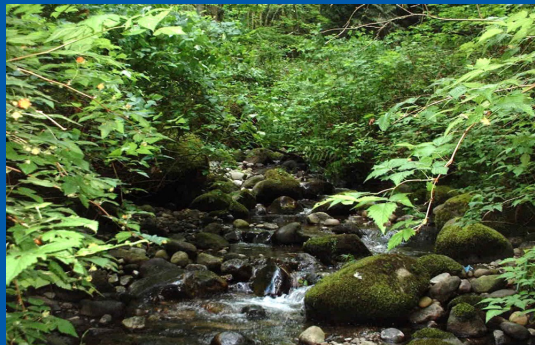


Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia



Are you planning a development on your property? If your property includes forests and is near streams, it may provide habitat for the tailed frog. 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 Rocky Mountain Tailed Frog and Pacific (Coastal) Tailed Frog are the only members of the family *Ascaphidae* and are considered to be the most primitive frogs in the world. These species get their names from the male frog's distinctive "tail" which is used for internal fertilization during mating.

Tailed frogs are small (2–5 cm) with skin colour varying from brown to tan to greyish-green or black, sometimes with irregular dark spots. They can reside away from streams in nearby moist micro-sites (seepage sites, wet draws, ephemeral channels, and pools) nested within mature forest. Adults and juvenile frogs eat a variety of invertebrates, foraging primarily at night along streams and in moist habitats away from streams.

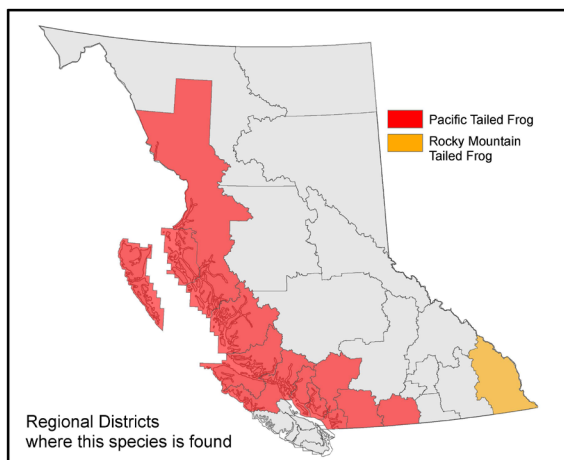
Healthy tailed frog populations require cool, fast-flowing streams within intact forests, and can be found in both urban and forested areas. Year-round streamflow is critical for tadpole survival as they spend up to four years instream before morphing into adult form. Adults can spend another 15 years living in the surrounding forest.

AT RISK

The Rocky Mountain Tailed Frog is **Red-listed** in British Columbia; the Pacific Tailed Frog is **Blue-listed**. Human activities, especially forest loss and developments that disturb riparian areas and compromise water quality and flows, are leading to the loss of suitable habitat for this species. You can help these unique creatures through careful planning of development and other activities that affect forests, streams and wetlands.

LEGALLY PROTECTED

Both species of tailed frogs are protected under the B.C. *Wildlife Act* and are species of **Identified Wildlife** in this province. It is illegal to kill, harm, harass, capture, or take these species. They are listed as **Endangered** (Rocky Mountain Tailed Frog) and as **Special Concern** (Pacific Tailed Frog) under SARA. The federal Fisheries Act prohibits the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat, which sometimes overlaps the habitat of tailed frogs. A permit from **FrontCounter BC** is required before attempting to capture, handle, or move



these frogs. Modifications to tailed frog habitat features may require authorization under the [Fisheries Act](#).

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)*.

- Design and locate your development to avoid disturbing tailed frog habitat. Talk to your local government about ways to protect sensitive habitats, for example through clustering. Careful design and construction can help you to avoid the liability of habitat damage.
- Identify and map tailed frog habitat prior to any site disturbance; and designate protected buffer areas.
- ◆ The core buffer area should be at least 30 m (measured from the top of banks for streams and from high water mark around seeps and wetlands adjacent to tailed frog streams), and designated as “no disturbance zones” (not even used for recreational trails). Buffers should be larger in areas of unstable terrain, at larger greenfield sites, and locations which are surrounded by urban development.
- ◆ An additional management zone (where disturbance is minimized) of at least 20 m should be established beyond the core area.
- ◆ Where slopes exceed 60%, buffers should extend beyond the top of the ravine.
- Avoid placing roads and stream crossings in buffer



Tailed frog tadpoles have a unique sucker mouth to anchor themselves to rocks in fast flowing streams

areas.

- Protect breeding and hibernating areas, especially in the headwaters reaches of the streams where frogs may congregate and in moist areas within riparian and adjacent forest.
- Apply best practices to construction. Delineate buffers and fence “no disturbance” areas before starting work. Do not allow sediment and runoff from development to enter streams, and avoid using pesticides and other chemicals near tailed frog habitat.
- Restore riparian forest, natural streamflow, and water quality in areas impacted by development, logging, and other land use activities.
- Check for local bylaws that protect environmentally sensitive areas or unique features in your area, and if present, what terms and conditions apply.
- More guidelines for tailed frogs can be found in the Identified Wildlife species accounts: http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/frpa/iwms/accounts.html#fourth_.

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

Develop with Care 2012: 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)

Wetland Ways: Interim Guidelines for Wetland Protection and Conservation in British Columbia

Changes in or about a stream: 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

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