

### Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia



*Are you planning any development or logging on your property? If your property includes forest near streams and wetlands in the Chilliwack area it may support critical features for the Coastal Giant Salamander. This fact sheet will provide you with important information about complying with the law and protecting this species while still benefiting from the enjoyment and value of your property.*

The Coastal Giant Salamander (*Dicamptodon tenebrosus*) earns its name through its stout body, wide wedge-shaped head, and fleshy legs. Adults can reach total lengths of up to 30–35 cm! Like many other amphibians, the skin of Coastal Giant Salamanders is sensitive to pollution, ultra-violet radiation and drought. They are found mainly in the Chilliwack River valley and adjacent smaller watersheds. Their nests are water-filled chambers under rocks, logs, or other cover-objects either within the stream or along its immediate shoreline.

To survive, Coastal Giant Salamanders need moist, forested sites adjacent to streams, with lots of coarse woody debris on the forest floor. The streams may be partially underground or seasonally intermittent, with 'pocket' pools and gravel/pebble substrate.

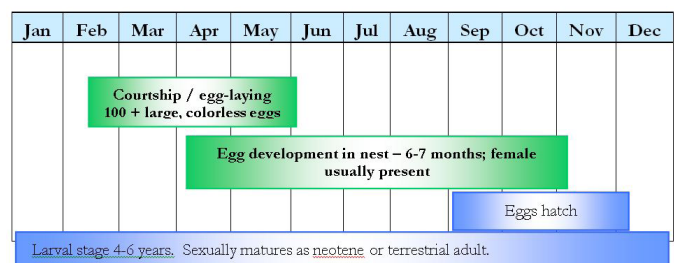
#### AT RISK

Coastal Giant Salamanders are **Red-listed** in B.C. Human activities—especially forest loss and development that removes critical habitat features or reduces water quality and flows in streams—are leading to the loss of suitable habitat for this species. Activities such as logging in riparian areas; removal of standing, dead and downed wood, removal of riparian vegetation, and encroachment of urban development, can damage or destroy nests or shelter sites. You can help these unique creatures through the careful planning of development or other disturbance activities.

#### LEGALLY PROTECTED

It is illegal to kill, harm, harass, capture, or take these species. The Coastal Giant Salamander is a **Threatened** species under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), and will likely be protected under B.C.'s *Wildlife Amendment Act*. It is also an **Identified Wildlife Species**. The federal Fisheries Act prohibits the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat; habitat which may overlap with that of the Coastal Giant Salamander.

A permit from **FrontCounter BC** is required before handling this species. Modifications to its habitat may require authorization under SARA, the federal *Fisheries Act* or B.C. *Water Act*. Activities that reduce the function of the nest would constitute damage or destruction of the residence.



## DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

More detailed guidelines for protecting amphibians and their habitat are provided in *Develop with Care 2014: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia* and *Guidelines for Amphibian and Reptile Conservation during Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia (2014)*.

- ☑ Contact the regional Species at Risk Biologist for onsite advice, or to report any sightings, specimens, or observations of activities threatening Coastal Giant Salamander habitat.
- ☑ Identify and map salamander habitats prior to any disturbance, including migration corridors if possible.
- ☑ Design and locate your development to protect nesting and shelter sites, and to avoid disturbing essential habitat features.
- ☑ Identify and set aside buffers to protect Coastal Giant Salamander habitat.
  - ◆ The core area should be at least 50 m (measured from the streambank), and designated as “no disturbance zones” (not even used for recreational trails).
  - ◆ An additional management zone (where disturbance is minimized) should extend at least 30 m beyond the core zone on each side of the stream.
  - ◆ The entire length of the occupied stream should be protected, including connecting and adjacent streams (less than 10 m wide) within 500 m.



- ◆ Additional upland habitat is needed to protect the populations, and should include the area between the connecting or adjacent streams.
- ☑ Ensure that the hydrology will not be impacted during or after construction. Activities that alter surface or groundwater hydrology, microclimate, topography, soil conditions (moisture), vegetation/cover, and water quality can impair the function of the residence.
- ☑ Apply best practices to construction. Delineate buffers and fence “no disturbance” areas before starting work. Be particularly careful not to allow sediment and runoff from construction sites to enter nearby streams and wetlands.
- ☑ Check for local bylaws that protect environmentally sensitive areas or unique features in your area, and if so what terms and conditions apply.

**For more information:** <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/BMP/bmpintro.html>

*Develop with Care 2014: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia*  
*Guidelines for Amphibian and Reptile Conservation during Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia (2014)*

*Recovery Strategy for the Pacific Giant Salamander (Dicamptodon tenebrosus) in British Columbia*  
<http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/eirs/viewDocumentDetail.do?fromStatic=true&repository=BDP&documentId=10320>

**Changes in or about a stream:** [http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/water\\_rights/licence\\_application/section9/](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/water_rights/licence_application/section9/)

**Riparian Areas Regulation:** [http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/habitat/fish\\_protection\\_act/riparian/riparian\\_areas.html](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/habitat/fish_protection_act/riparian/riparian_areas.html)

**FrontCounter BC** (<http://www.frontcounterbc.gov.bc.ca/>) or contact 1-877-855-3222

**Regional Species at Risk Biologist: Phone 604-582-5200**