

10.3 DPA-3 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Natural Environment Development Permit Area (DPA-3) is to establish objectives and guidelines to protect and enhance environmentally sensitive areas, ecosystems and biological diversity, and to ensure development has a positive impact on natural features and functions.

DESIGNATION

In accordance with the provision of [Section 488 \(1\)\(a\)](#) of the *Local Government Act*, all lands within the boundaries of Municipality of North Cowichan are designated a development permit area for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biodiversity.

The Natural Environment Development Permit Area (DPA-3) applies to:

- a. **Streams and Watercourses:**
 - Any development within 30 metres of a stream, as defined by the Riparian Area Protection Regulation.
 - Any development within a Riparian Assessment Area, as defined by the Riparian Area Protection Regulation.
- b. **Environmentally Sensitive Areas:**
 - Development within 15 metres of any environmentally sensitive area shown on Map 4 – Environmentally Sensitive Areas or identified as environmentally sensitive by a qualified environmental professional.
 - Development within 25 metres of a raptor nest tree.
- c. **Marine Riparian Areas:**
 - Any development within a 30 metre horizontal distance of the high water mark of the ocean.
- d. **Aquifer Protection:**
 - Any land with a high vulnerability rating as shown on Map 5 – Water Source Protection.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives for DPA-3 are:

- a. Protect the natural environment, its ecosystems, habitat and biological diversity from potential development impacts.
- b. Restore lost or degraded ecosystems and ecosystem functions.
- c. Promote and encourage ecological resilience in the natural environment to respond to climate change.
- d. Protect against flooding, erosion and sea level rise in ways that preserve environmental, cultural and recreational values.
- e. Establish procedures and guidelines for restoring environmentally sensitive lands damaged by unauthorized development.
- f. Protect shallow and vulnerable aquifers from risk of groundwater contamination.

GUIDELINES

"Environment DP Guidelines B" within Zoning Bylaw 2950 are associated with and applicable to DPA-3.