



Professional Practice Notice

Professional Practice Guidelines Related to Riparian Area Assessments

Version 1.0, Published July 16, 2025

Legislative Context:

The BC *Riparian Areas Regulation* was enacted under Section 12 of the *Fish Protection Act* in July 2004. The *Fish Protection Act* was then re-titled the *Riparian Areas Protection Act* in February 2016. In November 2019, the *Riparian Areas Regulation* was repealed and replaced by the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation*.

The *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation* is intended to provide improved provincial oversight and additional detail in the application of regulatory standards, and integrate mandatory approved training for professionals. The *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation* remains the current governing regulation which calls on applicable local governments to include riparian protection provisions in their zoning and land use bylaws.

Professional Regulator Involvement:

In 2016, Professional Practice Guidelines titled *Legislated Riparian Assessments in BC* were jointly developed and published by three regulatory bodies: the College of Applied Biologists, formerly the College of Applied Biology; Engineers and Geoscientists BC, formerly the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC; and Forest Professionals BC, formerly the Association of BC Forest Professionals. These Professional Practice Guidelines were intended to support professionals carrying out riparian assessments under the now repealed and replaced *Riparian Areas Regulation*.

These Professional Practice Guidelines were not updated when the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation* came into force in November 2019, nor when the *Professional Governance Act* took effect in February of 2021.

The College of Applied Biologists, alongside Engineers and Geoscientists BC, and Forest Professionals BC, have collectively removed these jointly prepared Professional Practice Guidelines from their respective resource libraries for the following key reasons:

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- The document was developed under the former *Riparian Areas Regulation* and was found to be out of date with the current *Riparian Area Protection Regulation* and industry practice, generally.
- There were inconsistencies between the document and the requirements under the *Riparian Area Protection Regulation* which generated a concern that these inconsistencies would have negative impacts on professional practice, the public interest, and the environment.

It was therefore determined that removal of the document was the best course of action until a decision is made to produce new Professional Practice Guidelines in relation to the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation*.

Advice to Registrants:

All versions (i.e., V1.0, V.1.1) of the *Legislated Riparian Assessments in BC* have been rescinded and are no longer supported by the College of Applied Biologists, Engineers and Geoscientists BC, and Forest Professionals BC for use as Professional Practice Guidelines. The document should no longer be referred to when conducting riparian area assessments pursuant to the *Riparian Area Protection Regulation* and/or associated enacted municipal zoning and land use bylaws.

Registrants are instructed to please contact their respective professional regulatory body for inquiries and additional information.

Relevant Materials & Resources:

The Provincial Ministry responsible for the *Riparian Areas Protection Regulation* has published extensive assessment manuals and is involved in the mandatory training course which provides a detailed overview of the regulation and the assessment methodology.

All guidance related to the assessment of riparian areas in BC pursuant to the *Riparian Area Protection Regulation* and/or associated enacted municipal zoning and land use bylaws can be found on the Provincial Ministry website. Table 1.0 contains both general and technical guidance and resources, current at the time of publication.

Table 1.0: Guidance Related to Riparian Area Assessments in BC	
General	Technical
1. Riparian Areas Protection Act	1. Preparing an Assessment Report
2. Riparian Areas Protection Regulation	2. Riparian Areas Assessment Methods Manual
3. Riparian Areas Regulation Brochure	3. Revegetation Guidelines
4. Webinar Slides - QEP Presentation	4. Permanent Structures and the Simple Assessment
5. Webinar Slides - Local Government Presentation	

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