

**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN**

**BYLAW NO. 2912, 2023**

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**A Bylaw to amend the Electoral Area “A”, “C”, “D”, “E”, “F”, “H” & “I”  
Official Community Plan Bylaws**

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The REGIONAL BOARD of the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen in open meeting assembled, ENACTS as follows:

1. This Bylaw may be cited for all purposes as the “Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area Update Official Community Plan Amendment Bylaw No. 2912, 2023.”

**Electoral Area “A”**

2. The “Electoral Area “A” Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2905, 2021” is amended by:
  - i) replacing sub-section 16.1.2.3 (Policies – General) under Section 16.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
    - .3 Requires that, where a proposed subdivision affects land subject to an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area, an Environmental Assessment (EA) be prepared by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) in accordance with the policies outlined at Section 23.2 as well as relevant federal and provincial best management guidelines.
  - ii) replacing sub-section 16.3.2.2 (Policies) under Section 16.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
    - .2 Requires that land designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area shall be retained in a natural state and not subdivided prior to the issuance of an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) in accordance with the guidelines outlined at Section 23.2 of this Plan unless an exemption applies.
  - iii) replacing sub-section 16.3.2.6 (Policies) under Section 16.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:

- .6 Encourages development that avoids impacting important native species, habitats, ecosystems or sensitive areas and to retain important ecosystem features and functions. Responsiveness to this policy will be a very important consideration in the approval of an amendment bylaw application.
- iv) replacing a new sub-section 23.2 (Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area) under Section 23.0 (Development Permit Areas) in its entirety with the following:

**23.2 Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area**

**.1 Category**

The Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area is designated pursuant to Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act* for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

**.2 Area**

The lands shown as Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area on Schedule 'C' are designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area.

**.3 Justification**

To regulate development activities within environmentally sensitive areas in order to protect important sensitive ecosystems and biological diversity including valuable habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat.

**.4 Background**

The natural environment provides essential habitat and corridors for plants, fish, birds and other organisms. It also acts as a natural water storage, drainage and purifying system, which can help to protect private property from flooding or land loss due to watercourse erosion. Furthermore, as concerns over climate change grow, it should be recognized that functioning ecosystems are more efficient at consuming carbon dioxide as well as carbon storage. Vegetation adjacent to watercourses needs to remain in a largely undisturbed state in order to maintain a healthy environment and clean water.

The south Okanagan-Similkameen area is considered one of the most ecologically diverse in British Columbia and Canada, and includes sensitive ecosystems which support a number of provincially Red and Blue-listed species (extirpated, endangered, threatened, and vulnerable) and federally listed Species at Risk. The ESDP Area is intended to protect habitat for

endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat within the Plan Area.

The ESDP Area is comprised of important habitat areas for wildlife and plant communities. Sensitive ecosystems in the area include grasslands, riparian areas, old forest, shrub-steppe, broadleaf woodland, coniferous woodland, wetlands, shallow soiled rock outcrops and ridges. Specifically, BC's pocket desert, Kruger Mountain, Osoyoos Lake, the oxbows and wetlands of Okanagan River, Richter Pass with the natural ridgeline views between Highway 3 and Osoyoos Lake. It is the close proximity of these diverse habitats that contribute to a wide variety of species, both common and rare, that are found in this Electoral Area.

## **.5 Development requiring a permit**

- .1 A development permit is required, except where exempt under Section 23.2.7 (Exemptions), for development on lands within the ESDP area. Where not exempted, development requiring a development permit includes:
  - a) subdivision.

## **.6 Guidelines**

- .1 A Development Permit is required for development within an ESDP Area, and shall be in accordance with the following guidelines:
  - a) An Environmental Assessment (EA) Report, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Regional District's Development Procedures Bylaw, must be submitted to the Regional District in respect of the proposed development by a qualified environmental professional (QEP) that is a Registered Professional Biologist in British Columbia (RPBio) or team that shall include a RPBio under contract to the development applicant, and shall include:
    - i) An Ecological Assessment Phase including:
      - .1 background information;
      - .2 an ecological assessment;
      - .3 listing of rare and endangered species; and
      - .4 stratification and rating of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs).
    - ii) An Impact Assessment and Mitigation Phase including:
      - .1 description of proposed development;
      - .2 assessment of potential impacts;

- .3 short and long term impacts;
  - .4 cumulative and residual impacts;
  - .5 avoidance of ESAs;
  - .6 mitigation and compensation;
  - .7 security requirements;
  - .8 monitoring reports;
  - .9 accountability; and
  - .10 monitoring plan.
- b) Subdivision should be planned, designed and implemented to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Habitats that provide for at-risk species, at-risk ecological communities and keystone species should be given priority for protection.
  - c) Development should be planned away from native trees and trees containing active nest sites or cavities. If removal of native trees cannot be avoided, mitigation should include restoration and replanting with equivalent native trees.
  - d) Habitat connectivity and the retention of connectivity corridors between sensitive ecosystems should be preserved. Wildlife crossings should be designed to protect continuity of wildlife corridors where these are interrupted by roadways.
  - e) Monitoring reports may be required to be submitted to the Regional District following the completion of a development in order to confirm the conditions of a development permit have been met.
  - f) The Regional District may incorporate any areas or measures identified in an EA to protect sensitive ecosystems from the effect of development as terms and conditions of the development permit.
- .2 If an area of land is subject to additional Development Permit Area designations under Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act*, the Regional District requires that a single development permit application that combines the requirements of each Development Permit Area be submitted. The application will be assessed in accordance with the individual development permit guidelines for each applicable Development Permit Area under this bylaw and, if approved, issued under a combined development permit.

## **.7 Exemptions**

A development permit is not required for development within land in the ESDP area for:

- .1 subdivisions that propose to:
  - a) consolidate existing parcels, including the consolidation of parts of a closed road to an existing parcel; or
  - b) alter parcel lines between two or more parcels where no additional parcels are created upon completion of the alteration.

### Electoral Area “C”

3. The “Electoral Area “C” Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2452, 2008” is amended by:
  - i) replacing sub-section 16.1.2.3 (Policies – General) under Section 16.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
    - .3 Requires that, where a proposed subdivision affects land subject to an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area, an Environmental Assessment (EA) be prepared by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) in accordance with the policies outlined at Section 21.2 as well as relevant federal and provincial best management guidelines.
  - ii) replacing sub-section 16.3.2.2 (Policies) under Section 16.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
    - .2 Requires that land designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area shall be retained in a natural state and not subdivided prior to the issuance of an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) in accordance with the guidelines outlined at Section 21.2 of this Plan unless an exemption applies.
  - iii) replacing sub-section 16.3.2.6 (Policies) under Section 16.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
    - .6 Encourages development that avoids impacting important native species, habitats, ecosystems or sensitive areas and to retain important ecosystem features and functions. Responsiveness to this policy will be a very important consideration in the approval of an amendment bylaw application.
  - iv) replacing a new sub-section 21.2 (Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area) under Section 21.0 (Development Permit Areas) in its entirety with the following:

## **21.2 Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area**

### **.1 Category**

The Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area is designated pursuant to Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act* for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

### **.2 Area**

The lands shown as Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area on Schedule 'C' are designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area.

### **.3 Justification**

To regulate development activities within environmentally sensitive areas in order to protect important sensitive ecosystems and biological diversity including valuable habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat.

### **.4 Background**

The natural environment provides essential habitat and corridors for plants, fish, birds and other organisms. It also acts as a natural water storage, drainage and purifying system, which can help to protect private property from flooding or land loss due to watercourse erosion. Furthermore, as concerns over climate change grow, it should be recognized that functioning ecosystems are more efficient at consuming carbon dioxide as well as carbon storage. Vegetation adjacent to watercourses needs to remain in a largely undisturbed state in order to maintain a healthy environment and clean water.

The south Okanagan-Similkameen area is considered one of the most ecologically diverse in British Columbia and Canada, and includes sensitive ecosystems which support a number of provincially Red and Blue-listed species (extirpated, endangered, threatened, and vulnerable) and federally listed Species at Risk. The ESDP Area is intended to protect habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat within the Plan Area.

The ESDP Area is comprised of important habitat areas for wildlife and plant communities. Sensitive ecosystems in the area include grasslands, riparian areas, old forest, shrub-steppe, broadleaf woodland, coniferous woodland, wetlands, shallow soiled rock outcrops and ridges. It is the close proximity of these diverse habitats that contribute to a wide variety of species, both common and rare, that are found in this Electoral Area.

**.5 Development requiring a permit**

- .1 A development permit is required, except where exempt under Section 21.2.7 (Exemptions), for development on lands within the ESDP area. Where not exempted, development requiring a development permit includes:
- a) subdivision.

**.6 Guidelines**

- .1 A Development Permit is required for development within an ESDP Area, and shall be in accordance with the following guidelines:
- a) An Environmental Assessment (EA) Report, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Regional District's Development Procedures Bylaw, must be submitted to the Regional District in respect of the proposed development by a qualified environmental professional (QEP) that is a Registered Professional Biologist in British Columbia (RPBio) or team that shall include a RPBio under contract to the development applicant, and shall include:
    - i) An Ecological Assessment Phase including:
      - .1 background information;
      - .2 an ecological assessment;
      - .3 listing of rare and endangered species; and
      - .4 stratification and rating of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs).
    - ii) An Impact Assessment and Mitigation Phase including:
      - .1 description of proposed development;
      - .2 assessment of potential impacts;
      - .3 short and long term impacts;
      - .4 cumulative and residual impacts;
      - .5 avoidance of ESAs;
      - .6 mitigation and compensation;
      - .7 security requirements;
      - .8 monitoring reports;
      - .9 accountability; and
      - .10 monitoring plan.

- b) Subdivision should be planned, designed and implemented to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Habitats that provide for at-risk species, at-risk ecological communities and keystone species should be given priority for protection.
  - c) Development should be planned away from native trees and trees containing active nest sites or cavities. If removal of native trees cannot be avoided, mitigation should include restoration and replanting with equivalent native trees.
  - d) Habitat connectivity and the retention of connectivity corridors between sensitive ecosystems should be preserved. Wildlife crossings should be designed to protect continuity of wildlife corridors where these are interrupted by roadways.
  - e) Monitoring reports may be required to be submitted to the Regional District following the completion of a development in order to confirm the conditions of a development permit have been met.
  - f) The Regional District may incorporate any areas or measures identified in an EA to protect sensitive ecosystems from the effect of development as terms and conditions of the development permit.
- .3 If an area of land is subject to additional Development Permit Area designations under Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act*, the Regional District requires that a single development permit application that combines the requirements of each Development Permit Area be submitted. The application will be assessed in accordance with the individual development permit guidelines for each applicable Development Permit Area under this bylaw and, if approved, issued under a combined development permit.

## **.7 Exemptions**

A development permit is not required for development within land in the ESDP area for:

- .1 subdivisions that propose to:
  - a) consolidate existing parcels, including the consolidation of parts of a closed road to an existing parcel; or
  - b) alter parcel lines between two or more parcels where no additional parcels are created upon completion of the alteration.

### Electoral Area “D”

- 4. The “Electoral Area “D” Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2603, 2013” is amended by:



- i) replacing sub-section 17.1.2.3 (Policies – General) under Section 17.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
  - .3 Requires that, where a proposed subdivision affects land subject to an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area, an Environmental Assessment (EA) be prepared by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) in accordance with the policies outlined at Section 24.2 as well as relevant federal and provincial best management guidelines.
  
- ii) replacing sub-section 17.3.2.2 (Policies) under Section 17.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
  - .2 Requires that land designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area shall be retained in a natural state and not subdivided prior to the issuance of an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) in accordance with the guidelines outlined at Section 24.2 of this Plan unless an exemption applies.
  
- iii) replacing sub-section 17.3.2.6 (Policies) under Section 17.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
  - .6 Encourages development that avoids impacting important native species, habitats, ecosystems or sensitive areas and to retain important ecosystem features and functions. Responsiveness to this policy will be a very important consideration in the approval of an amendment bylaw application.
  
- v) replacing a new sub-section 24.2 (Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area) under Section 24.0 (Development Permit Areas) in its entirety with the following:

**24.2 Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area**

**.1 Category**

The Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area is designated pursuant to Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act* for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

**.2 Area**

The lands shown as Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area on Schedule 'C' are designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area.

**.3 Justification**

To regulate development activities within environmentally sensitive areas in order to protect important sensitive ecosystems and biological diversity

including valuable habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat.

#### **.4 Background**

The natural environment provides essential habitat and corridors for plants, fish, birds and other organisms. It also acts as a natural water storage, drainage and purifying system, which can help to protect private property from flooding or land loss due to watercourse erosion. Furthermore, as concerns over climate change grow, it should be recognized that functioning ecosystems are more efficient at consuming carbon dioxide as well as carbon storage. Vegetation adjacent to watercourses needs to remain in a largely undisturbed state in order to maintain a healthy environment and clean water.

The south Okanagan-Similkameen area is considered one of the most ecologically diverse in British Columbia and Canada, and includes sensitive ecosystems which support a number of provincially Red and Blue-listed species (extirpated, endangered, threatened, and vulnerable) and federally listed Species at Risk. The ESDP Area is intended to protect habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat within the Plan Area.

The ESDP Area is comprised of important habitat areas for wildlife and plant communities. Sensitive ecosystems in the area include grasslands, riparian areas, old forest, shrub-steppe, broadleaf woodland, coniferous woodland, wetlands, shallow soiled rock outcrops and ridges. It is the close proximity of these diverse habitats that contribute to a wide variety of species, both common and rare, that are found in this Electoral Area.

#### **.5 Development requiring a permit**

- .1 A development permit is required, except where exempt under Section 24.2.7 (Exemptions), for development on lands within the ESDP area. Where not exempted, development requiring a development permit includes:
  - a) subdivision.

#### **.6 Guidelines**

- .1 A Development Permit is required for development within an ESDP Area, and shall be in accordance with the following guidelines:
  - a) An Environmental Assessment (EA) Report, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Regional District's Development Procedures Bylaw, must be submitted to the Regional District in respect of the proposed development by a

qualified environmental professional (QEP) that is a Registered Professional Biologist in British Columbia (RPBio) or team that shall include a RPBio under contract to the development applicant, and shall include:

- i) An Ecological Assessment Phase including:
  - .1 background information;
  - .2 an ecological assessment;
  - .3 listing of rare and endangered species; and
  - .4 stratification and rating of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs).
- ii) An Impact Assessment and Mitigation Phase including:
  - .1 description of proposed development;
  - .2 assessment of potential impacts;
  - .3 short and long term impacts;
  - .4 cumulative and residual impacts;
  - .5 avoidance of ESAs;
  - .6 mitigation and compensation;
  - .7 security requirements;
  - .8 monitoring reports;
  - .9 accountability; and
  - .10 monitoring plan.
- b) Subdivision should be planned, designed and implemented to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Habitats that provide for at-risk species, at-risk ecological communities and keystone species should be given priority for protection.
- c) Development should be planned away from native trees and trees containing active nest sites or cavities. If removal of native trees cannot be avoided, mitigation should include restoration and replanting with equivalent native trees.
- d) Habitat connectivity and the retention of connectivity corridors between sensitive ecosystems should be preserved. Wildlife crossings should be designed to protect continuity of wildlife corridors where these are interrupted by roadways.
- e) Monitoring reports may be required to be submitted to the Regional District following the completion of a development in

order to confirm the conditions of a development permit have been met.

- f) The Regional District may incorporate any areas or measures identified in an EA to protect sensitive ecosystems from the effect of development as terms and conditions of the development permit.
- .4 If an area of land is subject to additional Development Permit Area designations under Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act*, the Regional District requires that a single development permit application that combines the requirements of each Development Permit Area be submitted. The application will be assessed in accordance with the individual development permit guidelines for each applicable Development Permit Area under this bylaw and, if approved, issued under a combined development permit.

## **.7 Exemptions**

A development permit is not required for development within land in the ESDP area for:

- .1 subdivisions that propose to:
  - a) consolidate existing parcels, including the consolidation of parts of a closed road to an existing parcel; or
  - b) alter parcel lines between two or more parcels where no additional parcels are created upon completion of the alteration.

### Electoral Area “E”

5. The “Electoral Area “E” Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2458, 2008” is amended by:
- i) replacing sub-section 18.1.2.3 (Policies – General) under Section 18.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
    - .3 Requires that, where a proposed subdivision affects land subject to an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area, an Environmental Assessment (EA) be prepared by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) in accordance with the policies outlined at Section 23.2 as well as relevant federal and provincial best management guidelines.
  - iv) replacing sub-section 18.3.2.2 (Policies) under Section 18.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
    - .2 Requires that land designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area shall be retained in a natural state and not subdivided prior to the issuance of an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) in

accordance with the guidelines outlined at Section 23.2 of this Plan unless an exemption applies.

v) replacing sub-section 18.3.2.6 (Policies) under Section 18.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:

.6 Encourages development that avoids impacting important native species, habitats, ecosystems or sensitive areas and to retain important ecosystem features and functions. Responsiveness to this policy will be a very important consideration in the approval of an amendment bylaw application.

vi) replacing a new sub-section 23.2 (Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area) under Section 23.0 (Development Permit Areas) in its entirety with the following:

## **23.2 Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area**

### **.1 Category**

The Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area is designated pursuant to Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act* for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

### **.2 Area**

The lands shown as Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area on Schedule 'C' are designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area.

### **.3 Justification**

To regulate development activities within environmentally sensitive areas in order to protect important sensitive ecosystems and biological diversity including valuable habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat.

### **.4 Background**

The natural environment provides essential habitat and corridors for plants, fish, birds and other organisms. It also acts as a natural water storage, drainage and purifying system, which can help to protect private property from flooding or land loss due to watercourse erosion. Furthermore, as concerns over climate change grow, it should be recognized that functioning ecosystems are more efficient at consuming carbon dioxide as well as carbon storage. Vegetation adjacent to watercourses needs to remain in a largely undisturbed state in order to maintain a healthy environment and clean water.

The south Okanagan-Similkameen area is considered one of the most ecologically diverse in British Columbia and Canada, and includes sensitive ecosystems which support a number of provincially Red and Blue-listed species (extirpated, endangered, threatened, and vulnerable) and federally listed Species at Risk. The ESDP Area is intended to protect habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat within the Plan Area.

The ESDP Area is comprised of important habitat areas for wildlife and plant communities. Sensitive ecosystems in the area include grasslands, riparian areas, old forest, shrub-steppe, broadleaf woodland, coniferous woodland, wetlands, shallow soiled rock outcrops and ridges. It is the close proximity of these diverse habitats that contribute to a wide variety of species, both common and rare, that are found in this Electoral Area.

## **.5 Development requiring a permit**

- .1 A development permit is required, except where exempt under Section 23.2.7 (Exemptions), for development on lands within the ESDP area. Where not exempted, development requiring a development permit includes:
  - a) subdivision.

## **.6 Guidelines**

- .1 A Development Permit is required for development within an ESDP Area, and shall be in accordance with the following guidelines:
  - a) An Environmental Assessment (EA) Report, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Regional District's Development Procedures Bylaw, must be submitted to the Regional District in respect of the proposed development by a qualified environmental professional (QEP) that is a Registered Professional Biologist in British Columbia (RPBio) or team that shall include a RPBio under contract to the development applicant, and shall include:
    - i) An Ecological Assessment Phase including:
      - .1 background information;
      - .2 an ecological assessment;
      - .3 listing of rare and endangered species; and
      - .4 stratification and rating of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs).
    - ii) An Impact Assessment and Mitigation Phase including:

- .1 description of proposed development;
  - .2 assessment of potential impacts;
  - .3 short and long term impacts;
  - .4 cumulative and residual impacts;
  - .5 avoidance of ESAs;
  - .6 mitigation and compensation;
  - .7 security requirements;
  - .8 monitoring reports;
  - .9 accountability; and
  - .10 monitoring plan.
- b) Subdivision should be planned, designed and implemented to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Habitats that provide for at-risk species, at-risk ecological communities and keystone species should be given priority for protection.
  - c) Development should be planned away from native trees and trees containing active nest sites or cavities. If removal of native trees cannot be avoided, mitigation should include restoration and replanting with equivalent native trees.
  - d) Habitat connectivity and the retention of connectivity corridors between sensitive ecosystems should be preserved. Wildlife crossings should be designed to protect continuity of wildlife corridors where these are interrupted by roadways.
  - e) Monitoring reports may be required to be submitted to the Regional District following the completion of a development in order to confirm the conditions of a development permit have been met.
  - f) The Regional District may incorporate any areas or measures identified in an EA to protect sensitive ecosystems from the effect of development as terms and conditions of the development permit.
- .5 If an area of land is subject to additional Development Permit Area designations under Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act*, the Regional District requires that a single development permit application that combines the requirements of each Development Permit Area be submitted. The application will be assessed in accordance with the individual development permit guidelines for each applicable Development Permit Area under this bylaw and, if approved, issued under a combined development permit.

## **.7 Exemptions**

A development permit is not required for development within land in the ESDP area for:

- .1 subdivisions that propose to:
  - a) consolidate existing parcels, including the consolidation of parts of a closed road to an existing parcel; or
  - b) alter parcel lines between two or more parcels where no additional parcels are created upon completion of the alteration.

### Electoral Area “F”

6. The “Electoral Area “F” Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2790, 2018” is amended by:

- i) replacing sub-section 16.1.2.3 (Policies – General) under Section 16.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
  - .3 Requires that, where a proposed subdivision affects land subject to an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area, an Environmental Assessment (EA) be prepared by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) in accordance with the policies outlined at Section 23.2 as well as relevant federal and provincial best management guidelines.
- ii) replacing sub-section 16.3.2.2 (Policies) under Section 16.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
  - .2 Requires that land designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area shall be retained in a natural state and not subdivided prior to the issuance of an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) in accordance with the guidelines outlined at Section 23.2 of this Plan unless an exemption applies.
- iii) replacing sub-section 16.3.2.6 (Policies) under Section 16.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
  - .6 Encourages development that avoids impacting important native species, habitats, ecosystems or sensitive areas and to retain important ecosystem features and functions. Responsiveness to this policy will be a very important consideration in the approval of an amendment bylaw application.
- iv) replacing a new sub-section 23.2 (Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area) under Section 23.0 (Development Permit Areas) in its entirety with the following:



## **23.2 Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area**

### **.1 Category**

The Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area is designated pursuant to Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act* for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

### **.2 Area**

The lands shown as Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area on Schedule 'H' are designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area.

### **.3 Justification**

To regulate development activities within environmentally sensitive areas in order to protect important sensitive ecosystems and biological diversity including valuable habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat.

### **.4 Background**

The natural environment provides essential habitat and corridors for plants, fish, birds and other organisms. It also acts as a natural water storage, drainage and purifying system, which can help to protect private property from flooding or land loss due to watercourse erosion. Furthermore, as concerns over climate change grow, it should be recognized that functioning ecosystems are more efficient at consuming carbon dioxide as well as carbon storage. Vegetation adjacent to watercourses needs to remain in a largely undisturbed state in order to maintain a healthy environment and clean water.

The south Okanagan-Similkameen area is considered one of the most ecologically diverse in British Columbia and Canada, and includes sensitive ecosystems which support a number of provincially Red and Blue-listed species (extirpated, endangered, threatened, and vulnerable) and federally listed Species at Risk. The ESDP Area is intended to protect habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat within the Plan Area.

The ESDP Area is comprised of important habitat areas for wildlife and plant communities. Sensitive ecosystems in the area include grasslands, riparian areas, old forest, shrub-steppe, broadleaf woodland, coniferous woodland, wetlands, shallow soiled rock outcrops and ridges. It is the close proximity of these diverse habitats that contribute to a wide variety of species, both common and rare, that are found in this Electoral Area.

**.5 Development requiring a permit**

- .1 A development permit is required, except where exempt under Section 23.2.7 (Exemptions), for development on lands within the ESDP area. Where not exempted, development requiring a development permit includes:
- b) subdivision.

**.6 Guidelines**

- .1 A Development Permit is required for development within an ESDP Area, and shall be in accordance with the following guidelines:
- a) An Environmental Assessment (EA) Report, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Regional District's Development Procedures Bylaw, must be submitted to the Regional District in respect of the proposed development by a qualified environmental professional (QEP) that is a Registered Professional Biologist in British Columbia (RPBio) or team that shall include a RPBio under contract to the development applicant, and shall include:
    - i) An Ecological Assessment Phase including:
      - .1 background information;
      - .2 an ecological assessment;
      - .3 listing of rare and endangered species; and
      - .4 stratification and rating of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs).
    - ii) An Impact Assessment and Mitigation Phase including:
      - .1 description of proposed development;
      - .2 assessment of potential impacts;
      - .3 short and long term impacts;
      - .4 cumulative and residual impacts;
      - .5 avoidance of ESAs;
      - .6 mitigation and compensation;
      - .7 security requirements;
      - .8 monitoring reports;
      - .9 accountability; and
      - .10 monitoring plan.

- b) Subdivision should be planned, designed and implemented to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Habitats that provide for at-risk species, at-risk ecological communities and keystone species should be given priority for protection.
  - c) Development should be planned away from native trees and trees containing active nest sites or cavities. If removal of native trees cannot be avoided, mitigation should include restoration and replanting with equivalent native trees.
  - d) Habitat connectivity and the retention of connectivity corridors between sensitive ecosystems should be preserved. Wildlife crossings should be designed to protect continuity of wildlife corridors where these are interrupted by roadways.
  - e) Monitoring reports may be required to be submitted to the Regional District following the completion of a development in order to confirm the conditions of a development permit have been met.
  - f) The Regional District may incorporate any areas or measures identified in an EA to protect sensitive ecosystems from the effect of development as terms and conditions of the development permit.
- .6 If an area of land is subject to additional Development Permit Area designations under Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act*, the Regional District requires that a single development permit application that combines the requirements of each Development Permit Area be submitted. The application will be assessed in accordance with the individual development permit guidelines for each applicable Development Permit Area under this bylaw and, if approved, issued under a combined development permit.

## **.7 Exemptions**

A development permit is not required for development within land in the ESDP area for:

- .1 subdivisions that propose to:
  - a) consolidate existing parcels, including the consolidation of parts of a closed road to an existing parcel; or
  - b) alter parcel lines between two or more parcels where no additional parcels are created upon completion of the alteration.

### Electoral Area “H”

7. The “Electoral Area “H” Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2497, 2012” is amended by:

- i) replacing Section 17.0 (Environment & Conservation) in its entirety with the following:

## **17.0 ENVIRONMENT & CONSERVATION**

### **17.1 Background**

Environmental quality is an important component of the community vision, and is tied to the quality of life and lifestyle options valued by local residents, property owners and visitors. The natural attributes of the Plan area, however, are seen to extend beyond the boundaries of Electoral Area “H”, and the Regional District considers that environmental issues in the Similkameen Valley should be addressed from a broad regional perspective.

The Similkameen Valley is situated in the rain shadow of the Coast and Cascade Mountains, with the western part of the valley (which is seen to include Electoral Area “H”) possessing a cooler, moister climate from that found in the dry south-eastern part of the valley. The whole of the Valley is seen to belong to the Southern Interior “Ecoprovince”, which has the greatest diversity of birds in the interior of British Columbia and the most breeding species of all the Ecoprovinces in the province. The low elevation areas of the Similkameen Valley are also home to the Bunchgrass (BG), Ponderosa Pine (PP), and, Interior Douglas Fir (IDF) zones. These three zones are comparatively rare within the province, and have been identified as areas of conservation concern.

While the Bunchgrass zone is predominantly in the valley bottom from Keremeos southward, the Interior Douglas Fir (very dry hot) zone follows the major low elevation drainages including the Tulameen and the Similkameen rivers. A substantial proportion of the Ponderosa Pine zone falls in the area around the Town of Princeton.

Many of the Valley’s ecosystems are sensitive to human disturbance, and high proportions are designated by the Provincial and or Federal governments as being “at risk”. Alteration and the loss of ecosystems have historically occurred due to a variety of activities such as livestock farming, commercial orchard and field crop development, and more recently the focus has been on vineyard/winery and rural ranchette or larger parcel home developments.

The Similkameen River as a whole system continues to support many intact remaining natural attributes such as riparian deciduous forests, dense thickets, meadows and wetlands associated with its floodplain. The cottonwood forests on the valley floor are a notable feature of the landscape. Equally significant are the high mountains with deep dry valleys, the surrounding sensitive upland ecosystems of sagebrush grasslands,

rugged slopes, old growth open Ponderosa Pine and Interior Douglas Fir forests.

For the purpose of protecting environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs), which include not only riparian areas, but shrub-steppe, forested lands, rugged terrain and aquatic areas, the Regional District undertook Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) mapping around the communities of Eastgate, Otter Lake and Chain Lakes.

As a local government listed under Section 3 of the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation*, the Regional District has implemented a Watercourse Development Permit (WDP) Area designation in order to protect riparian areas; being lands within 30 metres of the high water mark of streams and ravines including lakes, watercourses and wetlands, and as described further at Section 22.3 of this bylaw.

For maps of development permit areas and other environmentally sensitive areas in the Plan Area see Schedule 'G' (Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area and Other Important Ecosystem Area) and Schedule 'H' (Watercourse Development Permit Area).

#### **17.1.1 Objectives - General**

- .1 Maintain and sustain a healthy environment by encouraging the enhancement of ecological systems and by protecting biodiversity.
- .2 Integrate measures to sustain environmental quality and consider impacts on the environment in future land use decisions.
- .3 Work with property owners and agents to inform and guide the design of development in a way that is sensitive to important landscape features such as watercourses, hillsides and sensitive ecosystems.
- .4 Support efforts to protect source water quality and quality today and for future generations.

#### **17.1.2 Policies - General**

The Regional Board:

- .1 Recognizes the importance of containing and controlling noxious weeds through the continued endorsement of weed prevention and control initiatives.
- .2 Recognizes and encourages the educational and eco-tourism contribution toward protection of the community's natural environment made by environmental organizations, and supports accommodating these uses with the necessary changes to the land use designations so long as the general intent of policies in this Plan are met.

- .3 Requires that, where a proposed subdivision affects land subject to an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area, an Environmental Assessment (EA) be prepared by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) in accordance with the policies outlined at Section 22.2 as well as relevant federal and provincial best management guidelines.
- .4 Requires that EA reports prepared by QEPs be undertaken in accordance with the Regional District's Development Procedures Bylaw.
- .5 Supports the incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge in the stewardship of important foreshore, riparian, and terrestrial ecosystems, and will seek to work with the Upper Similkameen Indian Band and Lower Similkameen Indian Band to incorporate it where feasible, practical and appropriate.

## **17.2 Riparian and Foreshore Areas**

Riparian areas are places under the influence of water. They surround and contain wetlands, ponds, permanent and intermittent creeks, springs, wet meadows, etc. The Plan Area includes several lakes such as Missezula, Alison, Chain, Link, Osprey and Thirsk Lakes and numerous smaller lakes. The Plan Area also includes the Similkameen River and various smaller streams.

Activities in riparian areas have potential to impact water quality, affect erosion, damage fish habitat and impact habitat for species at risk. Agriculture impacts are significant and range from infilling to cultivation and livestock use.

Because riparian and foreshore areas are so strongly connected to both habitats for species at risk and water quality through groundwater/surface water, it is vital that land use practices protect riparian areas by retaining and restoring native species, and ecosystems. Natural riparian areas provide significant ecosystems benefits that costly water treatment and recovery planning for species at risk cannot replace.

Generally land above the high water mark (natural boundary) is privately held and land below the high water mark belongs to the Crown and forms part of the water resource in the province. Land within 30.0 metres of the high water mark of a stream or a ravine is identified as being within a Watercourse Development Permit Area and any development within this area may require a Development Permit (see Section 22.3). Other activities that are subject to regulation include dock construction and modification, mooring buoy installation, and shoreline modifications (including sand, soil, vegetation removal, disturbance, and addition).

### 17.2.1 Objectives

- .1 Foster community awareness of the importance and sensitivity of the riparian and foreshore environments in the Plan Area.
- .2 Protect aquatic habitat areas and associated environmentally sensitive areas from negative impacts of development as identified in Schedule 'G' (Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area and Other Important Ecosystem Area) and Schedule 'H' (Watercourse Development Permit Area).
- .3 Improve and better manage waterfront public access along major lake shorelines, while limiting the overall number of public access points.
- .4 Minimize and avoid development in high hazard soil instability areas along lake foreshore and riparian areas.
- .5 Encourage high quality lakeshore development that maintains the natural character of all lakes and sustains the sensitive riparian and foreshore ecosystems.
- .6 Conserve, protect and enhance surface, ground and aquifer water sources in cooperation with provincial ministries, local water purveyors and landowners.
- .7 Identify, manage and protect significant watercourses to maintain their natural habitat and environmental quality.

### 17.2.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Recognises riparian values and, in accordance with the provincial *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation*, has designated land within 30.0 metres of the high water mark of a stream or a ravine as a development permit area. Land designated as a Watercourse Development Permit Area shall be developed according to the guidelines outlined in Section 22.3 (Watercourse Development Permit Area) of this Plan unless an exemption applies. The Watercourse Development Permit Area includes the lands within 30.0 metres of the high water mark of a stream or ravine identified on Schedule 'H'.
- .2 Encourages provincial and federal water and resource managers to protect and enhance water quality, base flows, natural drainage patterns, and continuous riparian corridors of sufficient width to accommodate the dynamic nature of the hydrologic system, to avoid and reduce flood damage, to avoid the need for channel stabilization, to avoid underground drainage systems, to avoid groundwater

interruption, and to protect and sustain aquatic biota, important fish populations and habitats.

- .3 Supports efforts that maintain appropriate riparian buffers, determined by qualified professionals that take into account processes of natural erosion, deposition and movement of natural stream boundaries, floodplain provisions and sensitive terrestrial habitats
- .4 Encourages and supports the analysis of ground water hydrology in areas with identified aquifers, and requires environmental assessments in advance of considering zoning amendments for uses such as heavy industrial, mining, fuel storage and/or sewage or waste containment.
- .5 Discourages development that will have a negative environmental impact on lake riparian and foreshore areas.
- .6 Encourages the subdivision approving officer to ensure that public access to lakes is provided pursuant to Section 75 of the *Land Title Act*.
- .7 Supports the use of Section 86 of the *Land Title Act* and Section 56 of the *Community Charter* to regulate development in a floodplain and provide for the safe use of the land for the intended purpose.

### **17.3 Terrestrial Areas**

Terrestrial areas are simply described as the areas upland or beyond water. They include areas with grassland and shrub-steppe, sparsely vegetated, broadleaf woodlands, coniferous woodlands and old forest ecosystems. Many at risk species are found in terrestrial ecosystems in the Plan Area.

Like foreshore and riparian areas, terrestrial areas also contain areas sensitive to development and land use. Of the various ecosystem types, the grassland and shrub-steppe ecosystems are particularly sensitive to disturbance and subject to habitat loss through development, agriculture conversion, impacts from invasive plants, and habitat loss resulting from recreation use.

Significant proportions of sensitive terrestrial habitat have been provincially recognized and protected in the Plan Area.

#### **17.3.1 Objectives**

- .1 Protect and steward sensitive and important terrestrial ecosystem areas as identified in Schedule 'G' (Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area Areas).



- .2 Encourage provincial and federal governments, private organizations and private landowners to protect, enhance and manage critical habitat areas for species at risk in the Plan Area.
- .3 Work cooperatively with regional partners and support rehabilitation, restoration and enhancement of wildlife habitats and environmentally sensitive areas that have been subject to negative impacts in the past.
- .4 Encourage and facilitate linkages of protected habitat areas.

### **17.3.2 Policies**

The Regional Board:

- .1 Recognizes the values of environmentally sensitive lands and has on Schedule 'G':
  - a) Designated these lands as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area pursuant to Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act*; or
  - b) Identified these lands as "Potential Sensitive Ecosystems".
- .2 Requires that land designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area shall be retained in a natural state and not subdivided prior to the issuance of an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) in accordance with the guidelines outlined at Section 22.2 of this Plan unless an exemption applies.
- .3 Considers that land identified as "Potential Sensitive Ecosystems" should generally be retained in a natural state and, if a re-designation of the land under the OCP or a re-zoning of the land under the Zoning Bylaw is proposed, that these lands be considered for inclusion in the Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area in Schedule 'G'.
- .4 Encourages the parcel sizes of land designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area or identified as "Potential Sensitive Ecosystems" on Schedule 'G' to remain as large as possible to protect these habitat areas.
- .5 Will not support the re-designation of land under the OCP or the re-zoning of land under the Zoning Bylaw where it is determined that the proposed development is contrary to the ESDP Area Guidelines of this Plan and the impact cannot be mitigated to a level acceptable to the Regional Board.
- .6 Encourages development that avoids impacting important native species, habitats, ecosystems or sensitive areas and to retain important ecosystem features and functions. Responsiveness to this policy will be a very important consideration in the approval of an application.

- .7 Encourage the protection, preservation, enhancement and management of sensitive ecosystems or land contiguous to sensitive ecosystems of private lands through the following methods:
  - a) donation of areas to the Regional District or provincial government;
  - b) donation of areas to a land trust or conservation organization;
  - c) introduction of conservation area designation and zoning;
  - d) creation of conservation covenants in favour of municipal, provincial government, private conservation organizations;
  - e) establishment of statutory right of ways under the *Land Title Act* for affected areas;
  - f) establishment of long-term leases for sensitive areas;
  - g) land stewardship and participation in conservation initiatives by the private landowner; or
  - h) consideration of alternative development standards.
- .8 Supports conserving, enhancing and promoting the protection of wildlife corridors and ecosystem connectivity with interfacing Crown lands.
- .9 Encourages the use of native vegetation to restore disturbed sites.

#### **17.4 Conservation Areas**

For the purpose of protecting environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs), the Regional District may designate lands as Conservation Area (CA). The Conservation Area designation is applied to land that is preserved and protected for its unique natural value, land left in a natural or semi-natural state for the purpose of conserving plant life and providing habitat for wildlife or fish.

Conservation Area lands may include Crown land designated as an Ecological Reserve or Wildlife Management Areas, but is generally applied to private lands that have been acquired or donated for conservation purposes and which are held by an individual or an organisation, such as The Nature Trust of British Columbia or the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

For a map of Conservation Areas in the Plan Area see Schedule 'B' (Official Community Plan Map).

### 17.4.1 Objectives

- .1 Protect and steward designated Conservation Areas in their natural or semi-natural state for the purpose of conserving plant life and providing habitat for wildlife or fish.
- .2 Work with agencies and partners, including local First Nations to enhance, protect and interpret ecological systems and biodiversity in Conservation Areas.
- .3 Work with property owners and agents to inform and guide the design of development in a way that is sensitive to adjacent or abutting Conservation Areas.

### 17.4.2 Policies

The Regional Board:

- .1 Recognizes and encourages the educational and eco-tourism contributions toward protection of Conservation Areas made by environmental organizations, and supports accommodating these uses where they do not conflict with Conservation Area objectives.
- .2 Supports the incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge in the stewardship of Conservation Areas, and will seek to work with local First Nations to incorporate it where feasible, practical and appropriate.

- ii) replacing a new sub-section 22.2 (Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area) under Section 22.0 (Development Permit Areas) in its entirety with the following:

#### **22.2 Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area**

##### **.1 Category**

The Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area is designated pursuant to Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act* for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

##### **.2 Area**

The lands shown as Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area on Schedule 'G' are designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area.

##### **.3 Justification**

To regulate development activities within environmentally sensitive areas in order to protect important sensitive ecosystems and biological diversity

including valuable habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat.

#### **.4 Background**

The natural environment provides essential habitat and corridors for plants, fish, birds and other organisms. It also acts as a natural water storage, drainage and purifying system, which can help to protect private property from flooding or land loss due to watercourse erosion. Furthermore, as concerns over climate change grow, it should be recognized that functioning ecosystems are more efficient at consuming carbon dioxide as well as carbon storage. Vegetation adjacent to watercourses needs to remain in a largely undisturbed state in order to maintain a healthy environment and clean water.

The Similkameen area is considered one of the most ecologically diverse in British Columbia and Canada, and includes sensitive ecosystems which support a number of provincially Red and Blue-listed species (extirpated, endangered, threatened, and vulnerable) and federally listed Species at Risk. The ESDP Area is intended to protect habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat within the Plan Area.

The ESDP Area is comprised of important habitat areas for wildlife and plant communities. Sensitive ecosystems in the area include grasslands, riparian areas, old forest, shrub-steppe, broadleaf woodland, coniferous woodland, wetlands, shallow soiled rock outcrops and ridges. It is the close proximity of these diverse habitats that contribute to a wide variety of species, both common and rare, that are found in this Electoral Area.

#### **.5 Development requiring a permit**

- .1 A development permit is required, except where exempt under Section 22.2.7 (Exemptions), for development on lands within the ESDP area. Where not exempted, development requiring a development permit includes:
  - a) subdivision.

#### **.6 Guidelines**

- .1 A Development Permit is required for development within an ESDP Area, and shall be in accordance with the following guidelines:
  - a) An Environmental Assessment (EA) Report, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Regional District's Development Procedures Bylaw, must be submitted to the Regional District in respect of the proposed development by a

qualified environmental professional (QEP) that is a Registered Professional Biologist in British Columbia (RPBio) or team that shall include a RPBio under contract to the development applicant, and shall include:

- i) An Ecological Assessment Phase including:
  - .1 background information;
  - .2 an ecological assessment;
  - .3 listing of rare and endangered species; and
  - .4 stratification and rating of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs).
- ii) An Impact Assessment and Mitigation Phase including:
  - .1 description of proposed development;
  - .2 assessment of potential impacts;
  - .3 short and long term impacts;
  - .4 cumulative and residual impacts;
  - .5 avoidance of ESAs;
  - .6 mitigation and compensation;
  - .7 security requirements;
  - .8 monitoring reports;
  - .9 accountability; and
  - .10 monitoring plan.
- b) Subdivision should be planned, designed and implemented to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Habitats that provide for at-risk species, at-risk ecological communities and keystone species should be given priority for protection.
- c) Development should be planned away from native trees and trees containing active nest sites or cavities. If removal of native trees cannot be avoided, mitigation should include restoration and replanting with equivalent native trees.
- d) Habitat connectivity and the retention of connectivity corridors between sensitive ecosystems should be preserved. Wildlife crossings should be designed to protect continuity of wildlife corridors where these are interrupted by roadways.
- e) Monitoring reports may be required to be submitted to the Regional District following the completion of a development in

order to confirm the conditions of a development permit have been met.

- f) The Regional District may incorporate any areas or measures identified in an EA to protect sensitive ecosystems from the effect of development as terms and conditions of the development permit.
- .7 If an area of land is subject to additional Development Permit Area designations under Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act*, the Regional District requires that a single development permit application that combines the requirements of each Development Permit Area be submitted. The application will be assessed in accordance with the individual development permit guidelines for each applicable Development Permit Area under this bylaw and, if approved, issued under a combined development permit.

#### **.7 Exemptions**

A development permit is not required for development within land in the ESDP area for:

- .1 subdivisions that propose to:
  - a) consolidate existing parcels, including the consolidation of parts of a closed road to an existing parcel; or
  - b) alter parcel lines between two or more parcels where no additional parcels are created upon completion of the alteration.

#### Electoral Area “I”

8. The “Electoral Area “I” Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2683, 2016” is amended by:

- i) replacing sub-section 17.1.2.3 (Policies – General) under Section 17.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
  - .3 Requires that, where a proposed subdivision affects land subject to an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area, an Environmental Assessment (EA) be prepared by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) in accordance with the policies outlined at Section 23.2 as well as relevant federal and provincial best management guidelines.
- ii) replacing sub-section 17.3.2.2 (Policies) under Section 17.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:

- .2 Requires that land designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area shall be retained in a natural state and not subdivided prior to the issuance of an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) in accordance with the guidelines outlined at Section 23.2 of this Plan unless an exemption applies.
- iii) replacing sub-section 17.3.2.6 (Policies) under Section 17.0 (Natural Environment and Conservation) in its entirety with the following:
  - .6 Encourages development that avoids impacting important native species, habitats, ecosystems or sensitive areas and to retain important ecosystem features and functions. Responsiveness to this policy will be a very important consideration in the approval of an amendment bylaw application.
- iv) replacing a new sub-section 24.2 (Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area) under Section 24.0 (Development Permit Areas) in its entirety with the following:

**24.2 Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area**

**.1 Category**

The Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit (ESDP) Area is designated pursuant to Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act* for the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.

**.2 Area**

The lands shown as Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area on Schedule 'I' are designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Area.

**.3 Justification**

To regulate development activities within environmentally sensitive areas in order to protect important sensitive ecosystems and biological diversity including valuable habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat.

**.4 Background**

The natural environment provides essential habitat and corridors for plants, fish, birds and other organisms. It also acts as a natural water storage, drainage and purifying system, which can help to protect private property from flooding or land loss due to watercourse erosion. Furthermore, as concerns over climate change grow, it should be recognized that functioning ecosystems are more efficient at consuming

carbon dioxide as well as carbon storage. Vegetation adjacent to watercourses needs to remain in a largely undisturbed state in order to maintain a healthy environment and clean water.

The south Okanagan-Similkameen area is considered one of the most ecologically diverse in British Columbia and Canada, and includes sensitive ecosystems which support a number of provincially Red and Blue-listed species (extirpated, endangered, threatened, and vulnerable) and federally listed Species at Risk. The ESDP Area is intended to protect habitat for endangered species of native, rare vegetation or wildlife, and provide wildlife corridors and secondary habitat within the Plan Area.

The ESDP Area is comprised of important habitat areas for wildlife and plant communities. Sensitive ecosystems in the area include grasslands, riparian areas, old forest, shrub-steppe, broadleaf woodland, coniferous woodland, wetlands, shallow soiled rock outcrops and ridges. It is the close proximity of these diverse habitats that contribute to a wide variety of species, both common and rare, that are found in this Electoral Area.

**.5 Development requiring a permit**

- .1 A development permit is required, except where exempt under Section 24.2.7 (Exemptions), for development on lands within the ESDP area. Where not exempted, development requiring a development permit includes:
- a) subdivision.

**.6 Guidelines**

- .1 A Development Permit is required for development within an ESDP Area, and shall be in accordance with the following guidelines:
- a) An Environmental Assessment (EA) Report, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Regional District's Development Procedures Bylaw, must be submitted to the Regional District in respect of the proposed development by a qualified environmental professional (QEP) that is a Registered Professional Biologist in British Columbia (RPBio) or team that shall include a RPBio under contract to the development applicant, and shall include:
    - i) An Ecological Assessment Phase including:
      - .1 background information;
      - .2 an ecological assessment;
      - .3 listing of rare and endangered species; and



- .4 stratification and rating of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs).
- ii) An Impact Assessment and Mitigation Phase including:
  - .1 description of proposed development;
  - .2 assessment of potential impacts;
  - .3 short and long term impacts;
  - .4 cumulative and residual impacts;
  - .5 avoidance of ESAs;
  - .6 mitigation and compensation;
  - .7 security requirements;
  - .8 monitoring reports;
  - .9 accountability; and
  - .10 monitoring plan.
- b) Subdivision should be planned, designed and implemented to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Habitats that provide for at-risk species, at-risk ecological communities and keystone species should be given priority for protection.
- c) Development should be planned away from native trees and trees containing active nest sites or cavities. If removal of native trees cannot be avoided, mitigation should include restoration and replanting with equivalent native trees.
- d) Habitat connectivity and the retention of connectivity corridors between sensitive ecosystems should be preserved. Wildlife crossings should be designed to protect continuity of wildlife corridors where these are interrupted by roadways.
- e) Monitoring reports may be required to be submitted to the Regional District following the completion of a development in order to confirm the conditions of a development permit have been met.
- f) The Regional District may incorporate any areas or measures identified in an EA to protect sensitive ecosystems from the effect of development as terms and conditions of the development permit.
- .2 If an area of land is subject to additional Development Permit Area designations under Section 488(1)(a) of the *Local Government Act*, the Regional District requires that a single development permit application that combines the requirements of each Development Permit Area be

submitted. The application will be assessed in accordance with the individual development permit guidelines for each applicable Development Permit Area under this bylaw and, if approved, issued under a combined development permit.

**.7 Exemptions**

A development permit is not required for development within land in the ESDP area for:

- .1 subdivisions that propose to:
  - a) consolidate existing parcels, including the consolidation of parts of a closed road to an existing parcel; or
  - b) alter parcel lines between two or more parcels where no additional parcels are created upon completion of the alteration.

READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME this 7<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2023.

PUBLIC HEARING held on this 21<sup>st</sup> day of December, 2023.

READ A THIRD TIME this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Corporate Officer