



Guidelines Outline Practice Standards for Riparian Area Assessments

The College of Applied Biology (CAB) has partnered with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC (APEGBC) and the Association of BC Forest Professionals (ABCFP) to produce the *Professional Practice Guidelines - Legislated Riparian Area Assessments in British Columbia*. This document provides guidance and establishes the standard of practice when carrying out riparian assessments that are consistent with BC's Riparian Areas Regulation.

The guidelines were developed in response to issues around the carrying out of riparian assessments, including matters related to the respective roles and responsibilities of various registered professionals involved in a riparian assessment. Until now, while assessment methods have been appended to the Riparian Areas Regulation, professional practice guidelines for riparian assessments had not been available.

Human development activities (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial) can have a direct impact on nearby aquatic habitats, and in 2001, the Streamside Protection Regulation (BC Reg 10/2001) was enacted to protect these riparian areas. In 2004, this was subsequently repealed and replaced by the Riparian Areas Regulation. The regulation requires that a riparian assessment be completed by a Qualified Environmental Professional before a development permit can be issued for work in that area.

The need for professional guidelines for Legislated Riparian Area Assessments was initially identified by the BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and a number of practitioners soon after the enactment of the Riparian Areas Regulation, when riparian assessments became a requirement in communities that had adopted riparian protection bylaws. In 2014, the Province's Office of the Ombudsperson recommended the drafting of professional guidelines for use in conducting assessments under the Riparian Areas Regulation. This recommendation was accepted by the Ministry and, as a result, the *Professional Practice Guidelines – Legislated Riparian Area Assessments in British Columbia* were prepared by a team comprising members of the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC and the College of Applied Biology, with input from the Association of BC Forest Professionals, the BC Institute of Agrologists, and the Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC (ASTTBC).

Professionals carrying out riparian area assessments in accordance with the Riparian Areas Regulation need to be aware of their obligations regarding the appropriate standard of care for this work, and are urged to familiarize themselves with the *Professional Practice Guidelines – Legislated Riparian Area Assessments in British Columbia*. APEGBC, CAB and ABCFP are working to make training on the guidelines available in the fall.

The guideline document is now available on the College of Applied Biology website at: [CAB-APEGBC-ABCFP Guidelines Riparian Assessments BC](#). For more information or questions, please contact the College at 250-383-3306.