



Kitsap County Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO)



Three sections of the CAO were recently revised – “Shoreline Buffer Widths,” “Wetlands Exemptions” and “Shoreline Infill Provisions.” These revisions were ordered and approved by the Growth Management Hearings Board.

1. Shoreline Buffer Widths:

Shoreline Designation	Buffer Width	Minimum Building Setback
Urban	50 feet	15 feet
Conservancy	50 feet	15 feet
Natural	100 feet	15 feet
Rural/Semi-Rural shorelines and lakes less than 20 acres	100 feet	15 feet

Buffer Reduction Provisions are now available for rural and semi-rural shorelines and lakes – including infill averaging for undeveloped lots in-between two lots with structures, not to exceed 50 feet.

A Habitat Management Plan is required for all buffer reduction requests.

A formal variance is required for buffer reductions on Urban, Conservancy and Natural shorelines.

(continued on reverse side...)

CAO Revisions continued...

2. Wetlands Exemptions:

All jurisdictional wetlands will be regulated regardless of size - including:

Category III Wetlands: Isolated wetlands less than 2,500 square feet

Category IV Wetlands: Isolated wetlands less than 7,500 square feet

Activities affecting these wetlands may be allowed, provided that the wetlands report identifies the specific wetland function affected or at risk, and proposes mitigation to replace the wetland function on a per function basis.

3. Shoreline Infill Provisions:

Building Setbacks and Buffers:

Shorelines are provided a buffer of native vegetation to protect them from human activities. No clearing or grading for new construction is allowed within a 50 foot buffer of the shoreline itself. In addition, structures must be kept outside a 15-foot building setback that extends beyond the buffer.

For more information on Building Permits, Critical Areas or Land Use Planning, visit the Kitsap County DCD website: www.kitsapgov.com/dcd