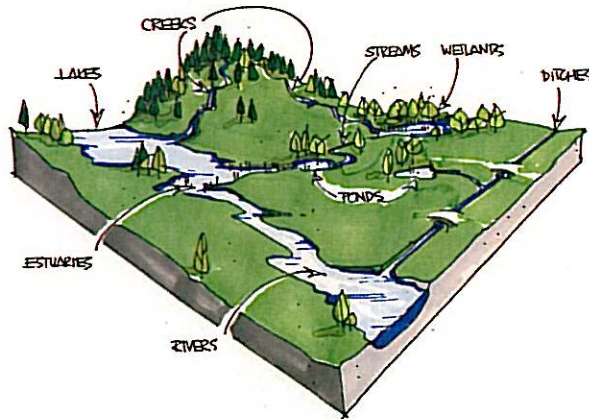




## What is a Riparian Area?

Riparian areas are located along the margins of streams, lakes and wetlands, the floodplains of these areas, and wet gullies. They are unique and diverse ecosystems that link water to land and they play a key role in creating fish habitat. Riparian ecosystems can range in width from a few metres, such as those next to small streams with steep banks, to more than 100 metres along large rivers.

### Riparian Areas are:



The moist soils of these areas support plant communities that are very different from those in drier, upland areas. Due to seasonal changes in water levels, riparian ecosystems are highly dynamic. Natural disturbances such as a periodic or seasonal flooding, blow-down of shallow-rooted trees, and shifts in the stream channels combine to create a variety of habitat types that support high levels of biodiversity. In mature riparian ecosystems, tree growth is rapid and the forest understorey is lush and diverse.

## Why are they Important?

Riparian ecosystems support an exceptionally high number of plants, amphibians, small animals, and insects for the area that they occupy because they contain the three critical habitat components for wildlife: water, shelter and food.

A healthy riparian ecosystem is vital for fish habitat by providing nutrients and insects for food, regulating stream temperature by shading, and protecting water quality by filtering surface runoff and ground water. Vegetation in riparian areas also helps stabilize banks thereby reducing bank erosion and sedimentation of water.

On North Pender Island, healthy riparian ecosystems around Buck and Magic Lakes also help to protect the drinking water source for many island residents.

## What is the Riparian Areas Regulation?

The Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) is a Provincial regulation enacted under the Fish Protection Act that requires local governments to protect riparian areas. The regulations prohibits a local government from approving or allowing a development to proceed in a riparian area unless it is in accordance with an assessment report by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP).

The Riparian Areas Regulation is applicable to the area within 30 metres of a stream, which is known as the "Riparian Assessment Area" (RAA). The RAA is an area within which development can only proceed following a professional assessment, it is not a setback.

A "stream" is defined to include a watercourse, whether it usually contains water year round or not, that provide fish habitat. Watercourses include ponds, lakes, rivers, creeks and brooks, as well as some ditches, springs, and wetlands if they are tributaries of a stream.



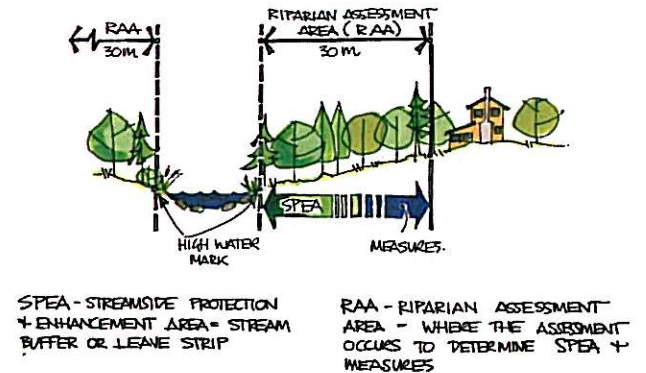
Islands Trust



# What is the Riparian and Aquatic Development Permit Area?

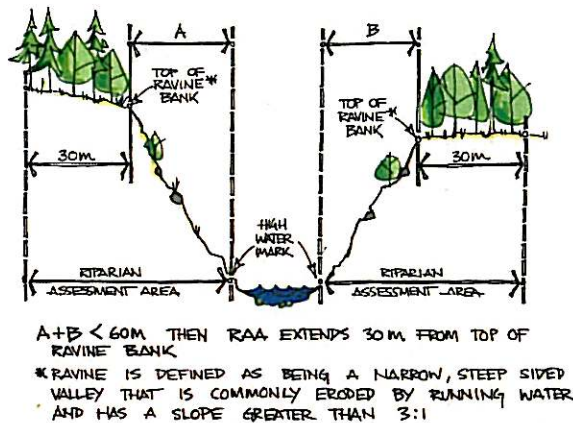
On North Pender Island an assessment was done to identify which watercourses have the natural features, functions and conditions that support fish life processes and are therefore, subject to the RAR. Several streams, plus Buck Lake, Magic Lake and Gardom pond were identified as subject to RAR and the Local Trust Committee subsequently adopted the Riparian and Aquatic Development Permit Area, extending 30 metres from the high water mark, to implement the requirements of the RAR.

## RAA Interpreted in a Stream

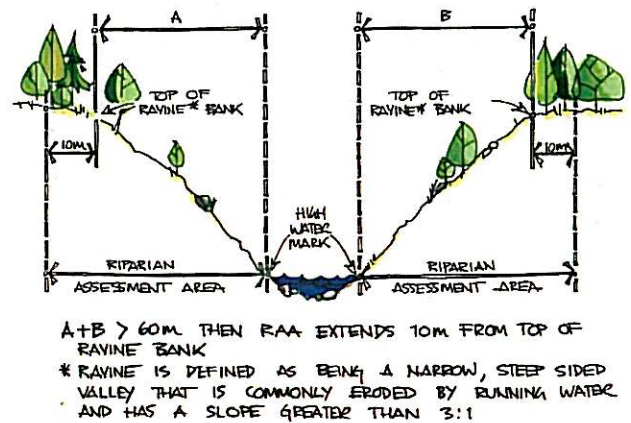


Property owners with proposed development within the Riparian and Aquatic Development Permit Area (DPA) will require an assessment report from a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) and issuance of a Development Permit from the Local Trust Committee before proceeding with new development. The QEP report will identify, on a site specific basis, which areas within the DPA can be developed and may provide recommendations for mitigation, enhancement or monitoring of the site specific to the proposal. The QEP will also identify areas that may not be developed as a Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA). Conditions of the Development Permit will primarily be based on the QEP report.

## RAA Interpreted in a: Narrow Ravine



## Wide Ravine



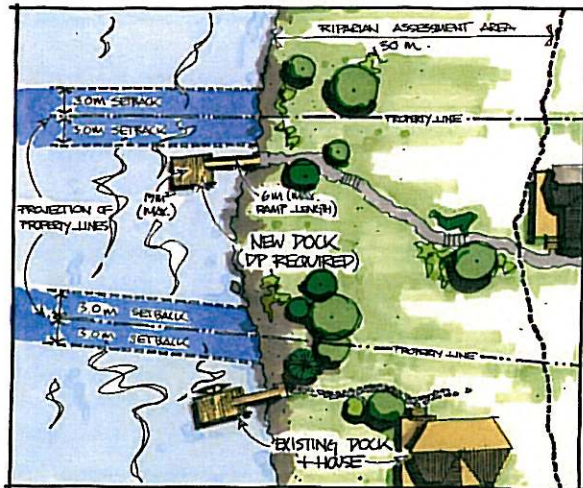
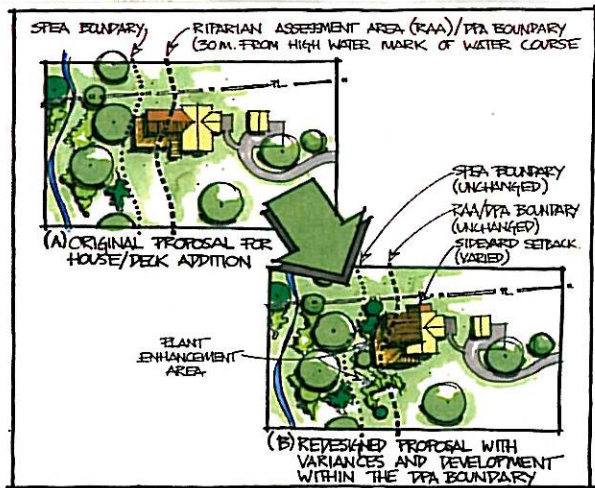
## Some Keys Facts:

- The RAR is a provincial regulation that must be implemented by local governments.
- The Riparian and Aquatic Development Permit Area (DPA) applies to the water bodies and lands within 30 metres of a watercourse, consistent with the requirements of RAR.
- Development permit areas do not change the permitted uses or density of a property, but provide guidelines and conditions on how development may proceed.
- The DP and RAR both apply to residential, commercial or industrial activities.

## The Riparian and Aquatic Development Permit applies to the following activities:

- Construction of buildings and structures, including docks.
- Creation of non-structural impervious or semi-impervious surfaces (e.g. parking lots, patios).
- Removal, alteration, disruption or destruction of vegetation.
- Disturbance of soils.
- Development of road, bridges, trails, docks, floats and ramps.
- Development of new services (e.g. water, sewer, drainage and utility corridors).

### Development Permit and QEP Report is Required:



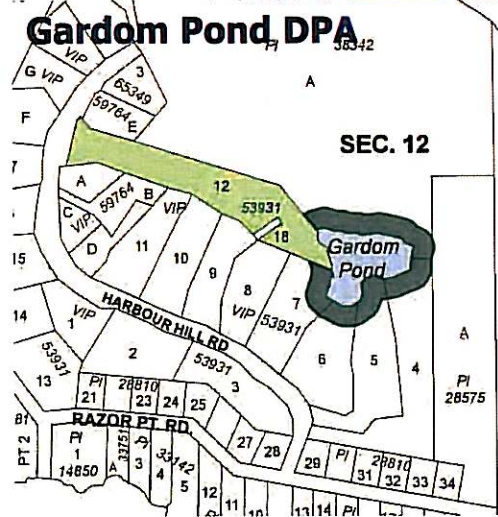
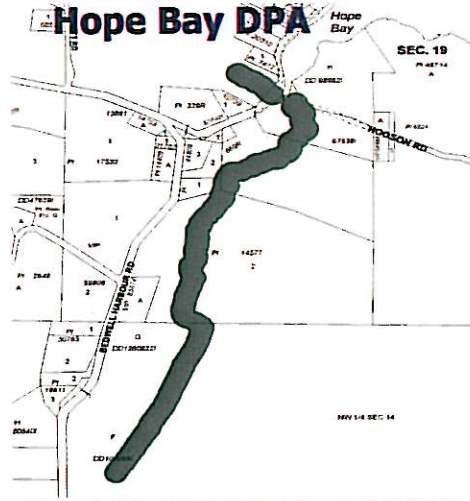
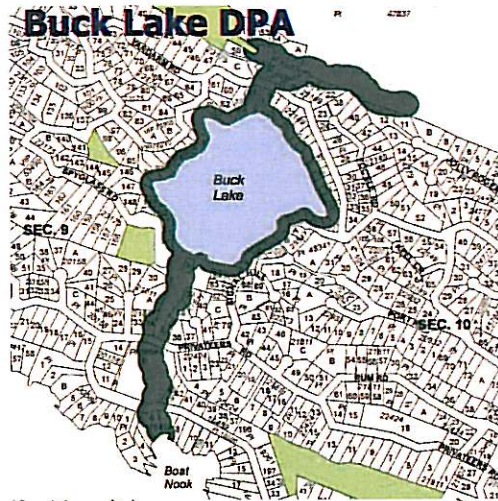
## The Riparian and Aquatic Development Permit exempts the following activities:

- Reconstruction or repair of permanent structure if the structure remains on its existing foundation.
- Farming activities (ALR or zoned) or institutional development.
- Developments that have been approved but not yet built.
- Gardening and yard maintenance within an existing landscape area that does not involve the application of pesticides.
- Removal of trees certified by an arborist to pose a threat to life or property.
- Construction of a fence if no native trees are removed and disturbance of vegetation is restricted to 0.5 metres on either side of the fence (1.5 metres in agricultural areas).

### Development Permit and QEP Report is Not Required:



# Development Permit Area Designations on North Pender Island:



## How to proceed with your development proposal?

If your property is within the Riparian and Aquatic Development Permit Area:

1. Contact Islands Trust staff to confirm if a permit is required.
2. If a permit is required you will need to hire a QEP to prepare an assessment report.
3. Once the QEP report is prepared, submit a Development Permit application to the Islands Trust.

## For more information contact:

Islands Trust - Victoria Office 250-405-5151

Ministry of Environment:

[http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/habitat/fish protection act/riparian/riparian areas.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/habitat/fish%20protection%20act/riparian/riparian%20areas.html)

[www.livingbywater.ca](http://www.livingbywater.ca)

[www.stewardshipcentre.bc.ca](http://www.stewardshipcentre.bc.ca)

For a list of QEPs view the Vancouver Island University course participant list at:

<http://www.viu.ca/nrep/environmental/rar.asp>

Capital Regional District - Pender Island Office 250-629-3424

Guide to Development Permits:

<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/lup/pdf/dpapplicationguide.pdf>



Islands Trust

Graphics and Layout: Phil Testemale - [www.testemale.com](http://www.testemale.com)

North Pender Island  
RIPARIAN & AQUATIC DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA