



# Environmental Report Guide

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE APPLICANT:**

When processing development applications with environmental sensitivities, the Town of Comox relies on expert professional opinions and recommendations in a report prepared by a Registered Professional Biologist (RPBio) who has reviewed the proposed development. The professional's report may become part of a legal document such as a covenant or permit. The purpose of this Guide is to outline the necessary elements of an environmental report for use by the Town of Comox.

Prior to engaging the services of a professional to produce an environmental report for your development, provide your biologist with this Guide. Before you commission the writing of any report, it's recommended that you obtain an acknowledgement from your professional that they have read and are able to comply with the report requirements contained in this Guide. For your convenience, an acknowledgement form is provided in **Schedule 1** on page 5 of this Guide.<sup>1</sup>

We would be happy to speak with your professional if they have any questions about the Town's requirements for an environmental report. Please call the Planning Department at 250-339-1118.

## **CONTEXT:**

The authority to require an environmental report may be found in a variety of statutes, bylaws, and regulations. Environmental reports may be required in the course of processing applications for development permit, rezoning, development variance permit, subdivision and building permit. Some reports will need to address requirements from multiple sources, depending on the nature of the development.

## **RELEVANT TOWN OF COMOX BYLAWS**

- Development Permit Areas (DPA) as published in the *Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 1685*:
  - DPA #7 Riparian Areas **NOTE: See Schedule 2 for information specific to this DPA.**
  - DPA #8 Waterfront Environment
  - DPA #9 Upland Environment
  - DPA #10 Bald Eagle and Great Blue Heron Nesting Trees/Sites
  - DPA#11 Wildlife Corridor
  - DPA #12 Garry Oak Habitat
  - DPA #14 Marine Foreshore
  - DPA #15 Comox Harbour and Marinas

Any other information considered relevant by the Biologist.

Ensure reference is made to the latest version of these documents which are all updated from time to time.

- *Comox Planning Procedures Bylaw No. 1780, Section 8 Development Approval Information (DAI)* - authority to require a report in relation to rezoning or development permit applications.

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<sup>1</sup>A completed Schedule 1 is not required to be submitted to the Town. It is provided as a convenience to property owners.



## **ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS**

Any report prepared by an RPBio, in support of a development application **must** contain the following. Incomplete reports will not be accepted which will result in delays.

- 1. **Information visible in black and white** – the text, figures, plans, and photos incorporated into the report must be clearly visible when printed as a black and white document. Text font and line weight must be sufficiently large to be easily readable when printed at 11 x 8.5 inch size and not be eroded upon scanning and copying of the original document. Discuss with staff as needed, particularly if the site requires larger format plans for information to be legible. See **Schedule 3** for Development Drawing Standards. (Note that colour photos may be used for illustrative purposes that do not convey key information.)
- 2. **Credentials** - A statement that the professional biologist is:
  - appropriately knowledgeable to provide the Environmental Report; and
  - is a member in good standing with the British Columbia College of Applied Biology.
- 3. Include acknowledgement in the text of the report that the author of the report has:
  - reviewed a title search printout for the subject property; and
  - reviewed any associated documents such as restrictive covenants, easements, or SRWs concerning land use or natural hazards relevant to the Environmental Report.Since reports on environmental issues may be attached to a restrictive covenant, and so that the covenant is not unnecessarily long, it is anticipated that the title search printout and associated documents would not be appended to the environmental report unless the report author determines such documents are essential to the report.
- 4. A **brief report title** that contains the civic address of the subject property (not the name of the development company) to facilitate reference of the environmental report in planning reports and within legal documents.
- 5. Clear **identification of the subject property** in the report by citing:
  - the legal address, as printed on a recent title search printout; and
  - the civic address if one has been assigned.
- 6. **In accordance with drawing standards** contained in **Schedule 3**, Include a **plan(s) showing the location of the property and the pertinent site conditions** and information on the environmental values under review, statutory rights-of-way, and easements marked on plan when relevant to the Environmental Report.
- 7. Description of the **intended use of the subject property** that corresponds to the development application(s) being considered by the Town.
  - Consult with Town staff to ensure completeness and consistency of terminology in the description of the use.
- 8. Where the environmental report is in conjunction with geotechnical or tree retention concerns and there is an associated report from a qualified professional such as a Professional Engineer or a Certified Arborist, **acknowledgment of the biologist's review of the engineer or arborists' report is required, citing the date of the report(s) reviewed.**



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- 9. If any revisions to a submitted environmental report are undertaken the report date must be updated or a revision number added to the report date.
- 10. Technical terms and acronyms are defined in the body of the report or in a glossary so as to be understood by the public.
- 11. As applicable, the following unqualified statement (examples) are required. Where more than one application is under review please consult with staff for customized statements:

- In the case of a **rezoning**:

“Notwithstanding any other statement in this report, this report may be relied upon by the Town of Comox in considering a zoning amendment application to rezone the subject property from <insert existing zone> to <insert proposed zone> as regulated by the *Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw No. 1377*.”

- In the case of an application for a **development variance permit**:

“Notwithstanding any other statement in this report, this report may be relied upon by the Town of Comox in considering an application to vary the *Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw 1377, section \_\_\_* to reduce the minimum <insert the name of the regulation proposed to be varied> from \_\_\_ m to \_\_\_ m.”

- In the case of an application for a **development permit**:

“Notwithstanding any other statement in this report, this report may be relied upon by the Town of Comox in considering an application for a development permit under section 920(11) of the *Local Government Act* for lands within Town of Comox Development Permit Area <insert DPA # and name>

- In the case of an application for **subdivision**:

“Notwithstanding any other statement in this report, this report may be relied upon by the Town of Comox in considering a subdivision application under Section 86(1)(d) of the *Land Title Act*.”

- 12. The Environmental Report must consider the following items as applicable to the site:
  - Background Information**- include a review of all available background information and previous environmental reports.
  - Any other items considered relevant by the RPBio.



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- 13. Statements pertaining to the use of the contents of the report must include the Town of Comox with the ability to share information in the report with the public.
- 14. The following is the only signature format and sealing of report by the biologist of record that will be accepted.

Elements of the Report Sign-Off ↓	Example of Report Sign-Off	
	↓ If a review is done	
<closing>	Submitted by,	Reviewed by,
<Biologist's Name> OR <Biologist's Company's Name>	M. Smith OR ABC Biology Inc.	A. Jones
<certification statement>	I certify this to be a report prepared by:	
<Written signature: Biologist of Record>	<i>M. Smith</i>	<i>A. Jones</i>
<Biologist's Name typed>, RPBio.	M. Smith, RPBio.	A. Jones, RPBio.
Scanned documents may be sent for preliminary review, marked as DRAFT.  A signed, sealed original will be required for final submission.		

- 15. An original, signed and sealed copy of the report to be completed by the RPBio of record is required to be submitted to the Town.



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## SCHEDULE 1<sup>2</sup>

**Note:** This is a sample form only and in delivering this sample to you, the Town of Comox is not guaranteeing:

- that no additional report revisions will be required; nor
- that this form meets the Developer's needs or that it is enforceable in any contractual arrangement the Developer may have with a consulting Biologist.

In regard to the following proposed development <provide brief description and location> :

as the Registered Professional Biologist engaged to provide an Environmental Report for this proposed development I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the Town of Comox Environmental Report Guide and agree that I am able to comply with the report requirements.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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### **DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA #7 – RIPARIAN AREAS**

Development Permit Area #7 has unique report format established by the Provincial Riparian Areas legislation and, therefore, is not subject to the requirements of this Guide.

To meet the requirements of DPA #7, Qualified Environmental Professional submits their report directly to the Province and the Town is notified by the Province that a report has been received.

Once the Town has received the notification from the Province that a Riparian Areas Report has been received for the proposed development, the Town only checks that the development proposed and subject property cited in the report are consistent with the Town's knowledge of the proposed development and subject property.

Compliance with the Province's Riparian Areas legislation is determined by the Province.



### DEVELOPMENT DRAWING STANDARDS

All plans must:

1. be in black and white;
2. utilize text and line weights sufficient to be easily readable when copied or scanned;
3. utilize solid black font lettering and for hard copies, lettering must not be less than 2.0 mm in height;
4. be in metric scale, showing bar scale and statement of metric units, and show all dimensions in metric;
5. be in the smallest scale that will permit all required detail and information to be shown on the plan without congestion and ensuring the information presented is clearly legible;
6. conform to the following scale and sheet size specifications:
  - a. Scale - 1:100, 1:125, 1:200, 1:250, 1:400, 1:500, or multiples of such scales by an integral power of 10.
  - b. The Site Plan, Landscape Plan, and any Site Servicing plan must be prepared on the same scale.
  - c. Sheet Sizes -

A size – 216 mm x 280 mm (8.5 x 11 in)	}	Discuss with staff as needed,
B size – 280 mm x 432 mm (11 x 17 in)		
C size – 432 mm x 560 mm (17 x 22 in)		
D size – 560 mm x 864 mm (22 x 34 in)		
7. be appropriately titled, which includes the street address(es) of the property or legal address if no street address has been assigned;
8. show a north arrow, be orientated so that the top of the plan, if practical, is north and text is arranged that it may be easily read when facing the top of the plan.
9. provide the street names of streets adjacent to the subject property; the name of bodies of water; and
10. provide the design professionals (architect, plan designer's, landscape architect etc.) contact information including phone number and email.

Any shading must

1. utilize shading patterns on plan that are distinct from one another at both full scale and when reduced to A (letter) size format; and
2. be identified by label, legend, or plan/drawing title.

Altitude elevations must be in geodetic and labeled as such.

Contour intervals must

1. be appropriate to convey slope information with a minimum of 0.5 m; and
2. be labeled on the plan including if they are existing or proposed as of the date submission.

Submission of a revised plan must be accompanied by

1. one copy showing revisions within a bubble/cloud indicating the area that has been changed and
2. one copy with all revision bubbles/clouds highlighted with yellow highlighter.

Subject properties with existing structures – plans must clearly distinguish between what buildings and structures are to be removed in whole or in part and proposed new construction.

Lot lines must be labeled and dimensioned

Landscape plans must also note that all landscape works must conform to the most recent BC Society of Landscape Architect / BC Nursery Trades Association Landscape Standard.