

# Village of Keremeos

*A wonder to behold in the **Similkameen Valley***



*A Guide to Development  
in Sensitive Areas*



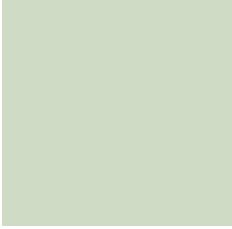


# Planning a Development in the Village of Keremeos



## Protecting our Natural Assets

The Similkameen is a unique valley located between the rugged coastal forests of the west and the colder interior. Our unique geography allows us to enjoy a pleasant climate with mild winters and hot summers. From the riparian area along the Similkameen River channel to the steep grassland slopes running through the Village, the diversity in nature that we witness in and around Keremeos is remarkable.



“A pleasant climate with mild winters and hot summers”



Our natural landscape offers beauty and many recreation opportunities, while also supporting a rich diversity of wildlife and native plants that are unique to this area. In response to the increasing threats to, and rarity of, native plants, wildlife, and ecosystems, the Village has gathered and provided information in this brochure for landowners and developers planning work within these natural areas.





## Benefits of Natural Areas



Healthy natural systems are our “green infrastructure” providing direct benefits to us, and supporting our community’s economy and well-being. The riverside plants and trees help control flooding and erosion, and wetlands filter water run-off. Healthy soils benefit our fruit and vineyard industries. Forests and grasslands absorb rain and snow and slowly release water into underground aquifers and watercourses.



Our forests release oxygen contributing to the valley’s clean air and their shade moderates hot summer temperatures. All of these natural assets are a benefit to the whole community and should be preserved as much as possible during development.

*“Protecting the environment can have lots of advantages”*



**Think About It** - *protecting the environment can have lots of advantages*



- reduced land clearing costs
- higher property values
- faster sales
- greater community support and recognition
- protection of green space and wildlife





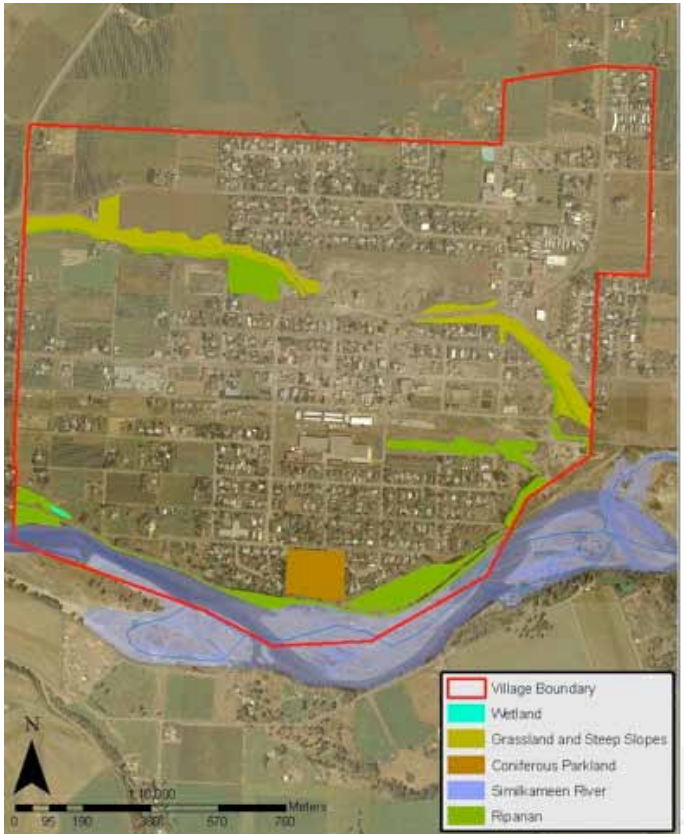
# Do you have Natural Areas on your Property?



The Village of Keremeos is working to keep the natural environment protected. They have mapped and designated natural areas so that the community is aware of natural features. Ask Village staff to provide you with a map of these natural areas in Keremeos.



“Discover  
Keremeos’  
Unique  
EcoSystems”

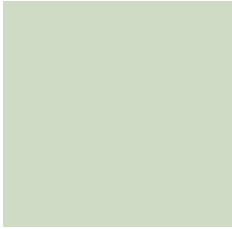


Discover Keremeos' Unique Ecosystems





The Similkameen River and its associated vegetation (riparian area) provides a vital movement corridor and habitat for fish and wildlife. Effective ways to protect the river are to control pollution, maintain the riparian area, and plan development with an appropriate setback from the river. Keremeos' **Floodplain Bylaw** is the primary regulation that protects the river and states:



“Plan development  
with an  
appropriate  
setback”



- The current minimum setback for construction of buildings and structures from a watercourse includes:
  - a) 30 meters from the natural boundary of a watercourse; or
  - b) 7.5 meters from the dike right of way.



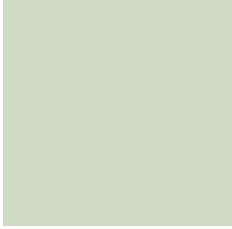
This bylaw not only reduces the risk to the public, but also achieves a level of protection for the riparian area that provides wildlife habitat and helps protect against floods.



## Conservation Options for Protection of Natural Areas



*Conservation Covenants* - May be placed on part of a property to protect the designated area from future disturbance, as a result of a rezoning, subdivision application, or voluntary action. These covenants require the owner, and all future owners, to abide by the terms of the covenants to protect native vegetation and wildlife habitat.



“Covenants to protect native vegetation and wildlife habitat”



*Tax Benefits* - Putting a covenant on a portion of a property is considered to be a disposition. If the land protection is not required by the development permit, donations of land or conservation covenants can be treated as a charitable gift that is eligible for a tax receipt. The tax receipt can be used by individuals as a non-refundable tax credit or by corporations as a tax deduction.



# If Planned Development includes Working in or Around a Natural Area



Protecting the environment is the responsibility of all levels of government- federal, provincial and municipal or regional. Find out which regulations apply to you and understand the approvals you need before you begin work.

You will likely need the assistance of a Registered Professional Biologist (RPBio) to assess the ecological components of the site and to determine if and how you can proceed with the development in an environmentally sensitive manner.

Your RPBio will likely use the sequence of mitigation options below to guide their assessment of the potential impacts that a proposed development will have.

“Find out which regulations apply to you and understand”



## Most Preferred

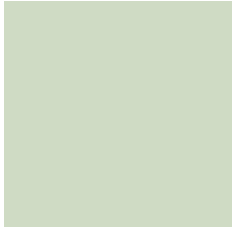


- Avoid developing in or near identified Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) or Features
- Locate proposed development to a pre-disturbed site on the property
- Design development to include Alternative Development Standards or to avoid ESAs
- Mitigate to reduce potential impacts based on recommendations from the QEP
- Compensate as a final resort to achieve a no-net-loss of environmental values onsite

## Least Preferred



# Best Practices for Developers



How well does the proposed development:

- Fit within growth areas outlined in the Official Community Plan.
- Occur close to existing infrastructure without requiring costly expansion of roads, water, power, sewer, police and fire protection.
- Fit with surrounding agricultural areas and their necessary operations.
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas including rivers, grassland slopes and riparian areas.
- Conserve wildlife movement corridors between natural areas.
- Connect to existing parks, natural open spaces and pedestrian trails for enhanced recreational opportunities.
- Add to community amenities.

*“Conserve wildlife  
movement  
corridors between  
natural areas”*

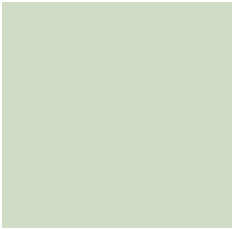




## The Water Challenge



During the summer, homeowners use more than sixty percent of domestic treated water for their lawns and gardens. With population increase and a shrinking supply of freshwater, developers will face increasing regulations and enforcement of water saving standards - especially for irrigating lawns and landscaping. Planning new home landscapes using native and drought-tolerant plants (xeriscaping) and low-water use irrigation systems is a good idea that will save money in the long-run.



*“Low-water  
use irrigation  
systems is a  
good idea”*



For advice on low-water landscaping consult:

<http://okanaganxeriscape.org>

or your local native plant nursery.



The following information and free publications will help you learn about natural habitats and development guidelines to consider before you begin a land development project.

1. **Develop with Care: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia**, published by BC Ministry of Environment.  
<http://tinyurl.com/develop-with-care>

2. **Riparian Areas Regulations:** Protecting the features, functions and conditions that are vital to maintain stream health.  
<http://tinyurl.com/riparian-areas>

“Guidelines  
to consider  
before you  
begin”



3. **Stewardship Series Guides:** For the protection of aquatic habitat.  
[http://www.stewardshipcentre.bc.ca/cdirs/st\\_series/](http://www.stewardshipcentre.bc.ca/cdirs/st_series/)

4. **Wetland Ways: Interim Guidelines for Wetland Protection and Conservation in BC**, written for people who are planning some form of activity or development near wetlands, as well as those looking for guidance on ways to best maintain the high ecological values in these areas.  
<http://tinyurl.com/wetlandways>





5. **Living By Water:** Working towards healthier human and wildlife habitat along the shorelines of Canada.

<http://livingbywater.ca/main.html>

6. **BC Ministry of Environment:** Information on habitats and wildlife. <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/list.htm>

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/okanagan/esd/atlas/index.html>

7. **Information on conservation covenants and**

**eco-gofts:** <http://www.cws-scf.ec.gc.ca/ecogifts>

<http://www.givegreencanada.ca>

<http://landtrustalliance.bc.ca/options.html>

“Working towards  
healthier human  
and wildlife  
habitat”



This brochure was developed by the South Okanagan-Similkameen Conservation Program partnership initiative supported by The Real Estate Foundation, Habitat Stewardship Canada and Village of Keremeos.



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