

Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia



RV parks and campgrounds can have a significant impact on the natural environment. This fact sheet provides information on ways to lessen these impacts.

There are many guidelines that will assist you in protecting environmental values during the design, construction and maintenance of RV parks and campgrounds. These are described in more detail in *Develop with Care 2014: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia*.

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Many RV parks and campgrounds are built in rural areas, where seasonal residents and travellers can 'get away from it all.' Coastal, lake and stream shorelines as well as forested areas are often desirable locations. However these areas need protection, as they provide important habitats for a variety of wildlife. Care also needs to be taken to ensure the development does not destroy the 'natural' feel that many visitors are seeking.

Retain natural vegetation

- ☑ Retain trees and other vegetation.
- ☑ Plant trees. The right tree in the right place will provide shade and windbreaks as well as providing habitats for local wildlife. Mature trees also help to remove pollutants from the air and reduce surface water runoff.
- ☑ Create habitats for local wildlife; for example by putting up bird feeders and nest boxes. Attracting birds can be a source of pleasure for visitors.

Protect streams and shorelines

- ☑ Retain deep-rooted trees and shrubs along shorelines to protect against erosion.

- ☑ Check with Fisheries and Oceans Canada before making any modifications to coastal shoreline (including the creation of beach areas or wharves), and with the Province for work along freshwater shorelines.
- ☑ Provide access only at key locations rather than a trail along the entire shoreline. This helps to retain quality habitats for fish and wildlife species.
- ☑ Make sure that septic fields are functioning properly, avoiding pollution of local waterways.
- ☑ For more ideas and tips see *Develop with Care* and the Living by Water website (<http://www.bcnature.ca/projects/completed-projects/living-by-water/>).



This sandy beach provides very little wildlife habitat



In high traffic areas, use permeable paving such as this gravel pave (left) or bricks (right)

Minimize stormwater runoff

- ☑ Use pervious materials (e.g., gravel or paving stones) that will allow rainwater to filter into the ground. This helps to protect water quality, groundwater supplies and fish habitat.
- ☑ Use swales and ditches to manage stormwater runoff rather than constructed storm drains. Natural systems are cheaper to install and maintain, and help to reduce erosion and pollution in local streams.
- ☑ Avoid compacting soil, especially where tree roots could be damaged. Consider permeable paving options in high traffic areas.
- ☑ In areas of high runoff, create constructed wetlands to slow stormwater runoff and to remove pollutants prior to discharge.
- ☑ For more information see the Waterbucket website (www.waterbucket.ca) which provides links to many sources of information.

MAINTENANCE

- ☑ Top hazard trees at 3–5 m or higher, rather than completely removing them. This creates a standing dead snag which provides food for woodpeckers and potential nesting sites for owls and other wildlife.
- ☒ Never top healthy trees as this promotes tree diseases. If you want to enhance views, use selective pruning of branches.

- ☑ Use local, native species for landscaping. Native plants provide food for wildlife and require less watering and other maintenance. NEVER USE INVASIVE SPECIES such as English Ivy, Butterfly Bush, Daphne and Purple Loosestrife, as these plants or their seeds may spread into nearby natural ecosystems, displacing native species.
- ☒ Avoid (or minimize) the use of chemical pesticides and herbicides. These products can harm wildlife if they enter local soils or waters and reduce local populations of important pollinators.



Construct raingardens to treat stormwater

For more information see *Develop with Care 2014: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia* and other Guideline documents
<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/BMP/bmpintro.html>