**2014 Metadata:**

**Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory for Metro Vancouver (2014)**

**Summary**

Provides the location and attributes for sensitive and important modified ecosystems throughout Metro Vancouver.

**Description**

A Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) was conducted for the Metro Vancouver region and Abbotsford from 2010-2012, using 2009 imagery. An update to that inventory was conducted for the Metro Vancouver region only from 2015-2018, using 2014 imagery. Provincial SEI standards were followed to identify and map ecologically significant and relatively unmodified 'Sensitive Ecosystems', including wetlands, older forests and woodlands. In addition, 'Modified Ecosystems' such as old fields and young forests, which are human modified but still have ecological value and importance to biodiversity were included in the mapping process. The project area totaled 330,600 ha, consisting of terrestrial lands plus rivers, freshwater bodies, intertidal and estuarine zones.

Two main approaches were used to build the inventory of polygons based on the availability of Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping (TEM) products. TEM was used to generate SEI values in the Coquitlam, Capilano, and Seymour watersheds; the Regional Parks network; and Mount Seymour and Indian Arm Provincial Parks. Riparian fringe and gully SEI classes could often not be directly translated from TEM so had to be newly generated. For remaining areas with no existing TEM, SEI mapping was developed through image interpretation followed by selective field checks to confirm and inform mapping decisions. For new mapping, 20% of polygons were checked in the field.

Polygons were delineated at 1:5,000 (new mapping) to 1: 10,000 - 1: 20,000 (originating from TEM). Sites as small as 0.5 ha were mapped, with the exception of some “Modified Ecosystems”, where only larger instances were mapped, e.g., greater than 2.5 ha for old fields, and greater than 5ha for young forest. Some sites originating from TEM were smaller than 0.5 ha and these were also included in the inventory. Key attributes of class and subclass, structural stage, stand composition, condition and size were recorded for each component within a polygon. Although a polygon can have up to three ecosystem components, attempts were made to map as many pure sites as possible (i.e. one component). Other attributes of biogeoclimatic unit, landscape context, disturbance factors and ecosystem 'quality' were recorded for the polygon as a whole.

In the 2014 update, inventory polygons were assessed with the primary purpose of detecting removals or disturbances during the previous 5 years. Corrections were also made where needed.

Users of the SEI must take into account certain limitations inherent with this type of dataset and consider how those limitations may impact the intended use of the information. This includes differences between the dataset and actual site conditions that could be due to human error, classification difficulties, and changes to the site occurring after the date of the imagery or field work. The dataset is considered accurate at the scale it was delineated at and should not be enlarged beyond this. The SEI does not replace the need for on-site assessments to support any decisions made for a particular area.

Visit [www.metrovancouver.org](http://www.metrovancouver.org) and search ‘SEI’ to access the SEI Technical Report.

**2009 Metadata:**

**Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory for Metro Vancouver and Abbotsford (2010-2012)**

**SDE Feature Class**



**Tags**  
SEI;Ecosystems

**Summary**

Provides the location and attributes for sensitive and important ecosystems throughout Metro Vancouver and Abbotsford.

**Description**

A Sensitive Ecosystem Inventory (SEI) was conducted over the Greater Vancouver Regional District (Metro Vancouver) and Abbotsford region from January 2010 – May 2012. Provincial SEI standards were followed to identify and map ecologically significant and relatively unmodified 'Sensitive Ecosystems', including wetlands, older forests and woodlands.In addition 'Other Important Ecosystems' such as seasonally flooded agricultural fields and young forests, which are human modified but still have ecological value and importance to biodiversity were included in the mapping process. The project area totaled 363,000 ha, consisting of 320,000 ha of terrestrial lands plus several thousand hectares of rivers, freshwater bodies, intertidal and estuarine zones.Two main approaches were used to build the inventory of polygons based on the availability of Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping (TEM) products. TEM was used to generate SEI values in the Coquitlam, Capilano and Seymour watersheds; the Regional Parks network; and Mount Seymour and Indian Arm Provincial Parks.Riparian fringe and gully SEI classes could often not be directly translated from TEM so had to be newly generated. For remaining areas with no existing TEM, SEI mapping was developed through image interpretation followed by selective field checks to confirm and inform mapping decisions. For new mapping, 20% of polygons were checked in the field.Two sets of digital format aerial imagery (orthophotography) from 2007 and 2009 were the primary image sources used and together provided complete coverage of the project area. Polygons were delineated at 1:5,000 (new mapping) to 1:10,000 - 1:20,000 (originating from TEM). Sites as small as 0.5 ha were mapped, with the exception of some “Other Important Ecosystems”, where only larger instances were mapped, e.g., greater than 2.5 ha for old fields and seasonally flooded agricultural fields. Some sites originating from TEM were smaller than 0.5 ha and these were also included in the inventory.Key attributes of class and subclass, structural stage, stand composition, condition and size were recorded for each component within a polygon. Although a polygon can have up to three ecosystem components, attempts were made to map as many pure sites as possible (i.e. one component). Other attributes of biogeoclimatic unit, landscape context, disturbance factors and ecosystem 'quality' were recorded for the polygon as a whole. Users of the SEI must take into account certain limitations inherent with this type of dataset and consider how those limitations may impact the intended use of the information. This includes differences between the dataset and actual site conditions that could be due to human error, classification difficulties, and changes to the site occurring after the date of the imagery or field work. The dataset is considered accurate at the scale it was delineated at and should not be enlarged beyond this. The SEI does not replace the need for on-site assessments to support any decisions made for a particular area.

**Credits**

Josephine Clark

**Use limitations**

To be used only in accordance with a data sharing agreement with Metro Vancouver