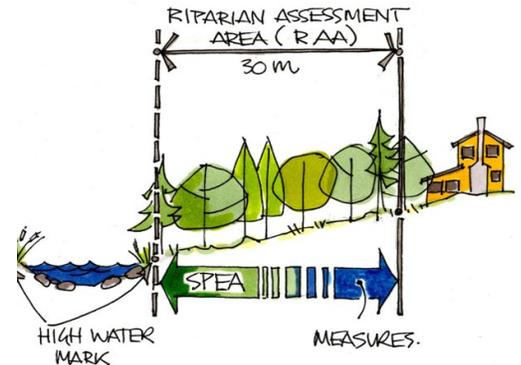


Riparian Areas Protection Regulations on Gambier Island

In 2019 the Gambier Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) adopted bylaws to provide additional safeguards for riparian areas on Gambier Island for the protection of biodiversity and freshwater.

Bylaw 148 amended the Gambier Island Official Community Plan (OCP) to provide a context and rationale for protection. See [Section 12.3](#) of the OCP.

Bylaw 149 updated the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) by defining the operational framework of Development Permit Area 3. See [Section 9.3](#) of the LUB.



The Importance of Riparian Areas

Riparian areas are the border regions adjacent to a stream, lake, wetland or other watercourse including ditches and dug ponds. Ephemeral or seasonal water courses are also part of these valuable ecosystems. These areas support many plants and animals, provide important refuge and migration routes for birds and wildlife, and, most critically, provide fish habitat. These ecosystems are extremely sensitive to disturbances and development.

Riparian areas play a key role in maintaining the natural hydrologic cycle of a watershed by stabilizing stream channels, reducing erosion, filtering sediment, capturing runoff and precipitation, and recharging aquifers that store groundwater.

Residential, commercial or industrial development activities within a riparian assessment area that provides fish habitat, or directly influences fish habitat, is protected under the provincial *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation* (formerly RAR) and is also covered within these new bylaws.

The Development Permit Application Process

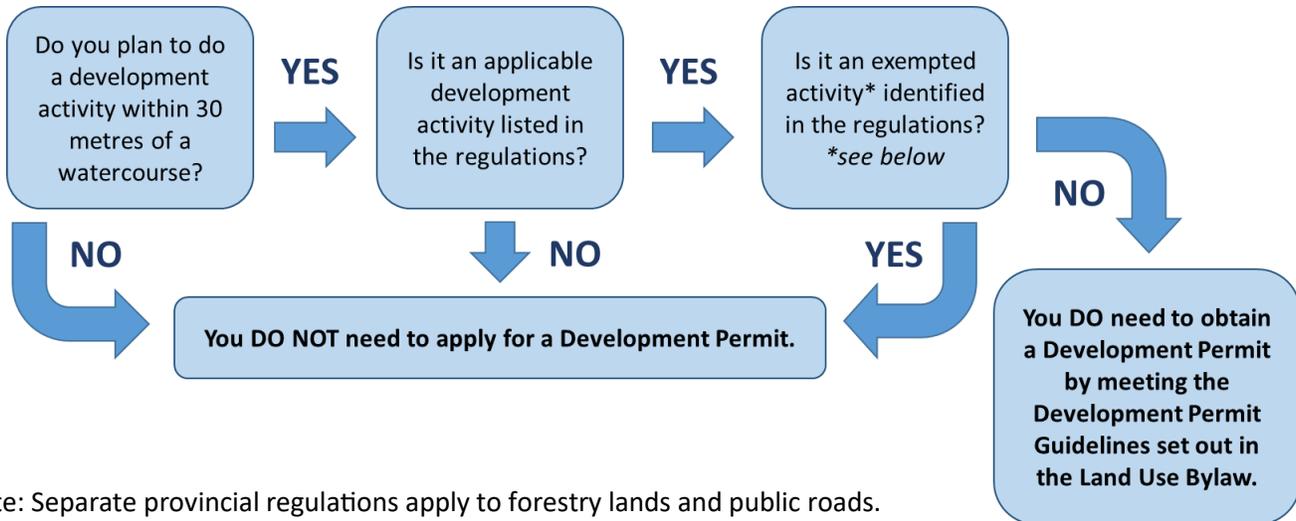
If you are undertaking a development activity within 30 metres of a watercourse, wetland, ditch connected to a stream or dug pond, you will be required to submit a development permit application. This will require that you hire a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) who will determine whether the watercourse, wetland, ditch connected to a stream or dug pond is RAR or non-RAR– applicable.

If it is determined that RAR applies to the watercourse, the QEP will assess the potential impact of your proposed activity on the riparian area in accordance with the provincial regulation.

If it is determined that RAR does not apply, the QEP will assess the proposed activity and provide recommendations for reducing impacts and protecting the riparian area.

Your application will then be assessed against the Development Permit Area guidelines found in the LUB. The permit will be issued if it meets the development permit guidelines.

Do I need to apply for a Development Permit?



Note: Separate provincial regulations apply to forestry lands and public roads.

When a Development Permit application IS required within 30 metres of a watercourse:

- Removal, alteration or destruction of vegetation.
- Disturbance of soils.
- Construction of, addition to, or alteration of a building or other structure.
- Creation of non-structural, impervious or semi-impervious surfaces.
- Subdivision of land.

When a Development Permit application IS NOT required (exempted activities):

- Development outside of the following areas:
 - A watercourse *not* in a ravine, 30 m from the high water mark;
 - A watercourse in a ravine less than 60 m wide, 30 m from the high water mark beyond the top of the ravine;
 - A watercourse in a ravine more than 60 m wide, 10 m from the high water mark beyond the top of the ravine bank;
 - A wetland, 30 m from the high water mark.
- Renovations that do not change the footprint of a building.
- Removal or replacement of a septic field in the existing footprint.
- Removal of trees that pose a threat to life or property.
- Cutting of trees and vegetation more than 20 m from a high water mark, provided roots and stumps are retained.
- Gardening and landscaping in a pre-existing landscaped area.
- Removal of invasive species and planting of native species.
- Pruning of not more than 2 trees per growing season.
- Work authorized by Fisheries and Oceans Canada.
- Emergency procedures to prevent immediate threats to life and property (flood and fire protection).
- Construction of a fence where no trees are removed.
- Construction of a 1 m wide or less trail.
- More than 20 m from the high water mark or top of raving:
 - Soil disturbance less than 5 m² in area,
 - Construction of an accessory building less than 10 m² in floor area, within an existing landscaped area.