



Islands Trust

FACT SHEET

STEEP SLOPE HAZARD DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA 7

What is the Steep Slope Hazard Development Permit Area (DPA 7)?

British Columbia's *Local Government Act* enables communities to designate parts of their planning area as Development Permit Areas (DPAs) so they can set objectives and guidelines for development within those areas. The [Galiano Island Official Community Plan](#) (OCP) designates seven DPAs generally designed to protect sensitive ecosystems or to guide development in areas with special circumstances. Depending on the particular Development Permit Area and its exemptions, the requirement to obtain a Development Permit may be triggered by any building construction, demolition, land alteration, or subdivision of land that occurs in the DPA.

The Steep Slope Hazard DPA was adopted by the Galiano Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) in order to prevent development from being impacted in areas that are potentially hazardous due to a combination of steep slope and geological conditions. The general intent of the DPA is to ensure that land alteration activities (including tree removal) do not expose persons or property to an unacceptable probability of slope instability or other geological failure, where "unacceptable" is defined as a probability in excess of 10% in 50 years.

How do I know whether my land is affected by the DPA?

The Steep Slope Hazard Development Permit Area includes lands of Moderate Hazard Slope (22.5 - 45 degrees) and High Hazard Slope (>45 degrees), as represented in Schedule I of the [Official Community Plan](#). Approximately 785 hectares of land on Galiano Island are designated within the Steep Slope Hazard DPA, accounting for about 13.1% of the total land area.

Together with the recommendations of a geotechnical consulting firm, the DPA boundaries are based on a digital elevation model which is stored and maintained in a geographic information system at the offices of the Islands Trust.



When do I need a development permit?



Any landowner who has property that is located within the DPA may be required to obtain a development permit from the Local Trust Committee before undertaking any land alteration activities, including tree cutting or removal, filling or excavation, and constructing services or infrastructure.

Where a building permit has been issued, the construction or alteration of structures within the DPA does not require a development permit, and neither does subdivision that does not require land alteration. Many activities within the Moderate Hazard Slope classification are exempt; others are listed in the OCP. A development permit is not required for development outside the boundaries of a DPA.

How do I obtain a development permit?

Islands Trust planning staff can give you advice on the application process and options for developing your property. If you do need to apply for a permit, you will be required to complete an [application](#) and submit the application fee. Additionally, you may be required to hire a qualified professional (e.g. registered engineer or geoscientist) to produce a geological hazard assessment report. In the report, the professional provides their opinion about the likelihood and probability of a geological failure occurring, and may recommend mitigation or monitoring measures.

Once a complete application is submitted, it typically takes 4 to 8 weeks to process an application. Staff will review your application, plans and any professional reports in relation to the DPA guidelines in the OCP, and make a recommendation to the LTC. The LTC will then consider issuance of the permit at a regular meeting. There is no public hearing or notification for a development permit application.

While a Development Permit cannot preclude permitted development, it can include conditions consistent with the DPA guidelines, such as attaching specific plans or requiring mitigation measures. Depending on the development, additional permits or approvals may be required as well.

General information about the development permit application process can be found on the [Islands Trust website](#).

How do I get more information?

To determine whether your land is subject to the Steep Slope Hazard DPA, consult the Galiano Island Official Community Plan. Copies of the OCP are available from Islands Trust offices in Victoria, and online at www.islandstrust.bc.ca/islands/local-trust-areas/galiano. You can also contact planning staff directly at 250-405-5151 or toll-free through Enquiry BC at 1-800-663-7867.