

What is a riparian area?

A riparian area includes the land and vegetation that is adjacent to a watercourse. These areas provide fish and wildlife habitat, erosion and sediment control, flood protection and bank stability. Riparian areas need to remain undisturbed from development in order to provide these vital functions.

What is a Riparian Protection Development Permit (DP)?

A Riparian Protection Development Permit (DP) is required for certain activities or developments that are located within a riparian area of a fish-bearing watercourse or wetland. A Riparian Protection DP includes guidelines and conditions that may require the retention or replanting of native vegetation, installation of fencing, drainage control, protection of banks and other requirements. Where a Riparian Protection DP is required, the project must meet the DP guidelines and conditions.

When is a Riparian Protection DP required?

Designated Riparian Protection Areas are mapped in Schedule D-2 of the City of Prince George Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 8383. A Riparian Protection DP is required within these areas prior to the subdivision of land, alteration of land, new construction, building additions and tree cutting.

When is a Riparian Protection DP not required?

A Riparian Protection DP may not be required for certain activities or developments. Please contact the Planning and Development Department to confirm if your activity or development qualifies for an exemption.

How long does it take to obtain a Riparian Protection DP and how much does it cost?

The average processing time for a Riparian DP application is 4 to 6 weeks. Additional time may be required for more complex projects or incomplete applications. The Riparian Protection DP application fee is \$1,200 for sites less than 1 hectare and \$1,800 for sites greater than 1 hectare (1 hectare = 2.5 acres).



McMillan Creek Fishing Park,
June 2009



Nechako River near North Nechako Road
April 2011

What do the Riparian Protection DP guidelines require?

The Riparian Protection guidelines are outlined in Section 8.9 of the Zoning Bylaw and include a number of considerations:

Development-Free Setbacks (i.e. leave strips):

The following setbacks (leave strip area) from the top of the watercourse bank must remain free of development in order to preserve the riparian habitat quality:

- 15m for agricultural, outdoor recreation and low density residential development;
- 30m for commercial, industrial and institutional development;
- 30m from the Fraser River and Nechako River, except 50m where there is active erosion or limited trees.

A reduced leave strip setback may be considered if the size is determined through a Riparian Area Assessment prepared by a qualified professional in respect of the development proposal.

Development Permit Conditions:

The guidelines specify possible conditions to protect or enhance the function of riparian areas, including fish processes, erosion control, drainage control, and flood protection. A Riparian Protection DP may require certain conditions for issuance such as:

- Training works that include ongoing maintenance or repair;
- Protection measures such as fence installations, planting and retention of vegetation and trees; and
- Restrictions on the sequence and timing of development.

What are the requirements for a complete Riparian Protection DP application?

The *Development Permit Application Checklist* is available at www.princegeorge.ca and provides a description of the following DP application requirements:

- Application Fee(s)
- Title Search and copy of all charges on Title
- Site Profile Form
- Development Permit Application Checklist
- Development Permit Application Form
- Development Plans (1 full size 24" x 36" copy; 1 reduced 11" x 17" digital copy)
- Survey Plan with measurements from the top of bank and watercourse natural boundary, to the proposed development or activity area

Additional information may also be requested by staff such as a Riparian Area Assessment, slope analysis, storm water management plan or a tree management plan amongst other requirements. For further information, please refer to the *Guide to the Development Permit Process* available at www.princegeorge.ca or contact a Planner at 250.561.7611.

This guide has been prepared to provide information only. It is neither a bylaw nor a legal document. If any contradiction between this guide and the relevant Municipal Bylaws or applicable codes is found, such bylaws or codes shall be the legal authority.

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