

## B. Environmentally Responsible Trail Planning Guidelines

These new Environmentally Responsible Trail Planning (ERTP) guidelines classify natural areas and habitat types according to high, medium and low sensitivity, and then provide related mitigation strategies to reduce the impacts of trails. The table below provides an overview of the ERTP guidelines and the detailed version is available by contacting [parksplanning@whistler.ca](mailto:parksplanning@whistler.ca).

The ERTP guidelines will be implemented and promoted in all trail and trail-related amenity planning. They were developed by Registered Professional Biologists with Cascade Environmental Resources, incorporating their expertise, municipal and provincial environmental GIS layers, policies, and other expert knowledge, research and resources. Prior to these guidelines, there was no formal municipal or provincial guidance in place for environmentally responsible trail planning.

### Summary of ERTP Guidelines

| Environmental sensitivity                                                                                                                                                | Natural area and habitat types                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Mitigation Strategies (summary)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Very High and High ESA and Priority Habitat Areas*</b><br><br>Greatest potential impact from recreational trail activities                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High (class 1) forage grizzly bear habitat (all seasons)</li> <li>Wetlands</li> <li>Mountain goat ungulate winter range areas</li> <li>Species at risk confirmed occurrences</li> <li>Community watersheds for drinking water supply</li> <li>Raptor nesting sites</li> </ul>                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoid new trails as much as possible</li> <li>If new trails are proposed in these areas, field studies by Qualified Environmental Professionals (QEP) or suitable specialists should be undertaken to analyze potential impacts and provide mitigation recommendations.</li> <li>Trail maintenance and modifications in these areas must follow strict mitigation strategies.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Medium ESA</b><br><br>Potential environmental impacts if appropriate studies and careful trails planning and Mitigation Strategies are not implemented in these areas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderately high (class 2) forage grizzly bear habitat polygons (all seasons)*</li> <li>Riparian areas*</li> <li>Forested floodplains*</li> <li>Potential species at risk habitat*</li> <li>Slope angles over 45°</li> <li>Community watersheds</li> </ul>                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed trails in these areas will require field verification to determine alignment, potential impacts, and required mitigation strategies.</li> <li>Commitments to Mitigation Strategies and trail design for each user must be adhered to during trail authorizations</li> </ul>                                                                                                     |
| <b>Low</b><br><br>Trail planning and Mitigation Strategies can minimize the impact of trail construction and recreation activities on this feature                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unlogged interior, unfragmented areas of forests</li> <li>Coastal western hemlock old growth forests</li> <li>Large and old cottonwood forests</li> <li>Tree preservation covenant areas</li> <li>Old Growth Management Areas (OGMA)</li> <li>- Ecosystem-based management reserves (e.g., Cheakamus Community Forest)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commitments to mitigation strategies for each user must be adhered to during trail authorization.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

\*These environmentally sensitive areas will require QEP verification.