

**III-5 CRITICAL AREAS**

**General Policies**

- CA-100**      **New development should be required to protect and preserve critical areas.**
- CA-101**      **The County should promote a land use pattern which will protect critical areas and minimize hazardous conditions.**
- CA-102**      **The County should promote innovative design and planning which assures protection of critical areas while allowing for reasonable use and development of property.**
- CA-103**      **The County should amend development regulations to provide for reasonable protection of critical areas.**
- CA-104**      **The County should ensure that a uniform process is used for the review of land use and development proposals within critical areas.**

**Wetlands**

- CA-200**      **The County should adopt permanent wetland regulations that address:**
- A.      Wetland designation.**
  - B.      Delineation procedures.**
  - C.      Land uses that are subject to permit requirements, including as a minimum those activities that involve or result in:
    - i.      The removal, excavation, grading and dredging of soil, sand, gravel, minerals, organic matter, or any other materials;**
    - ii.     The dumping of, discharging of, or filling with any material;**
    - iii.    The draining or flooding of wetland sites;**
    - iv.    The driving of pilings;**
    - v.     The placing of obstructions;**
    - vi.    The construction, reconstruction, demolition, or expansion of any structure;****

- vii. The destruction or alteration of wetlands and wetland vegetation area through clearing, harvesting, shading, intentional burning, or planting of vegetation; or
- viii. A significant change of water temperature, a significant change of physical or chemical characteristics of wetlands water sources, including quantity, or the introduction of pollutants.

D. Those activities and wetland areas that are exempt from permitting requirements, including but not limited to:

Agricultural activities on wetlands within agricultural lands, except where such activities result in the conversion of a regulated wetland to a non-agricultural use.

E. Development standards, including but not limited to standards that apply to:

- i. Vegetation areas;
- ii. Building setbacks.

F. Mitigation for wetland impacts

CA-201 Land use and development impacts to wetlands should be avoided. If it is not feasible to avoid such impacts, then the impacts should be mitigated such that no net loss of wetlands in terms of wetland acreage, function and value occurs.

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas

CA-300 The County should adopt permanent regulations that address classification, designation, appropriate land uses, and development standards for critical aquifer recharge areas.

CA-301 Within potential aquifer recharge areas, the County should identify and regulate land uses which could have a potential significant impact on ground water quality and/or quantity.

CA-302 Within potential aquifer recharge areas, uses such as landfills, junk yards, salvage yards, auto wrecking yards, businesses that use hazardous substances or generate hazardous waste in their operation, solid waste disposal facilities, or other uses and

activities determined by the Directors of the Mason County Department of Community Development and the Mason County Health Department that are likely to pose a threat to groundwater should be regulated via permit.

- CA-304** The County should encourage those engaged in agricultural activities, including commercial and hobby farms, to utilize best management practices regarding animal keeping, animal waste disposal, fertilizer use, pesticide use, and stream corridor management.
- CA-305** The County should review all proposals for subdivision, short subdivision, and other divisions of land to evaluate the impact on groundwater quality.
- CA-306** The County should require an Environmental Geologic Report for any development proposal in areas with a high degree of susceptibility to contamination of the water table or confined aquifers that have a high probability of yielding potable water.
- CA-307** An Environmental Geologic Report should identify the proposed development plans and the risk associated with on-site sewage disposal systems and other on-site activities which may potentially degrade the ground water aquifer or confined reservoirs. The report should contain:
- A.** A description of the general geological and hydrological characteristics of the area under permit application consideration;
  - B.** A description of the local characteristics associated with site drainage and water movement;
  - C.** A geologic map with a cross section of the site and adjoining properties up to 1,000 feet away at a scale of one inch equals 200 feet;
  - D.** A water well report which describes in detail the lithology of the penetrated geologic units and geologic units penetrated in wells in adjoining properties up to 1,000 feet away;
  - E.** A topographic map of the property and adjoining properties up to 1,000 feet away at a scale of one inch equals 200 feet and a five foot contour interval; and
  - F.** Provide a discussion on the proposed activities and the

effects of sewage disposal, lawn and yard uses, agriculture and animal husbandry, storm water impacts and any other impact reasonably associated with the project type.

- CA-308 An Environmental Geological Report should be prepared by an engineering geologist, hydrologist or professional engineer licensed by the State of Washington, who is qualified to analyze geological and hydrological information and ground water systems.

Frequently Flooded Areas

- CA-400 The Mason County Comprehensive Plan should be consistent and compatible with the Mason County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.
- CA-401 The County should adopt permanent regulations that address frequently flooded areas. These regulations should include provisions for classification and designation of frequently flooded areas, appropriate land use activities, and development standards.

Landslide Hazard Areas

- CA-500 The County should adopt permanent landslide hazard area regulations that minimize the risks to property owners and adjacent property owners from development activities. Landslide hazard regulations should include provisions for classification and designation of landslide hazard areas, appropriate land use activities, and development standards.
- CA-501 Permits should be required for all development activities and uses in Landslide Hazard areas, except the following:
- A. The growing and harvesting of timber, forest products and associated management activities in accordance with the Washington Forest Practices Act of 1974, as amended, and regulations adopted pursuant thereto; including, but not limited to, road construction and maintenance, aerial operations, applications of fertilizers and pesticides, helispots, and other uses specific to growing and harvesting timber forest products and management activities, except those forest practices designated as Class IV - "General Forest Practices" under the authority of the 1992 Washington State Forest Practices Act Rules and Regulations, WAC 222-12-030;
  - B. Activities and uses conducted pursuant to the Washington State

Surface Mining Act, RCW 78.44 and its rules and regulations, where State law specifically exempts local authority; and

- C. Existing and ongoing agriculture, aquaculture, floriculture, horticulture, general farming, and dairy operating under best management practices.

**CA-502** The County should require a geotechnical report prepared by a licensed civil engineer or a practicing engineering geologist with special knowledge to the geology of Mason County for proposals located on landslide hazard areas.

**CA-503** A geotechnical report should, at a minimum, include the following:

- A. A description of the soil and geological conditions of the proposed development, including a geologic map with a cross section showing site geologic conditions at a scale of one inch equals 200 feet, and opinions and recommendations of the adequacy of the site to be developed;
- B. A detailed temporary erosion control plan which identifies the specific mitigating measures to be implemented during construction to protect the slope from erosion, landslides and harmful construction methods;
- C. A detailed clearing and grading plan which specifically identifies vegetation to be removed, a schedule for vegetation removal and replanting, and the method of vegetation removal;
- D. An analysis of both on-site and off-site impacts of the proposed development; and
- E. Specifications of development conditions such as, vegetative management, drainage, and buffer widths.

**CA-504** Any area in which a geotechnical report indicates the presence of landslide hazards should not be subjected to development unless the report demonstrates conclusively that the hazards can be overcome, and that the proposed development meets all development standards.

### Seismic Hazard Areas

**CA-600** The County should adopt permanent seismic hazard area regulations in order to 1) identify areas that present potential

dangers to public health and safety, 2) prevent the acceleration of natural and manmade geologic hazards, and 3) minimize the risks to property owners and adjacent property owners from development activities. Seismic hazard regulations should include provisions for classification and designation of landslide hazard areas, appropriate land use activities, and development standards.

**CA-601** The County should take potential seismic effects into consideration when reviewing development proposals.

#### **Fish and Wildlife Habitat**

**CA-700** The County should adopt permanent regulations to protect fish and wildlife habitat. Such regulations should establish and define aquatic and terrestrial management areas and provide management guidelines that include development standards and permit requirements.

**CA-701** Fish and wildlife regulations should be compatible and consistent with the Mason County Shoreline Master Program.

**CA-702** The County should provide fish and wildlife habitat information/education to the public as part of the development permitting process.

**CA-703** All areas under the jurisdiction of the Mason County Shoreline Master Program where on-site sewage disposal systems exist should undergo an on-site sewage disposal system inspection certified by the County Health Department or the State of Washington, prior to any transfer of ownership.

**CA-704** The County should establish septic system inspection programs in areas where the County Health Director finds it necessary to protect water quality.

**CA-705** Tree removal adjacent to aquatic areas for building site preparation or for health and safety reasons, shrub removal, creation of access trails, and tree limbing should be done carefully and kept to a minimum to provide maximum aquatic habitat protection.

**CA-706** The commercial and non-commercial yarding of animals and use of fertilizer should be done in a manner to provide aquatic habitat protection.

**CA-707** Site preparation to support development activities should not

result in off-site erosion, siltation, or other reductions in water quality.

Harstine Island Sub-Area Plan

**B-6 Natural Systems**

- B-6-a:** Protect the subarea natural physical systems (air, water, and land resources) by identifying and designating critical areas, which have recognized resource values or are potentially hazardous to life and property. Public recreational access is currently available at Jarrell Cove State Park and the beach access near McMicken Island. Public boat launching is available at Latimers Landing on the west end of the bridge.
- B-6-a • 1:** The unique, fragile, sensitive, and critical areas of Mason County should be protected from incompatible uses, and the public should be alerted of the locations and natural limitations of these areas.
- B-6-a • 2:** Flooding and geologic hazard areas (seismic and landslide) should be delineated throughout the subarea. Residential, commercial, and industrial development in such areas should be closely regulated and should follow strict safety and development standards which are tailored to each hazard.
- B-6-a • 3:** The valuable natural functions of riparian areas in wetlands, shorelines, and stream corridors should be protected by maintaining an undisturbed or restored vegetation buffer and establishing protective development standards, such as prohibiting filling, clearing, draining, or excavating within these areas.
- B-6-a • 4:** Wetlands and floodplains should be preserved in their natural state to store and transport peak floodwater and to improve water quality in the vicinity.
- B-6-a • 5:** Estuary and contiguous wetlands, as well as freshwater wetlands, should be protected through the Mason County Shoreline Master Plan and other ordinances.
- B-6-a • 6:** In areas subject to flooding, priority land use should be forestry, agriculture and public recreation. New

development in the floodplain or actions protecting existing developments should involve no filling within the floodplain, be designed to avoid damage from floods, and not increase flood hazards on-site or downstream.

- B-6-a • 8:** When updated soil survey for the whole county is completed, include for Harstine Island the current descriptions of soil physical properties and limitations and the suitability of each soil for numerous land uses.

North Mason Sub-Area Plan

*Sensitive/Critical Areas*

1. **Riparian areas should be protected. Specific ways to do this include requiring buffers along streams, shorelines and wetlands, and establishing practices to protect those areas.**
2. **Wetlands and floodplains should be retained because of their ability to reduce flood peaks and provide treatment to improve water quality. They should be preserved in their natural state to protect water quality.**
3. **The quality of water entering wetlands, streams and ponds should be maintained and improved where necessary, so that the capability of these systems to cleanse the water is not overloaded.**
4. **Areas where there are sensitive aquifer areas (i.e. low supply of ground water) should be restricted to low intensity and compatible uses, unless alternative domestic water supplies are available from other sources.**
5. **The valuable natural functions of wetlands and stream corridors, should be protected by maintaining an undisturbed or restored native vegetation buffer and by prohibiting filling, draining, and clearing within these areas.**
6. **In areas subject to flooding, priority should be given to land uses such as forestry, agriculture, and public recreation. Developments in floodplains should be designed to avoid damages from floods, and not increase flood hazards down stream.**
7. **Flood storage and transmission capacity of floodplains should be maintained by prohibiting filling of wetlands and discouraging filling elsewhere in the floodplain.**

Southeast Mason County Sub-Area Plan

**G. NATURAL SYSTEMS**

- A1: The unique and fragile sensitive areas of the subarea should be protected from incompatible uses.**
- A2: Critical areas should be delineated throughout the subarea. Residential, commercial, and industrial development in such areas should be closely regulated and should follow strict safety and development standards which are tailored to each type of critical area.**
- A3: The valuable natural functions of riparian areas in wetlands, shorelines and stream corridors should be protected.**
- A4: Wetlands and floodplains of the subarea should be maintained to store and transport peak floodwater and to maintain or improve water quality in the vicinity.**
- A5: Estuary and contiguous wetlands, as well as freshwater wetlands, should be protected through the Mason County Shoreline Master Plan and other applicable ordinances.**
- A6: In areas subject to flooding, priority land uses should be forestry, agriculture and public recreation. New development in the floodplain or actions protecting existing developments should not involve filling within the floodplain or increase flood hazards onsite or downstream, and should be designed to avoid damage from future flooding.**
- A7: Protection of endangered and threatened plant and wildlife species and game species and their habitat should be considered in evaluating proposed land conversions.**
- A8: An updated soil survey for the subarea should be completed to aid in land use decision-making. The survey should include the current descriptions of soil physical properties and the limitations and suitability of each soil for numerous land uses.**