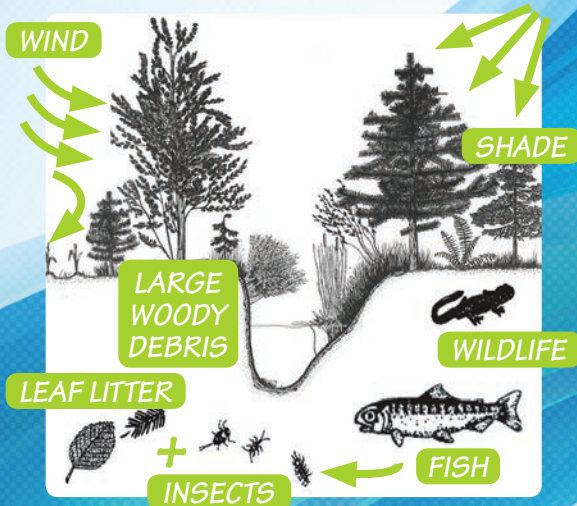


What is a Riparian Area?

Riparian areas are the areas bordering on streams, lakes, and wetlands that link water to land. The blend of streambed, water, trees, shrubs and grasses directly influences and provides fish habitat.



The Riparian Area is Fish Habitat

Riparian areas provide shade and shelter from predators, as well as a home and food for the insects that are food for fish. These areas provide wood to the stream that in turn provides shelter and nutrients. A healthy riparian area acts as a buffer to changes in weather, temperature, flooding and pollution. This resilience is critical to the survival of fish in a developing landscape.

Protecting Riparian Areas is Important

Preventing damage to riparian fish habitat is easier than restoring it if damage has occurred. Waterfront land owners have a direct role to play in ensuring the health of their local watercourse. For example, land owners can contribute to the restoration of riparian areas by allowing natural re-vegetation to take its course and re-establishing native plants.

Value for Fish & Your Community

A healthy riparian area has both economical and ecological benefits. Protected natural areas make neighbourhoods desirable and can have a positive impact on your property values.

Protected riparian areas mean:

- » Improved water quality
- » Decreased flood hazard
- » Lower stormwater management costs
- » Higher aesthetic values
- » Increased shoreline stability
- » Decreased heating and cooling costs
- » Better air quality

It will take all of us working cooperatively in our communities and with all levels of government to keep riparian areas healthy.

For More Information

Consult your local government to learn about the permit and approval process for developments in your riparian area.

Visit the provincial Riparian Areas Regulation website for more information.

Quick Guide for Waterfront Land Owners & Developers

If you have a stream, lake, wetland or ditch on or beside your property, there are things you need to know.

Provincial and, or Federal legislation may apply to you. This brochure is intended to assist land owners & property developers who are planning development activities in riparian areas adjacent to streams or other water bodies.

This pamphlet is a guide only. It is not a substitute for the Federal *Fisheries Act*, the *Riparian Areas Regulation*, or your local government's bylaws.



Riparian areas are highly productive ecosystems and are a critical source of British Columbia's biodiversity.



Ministry of
Forests, Lands and
Natural Resource Operations

Standards are in Place to Protect Fish

You need to follow local standards to protect riparian habitat when your development project is near a stream, river, creek, pond, lake, ditch, spring or wetland, if it provides fish habitat or nutrients to fish habitat.

Fish habitats are areas on which fish depend directly or indirectly for a variety of needs including spawning, nursery, rearing, food supply and migration.

If Your Project is...

a residential, commercial or industrial activity within 30 metres of a watercourse, even if that watercourse is not on your property,

AND you are planning ANY of the following:

- ✓ Removing or altering plants
- ✓ Disturbing soils
- ✓ Constructing buildings and structures
- ✓ Constructing roads, trails, docks, wharves, bridges
- ✓ Creating hard surfaces such as decks and pavement
- ✓ Installing works for flood protection
- ✓ Developing drainage systems and utility corridors
- ✓ Servicing sewage and water systems
- ✓ Subdivisions

...the Riparian Areas Regulation may apply to your development. The regulation helps you conduct your activities responsibly to avoid degrading valuable riparian fish habitat.

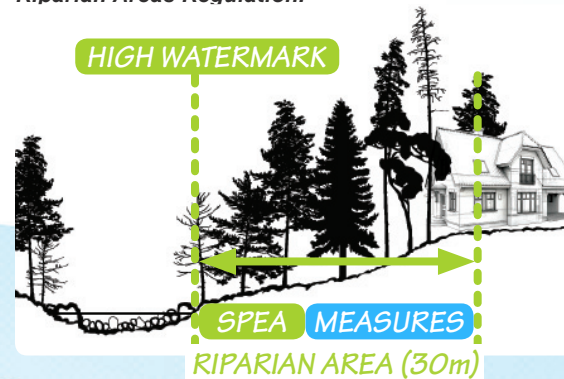
About the Regulation

The Riparian Areas Regulation is provincial legislation that requires local governments to enact bylaws that protect riparian areas during residential, commercial, and industrial development.

If the Regulation Applies to You

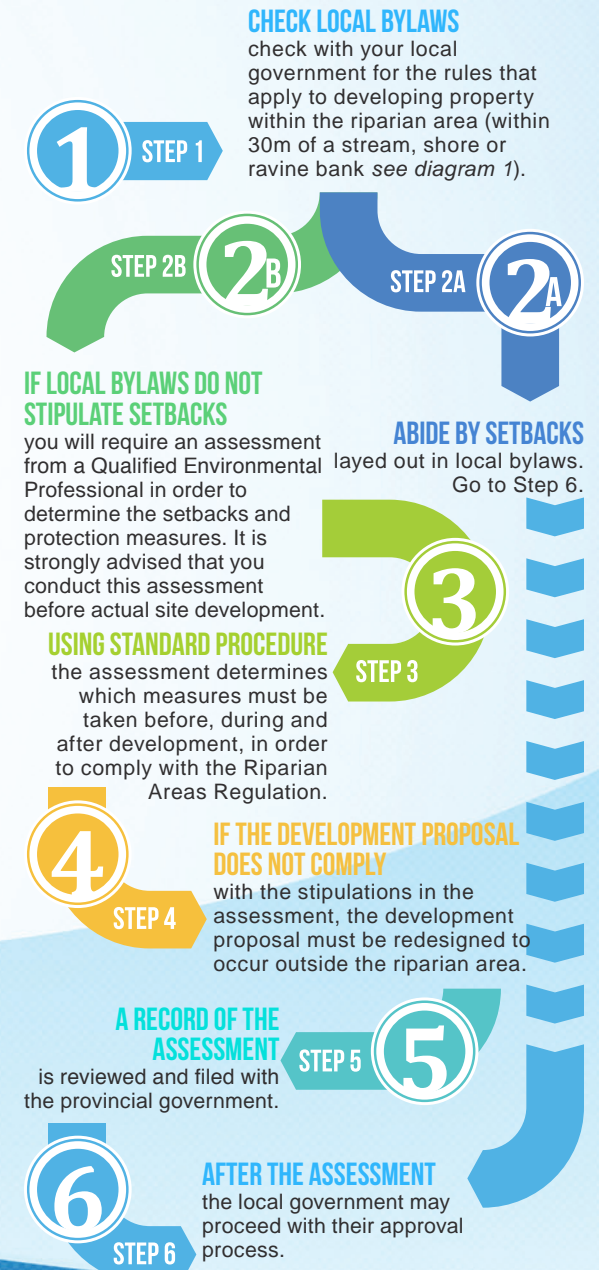
If the Riparian Areas Regulation applies to your development, you may need to have your property assessed by a **Qualified Environmental Professional**. The assessment will determine the width of the **Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA)** on your property. Development may be restricted in this area if it has the potential to damage vegetation and/or interfere with the ability of the riparian area to provide fish habitat. Additional measures to maintain riparian habitat such as sediment and erosion control, may be included in the assessment.

DIAGRAM 1: *Illustration of the 30m Riparian Assessment Area requiring compliance with the Riparian Areas Regulation.*



Qualified Environmental Professionals (QEPs) include agrologists, biologists, foresters, geoscientists, and technologists who are in good standing with their respective professional organizations working in their area of expertise.

How Do I Proceed?



Consult your local government for bylaws that apply to your development.