

## CITY OF KELOWNA AND REGIONAL DISTRICT CENTRAL OKANAGAN (\$25,000)

**Project Title:** Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping (SHIM) Completion Project

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The City of Kelowna's vision is to meet the challenges and opportunities of the community, through innovation, creativity, and flexibility. With a staff of 770 people, the City of Kelowna serves a population of approximately 106,000 people, the largest City in the Okanagan Valley.

The Regional District of Central Okanagan is dedicated to protecting and enhancing natural and environmentally sensitive areas and achieving sustainable development. With an area of 2,956 square kilometres the district serves over 170,000 people in two unincorporated electoral areas and four member municipalities of Kelowna, Westside, Peachland and Lake Country. The City of Kelowna and the Regional District Central Okanagan jointly applied for the Water Conservation and Quality Improvement Grant.

The RDCO and City of Kelowna SHIM (Sensitive Habitat Inventory Mapping) Completion Project is utilizing SHIM methodology to map approximately 85 km of stream. This represents the final phase to over 6 years of stream mapping by these two agencies ensuring that all stream sections within the Regional District and City of Kelowna

boundaries have been mapped and inventoried (excluding streams within the Districts of Peachland and Lake Country). To date these organizations have utilized SHIM to map over 225 km of stream in the Regional District and over 82 km of stream and more than 100 wetlands within Kelowna boundaries.

SHIM information provides planners with up-to-date information, allowing for more informed planning decisions and the protection of sensitive ecosystems and water quality. Without it, many sensitive areas, such as riparian areas may be severely influenced by development. The information obtained will be used to set priorities for habitat restoration and enhancement projects as well as can be used in the design of stormwater management plans.

The three phases of this joint venture are:

- Field Component (April to October, 2008)
- Data Management (November, 2008 to February, 2009)
- Upload to Community Mapping Network (February to March, 2009). The Community Mapping Network is a public database where the SHIM data will be easily shared with the public and other government agencies.

Some creeks are located on private property and so letters were mailed to those streamside property owners to inform about the project and ask for property access. There were some homeowners who declined access, to date 6 calls have been received which refused access. Several other homeowners have called allowing access only if they are home. To overcome these obstacles, these creeks will still be delineated through aerial photography and potentially using information gathered in previous assessments.