



TO: Qualified Environmental Professionals, Landowners and Developers  
FROM: Development Services  
DATE: March 23, 2022

**RE: Terms of Reference for Site Bio-inventories**

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The District of Squamish (District) Official Community Plan (OCP) recognizes the value of Squamish's natural assets and proposes policies to protect the natural environment. Development Permit Area 1 (Environmental Protection) of the OCP states that applications for development (unless exempted under DPA 1) shall be accompanied by a Site Bio-inventory prepared by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP). The requirement for a Site Bio-inventory is further supported by the District's Land Development Procedures Bylaw (Bylaw No. 2632, 2018) and Section 86 of the *Land Title Act*.

In accordance with the *Land Title Act*, the approving officer may refuse to approve a subdivision plan if the approving officer considers that after due consideration of all available environmental impact and planning studies, the anticipated subdivision would adversely affect the natural environment or the conservation of heritage property to an unacceptable level.

A Site Bio-inventory prepared by a QEP may be required for subdivision, rezoning and certain development permit proposals.

Each lot is unique and carries unique requirements which require the judgment of the QEP completing the assessment. The report shall establish the suitability of the land for development and any required mitigation measures. The following is intended to provide general terms of reference for typical requirements when completing Site Bio-inventory reports in the District of Squamish.

If all the items in the Preliminary Site Survey are answered "no", a Detailed Site Bio-inventory is not necessary.

Please refer to the Ministry of Environment's [Develop with Care 2014](#) (Appendix B) for more information.

**Note: A Site Bio-inventory does not substitute a riparian report. A riparian assessment report or a ditch assessment report is still required in addition to a Site Bio-inventory, if relevant, as per Development Permit Area 1 Aquatic Guidelines (Section 34.7 of the OCP).**



## Terms of Reference:


### General:

#### (i) Step 1: Preliminary Site Survey

- a. The QEP must begin with an initial screening of the site, as per the procedure for Preliminary Site Surveys outlined in Appendix B of *Develop with Care 2014: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia* (Develop with Care 2014 Guidelines).
- b. The Preliminary Site Survey (Table B-1 of Appendix B) must be conducted by a QEP and be submitted with the land development application and be signed by the QEP.
- c. If all the items in the Preliminary Site Survey are answered “no”, a Detailed Site Bio-inventory is not necessary
- d. If any of the items in the Preliminary Site Survey are answered “yes” or “unknown”, then there are two options:
  - i. Option 1: A detailed site inventory may not be needed if the development could be designed so that there are no impacts to the EVR(s). A brief report is required describing the EVR(s) identified, where they are located, and how they will be protected. Refer to the Develop with Care 2014 Guidelines Section B-2 for more information.
  - ii. Option 2: More information is needed on the possible impact to or presence of EVRs. Proceed to Step 2: Detailed Site Bio-inventory.

#### (ii) Step 2: Detailed Site Bio-inventory

- a. If Step 2 is required, the Detailed Site Bio-inventory must be conducted in accordance with the procedures and guidelines set out in the Develop with Care 2014 Guidelines.
  - b. The Detailed Site Bio-inventory must be completed by a QEP and submitted with the land development application.
  - c. The Detailed Site Bio-inventory Summary Report shall consider and include, where relevant, the content with Table B-2 and follow the format within Table B-3 in Appendix B of Develop with Care 2014.
- (iii) Depending on the complexity of the site, scope of development under consideration, availability/quality/reliability of background information and field data, the degree of judgment on which the assessment is based, QEP’s training/experience and the capability of the approving authority to review and respond, an independent peer review may be required by the District. Costs of the peer review are to be borne by the developer.



Property Description and Report Expiration:

- (i) The report must include a full description of the proposed land use(s) including the number, type and zoning of lots and/or units. The report must be accompanied by a site plan showing the full scope of the proposed land use.
- (ii) The report must contain a legal description of the subject parcel(s).
- (iii) The report must be no older than two years from the date of application.

Impact Assessment:


- (i) The Detailed Bio-Inventory report must identify and describe any potential impacts of the development on identified EVRs.
- (ii) Where applicable, impacts are to be quantified and mapped.

Mitigation, Restoration and Compensation Measures:

- (i) Per Section 34.5 (e) of the OCP, an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) shall accompany DPA1 applications. See the District's Terms of Reference for EMPs ([link](#)). The EMP can be submitted as a separate document or mitigation measures incorporated into the report.
- (ii) The report must specify all restoration measures recommended for the proposed development of the site.
- (iii) Compensation for habitat loss(es) should be provided as per Section 34.5 (h) of Development Permit Area 1 (DPA 1).
- (iv) Mitigation, restoration and compensation measures shall follow industry, federal and provincial best practices.
- (v) Upon approval from the District, Section 219 covenants for conservation may be required to be registered on title establishing appropriate conservation measures and indemnifying the District.

The Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP):

- (i) The QEP must be registered as a Professional Biologist (RPBio) with the BC College of Applied Biology in a relevant and appropriate discipline.
- (ii) The QEP must have developed demonstrable experience and expertise in the applicable matter and discipline.
- (iii) It is the responsibility of the RPBio to determine whether they are qualified by training or experience to undertake and accept responsibility for Detailed Site Bio-inventory Summary Reports for proposed developments (CABBC Code of Ethics Principle 2).
- (iv) The QEP must hold valid professional liability insurance.
- (v) Additional QEPs or professionals may be required to support an ESA DP application including professionals registered with the BC Society of Landscape Architects (BCSLA), the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of British Columbia (APEG), the British Columbia Institute of Professional Agrologists (BCIA), the Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABCFP), and the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA).



Exceptions:

- (i) At the discretion of the General Manager, the requirement for a Site Bio-inventory may be waived for instances where site works are not required, such as rezoning applications to allow for a change in use in an existing building.