

# Aquatic Ecosystem Development Permits

*A guide to the Aquatic Ecosystem Development Permit Requirements  
in the Regional District of Central Okanagan*

*(Accompanies the Guide “Development Permits: A Guide to the Development Permit Process”)*

## This Guide accompanies a full Brochure

This guide is intended to help in preparing an application for an aquatic ecosystem development permit (DP). It does not answer general questions about DP's or processing the application. This Guide is a supplement to the Development Services Department Brochure, “**Development Permits: A Guide to the Development Permit Process**”. It is important to use the following information in conjunction with that brochure (available from Planning Staff or the Regional District website).



## What is a DP area for Aquatic Ecosystems?

Aquatic Ecosystem DP's are for the protection of watercourses such as streams, ponds, and wetlands and the critical habitat and biodiversity in their riparian areas. Aquatic ecosystems have been mapped and identified using the Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping (SHIM) program with the use of a geographic positioning system (GPS) and a scientific aquatic and riparian inventory system.

**It is important to note that the protection by the Regional District of watercourses and their associated riparian areas is a legislated requirement of the Province of BC.**

## What are the guidelines for development in an Aquatic Ecosystem DP area?

Aquatic Ecosystem DP areas are defined in the text and maps of the applicable Official Community Plans (OCPs), or in the case of Joe Rich in the Joe Rich Rural Land Use (RLUB) Bylaw. Each type of DP area is defined in the section of the OCP (or RLUB) entitled “Development Permits” and has a corresponding set of Guidelines in the Appendix of the document.

There is a flow chart showing how to determine development permit application requirements in this guide.

## Are professional reports required for Aquatic Ecosystem DP applications?

Where the proposal cannot be altered to avoid the aquatic ecosystem or otherwise protect the aquatic ecosystem, or, where there is a need for greater review of the particular site, a professional report may be required.

The type of professional(s) that need to be involved are outlined in the development permit requirements of the applicable Official Community Plans (OCPs), or in the case of Joe Rich in the Joe Rich Rural Land Use (RLUB) Bylaw.

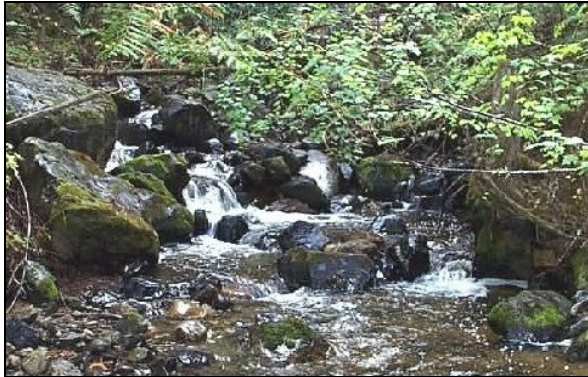
The determination of the specific type of professional to be involved, and the extent of the professional report required for a particular proposal, will be provided by Development & Environmental Services Staff. Staff can also provide a list of professionals who do this type of work or the applicant can choose a professional not on the list but having equivalent credentials.



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Typically, a professional report would look at:

- The location and extent of the aquatic habitat,
- The impact of the proposal and ways to limit impact,
- The means to protect the aquatic habitat,
- Areas and methods of rehabilitation, and,
- Monitoring to ensure protection during development and the completion of requirements.



## What happens if other DP's are required in addition to the Aquatic Ecosystem DP?

It is possible that a property may have several development permits required for one proposal. For example, an industrial development may be in both an aquatic ecosystem DP area as well as a DP area for the form, character and landscaping of the building.

It is important that the design of the proposal respond to all the different guidelines for each DP type.

The guidelines for different DP's are intended to be used for a variety of different proposals and different sites. Some resolution between overlapping guidelines for different types of DP's may be necessary. For example, the decorative landscaping around a new building may need to include the use of sheltering trees and native Okanagan plants along a stream corridor, or, the thinning of trees to reduce wildfire hazard may need to be done in a way that environmentally restores open woodland.

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Typically the professionals involved, in consultation with Planning Staff and the applicant, merge the various guidelines into one design for the site. This one design, along with the professional reports required by the guidelines for any of the DP types, will form the basis of the application.

## Determining DP Application Requirements

### Determine if the particular proposal requires an Aquatic Ecosystem DP

Planning Staff can help in interpreting the requirements. Staff can also provide advice about altering the proposal so that a DP will not be required at all such as changing a site plan, or, protecting the aquatic ecosystem through some other method.

### Review the Guidelines for the Aquatic Ecosystem DP

The Aquatic Ecosystem DP Guidelines, along with the guidelines for any other required DP's, will form the foundation for evaluating the application.

### Obtain professional reports and monitoring as required

Staff can help determine if a professional report is required as part of the aquatic ecosystem DP application. The professional report must consider the DP guidelines and identify where monitoring by a professional is required.

### Review completed application with staff and submit for formal consideration