Information Bulletin
Rural Westside Development Permit Areas

What are Development Permits & Development Permit Areas?

The Regional District of Central Okanagan uses Development Permits (DPs) to ensure development adheres to set guidelines and objectives, including protecting sensitive habitats and ecosystems. A DP may be required when the proposed development is located within a Development Permit Area (DPA). DPAs are in place along streams, fronting Okanagan Lake and around environmentally sensitive areas.

What is happening with the Rural Westside Aquatic Ecosystems and Terrestrial Ecosystems DPAs?

The Aquatic Ecosystems and Terrestrial Ecosystems DPAs were established in 2010 in the Rural Westside Official Community Plan (OCP) by assessing inventories of map data and air photos. At the time of development, property owners can be exempt from a DP if a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) assesses the property and finds no significant aquatic or terrestrial values. This lot by lot environmental assessment does not look at the “big picture” and is inefficient and costly. The Regional District recently obtained the services of a QEP to do overview environmental assessments of existing small lot subdivisions in the Rural Westside OCP area (specifically the Estamont, Fintry, Killiney Beach, Valley of the Sun, and Westshore areas).

What were the results of the assessments?

The assessments will benefit the Rural Westside residents.

- The DPAs have been refined to more accurately represent environmental conditions and features at a scale that can be used for individual properties.
- Property owners who are within the DPAs may not need to have a QEP assess the property if the refined DPAs no longer cover the property.

RDCO staff plan to propose amendments to the Rural Westside Official Community Plan’s DPAs so that RDCO’s mapping reflects the updated data.