

Excerpted Sammamish Comprehensive Plan Policies related to Environmentally Critical Area Regulations:

***Please note:** The following excerpts are a selected set of the Sammamish Comprehensive Plan goals and policies related to Environmentally Critical Areas. The examples were selected to provide an overview of the policy direction contained within the Sammamish Comprehensive Plan as background information for the proposed 2012 Environmentally Critical Areas update. The majority of all goals and policies related to Environmentally Critical Areas are contained within the Land Use Element and the Environment & Conservation Element of the Sammamish Comprehensive Plan, and may be found on the City's website here: <http://www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/departments/communitydevelopment/ComprehensivePlan.aspx>*

Introduction

COMMUNITY VISION AND IDEALS

In November of 1999, the City Council began the process of developing a vision statement to serve as the foundation for planning the future of the City of Sammamish. This included a community-wide survey and a series of public workshops in December of 1999 and the first part of 2000. The results of these workshops and the community survey were reviewed by the City Council's Community Development Committee, which then drafted a proposed statement representing the ideal vision of the community. The City Council then adopted the following statement and ideals in August 2000. It is upon this vision and accompanying ideals, that this plan is based and to which its goals and policies strive to achieve.

Vision Statement

The vision of Sammamish is a community of families. A blend of small-town atmosphere with a suburban character, the City also enjoys a unique core of urban lifestyles and conveniences. It is characterized by quality neighborhoods, vibrant natural features, and outstanding recreational opportunities. A variety of community gathering places provide numerous civic, cultural, and educational opportunities. Residents are actively involved in the decisions that shape the community and ensure a special sense of place.

Vision Ideals

Community Design

- Maintain a small-town atmosphere and suburban character so that new development will complement Sammamish's existing character as well as allow for diversity and creativity.
- Provide a family-friendly, kid-safe community.
- Encourage community gathering spaces which invite human presence, arouse curiosity, peak interest and allow for the interaction of people.
- Establish a unique sense of place for visitors and residents.
- Respect the character and integrity of existing neighborhoods.

Environment

- Preserve trees and green ways by encouraging the preservation or development of large areas of greenery which provide a visual impact as opposed to creating small areas of unusable residue.
- Protect and enhance streams, wetlands and wildlife corridors
- Maintain a harmonious relationship between the natural environment and future urban development.

Recreation

- Create a safe and interesting network of trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding.
- Establish a park and recreation system that meets the high standards of the community.

Government

- Provide accessible, quality government service and encourage active, involved citizens.
- Develop civic and cultural opportunities and experiences.

Land Use Element

GOAL LUG-9: Preserve and enhance the natural features and historic, cultural and archeological resources of the community.

LUP-9.3 The City should use regulations, incentives, open space acquisition, or where these measures are not adequate, use low density zoning to protect floodplains, riparian corridors, high value wetlands, and unstable slopes from degradation, and to encourage linking these environmental features into a network of open space, fish and wildlife habitat.

GOAL LUG-13: Practice environmental stewardship by protecting, enhancing, and promoting the natural environment within Sammamish and the surrounding communities.

GOAL LUG-14: Promote development design that maintains a harmonious relationship with the natural environment.

GOAL LUG-17: Develop and implement plan and regulatory amendment and development permit processes that are participatory, timely, predictable, and fair to all affected parties.

LUP-17.6 The City should review existing development regulations to ensure that P-suffix and SO regulations have been adequately incorporated to provide the desired land use and environmental protection.

Environment & Conservation Element

GOAL EC-1: Practice environmental stewardship by protecting, enhancing and promoting the natural environment in and around the City.

ECP-1.2 The protection of lands where development would pose hazards to health, property, important ecological functions or environmental quality shall be achieved through acquisition, enhancement, incentive programs and appropriate regulations. The features in policy ECP-1.1 defining critical areas are particularly susceptible and should be protected.

ECP-1.4 The SO-180 Wetland Management Areas Special Overlay District and requirements, and the SO-190, Erosion Hazards Near Sensitive Water Bodies Special Overlay District and requirements, shall be reviewed for potential amendment and updated where appropriate to ensure protection of high function or high hazard areas.

ECP-1.6 The City should protect and enhance natural ecosystems through its Comprehensive Plan, Policies and Development Regulations that reflect natural constraints and protect sensitive features. Natural resources and the built environment shall be managed to protect, improve, and sustain environmental quality while minimizing public and private costs.

ECP-1.7 Corridors with primary importance for wildlife, and ancillary importance as transitional buffers between development, should be designated by the City. Such corridors are defined as permanent low-density lands and/or designated streams and wetlands and their buffers, which protect adjacent resource lands and environmentally sensitive areas and which create open space corridors within and between development providing environmental, visual, recreational and wildlife benefits. The corridors further function as buffers to provide a visual contrast to continuous development and reinforce the unique identity of communities. The City should conduct a study to evaluate the effectiveness of the designated wildlife corridors and may revise the wildlife corridor criteria and/or boundaries as appropriate.

ECP-1.8 Corridors designated for wildlife and associated purposes should include and link parks and other lands that contain significant features as defined in ECP-1.7 and/or contain critical resource protection, contain defining physical features, or contain historic resources. The residential density for land so designated should be maintained at one unit per acre.

ECP-1.18 The City shall promote and lead education and involvement programs to raise the public awareness about environmental issues, advocate respect for the environment and demonstrate how individual actions and the cumulative effects of a community's actions can have significant effects on the environment.

ECP-1.19 Sammamish should take a regional role in environmental stewardship through direct education, coordinating of educational efforts and establishing partnerships with other entities that share similar environmental concerns or stewardship opportunities.

ECP-1.20 Sammamish should coordinate with local jurisdictions, federal and state agencies, federally-recognized tribes, citizen interest groups, special districts, and citizens in the development of Water Resource Inventory Area plans for all areas of the City.

ECP-1.21 Development of environmental regulations and restoration projects should be coordinated with local jurisdictions, federal and state agencies, federally recognized tribes, special interest groups and citizens when protecting and restoring the natural environment.

ECP-1.22 Critical and Special Areas shall be included in an open space system.

ECP-1.23 There shall be no net loss of wetlands acreage or function. The City shall review its wetland regulations in consideration of Best Available Science and mitigation effectiveness research conducted by King County and the State Department of Ecology or others to determine appropriate regulatory measures to promote and make a priority of wetland avoidance, and where mitigation is allowed, ensure strict wetland mitigation standards apply.

ECP-1.24

a. The City should use its regulatory powers to conserve Critical and Special Areas. Where it is unfeasible during development to avoid or conserve a Critical or Special Area, those areas should be integrated into the developed landscape by using innovative planning, design, and management practices; these areas should be integrated into the developed landscape in a manner that conserves their integrity.

b. The City should require, and provide guidance to, private landowners and organizations to protect, restore, or enhance privately owned critical areas, natural areas, scenic areas and natural drainage areas in new developments.

ECP-1.30 The City should seek to develop effective partnerships between the City, other governmental organizations, and the private sector for the protection and preservation of critical and special areas. It should also seek the cooperation and assistance of citizens, business, community groups, conservation programs, and governmental agencies in the development and implementation of programs to protect and preserve local Critical and Special Areas.

ECP-1.34 Environmental standards for development may emphasize flexible development options to allow densities without compromising the intent of the standards to protect the quality of the critical area or natural resource.

ECP-1.35 Mitigating measures should be utilized to serve multiple purposes, such as drainage control, ground water recharge, stream protection, open space, cultural and historic resource protection and landscaping.

ECP-1.36 Critical area regulations should provide sufficient buffer widths consistent with the quality and class of the environmentally sensitive area.

GOAL EC-3: Maintain a surface water and groundwater system that serves the community, enhances the quality of life, and protects the environment.

ECP-3.1 Sammamish shall use incentives, regulations and programs to manage its water resources (streams, lakes, freshwater wetlands and ground water) and to protect and enhance their multiple beneficial uses-including fish and wildlife habitat, flood and erosion control, water quality control and sediment transport, water supply, transportation, recreational opportunities and scenic beauty. Use of water resources for one purpose should, to the fullest extent practical, preserve opportunities for other uses.

ECP-3.2 Development shall support continued ecological and hydrologic functioning of water resources and should not have a significant adverse impact on water quality, or sediment transport and should maintain base flows, natural water level fluctuations, ground water recharge in Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas and fish and wildlife habitat.

ECP-3.11 River and stream channels, stream outlets, headwater areas, and riparian corridors should be preserved, protected and enhanced for their hydraulic, hydrologic, ecological and aesthetic functions, including their functions in providing woody debris sources to salmonid-bearing streams.

ECP-3.12 Lakes should be protected through management of lake watersheds and shorelines. Lakes sensitive to nutrients shall be protected through the management of nutrients that stimulate algae blooms and aquatic plant growth. Measurable standards for lake quality should be set and management plans established to meet the standards. Formation of lake management districts or other financing mechanisms should be considered to provide the financial resources necessary to support actions for protection of sensitive lakes.

ECP-3.13 The City should restrict the runoff rate, volume and quality for all new development and redevelopment. Critical drainage or erosion areas within the City limits draining directly to Lake Sammamish, George Davis (a.k.a. Eden) Creek, Ebright Creek, Pine Lake, and Beaver Lake should be subject to stricter requirements and conditions. Such conditions may include the limitation of the volume of discharge from the subject property to predevelopment levels, preservation of wetlands or other natural drainage features or other controls necessary to protect against community hazard.

ECP-3.23 The City should reduce erosion and sedimentation impacts to water quality from land clearing through BMP implementation.

ECP-3.32 To reduce erosion and phosphorous transport from individual buildings lots, the City should review and amend its building and clearing regulations as appropriate to limit the percent of building lots to be cleared, assuring environmentally-friendly revegetation of newly graded lots, and applying other erosion control best management practices.

Beaver Lake

Beaver Lake Watershed Management Goals

Beaver Lake is sensitive to potential increases in phosphorus and other pollutant loading from existing and proposed residential development in the watershed. Therefore, the Beaver Lake Management Plan establishes a non-degradation policy interpreted in the context of the following specific goals:

Goal EC-3i: Preserve Trophic Status: There should be no significant increase in the annual external phosphorus load to Beaver Lake and the present trophic status of each lake basin should be maintained.

Goal EC-3j: Preserve Public Health Status: There should be no significant increase in the concentration of fecal coliform bacteria in Beaver Lake.

Goal EC-3k: Prevent Nuisance Aquatic Plant Infestation: Introduction of nuisance aquatic plants to Beaver Lake should be prevented.

Goal EC-3l: Preserve The Beaver Lake Fishery: The water quality of Beaver Lake should be managed in such a manner as to continue to support a viable mixed fishery.

Goal EC-3m: Educate And Involve The Beaver Lake Community: The local community, in cooperation with the City of Sammamish, King County Metro, the Seattle-King County Department of Public Health, Washington Lake Protection Association, and the Washington State Departments of Health, Ecology and Wildlife, should develop and implement a program to educate and involve existing and future residents of the watershed regarding wise lake and watershed management practices at the individual household level.

Interim Pine Lake Watershed Management Goals

The City recognizes the importance of Pine Lake as an environmentally sensitive natural resource that should be protected and enhanced. As an interim measure, pending the establishment of a Pine Lake Management District by the property owners in the Pine Lake Watershed, the City adopts the following non-degradation goals and policies:

Goal EC-3n: Preserve Trophic Status: There should be no significant increase in the annual external phosphorus load to Pine Lake and the present trophic status of the lake basin should be maintained or improved. Methods to reduce existing phosphorus load in the lake should be explored.

Goal EC-3o: Preserve Public Health Status: There should be no significant increase in the concentration of fecal coliform bacteria in Pine Lake.

Goal EC-3p: Prevent Nuisance Aquatic Plant Infestation: Introduction of nuisance aquatic plants to Pine Lake should be prevented.

Goal EC-3q: Preserve the Pine Lake Fishery: The water quality of Pine Lake should be managed in such a manner as to continue to support a viable mixed fishery.

Goal EC-3r: Educate and Involve the Pine Lake Community: The local community, in cooperation with the City of Sammamish, King County Metro, the Seattle-King County Department of Public Health, Washington Lake Protection Association, and the Washington State Departments of Health, Ecology and Wildlife, should develop and implement a program to educate and involve existing and future residents of the watershed regarding wise lake and watershed management practices at the individual household level.

GOAL EC-4 Protect wetlands from encroachment and degradation and encourage wetland restoration.

ECP-4.3 The City's overall goal for the protection of wetlands is no net loss of wetland acreage and functions within each drainage sub-basin. Acquisition, enhancement, regulations, and incentive programs shall be used independently or in combination with one another to protect and enhance wetlands functions, avoiding wetland mitigation with the exception of public agency projects. Wetland mitigation, when permitted, should be located within the sub-basin. The City may authorize mitigation for public agency projects within a Federal, State, County, or City approved mitigation bank provided it is at a minimum located in the same basin within the City's incorporated boundaries and meets all City policies, regulations, and criteria.

ECP-4.4 Development adjacent to wetlands shall be sited such that wetland functions are protected, an adequate buffer around the wetlands is provided, and significant adverse impacts to wetlands are prevented. Education of abutting or adjacent property owners, signage and fencing should be considered as appropriate to maintain and protect wetlands and their buffers.

ECP-4.5 Areas of native vegetation that connect wetland systems should be protected. Whenever effective, incentive programs shall be used.

ECP-4.6 When feasible, City programs and regulations should promote the enhancement or restoration of riparian areas surrounding wetlands where functions have been lost or compromised.

GOAL EC-5 Protect life and property in areas of natural hazards.

ECP-5.1 The existing flood storage and conveyance functions and ecological values of floodplains, wetlands, and riparian corridors shall be protected, and should, where possible, be enhanced or restored.

ECP-5.3 The City should promote bioengineering techniques (including placement of large woody debris) that protect and enhance salmon habitat into flood control and bank stabilization measures undertaken by agencies, developers, or other parties.

ECP-5.6 Land uses permitted in Erosion Hazard Areas shall minimize soil disturbance and should maximize retention and replacement of native vegetative cover.

ECP-5.7 Slopes with a grade of 40 percent or more should not be developed. No disturbance zones shall be designated where basin plans identify the need to prevent erosion damages in areas that are extremely sensitive to erosion impacts. Properly designed storm water tightlines may be allowed within designated no-disturbance zones.

ECP-5.8 Landslide Hazard Areas should not be developed. Development proposed adjacent to landslide hazard areas shall be reviewed and mitigated to ensure development does not increase landslide or erosion hazards that would adversely impact downstream properties or natural resources.

ECP-5.9 Utilizing relevant Federal, State and County resources, the City shall identify the location of seismically active areas (liquefaction areas) and fault zones susceptible to damage in the event of an earthquake. The City shall identify escape routes and evacuation alternatives for emergency preparedness.

GOAL EC-7 Maintain and promote a diversity of species and habitat within the City.

ECP-7.1 The City shall strive to maintain the existing diversity of fish and wildlife species and habitats in the City through maintenance of a quality environment.

ECP-7.4 The City shall analyze wildlife corridors identified during County planning efforts to determine the impact of historic and recent development on its function and value. Mitigation measures or actions that can be taken to restore the corridor functions and values should be considered. Studies should also examine appropriate boundaries for the corridor and alternative boundaries, increasing or decreasing, and whether the corridor can function in two portions.

ECP-7.6 The City should designate and protect species of local importance, as listed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and listed by the City. Protection should be accomplished through regulations, incentives or acquisition.

ECP-7.7 Development proposals shall be assessed for the presence of fish and wildlife habitat conservation species and species of local importance. A comprehensive assessment should follow a standard procedure or guidelines and shall occur one time during the development review process.

ECP-7.8 Stream and wetland buffer requirements may be increased to protect species of local importance and their habitats.

ECP-7.11 Dedicated open spaces and designated sensitive areas help provide wildlife habitat. Habitat networks for Threatened, Endangered and Priority species of local importance shall be designated and mapped. Habitat networks for other Priority Species should be designated and mapped. Planning should be coordinated to ensure that connections are made with adjacent segments of the network. The City should provide incentives for new development within the networks to incorporate design techniques that protect and enhance wildlife habitat values.