

Riparian Areas Protection Regulation – British Columbia

Qualitest provides the Riparian Areas Protection Regulation (RAPR) services in throughout the British Columbia including Surrey, Vancouver, Langley, Richmond, Delta, Burnaby, Victoria, Abbotsford, Coquitlam, Burnaby, New Westminister, White Rock, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Pitt Meadows, Mapleridge, Kitimat, Terrace, Dawson Creek, Kelowna, Kamloops etc

The Riparian Areas Protection Regulation (RAPR) is Provincial legislation that requires local governments to protect riparian areas during residential, commercial, and industrial developments in order to maintain the features, functions and conditions that support fish habitat. A RAPR Assessment may be required when considering development near watercourses, ditches, or wetlands.

Qualitest has the scientific and technical knowledge in determining the applicability of the RAPR to development projects, conducting RAPR assessments in accordance with the standardized RAPR assessment methodology, and completing and submitting RAPR Assessment Reports to the provincial online Riparian Areas Regulation Notification System (RARNS) for review and audit.

Purpose of the Riparian Areas Protection Regulation

The former Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) was amended by the Government of BC, with the amendments coming into force on November 1, 2019 as the Riparian Areas Protection Regulation (RAPR). The RAPR (under RAPA) is a directive by the Province that requires that local governments protect riparian areas during residential, commercial, and industrial development. The Fish and Aquatic Habitat Branch of the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development (FLNRORD) leads the RAPR process. The purpose of the RAPR is to protect riparian-area features that border onto streams, lakes and wetlands, to maintain stream health and productivity, including:

- Sources of large organic debris, such as fallen trees and tree roots;
- Areas for stream channel migration;
- Vegetative cover to help moderate water temperature;
- Provision of food, nutrients and organic matter to the stream;
- Stream bank stabilization; and
- Buffers for streams from excessive silt and surface run-off pollution.

The Fish Protection Act was re-titled the Riparian Areas Protection Act (RAPA) in 2016. The Riparian Areas Protection Act focuses on four major objectives:

- Ensuring sufficient water for fish;
- Protection and restoration of fish habitat;
- Improved riparian protection and enhancement; and
- Stronger local government powers in environmental planning.

The RAPR functions in a Professional Reliance model with a prescriptive, repeatable assessment methodology that supports permitting for residential, commercial and industrial developments. Prior to the start of a project near a stream or riparian habitat, The RAPR requires that a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) conduct a (simple or detailed) riparian assessment to describe the Features, Functions and Conditions that contribute to fish habitat, including the riparian vegetation. The RAPR assessment establishes a Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA) and the required SPEA setbacks. The RAPR provides a riparian protection standard to protect the SPEA and avoid development within the SPEA.

The new RAPR is intended to provide improved oversight for the Ministry, incorporate training requirements for QEPs, and provide additional detail and rigour in the application of regulatory standards.

Contact us admin@qualitests.com today to get a quote.

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