LOCAL GOVERNMENT:
TOWN OF PRINCETON

Keeping Nature in Our Future – A Biodiversity Strategy identifies where there are opportunities to conserve biodiversity throughout the South Okanagan and Similkameen.

As part of the Strategy, this primer provides specific findings and opportunities for Princeton. **It should be used in conjunction with the Town of Princeton Conservation Opportunities Maps**, and the Regional **Relative Biodiversity** map which identify:
- Sensitive ecosystems ranked in importance for conservation ('Conservation Ranking'),
- Sensitive ecosystems already included in Environmentally Sensitive or Watercourse Development Permit Areas, Conservation Lands or Dedicated Open Spaces;
- Linkages among natural areas for wildlife ("Habitat Connectivity"); and,
- Areas of greatest ecological and biodiversity significance ("Relative Biodiversity").

The natural environment of Princeton offers many unique physical features (rivers and lakes) and sensitive ecosystems (grasslands, riparian areas, open forests). It is the juxtaposition of these diverse habitats that contribute to a wide diversity of species, both common and rare, that are found within the Municipal boundaries.

Conservation Ranking

Maps show the ecosystems that are of more importance to conserve. The maps highlight where important, rare and sensitive ecosystems have already been identified in development permit areas, or designated as dedicated conservation lands, open spaces, parks and protected areas. It is recommended that the areas ranked high and very high for conservation be used to update the Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit areas.

Relative Biodiversity

Maps show the areas of greatest ecological and biodiversity significance, essentially "hotspots". This mapping provides a more comprehensive picture of important areas for nature - starting with important ecosystems (conservation ranking) and adding information such as special features (eg. wetlands), selected important species habitat and known locations, habitat size, and distance to roads. These maps will be useful for parks, neighbourhood and site planning.

Habitat Connectivity

Habitat connectivity describes the degree to which ecosystems and habitat for wildlife are linked to one another to form an interconnected network across the land. This network provides opportunities for wildlife movement through habitat corridors. Breaking these linkages results in habitat fragmentation thereby reducing biodiversity, ecosystem functions and the ability for species to fulfill their needs for food, shelter, and reproduction.

Highlights for Biodiversity Conservation

Conservation Ranking- Areas of Important Sensitive Ecosystems

- 44% of Princeton's land base contains ecosystems ranked high or very high in importance for conservation.
- Only the high conservation ranking areas adjacent to watercourses are in Environmentally Sensitive Development Permit Areas. Grasslands, open forests and other sensitive ecosystems are not in permit areas.
- 6% of these highly sensitive ecosystems have been designated as Open Space or protected as Conservation Lands through parks or zoning.

Relative Biodiversity – Areas of Greatest Ecological or Biodiversity Significance

- Almost 15% of Princeton is has a very high or high relative biodiversity.
- Almost 50% of very high relative biodiversity areas are found in the valley bottoms which are only about a quarter of the RDOS land base.

Connectivity – linkages between natural areas and corridors for wildlife

- Princeton has a fairly distinct urban-rural delineation, so it is important to maintain those attractive urban areas along with protection of the rural open space through zoning and naturalized park creation.
- Rivers provide wildlife corridors in Princeton.

Current Tools and new Opportunities for Conservation

Official Community Plan Bylaws

Development Permit Area #3 Environmentally Sensitive Areas, applies to commercial, residential or industrial development. It requires landowners to apply for a permit before subdividing, construction, or altering the land within a riparian area (e.g. 30m from stream top of bank). This development permit area is specifically designed to comply with the provincial Riparian Areas Regulation, under the provincial Fish Protection Act.

- Add ecosystems ranked high or very high in importance for conservation from the conservation ranking map to the Development Permit Area #3 for non-farming uses.

Zoning Bylaw

Flood Protection limits construction within 7.6m of Tulameen and Similkameen River Dykes, and within 15m of the high water mark of other watercourses. It also limits the elevation of building.

Deer Feeding Bylaw

Prohibits the intentional feeding of deer within the Town of Princeton.

Opportunities for Biodiversity Conservation

- Maintain setbacks and vegetation along Rivers as local wildlife corridors.

- Maintain existing north south and east west corridors in higher conservation value lands.
- For areas of Future Development, examine the impacts on biodiversity and servicing under different development scenarios.
- Use future land use maps in OCP reviews to signal where conservation or less detrimental land uses are more appropriate than the current OCP and zoning designations.

Princeton

Biodiversity Class Summary

| Biodiversity class	Area (ha)*	% of Princeton
Very high	61	5.9%
High	94	9.1%
Moderate	165	15.9%
Low	181	17.4%
Very low	536	51.7%
Total	1,038	

*area statistics exclude large lakes (>50ha)
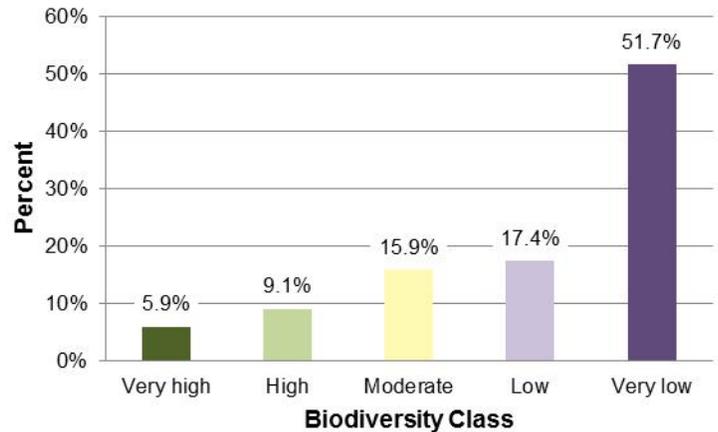
Management Class Summary

Management class	Area (ha)*	% of Princeton
Class 1 - Conservation Lands	61	5.9%
Class 2 - Dedicated Open Space	12	1.2%
Class 3 - Public Resource Lands	159	15.3%
Class 4 - Agriculture & Crown Leases	195	18.8%
Private land	367	35.4%
Indian reserve	3	0.3%
Undefined	241	23.2%
Total	1,038	

*area statistics exclude large lakes (>50ha)
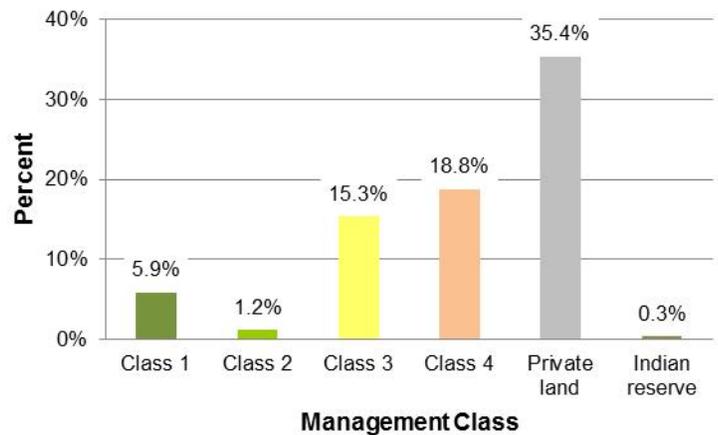
Conservation Ranking Summary

Conservation ranking	Area (ha)*	% of Princeton
Very high - Class 1	245	23.6%
High - Class 2	207	20.0%
Moderate - Class 3	48	4.6%
Low - Class 4	535	51.6%
No Data	2	0.2%
Total	1,038	

*area statistics exclude large lakes (>50ha)