

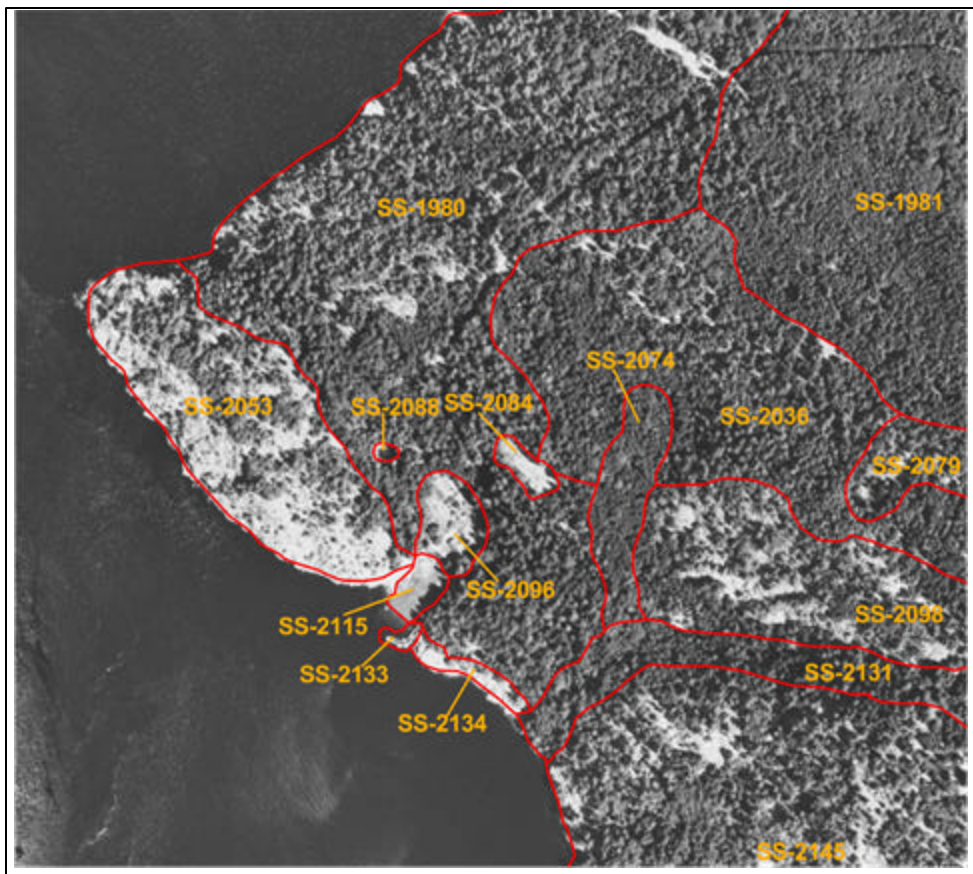
Methodology used to Create Ecosystem Maps

Until the Islands Trust Fund started mapping the islands in the Islands Trust Area, the best consistent, scientific information that was available was the Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI). The SEI was carried out primarily through interpretation of black and white air photos, flown in the 80's at a scale of 1:10,000. The minimum mapping size was set at 0.5 hectares and every polygon that was identified was given a site number (i.e. T0801).

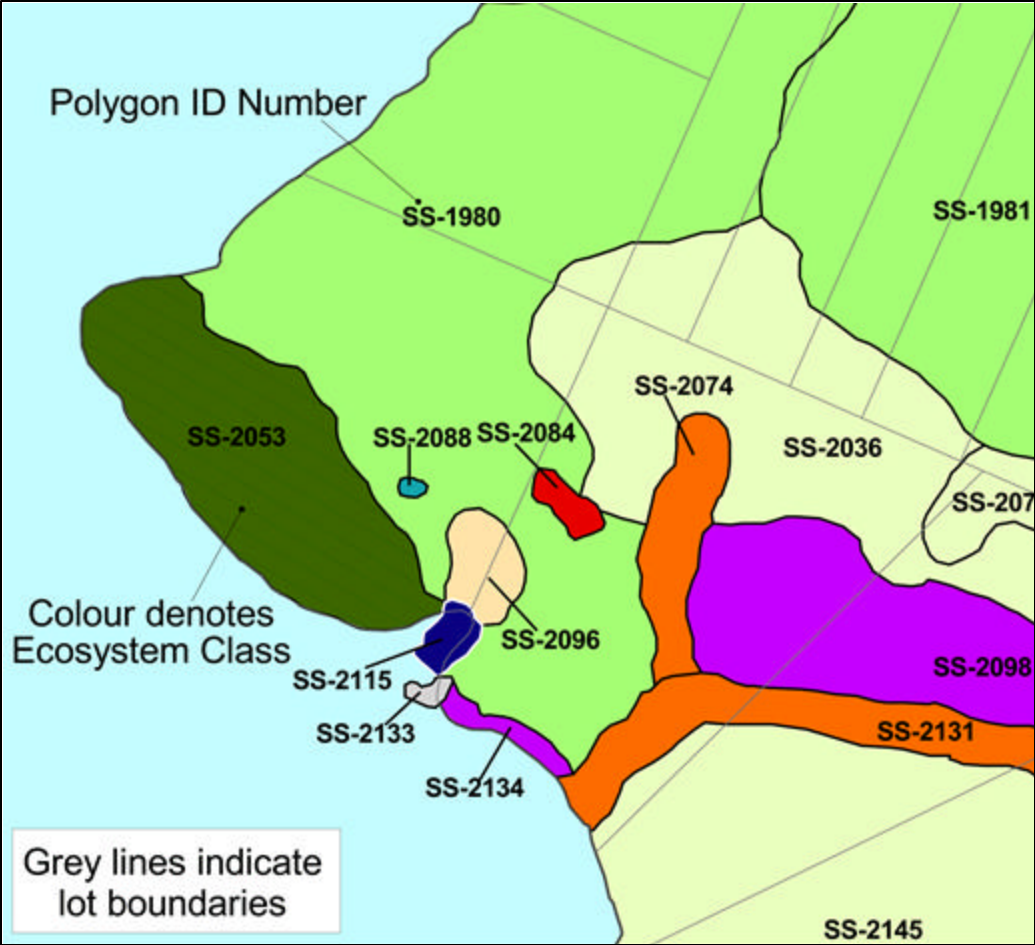
Further information regarding the methods and limitations of the SEI study can be found in the technical report entitled "**Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory: East Vancouver Island and Gulf Islands 1993-1997. Volume 1: Methodology, Ecological Descriptions and Results**" (Ward et al., 1998)".

In order to get a more comprehensive picture the Islands Trust Fund developed the Islands Trust Ecosystem Maps which uses a classification scheme that is similar to, yet different than, the SEI. The Islands Trust Ecosystem Maps classify both natural and modified ecosystems that exist across the entire landscape.

These ecosystems were determined using air photo interpretation. In the air photo below an ecosystem mapper looks for a uniform ecosystem and delineates the area and assigns the area a polygon number.



This example shows the polygons that were delineated for the south west portion of Salt Spring Island. The information that the ecosystem mapper gathered was then put into a Geographic Information System which added an additional layer – the cadastral (lot lines), to produce the final map (see below).



Please view the **Ecosystem Classifications Legend** found on the Ecosystem Map section of the Islands Trust website for more information on colors and relationships.