

Overview



Woodinville Municipal Code 21.24.

The City's Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) provides incentives to developers by reducing standard buffers (setbacks from critical areas) in exchange for restoration of fish and wildlife habitat, wetlands or stream areas.

For example, Little Bear Creek requires a 150 foot standard setback. When an applicant applies for a development permit he/she may reduce the buffer to 115 feet in return for enhancement and restoration of the buffer area. Further reduction of the buffer may occur (to 100 feet) if it is proven by special study that the same system functions can be achieved at the reduced 100 feet.

To learn how the City's Critical Areas Ordinance may affect you, contact Debra Crawford, Environmental Planner
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Background

In response to a mandate of the a state Growth Management Act (GMA), the City of Woodinville adopted new regulations to protect its critical areas. Woodinville Municipal Code (WMC) 21.24 became effective December 2004 and applies to new development (i.e.) construction projects by establishing buffers that will protect, restore or enhance fish & wildlife habitat.

As required by the GMA, the City used Best Available Science (BAS) to update its regulations. Best Available Science is defined as current scientific information used in the process to designate, protect, or restore critical areas that are derived from a valid scientific process.

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The City of Woodinville



Critical Areas Ordinance

AT A GLANCE



Understanding
Critical Areas
Regulations in the
City of Woodinville



Woodinville's Critical Areas Ordinance

The City's Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) may affect your commercial or residential development project. Is there a wetland or stream close to where you want to build? Are fish or other wildlife living near your property?

For a preliminary determination as to whether the City's CAO affects your project, please review the following overview of code provisions.

The City strives to make your development project a success and appreciates your compliance with these "environmentally friendly" regulations.

Geological Hazards

WMC 21.24.290 to 310

Geological hazard areas include areas susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geological events.

- New report requirements
- New development standards and;
- New performance standards – buffer requirements, allowed alterations, design standards, seasonal restrictions, utility location, and subdivision restrictions.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas

WMC 21.24.410

Fish and Wildlife conservation areas are those lands set aside (Usually in a Native Growth Protection Easement NGPE) to protect and preserve habitat.

- Designation for fish and wildlife conservation areas.
- Report requirements – Habitat Management Plan.
- Performance standards for conservation areas.
- Performance standards for specific habitats – meaning endangered or threatened species, Chinook Salmon, Bald Eagles, Blue Heron rookeries.
- Anadromous fish— how we give special consideration per federal law to habitats containing salmonids.

Streams



WMC 21.24.380 to 400

Streams are water bodies with a defined bed and banks and demonstrable flow of water.

- Designation and rating— Type 1, Type 2, Type 3, Type 4 and criteria for these types.
- Stream development standards and recommended buffer widths.
 - ◇ Type 1- 150 ft. reduced to 115 ft. with buffer enhancement.
 - ◇ Type 2- 115 ft. reduced to 100 ft. with buffer enhancement.
 - ◇ Type 3- 75 ft. reduced to 50 ft. with buffer enhancement.
 - ◇ Type 4- 50 ft. reduced to 35 ft. with buffer enhancement.

Note: a new provision for urban streams has been added to the code that reduces buffers when certain criteria are met.

- Streams permitted alterations include: a special study, utility placement, surface water management activities, trail location, stream crossings, stream locations, channel stabilization, enhancement and restoration.
- New stream mitigation requirements.

Wetlands

WMC 21.24.320 to 360

Wetlands are areas inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.

- Designation and ranking— similar to Department of Ecology wetland rating system— Class 1, 2, 3 and criteria.

For class criteria see Ordinance 21.24

- Recommended buffer width for:

Class 1 wetlands- 150 ft. with reduction of 50 ft. (to 100 ft.) with enhancement.

Class 2 wetlands— 100 ft. with reduction of 50 ft. with enhancement.

Class 3 wetland—50 ft. buffer with reduction of 25 ft. with enhancement.

Note- Buffer averaging is allowed as an alternative to the standard buffer reduction but only one may be utilized.

- Wetland mitigation requirements—for lost functions and values, type and location, timing, monitoring (5 years) and maintenance.

• Mitigation ratios—Class 1 requires a 4 to 1 replacement ratio or wetland area. Class 2 requires a 2 to 1 replacement ratio of wetland area. Class 3 requires a 1.5 to 1 replacement ratio of wetland area.

- Mitigation banking
- Limited exemptions

