniferous (co), coniferous-deciduous (mx), pole sapling (ps), clearcut (cc) and commercially thinned (fc).

RW

Rural (RW):

Rural ecosystems are areas in which human developments are interspersed with forest range, farmland and native vegetation or cultivated crops. There are three rural subclasses: rural residence (rr), golf course (gc) and park (pk).

AG

Agricultural (AG):

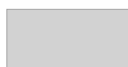
Agricultural ecosystems are areas where the dominant use is for agricultural purposes. There are three agricultural subclasses: cultivated field (cf), cultivated orchard (co) and cultivated vineyard (cv).

DP

Developed (DP):

Developed ecosystems are areas in which human features or disturbances are dominant across the landscape. There are eight developed subclasses: canal (ca), developed/occupied foreshore (sz), road surface (rz), gravel pit (gp), urban/suburban (ur), utility corridor (uc), unrestored landfills and quarries (lq) and exposed soil (es).

Other Features



Other Islands



Lot Boundary

Note: Lot boundaries are displayed for reference, and should be viewed as a general guideline only.