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## Community Planning and Economic Development

*Creating Solutions for Our Future*

Joshua Cummings, Director

### 2022 Thurston County Community Planning Field Screening Guidelines for Prairie Habitat

#### Section 1 -

##### 1.1 Purpose

Under the development of the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), it is the long-term goal of Thurston County to conserve and restore large, intact areas of prairie habitat in addition to smaller tracts of land within 1/2 mi of larger prairies (**Chapter 24.25.065 Thurston County Code (TCC)**). While the screening process described in this protocol focuses on the detection of diagnostic prairie flora listed in the CAO, the overall intention for prairie conservation under the CAO and pending the HCP is to protect a much broader range of prairie butterflies, birds and mammals, and habitat.

South Puget Sound Prairie ecosystems support a wide range of rare flora and fauna, some of which are listed under federal or state protection, including butterflies which are considered Species of Conservation Concern (SCC) or Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). Particular attention is given to the protection of federally listed and imperiled butterfly species in Thurston County, such as the Taylor's checkerspot (TCB, *Euphydryas editha taylori*), Puget blue (*Icaria icarioides blackmorei*), hoary elfin (*Callophrys polios*), Oregon branded skipper (*Hesperia Colorado oregonia*), Mardon skipper (*Polites mardon*), and valley silverspot (*Speyeria zerene*) butterflies, and the plant species known to serve as host and nectar plants for these butterflies. Other federally listed and candidate prairie species include the streaked horned lark (*Eromophila alpestris strigata*), Mazama pocket gopher (*Thomomys mazama*), and the Oregon vesper sparrow (*Pooecetes gramineus*).

A delineated Critical Areas screening process provides assurance that land use projects proposed in potential prairie habitat are evaluated in a thorough, consistent, and repeatable manner. While this process may lengthen the time between permit application and approval where a habitat management plan (HMP) is required, it may also conserve financial resources and time in cases where an HMP is not required. The guidelines in the following sections are to be applied in a preliminary site visit. These guidelines are based on the constraints of the CAO policy, the CAO Prairie Definition, and certain techniques included in the draft Prairie Habitat Assessment Methodology (PHAM) protocol (Thurston County, Institute for Applied Ecology (IAE), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), and Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM)), and WDFW's draft "Protocol for Mapping PHS Westside Prairie."

## 1.2 Introduction

When a development application is received for a property mapped with glacial outwash soils known to support prairie habitat, as indicated in Thurston County Geodata (**Appendix A. Figure 2**, p. 15), a site visit must be conducted to screen for prairie critical areas (**Chapter 17.15.730, 24.40.010, 24.35.266 and 280 TCC**). These site visits entail a thorough screening process to determine whether prairie habitat, based on floristic composition, may be present and/or potentially impacted by proposed land use activities (**Chapter 24.05.027 Thurston County Code (TCC)**). Current CAO policy does not give Thurston County the authority to restrict development solely based on the presence of certain soils (**24.03.010 TCC**), although soil types trigger a need for prairie review and may result in the requirement of a Critical Areas report in some instances (**Chapter 25.35.260 (C) TCC**).

Mima-type mounds, described as “unique geologic features” in the CAO prairie definition (**Chapter 24.03.010 TCC**), are considered important prairie features due not only to their unique formation, but also to the heterogenous topography and microclimates these formations provide, which support mating and nectaring behaviors of imperiled butterflies such as the Oregon branded skipper and the valley silverspot (Ann Potter, pers. Comm.). Additionally, deeper soils on Mima mound tops and swales between the mounds sustain rare prairie flora during periods of drought (DelMoral, 1976; Sprenger, 2008). Therefore, Mima mounds shall be preserved to the greatest practicable extent even in the absence of native prairie flora (**24.03, Table 24.5-4 TCC**).

In the event that the appropriate number or presence of at least three plant species from Thurston County’s CAO target prairie plant list (**Tables 24.25-7 and 24.25-8, Appendix 24.25-1 in Chapter 24.25 TCC**) or Mima mounds or are detected within an area of proposed development, mitigation sequencing or an HMP may be required (**Chapter 24.35.260 TCC**). Alternative options to an HMP, as well as diagnostic prairie plant lists, are described later in this document (**Section 3, “When an HMP is Not Required,”** and in **Figure 3., Tables 1 and 2 (p. 8-10)**).

## 1.3 Preparation

While the County obtains permission to visit a site in question once a permit application is processed, it is a good practice to contact landowners ahead of time to let them know the date in which you plan to visit a site (**Chapter 24.01.035(D)TCC**). An appointment is not necessary unless a landowner specifically requests their presence during your site survey. **Site visits for prairie habitat should, if feasible, only take place between the period of April 1st through September, subject to varying seasonal conditions, when plant leaf morphology, flowering or fruiting will indicate the presence or absence of diagnostic prairie plant species.** While botanists experienced in prairie plant identification may recognize senesced vegetation, site visits outside this seasonal period may not capture the full range of plant species present. Bear in mind that screening conducted only during the later end of this time window may miss earlier-season plant species which have senesced, particularly during seasons with extreme drought. Ideally, two site visits would take place, one in spring and the other during the summer season, if time allows. This is often feasible for properties which also receive Mazama pocket gopher review.

Prior to visiting a site, view the parcel on Geodata including the LIDAR feature, which makes Mima mounds more visible in cases where shrub layer is thick or mounds are small. Print an aerial photo map of the subject parcel which depicts the boundary of the parcel, the area of alteration, staging areas, roads or access points, and areas of proposed landscaping (plantings, rock gardens, other areas of use or distribution). Each map should include a north arrow, the parcel number and address.

## **Section 2**

### **2.1 In the field**

#### **Equipment Needed**

50 meter metric transect tape	Plant identification field guide
Compass	Hand lens
Pin flags/flagging tape	Ziplock baggies/labels for plant specimens
Hand held tally counter (optional)	GPS equipment for mapping
Camera	

#### **General Guidelines**

Locate the development footprint and, if needed, use pin flags to mark the entire boundary; using metric tape, measure out 50 feet (15 meters) from the edge of the footprint on all sides to create a buffer, then mark its edge with pin flags. This combined area of the footprint and buffer are your **area of alteration** (PHAM Technical Working Group, 2013). The project proposal, including any driveways, septic or well sites, staging areas, roads, access points, or proposed landscaping, should dictate the level of review. Whenever possible, view the entire parcel; if the proposed land use project is for a subdivision or large-scale area of soil disturbance, or a general Critical Area Review Permit (CARP) review with no proposed building area, the entire parcel must be reviewed. Walk through the property, or at bare minimum the area of alteration, in a north to south or similar linear grid fashion (**Figure 1**, p. 6), with lines 5 meters apart. If visibility is poor, transects should be closer together. Use of a compass is recommended for maintaining straight, consistent transects. Scan for target prairie plants (**Figure 3, Tables 1 and 2**, p. 8-10). The following sections will determine whether the footprint needs to be moved, or whether further assessment in the form an HMP will be required. See also **Figure 4**, p. 11.

### **2.2 Within Building Footprint and Buffer: Prairie Habitat Screening**

If target plant species are encountered walking your grid, mark the area of first sighting with a pin flag and record the following data:

- Check the appropriate plant species in the box(es) on the left margin of the datasheet (**Appendix A**).
- For each species classified as a Washington Natural Heritage Program (WNHP) rare plant or which serves as both a TCB and SCC or SGCN butterfly host or nectar plant, (indicated by bold font on attached target species lists (**Figure 3, Tables 1 and 2**, p. 8-10) and in the prairie screening datasheet (**Appendix A**, p. 13), circle “present” in the section to the right of the species name.
- For plants which are not known to have WNHP rare plant status or serve as both a TCB and SCC or SGCN butterfly host or nectar plant, count the number of individual plants of each target species in each cluster you encounter on your transects; circle a size class in the categories to the right of the species name:

- 1 = <25
- 2 = 25-49
- 3 = 50-74
- 4 = 75-100
- 5 = >100

- Continue your grid, repeating the procedure described above if other target species are encountered.
- If at any point at least three different target plant species, totaling in *at least 25 plants each* or meeting the presence/absence criteria based on imperiled butterfly use, are encountered within 5 meters of each other, the area in question meets the criteria to be established as occurrence of prairie. See **Figure 2**, p. 7 for examples of instances where prairie criteria is met (**Diagram 1**) or not met (**Diagram 2**).
- When prairie habitat is detected within the proposed building footprint or buffer, the landowner may be given the option to avoid impact by moving the footprint to a different location (mitigation sequencing), depending upon the size and floristic composition of the property beyond the area of alteration (**Chapter 24.01.010, 24.01.037(A) TCC**).
- If prairie habitat is detected elsewhere on the property, the landowner must be informed in order to avoid future disturbance of this habitat. Target plant species may be hand-drawn on the aerial map or logged using GPS equipment, depending on availability. Existing and ongoing agricultural activities may continue.

### **2.3 Collecting Plant Specimens**

If during any stage of the survey you come across a plant you are unable to identify, collect a specimen. Each specimen should be collected so as to include as much of the entire plant as possible, including roots, leaves, and flower or fruit structures when available. Each specimen should be stored in individual Ziplock baggies, and include a label depicting the parcel number, date, transect or plot number, and suspected genus, species or family, as applicable. Specimens should be stored in a refrigerator if they cannot be immediately identified back at the office. Also take photos (approximately 1 meter away from the plant, using “macro” setting) and a GPS reading. If you suspect the plant in question to be a rare species and it is in low abundance onsite, take only photos.

### **2.4 How much of a parcel should be surveyed?**

Although the most critical screening process is to take place within the area of alteration, assessing an entire parcel is ideal. This process informs the landowner of potential habitat impacts if future developments are proposed elsewhere on the property, may locate alternative locations for the building footprint and buffer if development activities require relocation, and informs landowners of their future land use and management options. If impact avoidance measures must be taken when prairie habitat is detected (see **Section 3**), you will need to assess more or all of the property.

## **Section 3**

### **3.1 When an HMP or Further Assessment Is Required**

If prairie criteria is met and avoidance appears unfeasible (**Chapter 24.01.037, “Mitigation Sequencing”**) based on findings from the initial survey, a prairie delineation and an HMP will be required. This will entail a revisit of the property by a qualified environmental consultant skilled in the identification of south Puget Sound prairie plants, who will develop mitigation options. This may also require a Reasonable Use Exception (**Chapter 24.45.010 TCC**). Mitigation strategies would generally include planting or seeding of native CAO-listed prairie plants, including those detected in the prairie survey, and may also include invasive plant management strategies.

### ***Additional Factors for HMP and Mitigation Plan Development***

Puget balsamroot (*Balsamorhiza deltoidea*), a WHNP rare plant species, serves not only as a nectar source for the TCB, but also provides shelter from the elements for TCB and other prairie butterflies (Dave Hays, pers. comm.). If this species is encountered in the review process, the utmost effort should be made to avoid or preserve it, even where an RUE is sought. As indicated in **Figure 2., Table 3.**, you may encounter native and nonnative plant species in a prairie environment which are not included in the current target plant species list but which provide prairie butterflies with nectar and post-diapausal host sources, and in some cases serve as a food source for gophers. Also see **Appendix B.** for further details of which plant species are utilized by SCC and SGCN butterflies (compiled from HCP, Appendix 3.). The Hoary Elfin (*Callophrys Polios*) for example, an SGCN butterfly and also an endemic species, relies almost solely on kinnikinnik (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) as a host and nectar source (Thurston County Habitat Conservation Plan, Appendix C.; listed in **Figure 3, Table 3.**, p. 10, **Appendix B.**, p. 16). Pearly everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*) and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) are known to support the Oregon branded skipper and TCB butterflies. Manroot (*Marah oregonus*) supports the Puget blue butterfly. English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), while non-native, is known to serve as an ovipositional host plant for the TCB in the absence of harsh paintbrush (*Castilleja hispida*).

Landscape structure is an additional factor to consider as it affects prairie-dwelling fauna (Dave Hays, pers. comm.). Small, suitable patches of habitat can be utilized by prairie-dwelling birds and butterflies even when surrounded by a matrix of low-quality habitat. For example, large, contiguous tracts of grassland with variable vegetation height and a margin of approximately 200 meters from tall buildings or trees can support prairie birds including the SHL even where native plant populations are low, so long as patches of the landscape are open and structurally suitable (Altman, 2000). Grasslands containing several patches as small as 0.2 hectares (0.5 acres) containing short vegetation, bare ground or bryophytes and appropriate host and nectar plants can support the TCB (PHAM Technical Working Group, 2013).

### **3.2 When No HMP or Further Assessment is Required**

- No or fewer than three target prairie plant species are detected within the footprint or within the 50 foot buffer, or the three species are not numerous enough or close enough in proximity (species within 5 meters of each other) to establish an occurrence of prairie habitat.
- No Mima mounds are present within the assessment area
- If prairie habitat is detected, but the size or landscape of the parcel allows avoidance of impact by adjusting or relocating the footprint

Figure 1. Grid Pattern for Transects

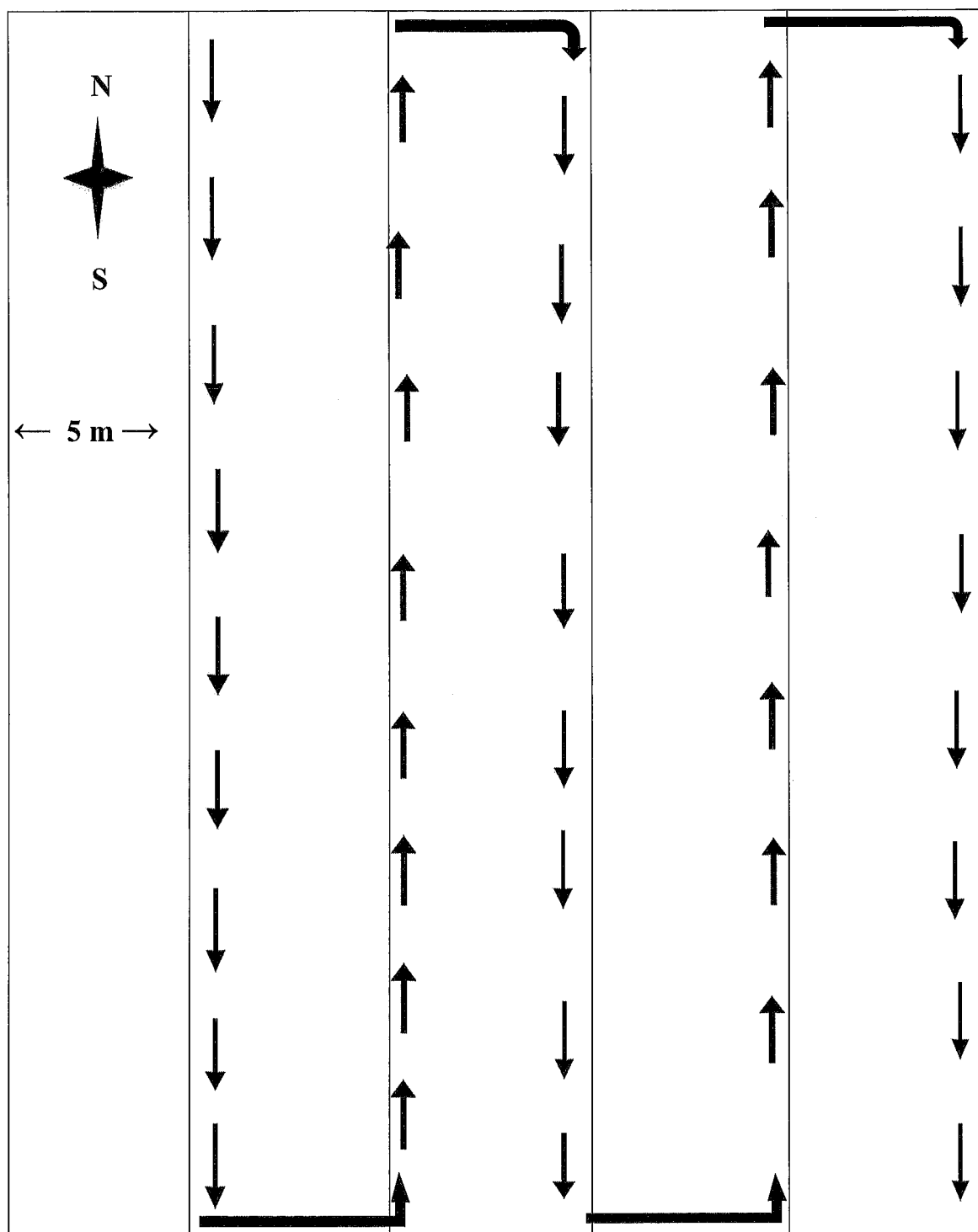
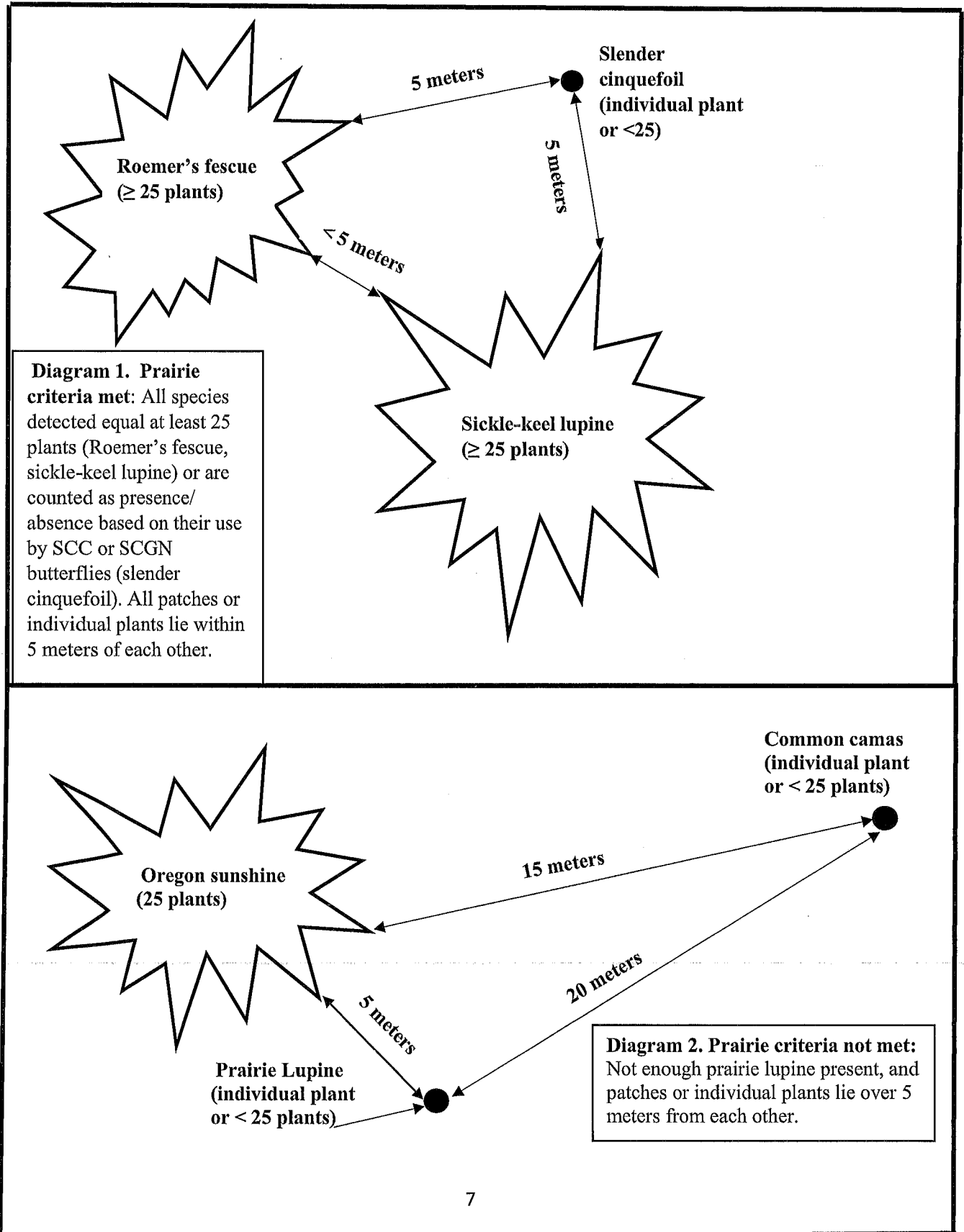


Figure 2. Prairie Criteria Determination



**Figure 3: Diagnostic CAO Prairie Plants and Flowering Periods**

**Table 1.** Wet prairie target species; bold print indicates a WHNP rare species

Scientific Name Bold font = rare plant	Common Name	Most Identifiable (lf. morphology, flowering, fruiting)	Flowering Period	TCB Nectar Species	SCC/ SGCN** Nectar/ Host
<b><i>Bistorta bistortoides</i></b>	<b>American bistort*</b>	Mid-May to mid-Aug	May - August		
<i>Camassia leichtlinii</i>	giant camas		April - May		
<i>Camassia quamash</i>	common camas	Mid-Mar to mid-Jul	April - June	N	N
<b><i>Carex densa</i></b>	<b>dense sedge*</b>	Mid-May to mid-Aug	April - June		
<i>Carex feta</i>	green-sheath sedge	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	May - July		
<i>Carex tumulicola</i>	foot-hill sedge	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	April - May		
<i>Carex unilateralis</i>	one-sided sedge	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	May - July		
<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	tufted hairgrass	Mid-May to mid-sept	June - September		
<i>Deschampsia danthonioides</i>	annual hairgrass	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	April - May		
<i>Downingia yina</i>	Cascade downingia	Mid-May to mid-Jul	April - August		
<b><i>Eryngium petiolatum</i></b>	<b>Oregon coyote thistle*</b>	Mid-May to mid-Aug	June - August		
<b><i>Lomatium bradshawii</i></b> Seldom in Thurston County	<b>Bradshaw's lomatium*</b> <b>Federally Endangered Species</b>	Mid-Mar to mid-May	May		
<b><i>Hosackia pinnata</i></b>	<b>bog bird's-foot-trefoil*</b>	Mid-May to mid-Jul	May - July		
<i>Lupinus polyphyllus</i>	large-leaf lupine	Mid-May to mid-Jul	June - September		
<i>Micranthes integrifolia</i>	northwestern saxifrage	Mid-Mar to mid-Jul	March - July	N	N
<i>Micranthes oregana</i>	bog saxifrage	Mid-Mar to mid-Jul	April - July		
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i>	Gardner's yampah	Mid-May to late Sept	July - August		
<i>Plagiobothrys figuratus</i>	fragrant popcorn flower	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	May - July		N
<b><i>Polemonium carneum</i></b>	<b>great polemonium*</b>	Mid-May to mid-Aug	May - July		
<i>Potentilla gracilis</i>	graceful (fanleaf) cinquefoil	Mid-May to mid-Aug	July - August	N	N
<i>Ranunculus alismifolius</i>	plantain-leaf buttercup	Mid-May to mid-Jul	May - July		
<i>Ranunculus orthorhynchus</i>	bird's-foot buttercup	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	April - August		
<b><i>Sidalcea malviflora</i> var. <i>virgata</i></b>	<b>rose checkermallow*</b>	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	May - June		
<i>Sisyrinchium idahoense</i>	Idaho blue-eyed-grass	Mid-May to mid-Jul	April - June		N
<i>Veratrum californicum</i>	California false hellebore	Mid-May to mid-Aug	June - August		
<i>Veratrum viride</i>	American false hellebore*	Mid-May to mid-Sept	June - September		
* Rare Wet Prairie Species					



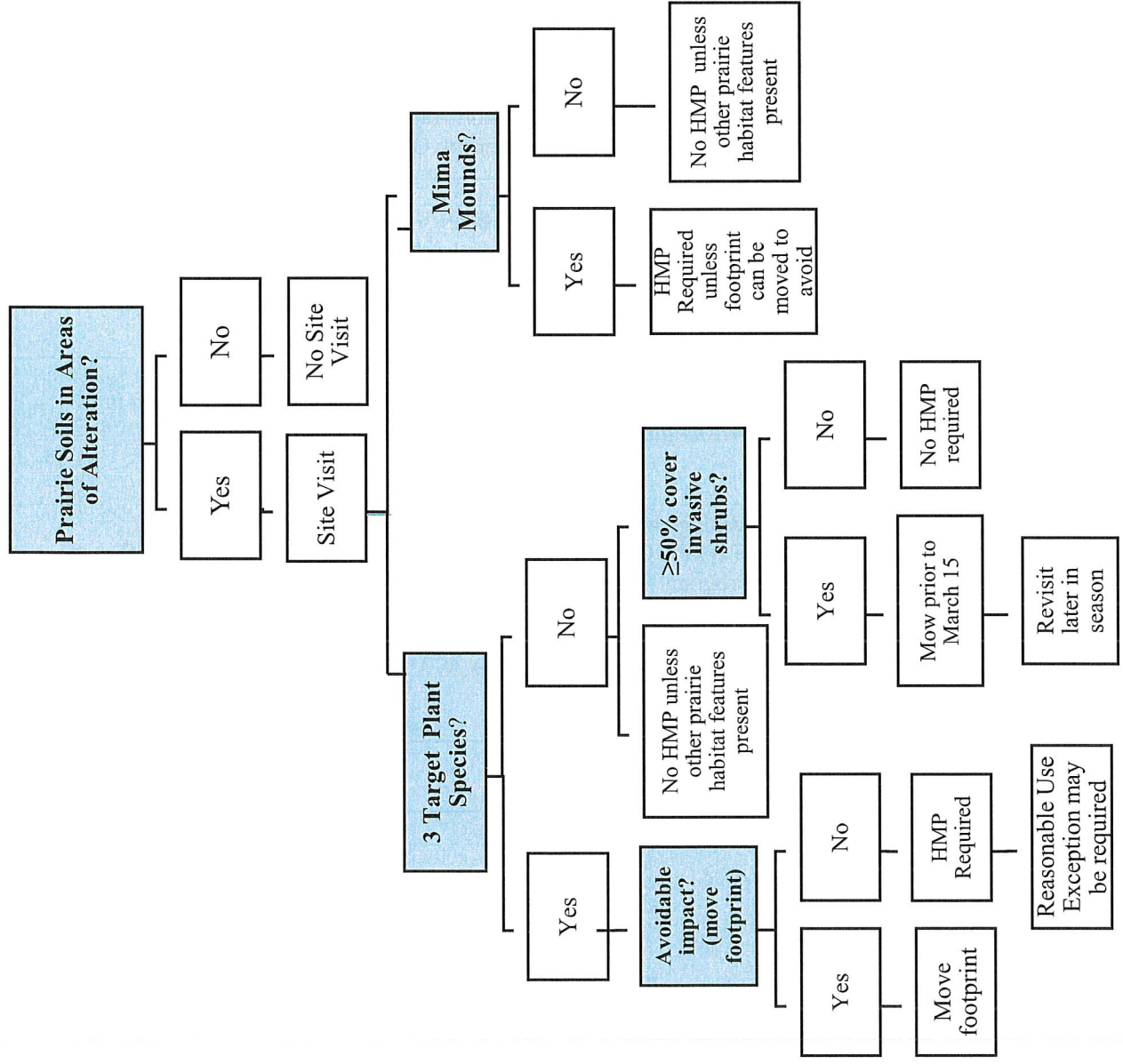
**Table 2.** Dry prairie target plants; bold print indicates a WHNP rare species.

Scientific Name Bold font = rare plant	Common Name	Most identifiable (lf. morphology, flowering, fruiting)	Flowering Period	TCB Nectar/ Host	SCC/ SGCN** Nectar/ Host
<i>Apocynum androsaemifolium</i>	spreading dogbane		June – Sept. (mid June - Jul)*		
<b><i>Balsamorhiza deltoidea</i></b>	<b>deltoid balsamroot</b>	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	March - July	N	
<i>Brodiaea coronaria ssp. coronaria</i>	harvest firecracker-flower		May - June		
<i>Camassia quamash</i>	common camas	Mid-Mar to mid-Jul	April - June	N	N
<i>Carex inops ssp. inops</i>	long-stolon sedge		April – July		H
<b><i>Castilleja levisecta</i></b>	<b>golden Indian paintbrush Federal Threatened Species</b>	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	April – Sept. (usually only through June);	H	
<i>Castilleja hispida</i>	harsh Indian paintbrush		April – August	H	
<i>Danthonia californica</i>	California oatgrass	Mid-May to mid-Jul	Late May – early July		H
<i>Delphinium menziesii</i>	Puget Sound larkspur	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	April - July		
<i>Delphinium nuttallii</i>	upland larkspur	Mid-May to mid-Jul	May - June		
<i>Dodecatheon hendersonii</i>	Henderson's shootingstar	Mid-Mar to mid-Jul	March - June		
<i>Erigeron speciosus</i>	showy fleabane (aspen fleabane)	Mid-May to mid-Jul	June - August		N
<i>Eriophyllum lanatum var. lanatum</i>	common woolly sunflower	Mid-Apr to mid-Aug	May - August	N	
<i>Festuca idahoensis v. roemerii</i>	Roemer's fescue	Mid-May to mid-Jul	May - July		H
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Virginia strawberry		May - August	N	
<i>Fritillaria affinis</i>	chocolate lily	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	April - June		
<i>Hieracium scouleri</i>	hound's-tongue hawkweed	Mid-May to mid-Jul	June - August		
<i>Koeleria macrantha (cristata)</i>	prairie Junegrass	Mid-May to mid-Jul	May - July (primarily June)*		
<i>Leptosiphon bicolor</i>	bicolored desert-gold	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	April - June		
<i>Lomatium triternatum</i>	nineleaf biscuitroot	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	April - July (late May - mid June)*	N	
<i>Lomatium utriculatum</i>	spring gold	Mar to mid-Jul	April - June	N	N
<i>Lomatium nudicaule</i>	barestem biscuitroot		April - June		
<i>Lupinus albicaulis</i>	sickle-keel lupine	Mid-May to mid-Jul	May – July (primarily June)*		N/H
<i>Lupinus lepidus var. lepidus</i>	prairie lupine	Mid-May to mid-Jul	June - August		N
<b><i>Microseris laciniata</i></b>	<b>cut-leaf silverpuffs</b>	Mid-May to mid-Jul	May – July (primarily June)*		

<i>Plectritis congesta</i>	seablush	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	April – June	N/H	N
<i>Potentilla gracillis</i>	fanleaf cinquefoil	Mid-May to mid-Aug	Late May – July	N	N
<i>Ranunculus occidentalis</i> var. <i>occidentalis</i>	western buttercup	Mid-Mar to mid-Jul	April - June	N	N
<i>Saxifraga integrifolia</i>	northwestern saxifrage	Mid-Mar to mid-Jul	March - July	N	N
<i>Sericocarpus rigidus</i>	aster Curtus (white top aster)	Mid-May to mid-Aug	July - August		N
<i>Silene scouleri</i>	Scouler's catchfly		June - August		
<i>Sisyrinchium idahoense</i>	Idaho blue-eyed-grass	Mid-May to mid-Jul	April - July		N
<i>Solidago missouriensis</i>	Missouri goldenrod	Mid-May through Sept	Late June - October		
<i>Solidago simplex</i> var. <i>simplex</i> ( <i>S. Spathulata</i> )	sticky goldenrod	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	June – Sept.		
<i>Solidago spathulata</i>	spikelike goldenrod	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	June – Sept.		
<i>Trifolium willdenowii</i> ( <i>T. tridentatum</i> )	springbank clover	Mid-Mar to mid-Aug	April - July		
<i>Triteleia grandiflora</i>	Howell's triteleia	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	May - June		
<i>Triteleia hyacinthina</i>	white triteleia	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	May - August		
<i>Toxicoscordion venenosus</i> var. <i>venenosus</i>	meadow death-camas	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	May - July	N	
<i>Viola adunca</i>	early blue violet (sand violet)	Mid-Apr to mid-Jul	April - August		N/H
<i>Viola praemorsa</i> var. <i>nuttallii</i>	upland yellow violet	Mid-Mar to mid-Jul	April - July		

**Table 3: Taylor's Checkerspot and Butterflies of Conservation Concern (CC) Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) Host and Nectar Plants Not Included in CAO Target List**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Flowering Period	TCB Host/ Nectar	SCC/ SGCN Host/ Nectar
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	April - October	N	
<i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i>	Pearly everlasting	July - September		N
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Kinnikinnick	April - June		H
<i>Armeria maritima</i>	Sea thrift	March - July	N	
<i>Castilleja attenuata</i>	Attenuate paintbrush	April - June	H	
<i>Cerastium arvense</i>	Field chickweed	April - August	N	
<i>Collinsia grandiflora</i>	Giant blue-eyed Mary	April - June	H	
<i>Collinsia parviflora</i>	Maiden blue-eyed Mary	March - July	H	
<i>Marah oregonus</i>	Coastal manroot	April - June		N
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	English plantain (nonnative)	April – Aug (Lvs recognizable off-season)	H	
<i>Tryphysaria pusilla</i>	Dwarf owl clover	April - June	H	
<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Common vetch (nonnative)	April - July		N



**Figure 4:** Overview of decision-making process in determining whether an HMP will be required, based on assessment area

### Citations

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- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (2015). Draft Protocol for Mapping PHS Westside Prairie. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Olympia, WA.

# Appendix A - 2022 Thurston County Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) Prairie Screening Data Sheet

Parcel Number: _____	CAO prairie criteria met? Yes or No
Property Owner: _____	Mima mounds present? Yes or No
Surveyor(s): _____	Oaks ( <i>Quercus garryana</i> ) present? Yes or No
Date: _____	Mature: _____
Composition of Vegetation: _____	Sapling: _____
	Seedling: _____

X Target species	Class* (circle)
<i>Apocynum androsaemifolium</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<b><i>Balsamorhiza deltoidea</i></b>	Present / Absent
<b><i>Bistorta bistortoides</i></b>	Present / Absent
<i>Brodiaea coronaria</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Camassia leichtlinii</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Camassia quamash</i>	Present / Absent
<b><i>Carex densa</i></b>	Present / Absent
<i>Carex feta</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Carex inops</i> ssp. <i>inops</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Carex tumulicola</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Carex unilateralis</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Castilleja hispida</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<b><i>Castilleja levisecta</i></b>	Present / Absent
<i>Danthonia californica</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Delphinium menziesii</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Delphinium nuttallii</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Deschampsia danthonioides</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Dodecatheon hendersonii</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Downingia yina</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Erigeron speciosus</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Eriophyllum lanatum</i>	Cover: ____ m <sup>2</sup> N/A
<b><i>Eryngium petiolatum</i></b>	Present / Absent
<i>Festuca roemerii</i> (F. <i>idahoensis</i> )	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Cover: ____ m <sup>2</sup> N/A
<i>Fritillaria affinis</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Hieracium scouleri</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<b><i>Hosackia pinnata</i></b> ( <i>Lotus pinnatus</i> )	Present / Absent
<i>Koeleria macrantha</i> (K. <i>cristata</i> )	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Leptosiphon bicolor</i> ( <i>Linanthus b.</i> )	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<b><i>Lomatium bradshawii</i></b>	Present / Absent
<i>Lomatium nudicaule</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Lomatium triternatum</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Lomatium utriculatum</i>	Present / Absent

<i>Lupinus albicaulis</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Lupinus lepidus</i> var. <i>lepidus</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Lupinus polyphyllus</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Micranthes integrifolia</i> ( <i>Saxifraga i.</i> )	Present / Absent
<i>Micranthes oregana</i> ( <i>Saxifraga o.</i> )	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<b><i>Microseris laciniata</i></b>	Present / Absent
<i>Perideridia gairdneri</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Plagiobothrys figuratus</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Plectritis congesta</i>	Present / Absent
<b><i>Polemonium carneum</i></b>	Present / Absent
<i>Potentilla gracilis</i>	Present / Absent
<i>Ranunculus alismifolius</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Ranunculus occidentalis</i>	Present / Absent
<i>Ranunculus orthorhynchus</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<b><i>Sericocarpus rigidus</i></b>	Present / Absent
<b><i>Sidalcea malviflora</i></b> var. <i>virgata</i>	Present / Absent
<b><i>Silene scouleri</i></b>	Present / Absent
<i>Sisyrinchium idahoense</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Solidago missouriensis</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Solidago simplex</i> (S. <i>spatulata</i> )	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Toxicoscordion venenosum</i> var. <i>venosum</i> ( <i>Zigadenus venenosus</i> )	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Trifolium willdenowii</i> (T. <i>tridentatum</i> )	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Triteleia grandiflora</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Triteleia hyacinthina</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Veratrum californicum</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<b><i>Veratrum viride</i></b>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Viola adunca</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
<i>Viola praemorsa</i> var. <i>nuttallii</i>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A

\*Species Count Class:

- 1 = < 25
- 2 = 25 - 49
- 3 = 50 - 74
- 4 = 75 - 100
- 5 = >100

Prairie Plant Manual:

<https://www.thurstoncountywa.gov/planning/planningdocuments/cao-prairie-plant-manual-4.23.2018.pdf>

**Non-CAO vegetation notes:**

Species	Notes
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	

Prairie Habitat Criteria: If at any point at least three target species, totaling in general at least 25 plants each are encountered within 5 meters of each other (WDFW 2015), the area in question meets the criteria to be established as occurrence of prairie. For certain plants such as WNHP rare plants (indicated here in bold), or species which serves as nectar or host plants for both TCB and either SCC or SGCN butterflies, presence is enough to meet prairie habitat criteria for such species, even if their count is less than 25 individual plants.

**Appendix A. Figure 2: List of Soil Conservation Service (SCS) Prairie Soils**

**SCS\_CODE   SCS\_NAME**

005	Baldhill very stony sandy loam, 0 to 3% slopes
007	Baldhill very stony sandy loam, 15 to 30% slopes
006	Baldhill very stony sandy loam, 3 to 15% slopes
008	Baldhill very stony sandy loam, 30 to 50% slopes
020	Cagey loamy sand
032	Everett very gravelly sandy loam, 0 to 3% slopes
033	Everett very gravelly sandy loam, 3 to 15% slopes
042	Grove very gravelly sandy loam, 3 to 15% slopes
046	Indianola loamy sand, 0 to 3% slopes
047	Indianola loamy sand, 3 to 15% slopes
073	Nisqually loamy fine sand, 0 to 3 % slopes
074	Nisqually loamy fine sand, 3 to 15 % slopes
109	Spana gravelly loam
114	Spanaway-Nisqually complex, 2 to 10% slopes
110	Spanaway gravelly sandy loam, 0 to 3% slopes
111	Spanaway gravelly sandy loam, 3 to 15% slopes
112	Spanaway stony sandy loam, 0 to 3% slopes
113	Spanaway stony sandy loam, 3 to 15% slopes
117	Tenino gravelly loam, 3 to 15% slopes

Appendix B. Nectar/Host Plants for Butterfly Species of Conservation Concern (SCC), Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)

Species/Status	Host Plant(s)	Nectar plant(s)	Habitat type
Hoary elfin (SGCN)	<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i> <i>Lomatium utriculatum</i> <i>Ranunculus occidentalis</i>	Grasslands/open heath woodlands
Mardon skipper (SCC)	<i>Danthonia californica</i> <i>Festuca roemerii</i>	<i>Camassia quamash</i> <i>Lomatium utriculatum</i> <i>Lupinus lepidus</i> <i>Plagiobothrys figuratus</i> <i>Plectritis congesta</i> <i>Ranunculus occidentalis</i> <i>Saxifraga integrifolia</i> <i>Sisyrinchium idahoense</i> <i>Viola adunca</i> <i>Vicia sativa</i>	Open grasslands with FESROE, VIOADU
Oregon branded skipper (SCC)	<i>Festuca roemerii</i> <i>Carex inops</i>	<i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i> <i>Cirsium</i> spp <i>Hypochaeris radicata</i> <i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i> <i>Serricarpus rigidus</i>	Open grasslands; use Mima mounds for hilltopping during mating season
Puget blue (SGCN)	<i>Lupinus albicaulis</i>	<i>Lomatium utriculatum</i> <i>Lupinus albicaulis</i> <i>Marah oregonus</i> <i>Potentilla gracilis</i> <i>Ranunculus occidentalis</i>	Low elevation grasslands to subalpine meadows
Valley silverspot (SCC)	<i>Viola adunca</i>	<i>Cirsium</i> spp. <i>Erigeron speciosus</i> <i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i> <i>Sericocarpus rigidus</i>	Low elevation grasslands, forest openings



2023

# COUNTY INSPECTIONS

## Prairie Plant Inspections



THURSTON COUNTY

As part of the county's Critical Areas Ordinance regulations, when you apply for a permit, the County checks its map to see if the project property has prairie plant soils. If it does, the entire parcel is inspected to see if prairie plants are on it.

### PRAIRIE PLANT INSPECTION

**Inspection dates** mid-April - mid Sept.

**Choose an Option** Use County staff (no additional fee if getting a gopher inspection), or your consultant.

**Inspector looks for** Mima Mounds, oak trees & plants listed in County Code Title 24.

**Number of visits** One or two visits, depending on site conditions.

**Prepare for Inspection** Don't mow, dig, move dirt, level mounds, etc. before inspection. Details online.

### PRAIRIE SOILS LIST

Prairie	
X	Cagey
X	Everett
X	Indianola
X	Nisqually
X	Spana
X	Spanaway
	Alderwood
	Kapowsin
	McKenna
	Norma
	Yelm
X	Baldhill
X	Grove
X	Tenino

### VERY IMPORTANT APPLICANT INSTRUCTIONS

Find details about these instructions at the web address below.

**1. Fill out application forms completely, correctly & neatly.**

Inaccurate, incomplete or unreadable forms delay your application.

**2. Give us your correct contact info & check your messages.**

We use the contact info on your application to let you know your inspection dates. Each year, applicants miss inspections because of inaccurate contact info, or unchecked messages.

**3. Put property access info on your application.**

Provide access to locked gates; remove or secure animals; and let us know where and how to access fenced areas.

**4. Follow Prairie Plant mowing requirements & timing.**

When and how you mow is **very important**. The entire parcel is inspected, and mowing helps inspectors see the ground. But the ground needs time to settle before inspection. No mowing 3 weeks before inspection. Detailed instructions are online. Please follow them.

**FAQs are on back.**

[www.ThurstonCountyBDC.com](http://www.ThurstonCountyBDC.com) | search 'prairie plant inspections'

## ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **How can I tell if my property has prairie plant soils?**

Ask staff.

### **How do I schedule an inspection?**

The County schedules it for you when you apply for a building permit or a critical areas determination & use a County inspector. Or you can hire your own inspector to do the inspection and submit to us the report. They must follow the inspection protocol and instructions outlined on the Prairie Plant Inspections web page. Go to the county's website [www.ThurstonCountyBDC.com](http://www.ThurstonCountyBDC.com) and search "Prairie Plant Inspections" to learn more.

### **Why does the County do this inspection?**

To comply with County Code (Title 24-Critical Areas, and Federal regulations) as adopted by the County's Board of Commissioners.

### **What if property has prairie plants?**

Choose an option that meets the code, including: mitigate for impacts by planting prairie plants to replace any lost to development. See more details on the prairie plant page. Go to the county's website [www.ThurstonCountyBDC.com](http://www.ThurstonCountyBDC.com) and search "Prairie Plant Inspections" to learn more.

[www.ThurstonCountyBDC.com](http://www.ThurstonCountyBDC.com) click 'Gopher Inspections' or 'Prairie Plant Inspections' from the left column on that page.

## CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PRAIRIE PLANT INSPECTION

Vince McDowell, Project Coordinator  
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