Appendix 4. Broad ecosystem units of British Columbia

Adapted from *Standards for Broad Terrestrial Ecosystem Classification and Mapping for British Columbia: Classification and Correlation of the Broad Habitat Classes used in 1:250,000 Ecological Mapping* (RIC 1998). See http://srmwww.gov.bc.ca/risc/pubs/teecolo/bei/assets/bei.pdf for more detailed descriptions.

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
AB	Antelope-brush Shrub/ Grassland	Typically an open to dense, dry shrubland, generally lacking trees, that is dominated by drought-tolerant shrubs, most prominently antelope-brush and perennial grasses. Found at lower elevations, between 250 and 700 m; limited to the southern portion of the Okanagan Valley, mainly south of Penticton, extending to the U.S. border.	*BGxh1 PPxh1 PPdh2*
AC	Trembling Aspen Copse	Typically a dense deciduous or broad-leaved forest with a shrub-dominated understorey which includes plant communities that succeed through shrub thickets to an edaphic climax of trembling aspen; found in association with shrub/grasslands or grasslands. Found at lower elevations, between 330 and 1150 m, throughout the major river valleys of the Fraser Plateau and the Thompson–Okanagan Plateau, as well as in the Okanagan Valley and portions of the East Kootenay Trench.	*BGxw1 BGxw2 IDFdk1 IDFdk3 IDFdk4 IDFxh1 IDFxh2 IDFxm PPdh2 PPxh1 SBPSmk SBPSxc*
AD	Sitka Alder – Devil's-club Shrub	Typically a Sitka alder shrub community with a lush fern understorey, which occurs on steep slopes within the northern portion of the Interior Cedar-Hemlock zone. Typically found at lower elevations, between 150 and 1000 m, on the leeward side of the Coast Mountains, in river valleys.	*ESSFwk1 ICHmc1 ICHvc ICHwc*
AG	Alpine Grassland	Typically a high elevation, northern, grassland habitat, characterized by lush bunchgrass growth, with forbs, sedges, and terrestrial lichens. This unit is only found in the alpine tundra (AT) zone in most of the mountain ranges in the province.	
AH	Alpine Heath	Typically a high elevation dwarf shrubland habitat, characterized by cold resistant vegetation, consisting of mountain-heathers, forbs, graminoids, and lichens. This unit is only found in the alpine tundra (AT) zone in most of the mountain ranges in the province.	
AM	Alpine Meadow	Typically a high elevation, herbaceous community, dominated by moisture-loving forbs and/or sedges, on wetter sites in alpine areas. This unit is only found in the alpine tundra (AT) zone in most of the mountain ranges in the province.	

1 Broad ecosystem unit names contain the dominant and/or characteristic climax and seral species.

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
AN	Alpine Sparsely Vegetated	Typically a high elevation, sparsely vegetated habitat, characterized by a mixture of rocky slopes and a sparse cover of grasses, lichens, and low shrubs. This unit is only found in the alpine tundra (AT) zone in most of the mountain ranges in the province.	
AS	Alpine Shrubland	Typically a high elevation, shrubland habitat, characterized by a dense cover of deciduous shrubs with graminoids, forbs, and terrestrial lichens. This unit is only found in the alpine tundra (AT) zone in most of the mountain ranges in the province.	
AT	Alpine Tundra	Typically a high elevation, open to dense herbaceous or dwarf shrubland habitat, characterized by cold-resistant vegetation consisting of low dwarf shrubs, graminoids, hardy forbs, and lichens. This unit is only found in the alpine tundra (AT) zone in most of the mountain ranges in the province.	
AU	Alpine Unvegetated	Typically a high elevation habitat dominated by rock outcrops, talus, steep cliffs, and other areas with very sparse vegetation of grass, lichens, and low shrubs. This unit is only found in the alpine tundra (AT) zone of the mountain ranges in the province.	
AV	Avalanche Track	Typically a dense shrub- or herb-dominated ecosystem where periodic snow and rock slides have prevented coniferous forest establishment, and abundant moisture is available for much of the growing season. Avalanche tracks characteristically begin in the alpine or subalpine zones where there is abundant snow accumulation and steeply sloping valley walls. There are no definite elevational limits, upper or lower. Slope breaks and snow accumulation determine the downslope extent of each avalanche track.	*AT CWHds1 CWHds2 CWHmm2 CWHms2 CWHvm1 CWHvh2 CWHvm2 CWHwm CWHws2 CWHxm MHmm1 MHmm2 BWBSdk BWBSmw BWBSvk BWBSwk ESSFdc ESSFdk ESSFmc ESSFmk ESSFmm ESSFmv ESSFmw ESSFvc ESSFwc ESSFwk ESSFwm ESSFwv ESSFxc ESSFxv ICHmc ICHmk ICHmm ICHmw ICHvc ICHvk1 ICHwc ICHwk IDFww MHmm1 MHmm2 MHwh MSdk MSxv SBPSmc SBSdh SBSmc SBSmk SBSvk SBSwk SWBdk SWBmk*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
BA	Boreal White Spruce –Trembling Aspen	Typically a dense, broad-leaved, mixed, or coniferous mixed forest with shrub- and herb-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that succeed through trembling aspen seral forests to a white spruce climax. Found in the northeastern portion of the province, from the intersection of the Rocky Mountains and the Alberta border north to the Yukon and Northwest Territories. Found at lower elevations, between 300 and 1050 m, in the more northerly locations. In the southern portions, it occurs at higher elevations, between 750 and 1050 m.	*BWBSmw1 BWBSmw2*
BB	Black Spruce Bog	A bog wetland class that typically is a sparse to open, treed organic wetland, with a peat moss-dominated understorey, black spruce and sometimes, tamarack. Found at low to mid-elevations, between 300 and 1250 m. It is common throughout the Taiga and Boreal Plains, Northern Boreal Mountains, Sub-Boreal Interior, Nass Basin, Southern Rocky Mountain Trench, and Fraser Plateau.	*BWBSdk1 BWBSdk2 BWBSmw1 BWBSmw2 BWBSwk1 BWBSwk2 BWBSwk3 ICHmc2 ICHmm ICHvk2 ICHwk3 SBPSdc SBPSmc SBPSmk SBSdh SBSdk SBSdw2 SBSmk1 SBSdw3 SBSmc2 SBSmc3 SBSmw SBSvk SBSwk1 SWBmk*
BG	Sphagnum Bog	A bog wetland class that typically is an unforested wetland, dominated by sphagnum mosses and herbaceous plants, found on poorly drained organic sites. Found throughout the province in poorly drained, wet sites, typically areas that are level or depressional. This very localized habitat is found at elevations ranging from sea level on the north coast to higher elevations (< 1800 m) in the Northern Interior. It is found at much higher elevations in the Southern Interior, usually above 1200 m.	
BK	Subalpine Fir – Scrub Birch Krummholz	Typically a northern, high elevation, stunted tree, open habitat, characterized by islands of subalpine fir intermixed with a dense shrub cover of willows and scrub birch. This unit is found at elevations above the upper limit of the Spruce–Willow–Birch (SWB) zone, approximately 1500 m and below the Alpine Tundra (AT) zone. It occurs throughout the subalpine areas of the Northern Boreal Mountains; small patches are also present in the Northern Omineca and Central Canadian Rocky Mountains, as well as on the Muskwa Plateau.	*SWBdk SWBmk SWBun*
BL	Black Spruce – Lodgepole Pine	Typically an open coniferous forest with shrub, moss, or terrestrial lichen understories, on gently sloping dry or wet sites, usually with lodgepole pine communities that progress to a black spruce climax. Generally found in the northern half of the province, north of 53 N. Located throughout the region east of the Rocky Mountains to	*BWBSdk1 BSBSdk2 BWBSmw1 BWBSmw2 BWBSwk1 BWBSwk2*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
		the Alberta border and north to the Northwest Territories. It is also found at lower to mid-elevations of the major river valleys in the Skeena, Omineca, and Central Rocky Mountains, as well as in the Fraser Basin, Rocky Mountain Trench, and northern portions of the Fraser Plateau. Typically, the elevation ranges between 350 and 1200 m. The majority of sites are located in cool areas, either low-lying valley floors or on north-facing slopes.	*SBPSdc SBPSmc SBSdw2 SBSdw3 SBSmc2 SBSmc3 SBSmk1 SBSmk2 SBSwk1 SBSwk2 SBSwk3*
BP	Boreal White Spruce – Lodgepole Pine	Typically a dense, boreal coniferous forest which includes plant communities that succeed through lodgepole pine seral forests to a white spruce climax. Found at elevations ranging from 300 to 1200 m throughout the northeastern plains, north of the Rocky Mountain/Alberta border intersection to the Northwest Territories. It also occurs extensively along the walls of major valleys in the northern Boreal Mountains, including the Northern Rocky Mountains, Cassiar Ranges, St. Elias Mountains, and all of the adjacent plateaus.	*BWBSdk1 BWBSdk2 BWBSmw1 BWBSwk1 BWBSwk2 BWBSwk3*
BS	Bunchgrass Grassland	Typically a dense herbaceous habitat dominated by perennial grasses and forbs and generally lacking shrubs or trees. Found at elevations ranging from 300 to 1650 m depending on the amount of moisture present. This unit occurs extensively throughout the lower to mid-elevations of the Southern Interior and southern portion of the Fraser Plateau; including the Fraser River, Thompson and Okanagan basins, as well as the valleys around the Fraser River in the Pavilion Ranges, the Nicola River, and the Similkameen River. More isolated ecosystems are also found in the Granby and Kettle River valleys of the Southern Okanagan Highland and in portions of the East Kootenay Trench.	*BGxh1 BGxh2 BGxh3 BGxw1 BGxw2 ESSFxc IDFdk1 IDFdk3 IDFdk4 IDFdm1 IDFxh1 IDFxh2 IDFxm MSxk PPdh1 PPdh2 PPxh1 PPxh2 SBPSdc SBPSmk SBPSxc SBSdk*
CB	Cedars – Shore Pine Bog	A bog wetland class that typically is an open to dense forest, with moss- and shrub-dominated understories. Sites are found in poorly drained outer coastal areas; often containing a varying mixture of western hemlock, western redcedar, yellow-cedar, and shore pine. Found at lower elevations throughout the coast and mountains, as well as the Georgia Depression, ranging from sea level to 1100 m.	*CDFmm CWHdm CWHds1 CWHds2 CWHmm1 CWHmm2 CWHms1 CWHms2 CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHvm1 CWHvm2 CWHwh1 CWHwm CWHws1 CWHws2 CWHxm*
CD	Coastal Douglas-fir	Typically a dense coniferous forest with shrub-dominated understories, including seral plant communities composed of Douglas-fir, which progress directly to climax. Occurs from sea level to ~ 700 m in southwest B.C. including the Gulf Islands, and Vancouver Island, east of the Vancouver Island Ranges and south of Kelsey Bay. It is also found in a narrow strip along the Mainland Coast,	*CDFmm CWHdm CWHds1 CWHmm1 CWHxm CWHds2 CWHmm2*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
		south of Bella Coola and in the southern portion of the Fraser Valley as well as east and north of Chilliwack into the drainages of the upper Fraser River and the eastern Coast Mountains.	
CF	Cultivated Field	Typically a mixture of farmlands where human agricultural practices of plowing, fertilization, and non-native crop production have resulted in long-term soil and/or vegetation changes. Generally, cultivated fields are located on flat to gently rolling terrain. Soil types and local climatic factors influence the types of crops that can be grown. The majority of the lower elevation plateaus and floodplains in the province are used for agriculture.	
CG	Coastal Western Redcedar – Grand Fir	Typically a dense coniferous forest which includes plant communities that progress through long-lived Douglas-fir seral stages to a varied climax of western redcedar and grand fir. Restricted to low elevations (sea level to ~150 m) along southeastern Vancouver Island from Bowser to Victoria, the Gulf Islands south of Cortes Island, and a narrow strip along the Sunshine Coast.	*CDFmm*
CH	Coastal Western Hemlock – Western Redcedar	Typically a dense coniferous forest, with shrub-dominated understories, found along outer coastal plains. Occurs in a narrow fringe (sea level to 600 m) along the outer coast of southern Vancouver Island widening to cover the northern portion of Vancouver Island, the windward side of the Queen Charlotte Ranges, and the Coast Mountains up the Mainland Coast to the Alaskan border.	*CWHmm1 CWHmm2 CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHvm1 CWHvm2 CWHwh1 CWHwh2*
CL	Cliff	Non-alpine, steep unvegetated rock slope. Cliffs are typically located throughout the province, mainly concentrated in mountainous regions. Cliffs are most often associated with many of the alpine units as well as the talus and rocky outcrop units.	
CP	Coastal Douglas-fir –Shore Pine	Typically a dry coniferous forest, characterized by plant communities composed of a sparse shrub layer and a well-developed moss and lichen layer, which proceeds to a Douglas-fir climax. Typical elevation ranges from sea level to approximately 650 m. This unit is found along the Sunshine Coast and in the lower Fraser Valley, extending inland along the major river valleys to its eastern limit in the Coast Mountains.	*CWHds1 CWHds2 CWHms1 CWHms2*
CR	Black Cottonwood Riparian Habitat Class	Typically a dense conifer and deciduous or broad-leaved forest with shrub-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that progress through a varying mixture of shrubs and black cottonwood. Found throughout the province along major rivers where floodplains occur, ranging in elevation from sea level to approximately 600 m.	*CDFmm CWHdm CWHds1 CWHds2 CWHmm1 CWHvm1 CWHxm BGxh1 BGxh2 BGxw2 BGxh3 ICHmc1 ICHmc2 ICHvc ICHwc IDF PPdh1 PPxh2*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
CS	Coastal Western Hemlock –Subalpine Fir	Typically a northern coastal, cold habitat, characterized by dense coniferous forests of western hemlock, subalpine fir, and spruce with dense shrub, moss, and lichen layers. Occurs in the Coast, Skeena, and Hazelton mountains, the Nass Basin, and the Stikine Plateau; ranging between 100 and 1100 m in elevation.	*ICHmc1 ICHmc1a ICHmc2 ICHvc ICHwc*
CW	Coastal Western Hemlock –Douglas-fir	Typically a dense coniferous forest with fern- or shrub-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that progress through long-lived Douglas-fir seral stages to a western hemlock climax. Found in lower to mid-elevations, ranging from sea level to approximately 700 m, in the southwestern portion of the province.	*CWHdm CWHds1 CWHds2 CWHxm*
DA	Douglas-fir – Arbutus	Typically a dense coniferous forest with shrub-dominated understories, whose plant communities may pass through seral stages with arbutus as a major component after intense fire, to a Douglas-fir climax. Occurs on the eastern side of Vancouver Island south of Kelsey Bay, on the Southern Gulf Islands, and on some of the islands located in Johnstone Strait. It also occurs in the lower Fraser Valley on the south side of the Fraser River as far as Chilliwack and along the Sunshine Coast up to Desolation Sound. It ranges in elevation from sea level to approximately 700 m.	*CDFmm CWHdm CWHxm*
DF	Interior Douglas-fir Forest	Typically a dense coniferous forest with grass- or shrub-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that progress directly to a Douglas-fir climax. Occurs in the Southern Interior at low to moderate elevations in the Interior Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone. Elevational limits range between 700 and 1100 m.	*BGxh3 BGxw2 IDFdk1 IDFdk2 IDFdk3 IDFdk4 IDFdm1 IDFdm2 IDFmw1 IDFmw2 IDFxh2 IDFxm IDFxw IDFww SBPSmk SBSdk SBSdw1 SBSdw2 SBSmc1 SBSmh ICHmk1 ICHmk2 ICHmw3 ICHxw MSdk MSdm1 MSdm2 MSxk*
DL	Douglas-fir – Lodgepole Pine	Typically a dense coniferous forest with shrub- or pine-grass-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that progress through a mixture of lodgepole pine and Douglas-fir or trembling aspen to a Douglas-fir climax. Found at lower to middle elevations (between 400 and 1600 m) throughout the central and Southern Interior.	*ICHmk1 ICHmk2 ICHmw1 ICHmw2 ICHmw3 IDFdk1 IDFdk2 IDFdk3 IDFdk4 IDFww IDFdm1 IDFdm2 MSdc MSdm1 MSdm2 MSxk SBSdh SBSdw1 SBSdw2 SBSdw3 SBSmh SBSmm SBSmw SBPSmk SBPSxc*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
DP	Douglas-fir – Ponderosa Pine	Typically an open to dense coniferous forest with shrub- or bunchgrass-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that progress through a mixture of Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine to a Douglas-fir climax. Occurs at low elevations in the valleys of the Southern Interior, including the Okanagan and Nicola valleys, as well as the valleys of the North and South Thompson, Bonaparte, Fraser, Similkameen, Kettle, and Granby rivers. Typically found at elevations ranging between 450 and 1300 m.	*ICHdw ICHxw IDFmw1 IDFdk1 IDFdk2 IDFdm1 IDFdm2 IDFxh1 IDFxh2 IDFxw PPxh1 PPdh1 PPxh2*
EF	Engelmann Spruce – Subalpine Fir Dry Forested	Typically a dense coniferous forest with shrub-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that may progress through seral lodgepole pine to a varied climax of Engelmann spruce and subalpine fir. In the southern and central Interior of the province, this unit represents the highest elevation forested area. It occurs throughout the Coast Mountains and eastward into the Rocky Mountains, ranging in elevation between 1275 and 2050 m. There is considerable range in upper and lower elevational limits due to climatic and topographic variability.	*ESSFdc1 ESSFdc2 ESSFdk ESSFdv ESSFmc ESSFmm1 ESSFmk ESSFmw ESSFmv1 ESSFmv2 ESSFmv3 ESSFmv4 ESSFwc1 ESSFwc2 ESSFwc3 ESSFwc4 ESSFwk1 ESSFwk2 ESSFwm ESSFvv ESSFwv ESSFxc ESSFxv MSdc*
ER	Engelmann Spruce Riparian	Typically a dense coniferous forest, with shrub- and forb-dominated understories, Engelmann spruce and sometimes black cottonwood; found on floodplains or small riparian areas. Occurs on floodplains and riparian areas throughout the central, southern, and sub-boreal Interiors, as well as in the Southern Interior Mountains and the eastern slopes of the Coast Mountains. Elevational limits range between 1200 and 2000 m in the south, and 900 and 1500 m in the north.	*ESSFdc1 ESSFdk ESSFdv ESSFmc ESSFmk ESSFmm1 ESSFmv1 ESSFmv2 ESSFmv3 ESSFmv4 ESSFmw ESSFvc ESSFwc1 ESSFwc2 ESSFwc3 ESSFwc4 ESSFwk1 ESSFwk2 ESSFwm ESSFwv ESSFxc ESSFxv*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
ES	Estuary	Typically an unforested tidal wetland dominated by persistent emergent herbaceous species, with open sporadic access to ocean areas and where the seawater is periodically diluted with fresh water derived from land drainage. Estuaries occur along coastal B.C. where perennial rivers flow into the ocean.	*CDFmm CWHdm CWHmm1 CWHms2 CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHvm1 CWHwh1 CWHwm CWHws1 CWHxm1 CWHxm2*
EW	Subalpine Fir – Mountain Hemlock Wet Forested	Typically a dense coniferous forest with shrub-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that progress directly to a mixed climax of subalpine fir, mountain hemlock, and sometimes amabilis fir. Generally found in the eastern Kitimat ranges, south/central Hazelton Mountains, southeast Boundary ranges, and northwest Skeena Mountains. The elevational limits range between approximately 900 and 1800 m. There is also a limited amount of this unit on the leeward side of the Pacific ranges as well as in the western Monashee Mountains, between 1275 and 1675 m.	*ESSFmk ESSFmw ESSFvc ESSFvv ESSFwv*
FB	Subalpine Fir – Scrub Birch Forested	Typically a northern, subalpine, open forested habitat, characterized by stands of subalpine fir and white spruce with a dense shrub understorey of willows and scrub birch. This unit is limited to elevations ranging between 1050 and 1500 m. It occurs in the subalpine areas of the Northern Boreal Mountains including the Northern Omineca, Cassiar, St. Elias, and Northern Rocky Mountains, as well as the Stikine, Teslin, and Southern Boreal plateaus.	*BWBSdk1 BWBSdk2 BWBSvk SWBdk SWBmk SWBvk*
FE	Sedge Fen	A fen wetland class is typically an unforested wetland, dominated by sedges, found on poorly drained organic sites. This very localized ecosystem unit generally occurs in small patches throughout all forested zones within the province. It is most commonly found on the interior plateaus and does not occur in the AT zone.	
FP	Engelmann Spruce – Subalpine Fir Parkland	Typically a high elevation mosaic of stunted-tree clumps and herb- or dwarf shrub-dominated openings, occurring above closed forest ecosystems and below the alpine communities. In the southern and central Interior of the province, this unit represents the transition between the Engelmann Spruce – Subalpine Fir (ESSF) and Alpine Tundra (AT) zones. It occurs throughout the Coast Mountains and eastward into the Rocky Mountains, usually present above the ESSF zone (approximate elevation 2050 m). Note that there is considerable range in the upper and lower elevational limits due to climatic variability and differing topography.	*ESSFdc ESSFdk ESSFdv ESSFmc ESSFmm1 ESSFmm2 ESSFmv1 ESSFmv2 ESSFmv3 ESSFwc1 ESSFwc2 ESSFwc3 ESSFvc ESSFwk1 ESSFwk2 ESSFwm ESSFxc ESSFxv*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
FR	Amabilis Fir – Western Hemlock	Typically a low elevation, dense coniferous forest with fern- or shrub-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that may contain western redcedar as a long-lived seral species, leading to a mixed western hemlock and amabilis fir climax. Commonly occurs at low to middle elevations, between 500 and 1100 m, occasionally down to sea level. This unit is found extensively throughout the major valleys of the windward and leeward portions of the Coast Mountains, Vancouver Island Ranges, and Queen Charlotte Ranges, as well as on the outer coast of southern Vancouver Island and the adjacent northern Gulf Islands.	*CWHmm1 CWHmm2 CWHms1 CWHms2 CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHvm1 CWHvm2 CWHws1 CWHws2 ICHmc1a*
FS	Fast Perennial Stream	Typically a freshwater riverine habitat contained within a channel that has continuously moving, fast flowing water, that is bounded by banks or upland habitat and has a high gradient. Distributed throughout the province with a larger proportion of fast flowing streams found at higher altitudes where there is a larger gradient.	
GB	Gravel Bar	Typically a level, unvegetated, or partially vegetated fluvial area along an active watercourse. Found extensively along streams and rivers throughout the province.	
GL	Glacier	Typically a field or body of snow or ice formed in higher elevations in mountainous terrain where snowfall exceeds melting: these areas of snow and ice will show evidence of past or present glacier movement. Glaciers are generally found above 1800 m in the higher elevation biogeoclimatic zones throughout the mountain ranges of the province.	*AT BWBSdk1 CWHds1 CWHwm CWHws2 ESSFmm1 ESSFmw ESSFxv MHmm2 SWBdk SWBmk SWBvk*
GO	Garry Oak	Typically a sparse to open mixed forest, with understories dominated by mosses and a dense mixture of spring wildflowers and grasses growing on shallow, rocky sites. This ecosystem is very limited in distribution, occurring at low elevations along southeast Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. Elevational limits range between sea level and approximately 150 m.	*CDFmm*
HB	Coastal Western Hemlock – Paper Birch	Typically a dense mixed forest composed of paper birch, Douglas-fir, western redcedar, and western hemlock with shrub-dominated understories. Occurs at low elevations in submaritime and subcontinental areas north of Knight Inlet, ranging in elevation from valley bottom to approximately 500 m.	*CWHds1 CWHds2*
HL	Coastal Western Hemlock – Lodgepole Pine	Typically an open to dense coniferous forest situated on dry sites with shrub-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that progress through lodgepole pine seral stages to a western hemlock climax. This very uncommon ecosystem type is limited to dry ridgecrests and rocky outcrops along the outer coast to the Alaskan border, including Vancouver Island, the Queen Charlotte Islands, and any of the small coastal islands. It can also be found throughout the coast, western Hazelton, and Skeena mountains, and the Nass Basin. It ranges in elevation between sea level and 1000 m.	*CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHvm1 CWHvm2 CWHws1 CWHws2 ICHwc*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
HP	Mountain Hemlock Parkland	Typically a high elevation, sparse to open mosaic of stunted tree clumps and herbaceous or mountain-heatherdominated openings, that proceeds after disturbance directly to a climax species mix dominated by mountain hemlock. Found at high elevations along the coast, this unit represents the transition between the Mountain Hemlock (MH) and Alpine Tundra (AT) zones. When present, it occurs above the MH zone on the eastern and western slopes of the Vancouver Island Ranges, Queen Charlotte Mountains, and Coast Mountains, as well as the western slopes of the Hazelton Mountains; elevation approximately 1600 m. Note there is considerable range in the upper and lower elevational limits due to climatic variability and differing topography.	*MHmm1 MHmm2 MHwh*
HS	Western Hemlock – Sitka Spruce	Typically a dense coniferous forest along outer coastal sites with shrub-dominated understories, which usually succeeds directly to a mixed climax of western hemlock and Sitka spruce. Occurs along the west and north coast of Vancouver Island and the Queen Charlotte Islands. It is also found throughout the windward portion of the Coast Mountains, extending from Knight Inlet northward into the Boundary Ranges. Typically this unit occurs at elevations ranging between sea level and approximately 600 m.	*CWHds2 CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHwh1 CWHwh2 CWHwm*
IG	Interior Western Redcedar	Typically a dense coniferous or mixed forest with extensive shrub- and herb-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that progress through seral Douglas-fir, trembling aspen, and paper birch to a climax of western redcedar and grand fir. ICHxw has a very limited distribution in B.C. It is only found in middle, lower, and toe slope positions, as well as along the valley floor in the southern extremities of the Selkirk and Purcell mountains. Elevational limits range from 450 to 1100 m.	*ICHxw*
IH	Interior Western Hemlock – Douglas-fir	Typically a dense coniferous forest with various shrub- and herb-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that proceed through Douglas-fir, western larch, western white pine, and/or paper birch seral stages to a mixed climax of western hemlock and western red-cedar. Found extensively at low to middle elevations throughout the Columbia Mountains and Highland. Typically ranges in elevation between approximately 400 and 1400 m.	*ICHdw ICHmm ICHmw1 ICHmw2 ICHmw3 ICHvk1 ICHvk2 ICHwk1 ICHwk2 ICHwk3 ICHwk4*
IM	Intertidal Marine	Typically a habitat that consists of ocean overlying the continental shelf and its associated high energy shoreline, with salinities in excess of 18 ppt and a substrate that is exposed and flooded by tides (includes associated splash zone). This unit occurs along the shores of all coastal islands and the mainland, including major inlets, fjords, bays, and open ocean.	*CDFmm CWHdm CWHmm1 CWHms2 CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHvm1 CWHwh1 CWHwm CWHws1 CWHxm1 CWHxm2*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
IN	Intermittent Stream	Typically a freshwater riverine habitat contained within a channel that only periodically has moving water and is bounded by banks or upland habitat. Occurs throughout the province in areas where there is not enough water supply to support perennial flow.	
IS	Interior Western Hemlock – White Spruce	Typically a dense coniferous forest with shrub- and moss-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that may progress through long-lived seral sub-alpine fir, spruce, and lodgepole pine to a climax of western hemlock and western redcedar. Found extensively at low to middle elevations throughout the Columbia Mountains and highlands. Typical range of elevation is between approximately 400 and 1400 m. Small pockets are also present in the Southern Nass Basin and Skeena and Hazelton mountains.	*ICHdw ICHmc2 ICHmm ICHmk3 ICHmw1 ICHmw2 ICHmw3 ICHvk1 ICHvk2 ICHwk1 ICHwk2 ICHwk3 ICHwk4 ICHxw*
LL	Large Lake	Typically a fresh deepwater habitat that includes permanently flooded lakes, usually found in a topographical depression, lacking emergent vegetation except along shorelines, and usually greater than 60 ha.	
LP	Lodgepole Pine	Typically an open lodgepole pine forest with shrub, moss, or terrestrial lichen understories on level, nutrient-poor, coarse-textured soils. Found extensively between 500 and 1600 m, throughout the interior of the province. It occurs in the Southern Interior Mountains, throughout the Columbia range, in the sub-boreal, central, and Southern Interior, as well as throughout the Fraser Plateau, Fraser Basin, Skeena and Omineca mountains, Thompson-Okanagan Plateau, and the leeside of the Pacific Ranges. It is also common within portions of the Taiga and Boreal Plains and Northern Boreal Mountains, and along the North Coast.	*BWBSdk1 BWBSdk2 BWBSmw1 BWBSmw2 BWBSwk1 BWBSwk2 BWBSwk3 ICHmc1 ICHmc2 ICHwk1 IDFdk4 ESSFdc2 ESSFmv1 ESSFwc2 ESSFxc ESSFxv1 MSdk MSdm2 MSdm1 MSxv SBPSdc SBPSmc SBPSmk SBPSxc SBSdh SBSdk SBSdw1 SBSdw2 SBSdw3 SBSmc1 SBSmc2 SBSmc3 SBSmk1 SBSmk2 SBSmm SBSmw SBSvk SBSwk1 SBSwk2 SBSwk3*
LS	Small Lake	Typically a fresh deepwater habitat that includes permanently flooded lakes (and sometimes reservoirs), usually 8 to 60 ha in a topographic depression, with most of the water less than 7 m in depth. Small lakes occur throughout the province in small valleys and basins.	

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
ME	Meadow	A meadow wetland class that typically is a lower elevation herbaceous community, dominated by moisture-loving species, on imperfectly to poorly drained mineral soil sites. Occurs, to a limited extent, at lower elevations throughout the southern portion of the province, including Vancouver Island, the Mainland Coast, and Okanagan and Kootenay regions. It is most commonly found within the Fraser Plateau area. Meadows do occur in most southern biogeoclimatic zones, with the exception of the AT zone.	
MF	Mountain Hemlock – Amabilis Fir	Typically a high elevation, dense coniferous forest with shrub-dominated understories, which proceeds after disturbance directly to a climax species mix of mountain hemlock, western hemlock, and amabilis fir. This unit occurs in high elevation areas along the coast, including the eastern and western slopes of the Vancouver Island Ranges, Queen Charlotte Mountains, and Coast Mountains, as well as the western slopes of the Hazelton Mountains. It is limited to elevations ranging between 800 and 1600 m. Note there is considerable range in the upper and lower elevation due to climatic variability and differing topography.	*MHmm1 MHmm2 MHwh*
MI	Mine	Typically an area where mining exploration is presently taking place or where mining has recently been completed. Mining activity occurs in all regions of the province, covering large or small areas, depending on the minerals that are desired and the terrain. Open pit mining is commonly used for mineral extraction. Open pit mines are holes in the ground, varying in size and shape, which are open to the sky and have been created to extract minerals or aggregates (including gravel pits). Mines can also be in the form of complex underground tunnels, with only a few tunnels that actually connect to the surface, often via a central mine shaft. Another common feature associated with mining activity are mine tailings or rubbly mine spoils. These are areas containing the waste rock or overburden that is discarded in the extraction of ore in a mining operation.	
MR	Marsh	A marsh wetland class that typically is permanently or seasonally inundated and that supports an extensive cover of emergent, non-woody vegetation rooting in mineral-rich substrate. Found in a limited extent throughout lower elevation sites in the province. Marshes generally occur below 800 m.	
MS	Montane Shrub/Grassland	Typically a varied mixture of shrubs, thickets, and herbaceous openings found in steep breaks along lower river valleys. This type of habitat occurs in a very limited extent, usually in small patches throughout many of the river valleys in the province. It typically ranges in elevation between 350 and 1200 m.	*BGxh3 BWBSmw1 BWBSdk1 BWBSdk2 IDFxh1 MSxv SBPSdc SBPSmc SBSdk SBSdw2 SBSmc2 SBSmc3*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
OA	Garry Oak – Arbutus	Typically a sparse to open mixed forest, with understories dominated by mosses and a dense mixture of spring wildflowers and grasses, growing on shallow, rocky sites. Restricted to rocky areas of the Coastal Douglas-fir (CDFmm) and Coastal Western Hemlock (CWHxm1) biogeoclimatic subzones of southern Vancouver Island and adjacent Gulf Islands, and a few sites in the southern portions of the Fraser Valley.	*CDFmm CWHxm1*
OV	Orchard/Vineyard	Typically an agricultural area used for growing hard and soft fruit crops, with some form of symmetrical arrangement of the trees, shrubs, or vines. Concentrated in very arid regions of the province including the river valleys of the south Fraser, Thompson, and Similkameen rivers; the Okanagan Valley; and southeastern Vancouver Island. Typically orchards and vineyards are associated with the Coastal Douglas-fir, Interior Douglas-fir, Ponderosa Pine, and Bunchgrass biogeoclimatic zones.	
OW	Shallow Open Water	A shallow open water wetland class that typically is comprised of permanent shallow open water and that lacks extensive emergent plant cover; water is usually less than 2 m in depth, with submerged and floating aquatic plants present. Generally found throughout the province at elevations below 1000 m.	
PB	Lodgepole/Shore Pine Bog	A bog wetland class characterized by a sparse cover of stunted shore pine and poorly drained coastal soils. Shrubs and sphagnum moss dominate the understorey. Typically found along eastern Vancouver Island south of Kelsey Bay, throughout the Lower Mainland and up the Mainland Coast, including the western slopes of the Coast Mountains, Hecate Lowland, Outer Fiordland, Georgia Lowland, and the southern Gulf Islands, as well as the islands of Queen Charlotte Strait and the Strait of Georgia. The elevational limits of this unit range between sea level and 700 m.	*CWHds1 CWHds2 CDFmm1 CWHms1 CWHms2 CWHxm*
PO	Lodgepole Pine Outcrop	Typically a sparse to open lodgepole pine forest, with understories dominated by moss, lichens, and grasses, growing on shallow, rocky sites. Limited to areas with shallow soils over bedrock, within the Pacific Ranges.	*CWHxm CWHdm MSxv SBPSxc*
PP	Ponderosa Pine	Typically a sparse to open coniferous forest with shrub- or perennial grass-dominated understories, which occurs along the grassland/forest borders, leading to a ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir climax. Occurs at low elevations in the major valleys of the Thompson/ Okanagan Plateau, including the Thompson and Okanagan basins. It also occurs in the East Kootenay Trench and in the Fraser Valley from north of Lillooet to just south of Lytton. Generally found below 500 m in elevation.	*BGxh1 BGxh2 BGxw1 IDFxh1 PPdh1 PPdh2 PPxh1 PPxh2*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
PR	White Spruce – Balsam Poplar Riparian	Typically a dense, deciduous, mixed or coniferous forest, with thick shrub understories, found on or in association with fluvial sites; includes plant communities that succeed through deciduous forests to a white (or hybrid white) spruce climax. This unit occurs between 300 and 1200 m in the northern portions of the province, throughout the major river valleys of the Northern Boreal Mountains, Boreal and Taiga Plains, as well as in the Southern Omineca and Central Canadian Rocky mountains.	*BWBSdk1 BWBSdk2 BWBSmw1 BWBSmw2 BWBSwk1 BWBSwk2 SWBdk SWBmk SWBvk*
RB	Western Redcedar – Paper Birch	Typically a dense coniferous forest with shrub-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that succeed through deciduous seral stages or through Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, and western larch (sometimes) to a climax of western redcedar and hybrid spruce. Commonly found in valley bottoms and lower slopes between 800 and 1400 m. Distributed throughout the Shuswap, Quesnel, and Okanagan highlands, as well as the North Thompson Upland, Southern Fraser Plateau, Southern Rocky Mountain Trench, and the leeside of the Cascade Mountains.	*ICHdk ICHmk2 ICHmk3 ICHmw3 IDFdk2*
RD	Western Redcedar – Douglas-fir	Typically a dense coniferous forest with shrub-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that succeed through Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, and western larch (sometimes) to a climax of western redcedar. Found at low elevations (300–1200 m) in the Shuswap, Quesnel, and Okanagan Highlands and the southern Fraser Plateau. It also occurs in the southern Rocky Mountain Trench and the southern Monashee and Purcell mountains, as well as in the leeward Pacific range and the southern Chilcotin range.	*ICHdk ICHmk1 ICHmk3 ICHmm ICHmw2 ICHwk4 IDFmw1 IDFmw2 IDFww IDFxh2*
RE	Reservoir	Typically a fresh, dammed, deepwater habitat that is permanently flooded, with variable water levels. Found all over the province, mainly at lower elevations.	
RM	Reclaimed Mine	Typically a mined area or mine tailings that have plant communities composed of a mixture of agronomic grasses, forbs, and native plants. Mining activity has taken place in all regions of the province, covering large and small areas, depending on the minerals that were desired and the terrain . Reclaimed mines usually contain a mixture of native and introduced plant species. The density and composition of these communities is related to the age and location of the site, as well as the amount of disturbance that resulted from the mining activities. In some areas of the province, the disturbances caused by mining activities may have provided the ideal conditions for particular native plant species, which have flourished since the operation ceased. However, in other heavily disturbed areas, agronomic species may have been seeded to stabilize the soils and have subsequently dominated these previously mined sites.	

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
RO	Rock	Typically a mixture of gentle to steep, non-alpine bedrock escarpments and outcroppings with little soil development and relatively low vegetative cover. Found anywhere exposed bedrock is located in non-alpine regions of the province. Occurs extensively in mountainous areas.	
RR	Western Redcedar – Black Cottonwood Riparian	Typically a dense coniferous forest with shrub-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that may succeed either through deciduous seral species or directly to a climax of hybrid spruce, western redcedar, and western hemlock. Found extensively throughout valleys of the Southern Interior Mountains and portions of the Northern Thompson Upland and Northern Okanagan Highland, between approximately 400 and 1450 m elevation. It also occurs between 350 and 1100 m in the valleys of the Skeena Mountains, Nass Basin, and Nass Ranges.	*ESSFvc ESSFwc1 ESSFwc2 ICHdk ICHdw ICHmc1 ICHxw ICHmk1 ICHmk2 ICHmk3 ICHmm ICHmw1 ICHmw2 ICHmw3 ICHvk1 ICHwk1 ICHwk2 ICHwk3 ICHwk4 ICHvk2 IDFmw1 IDFmw2 IDFww*
RS	Western Redcedar Swamp	A swamp wetland class that typically is an open forested wetland composed of western redcedar and various conifers, with a skunk cabbage and fern understorey associated with very poorly drained sites. The redcedar swamp is limited in size but has an extensive distribution. It occurs between 400 and 1550 m on the more gentle slopes of the Southern Interior Mountains and portions of the Northern Thompson Upland and Northern Okanagan Highland. It occurs throughout the Coastal Douglas-fir (CDF) and Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH) biogeoclimatic zones of the Coast Mountains and Vancouver Island regions between sea level and approximately 1000 m.	*CDFmm CWHdm CWHds1 CWHds2 CWHmm1 CWHmm2 CWHms1 CWHms2 CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHvm1 CWHvm2 CWHwm CWHwh1 CWHwh2 CWHws1 CWHws2 CWHxm ICHmk1 ICHmk2 ICHmk3 ICHmw1 ICHmw2 ICHmw3 ICHvk1 ICHvk2 ICHwk1 ICHwk2 ICHwk3 IDFmw2 IDFww*
SA	Sub-boreal White Spruce – Trembling Aspen	Typically a dense mixed or coniferous sub-boreal forest with shrub- and herb-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that succeed through trembling aspen seral forests to a white spruce climax.	
SB	White Spruce – Paper Birch	Typically a dense, mixed sub-boreal forest with dense shrub-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that succeed through paper birch, trembling aspen, and Douglas-fir seral forests to a white spruce climax. Found on the lower valley slopes and valley bottoms between the elevations of 450 and 1225 m in the Rocky Mountain Trench, Fraser Basin, and northern Fraser Plateau.	*SBSmh*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
SC	Shrub-Carr	A shrub-carr wetland class that typically is dominated by shrubs, found on poorly drained mineral soil sites. Occurs along stream edges, drainage ways, small depressions, and the perimeters of lakes, ponds, and sedge wetlands in most areas.	
SD	Spruce – Douglas-fir	Typically a dense coniferous forest with soopolallie- or pinegrass-dominated understories, which includes plant communities that progress though a mixture of lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, and western larch to a white spruce and subalpine fir climax; sometimes with lodgepole pine or trembling aspen present. Located between 600 and 1600 m in the areas around the Nechako, Fraser, and Thompson plateaus, as well as in the Okanagan Highland. It is also located in the southern Rocky Mountains, southern Rocky Mountain Trench, southeastern Purcell and Monashee mountains, as well as the leeside of the Cascade Mountains.	*MSdk MSdm1 SBSdh SBSdk SBSdw1 SBSdw2 SBSdw3 SBSvk IDFdk1 IDFdk2 IDFdk3 IDFdm1 IDFdm2 IDFxh1 IDFxm IDFxw*
SF	White Spruce – Subalpine Fir	Typically a dense, coniferous sub-boreal forest with dense shrub- and moss-dominated understories, which includes communities that progress directly to a white spruce and subalpine fir climax, sometimes with lodgepole pine or trembling aspen. This unit is common throughout the lowland forests found on the Fraser Plateau, Fraser Basin, Nass Basin, Central Canadian Rocky Mountains, Omineca Mountains, Skeena Mountains, and Columbia Highlands. It also occurs to a limited extent in the Southern Rocky Mountain Trench and on the Thompson-Okanagan Plateau. In northerly areas it commonly occurs between 500 and 1200 m elevation, while more southerly locations occur at higher elevations between 1000 and 1650 m.	*ESSFmv3 SBSdh SBSdk SBSdw1 SBSdw2 SBSdw3 SBSmc1 SBSmc2 SBSmc3 SBSmh SBSmk1 SBSmk2 SBSmm SBSmw SBSvk SBSwk1 SBSwk2 SBSwk3 MSdc MSdm1 MSdm2 MSxk ICHdk ICHmk1 ICHmk3 ICHvc ICHwc ICHwk2 ICHwk4*
SG	Subalpine Grassland	Typically a high elevation, lush grassland habitat dominated by perennial grasses and forbs, on dry sites. This uncommon unit occurs on isolated, high elevation sites throughout the Northern Boreal Mountains, Omineca Mountains, Central Canadian Rockies, and Southern Interior Mountains. It is found at elevations ranging between 1000 and 1600 m in the north and approximately 1600 and 2000 m in the south.	*BWBSdk1 SWBmk ESSFdk ESSFmv ESSFxc ESSFxv*
SH	Shrub Fen	A fen wetland class that is typically dominated by shrubs, found on poorly drained organic sites. Common throughout the interior of the province, with the exception of the Bunchgrass (BG), Ponderosa Pine (PP), and Alpine Tundra (AT) zones. Limited to areas that are poorly drained, subhydric, and depressional or level.	

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
SK	Spruce – Swamp	A swamp wetland class that typically is an open forested wetland of spruce with an understorey of skunk cabbage and sparse shrubs, found on very poorly drained sites. Located throughout the interior of the province, east of the Coast Mountains including the Northern Boreal Mountains; Taiga and Boreal plains; central, southern, and sub-boreal Interior; and the Southern Interior Mountains. Generally found at mid-elevations between 400 and 1400 m; more northerly locations may occur at lower elevations while more southerly areas may occur at higher elevations.	*IDFdk3 IDFdk4 SBPSdc SBPSmc SBPSmk SBPSxc BWBSdk1 SBSdw1 SBSmc2 SBSmh SBSvk ICHdk ICHmc2 ICHmk1 ICHmk2 ICHmw3 ICHwk4 ICHvc ICHwk1*
SL	Sub-boreal White Spruce – Lodgepole Pine	Typically a dense, sub-boreal coniferous forest that includes plant communities that succeed through lodgepole pine seral forests to a white spruce climax. This unit occurs extensively in the Southern Rocky Mountain Trench, Fraser Basin, Omineca Mountains, and northern portion of the Fraser Plateau; elevational limits range between 700 and 1400 m. It is also present at higher elevations between 1200 and 1650 m, and in portions of the southern Fraser and Thompson-Okanagan plateaus.	*SBSdk SBSdw1 SBSdw2 SBSdw3 SBSmc1 SBSmc2 SBSmc3 SBSmh SBSmk1 SBSmk2 SBSwk3 SBPSdc SBPSmc SBPSmk SBPSxc IDFdk3 IDFdk4 IDFdm2 MSxk MSxv*
SM	Subalpine Meadow	Typically a high elevation meadow community, dominated by moisture-loving herbaceous species, found on wetter sites in the subalpine forested areas. This unit occurs throughout the province at elevations ranging between 1000 and 1600 m in the north and 1600 and 2000 m in the south. It occurs in the Vancouver Island and Queen Charlotte Islands Ranges, Coast Mountains, Southern Interior Mountains, and Northern Boreal Mountains, as well as many of the high elevation plateaus found in the province.	*ESSFdc ESSFdk ESSFmc ESSFmk ESSFmm1 ESSFmv3 ESSFmv4 ESSFmw ESSFvc ESSFwc ESSFwk1 ESSFwk2 ESSFwm ESSFwv ESSFxc ESSFxv MHmm1 MHmm2 MHwh1 SWBdk SWBmk*
SP	Slow Perennial Stream	Typically a freshwater riverine habitat contained within a channel that has continuously slow-moving water, is bounded by banks or upland habitat, and has a low gradient; may include channels that form a connecting link between two bodies of standing water. Distributed throughout the province with a larger proportion of slow-moving streams found at lower altitudes where the gradient of the stream is reduced.	

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
SR	Sitka Spruce – Black Cottonwood Riparian	Typically a dense coniferous forest with fern- or shrub-dominated understories, which may progress through plant communities with red alder, black cottonwood, or bigleaf maple to a coniferous mixture of Sitka spruce and western hemlock; found on or in association with fluvial sites. Occurs extensively throughout valley bottoms of the Coast and Mountains ecoprovince, ranging in elevation between sea level and 1000 m.	*CDFmm CWHdm CWHmm1 CWHds1 CWHds2 CWHvm1 CWHms1 CWHms2 CWHxm CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHwh1 CWHwm CWHws1 CWHws2 ICHvc CDFmm CWHdm CWHds1 CWHds2 CWHmm1 CWHms1 CWHms2 CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHvm1 CWHvm2 CWHwh1 CWHwm CWHws1 CWHws2 CWHxm ICHmc1 ICHmc2 ICHvc ICHwc*
SS	Big Sagebrush Shrub/Grassland	Typically an open to dense, dry shrubland, dominated by drought-tolerant shrubs and perennial grasses, and generally lacking trees. This unit occurs extensively throughout the lower to middle elevations of the Southern Interior and southern portion of the Fraser Plateau; including the Fraser River, Thompson and Okanagan basins, as well as the valleys around the Fraser River in the Pavillion Ranges, Nicola River, and the Similkameen River. More isolated ecosystems are also found in the Granby and Kettle River valleys of the Southern Okanagan Highland. Elevation ranges from 250 to 1300 m with a sagebrush variety change in the higher elevation subzone (MSxk: 1450 to 1650 m).	*BGxh1 BGxh2 BGxh3 BGxw1 BGxw2 ESSFxc MSxk IDFdk1 IDFdm1 IDFxh1 IDFxh2 PPxh1 PPxh2*
ST	Subtidal Marine	Typically a habitat that consists of open ocean overlying the continental shelf with salinities in excess of 18 ppt and a substrate that is continuously submerged. This unit occurs adjacent to the intertidal shores of all coastal islands and the mainland, including major inlets, fjords, bays, and the open ocean.	*CDFmm CWHdm CWHmm1 CWHms2 CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHvm1 CWHwh1 CWHwm CWHws1 CWHxm1 CWHxm2*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
SU	Subalpine Shrub/Grassland	Typically high elevation, northern habitat, characterized by dense shrubs and bunchgrasses, both inter-mixed and occasionally dominated by scrub birch, willows, and Altai fescue. Generally limited to the high elevation areas of the Northern Boreal Mountains and portions of the Omineca and Central Canadian Rocky Mountains. Elevational limits range between 1000 and 1600 m.	*SWBmk SWBun*
SW	Shrub Swamp	A swamp wetland class that typically is a tall shrub wetland, characterized by willows, a sparse cover of spruce and sedges, usually found along stream channels and composed of a mixture of mineral and organic material. Occurs at lower to middle elevations, in a limited extent along creeks and rivers throughout the province.	
TA	Talus	Typically sparsely vegetated, rubbly or blocky colluvial areas, at the base of rock outcroppings, cliffs, or escarpments. Found throughout the province in non-alpine areas, usually on steep slopes below rock outcrops or escarpments. The weathered bedrock sheds blocks of rubble, which accumulate in draws and across the base of steep slopes and cliffs.	
TB	Trembling Aspen – Balsam Poplar	Typically an open, deciduous subalpine forest found on warm aspects, often in association with shrub/grasslands. This important habitat occurs on steep, warm aspects in the Spruce–Willow–Birch biogeoclimatic zone. This unit is limited to elevations ranging between 1050 and 1500 m. It occurs throughout the subalpine areas of the Northern Boreal Mountains; small patches are also present in the Northern Omineca and Central Canadian Rocky mountains, as well as on the Muskwa Plateau.	*SWB*
TC	Transportation Corridor	Typically a linear-shaped land area dedicated to some form of above-ground system for carrying products from one point to another, including roads and railways. Commonly occurs in low to middle elevation biogeoclimatic units throughout the southern half of the province. In more northerly locations they are not as widespread. Transportation corridors tend to be associated with communities, linking one community to another and to resource-related activities.	
TF	Tamarack Wetland	A fen wetland class that typically is an open forested wetland, dominated by tamarack, scrub birch, sedges, and moss. Found between 300 and 1100 m elevation throughout the Boreal and Taiga Plains, as well as the Liard Basin.	*BWBSdk BWBSmw1 BWBSmw2*
TR	Transmission Corridor	Typically a linear-shaped land area dedicated to some form of above or below ground system for carrying products from one point to another, including transmission lines and pipeline. Commonly occurs in low to mid-elevation biogeoclimatic units throughout the southern half of the province. In more northerly locations they are not as widespread in occurrence. Transmission corridors tend to be concentrated around hydroelectric systems.	

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
UR	Urban	Typically a mixture of human-influenced habitats that includes residential and urban areas, but excludes major agricultural lands. Urban development is not limited to specific regions or particular physical environments. However, most urban centres are situated at low elevations and near the coast, large rivers, or lakes.	
UV	Unvegetated	Typically non-alpine, unvegetated areas consisting of exposed soils and excluding unvegetated bedrock sites. Typically the total cover of vegetation, including trees, shrubs, herbs, and lichens, is less than 5% of the total surface area. This limited habitat occurs as a result of natural erosion, as well as human activities. Some typical sources of exposed soils include cutbanks along watercourses and roads, beaches, gravel pits, landings for sorting and loading logs, glacial moraines, mudflats in association with dried up lakes and ponds, and steep slopes where mudslides and debris torrents commonly occur.	
WB	Whitebark Pine Subalpine	Typically a subalpine habitat of open, whitebark pine forests, inter-mixed with lush bunchgrasses, other perennial grasses, and forbs, on droughty sites. Limited to south-facing slopes above the Engelmann Spruce – Subalpine Fir (ESSF) zone and below the Alpine Tundra (AT) zone, east of the leeward Coast Mountains into the Rocky Mountains. Occurs between 1650 and 2100 m elevation in more southerly areas and between 1000 and 1800 m in more northerly locations. Note, there is considerable range in the upper and lower elevational limits due to climatic variability and differing topography.	*ESSFdk ESSFdv ESSFmk ESSFxv*
WG	Hybrid White Spruce Bog Forest	A bog wetland class that is typically a sparse to open, treed organic wetland, composed of hybrid white spruce, with minor amounts of lodgepole pine and moss-dominated understorey. Occurs throughout the interior, east of the Coast Mountains; including the sub-boreal, central and southern interior of the province and into the Southern Interior Mountains. Elevational limits range between 400 and 1450 m. More northerly locations may occur at lower elevations while more southerly locations may occur at higher elevations.	*BWBS IDF MSdk MSxv SBPS SBS ICH*
WL	Wetland	Used for any wetland habitat class that cannot be recognized at small mapping scales.	
WP	Subalpine Fir – Mountain Hemlock Wet Parkland	Typically a high elevation mosaic of tree clumps and subalpine meadows or tundra, occurring above the closed forest and below the alpine. This unit occurs above the Engelmann Spruce – Subalpine Fir (ESSF) zone in the eastern Kitimat Ranges, south/central Hazelton Mountains, southeast Boundary Ranges, and northwest Skeena Mountains; elevation is approximately 1800 m. There is also a limited amount of this unit found on the leeward side of the Pacific Ranges, as well as in the western Monashee Mountains, at approximately 1675 m. Note, there is considerable range in the upper and lower elevational limits due to climatic variability and differing topography.	*ESSFmk ESSFmw ESSFvc ESSFwv*

Code	Name[1]	Description	BEC units
WR	Hybrid White Spruce – Black Cottonwood Riparian	Typically a dense deciduous, mixed or coniferous forest with shrub-dominated understories, found on, or in association with fluvial sites; includes plant communities that succeed slowly through black cottonwood to potential hybrid white spruce climax. Occurs throughout the interior, east of the Coast Mountains; including the sub-boreal, central, and southern interior and into the Southern Interior Mountains. Elevational limits range between 400 and 1450 m. More northerly locations may occur at lower elevations while more southerly locations may occur at higher elevations.	*ICHdk ICHmc1 ICHmc2 ICHwk1 IDFdk1 IDFdk2 IDFdk3 IDFdk4 IDFdm1 IDFdm2 IDFxm IDFxw IDFxh1 IDFxh2 SBPSdc SBPSmc SBPSmk SBPSxc SBSdh1 SBSdh2 SBSdk SBSdw1 SBSdw2 SBSmc1 SBSmc2 SBSmc3 SBSmh SBSmk1 SBSmk2 SBSmm SBSmw SBSvk SBSwk1 SBSwk2 SBSwk3 MSdk MSxv PPdh2 PPxh1*
YB	Yellow-cedar Bog Forest	Typically an open forest with shrubby yellow-cedar, mountain hemlock, and western hemlock; found on poorly drained sites. This unit is found on the western slopes of the Coast Mountains, north of the Fraser River through to the Alaskan border and throughout the Hecate Lowlands. It also occurs on the islands along the coast, including the Queen Charlotte Islands and Vancouver Island. It is restricted to the windward portion of southern Vancouver Island and expands to cover all of northern Vancouver Island, north of Kelsey Bay. Typically, the elevational limits of this unit range between sea level and approximately 1800 m.	*CWHmm2 CWHvh1 CWHvh2 CWHvm1 CWHvm2 CWHwh1 CWHwh2 MHmm1 MHmm2 MHwh*
YM	Yellow-cedar – Mountain Hemlock Forest	Typically an open scrubby forest with a well-developed understorey; mountain hemlock and yellow-cedar are the dominant climax species. Occurs at high elevations on the Queen Charlotte Islands and in hypermaritime areas of the coast, including major coastal islands north of Smith Inlet; typically found at elevations ranging from 500 to 1100 m.	*MHmm1 MHmm2 MHwh*
YS	Yellow-cedar Skunk Cabbage Swamp Forest	Typically an open forested wetland of yellow-cedar with an understorey of skunk cabbage and sparse shrubs found on poorly drained mineral sites. Occurs at higher elevations, ranging between 500 and 1600 m, on the Queen Charlotte Islands, Vancouver Island, and the Mainland Coast, expanding east into the Coast Mountains and north to the Alaskan border.	*MHmm1 MHmm2 MHwh*