

# Develop with Care



Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia

March 2006

## Section Five

### REGIONAL INFORMATION PACKAGES: SKEENA REGION

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## Ministry of Environment Regions

This section of *Develop with Care* offers information on issues and species of concern that are unique to each region. This section is not a stand-alone guide to environmentally sensitive development in each region—reference to other sections of this document will be essential for a full understanding of the recommended environmental guidelines.

Figure 5.7-1: Ministry of Environment regions.





## Skeena Region

The Skeena Region covers approximately the northwest third of British Columbia.

Figure 5.7-2: Skeena Region.



### 5.7.1 REGIONAL FEATURES

The Skeena Region is characterized by mountainous terrain and by large rivers including the Skeena, Nass, Stikine, and Taku Rivers, and includes British Columbia's north coast and Queen Charlotte Islands. The steep terrain and large rivers leave little room for urban and rural development, so towns are crowded in relatively narrow valleys and may have to contend with flooding rivers and streams. Protection of local environmental resources requires careful planning where large rivers and streams threaten urban developments. The narrow valleys also limit agricultural opportunities and alienation of agricultural lands due to urban and rural developments should be avoided.

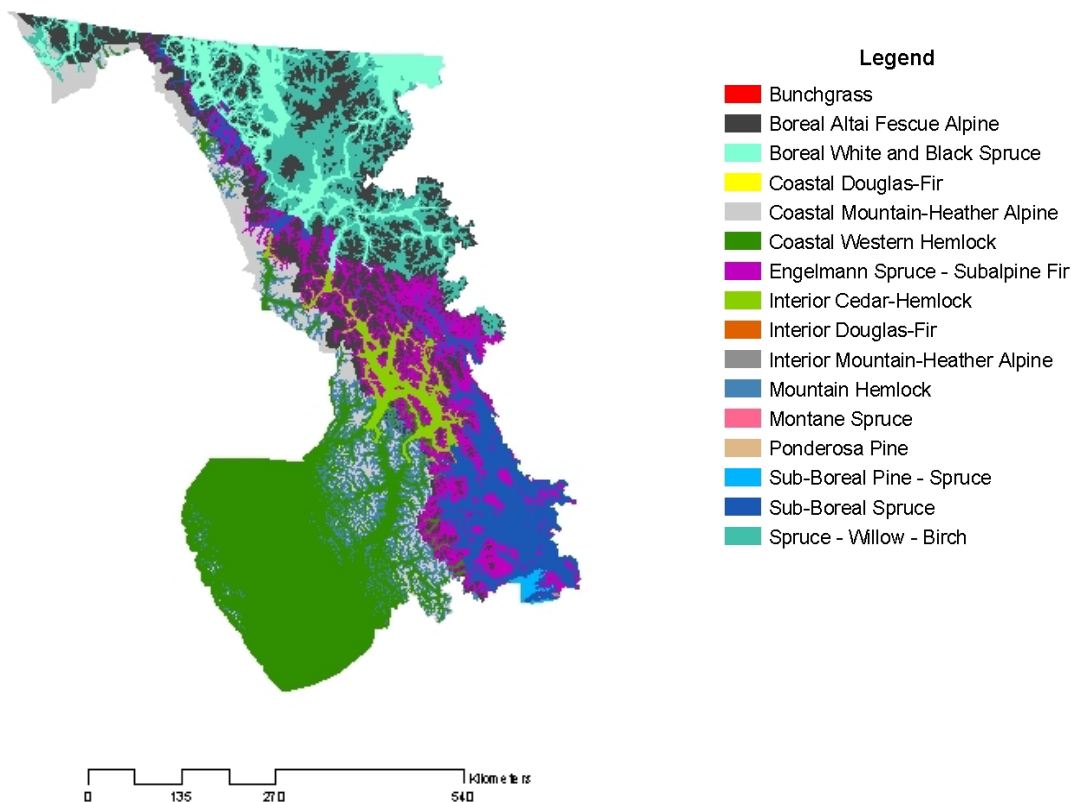
The climate of the Skeena region is varied. Heavy rainfall and snowfall occurs on the west side of the Coast Mountains, whereas dry rain shadows occur in places such as the Telegraph Creek area on the Stikine River. The combination of steep terrain and abundant precipitation makes avalanches and landslides characteristic features of the region. Care needs to be taken in identifying and avoiding these hazards.



Stikine Valley junipers, spruce-poplar forest, Iskut valley burn. PHOTOS: DAVE POLSTER



Figure 5.7-3: Biogeoclimatic zones of the Skeena Region.



The Skeena Region has extensive wilderness areas which provide habitat for a variety of wildlife. Both black and grizzly bears occur in the region and can present problems for urban developments. Salmon are abundant in the major rivers and are a source of food for both bears and humans; consequently, conflicts can arise. Animal movements can be constrained by urban and rural developments; therefore, care should be taken to minimize impacts by avoiding known travel corridors and providing passage for smaller animals under roads and along watercourses.

Fishing on the Bulkley River.  
PHOTO: DAVE POLSTER





## 5.7.2 USEFUL SOURCES

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Ministry of Environment Skeena Regional Office

PO Box #5000

3726 Alfred Avenue

Smithers BC V0J 2N0

Phone: (250) 847-7260

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/ske/> or <http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/ske/><sup>1</sup>

### REGIONAL RESOURCES

Access to many sources of inventory information can be found through the EcoCat (Ecosystems Report Catalogue) website <http://srmapps.gov.bc.ca/apps/acat/>

Fish and fisheries management in the Skeena Region

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/ske/fish/index.html>

Skeena Region Reduced Risk In-stream Work Windows and Measures

[http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/ske/wateract/work\\_windows\\_measures\\_030205.pdf](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/ske/wateract/work_windows_measures_030205.pdf)

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<sup>1</sup> Note: Ministry websites are being updated. If the 'www.env.gov.bc.ca' link does not work, try wlapwww.gov.bc.ca