

WAC 173-26-211 4(2)(i) and (ii) Environment Designation System Purpose and Criteria

Purpose Statement. The Statement of purpose shall describe the shoreline management objectives of the designation in a manner that distinguishes it from other designations. (*Shoreline Residential Thurston SMP does not meet this purpose, creates confusion.*)

Classification criteria. Clearly stated criteria shall provide the basis for classifying or reclassifying a specific shoreline area with an environment designation. (*Except for Shoreline Residential, most Thurston SMP criteria are mostly identical to WAC*)

Shoreline Residential Purpose Statement: Identical

“Accommodate residential development and appurtenant structures that are consistent with this chapter. An additional purpose is to provide appropriate public access and recreational uses.”

Shoreline Residential WAC 173-26-211 **Criteria**

Inside: Urban Growth Areas
Incorporated Municipalities
“Rural Areas of more intense development”
= LAMIRD (see RCW 36.70A.170 and
GMA RCW.36.70A.170(C)(iv)) but
residential only

Shoreline Residential Thurston SMP (draft) **Criteria**

1. Does not meet the criteria for Natural or Rural Conservancy
2. “Predominantly single-family or multifamily residential development or are planned and platted for residential development.”
3. Majority of lots are within shoreline jurisdiction
4. “Ecological functions have been impacted by more intense modification and use.”

Rural Conservancy Purpose Statement: Identical

“Protect ecological functions, conserve exiting natural resources and valuable historic and cultural areas in order to provide for sustained resource use, achieve natural flood plain processes, and provide recreational opportunities. Examples...include...low-intensity residential

Rural Conservancy WAC 173-26-211 **Criteria**

Outside incorporated municipalities and UGAs if any of the following apply:

1. Supports lesser-intensity resource use.
2. Accommodates residential uses “outside UGAs and incorporated cities or towns.”
3. Supports *human uses* but subject to environmental limitations, such as steep banks, feeder bluffs, flood plains/flood-prone areas.
4. High recreational, historic, cultural value
5. Low-intensity water-dependent use

Rural Conservancy SMP (draft) **Criteria**

1. Supports lower-intensity resource use.
2. Accommodates *residential uses* subject to environmental limitations (see WAC #3)
3. Supports low-intensity water-dependent use (WAC #5 but **adds** “without significant adverse impacts to shoreline functions or processes”)
4. High recreational, historic, cultural value (**adds** private and/or publicly owned)
5. Does not meet designation criteria for Natural environment.
6. Rural Conservancy designation may apply in urban areas under certain circumstances.

Natural Environment Purpose Statement:

Identical (*wordsmithing only*): “To protect those shoreline areas that are relatively free of human influence, and/or that include intact or minimally degraded shoreline functions intolerant of human use. Only very low intensity uses are allowed in order to maintain the ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes. Restoration of degraded shorelines should be planned within this environment.”

Different: WAC but not Thurston SMP states, “Consistent with the policies of the designation, local government should include planning for restoration of degraded shorelines within this environment.”

Natural Environment WAC 173-26-211 Criteria
“applies to all shoreline areas meeting the..criteria (including) small areas located within a single property,” and includes urban.

1. Ecologically intact and performing “an important, irreplaceable function or ecosystem-wide process that would be damaged by human activity.
2. Represents ecosystems/geologic types of scientific/ educational interest
3. Unable to support new development/uses without significant adverse impacts to ecological functions or with risk to human safety (specifically includes unstable bluffs, spits)

Natural Environment SMP (draft) Criteria
“includes shorelines both in and out of the UGA or LAMIRD” when meeting criteria.

1. Ecologically intact (identical to WAC #1)
2. Represents types of interest (WAC #2)
3. Unable to support new development (WAC #3)
4. Includes “largely undisturbed” portions of shoreline, language identical to WAC #3: “such as wetlands, estuaries, unstable bluffs, coastal dunes, spits, and ecologically intact...”
5. Meets criteria for “ecologically intact” in WAC #1: majority of function, configuration and presence of native vegetation.
6. Meets criteria for WAC #3: “Generally (WAC adds, “but not necessarily”) free of structural shoreline modifications, structures, and intensive human uses.

Notes:

1. Treatment of denser rural residential is different between WAC and Thurston SMP. Thurston SMP Residential Shoreline Criterion #2, allowing the designation anywhere that is residential whether rural or not, is a clear violation of the intent of the Shoreline Resident Criteria and the basic requirements for environment designation (*criteria cannot also apply to other environment designations*) under the WAC as well as the GMA. *The SMP Criterion #2 should be changed to specifically include LAMIRD’s according to the WAC language if that is the intent.* The WAC, but not Thurston SMP, states: “Limited areas of more intensive rural development” [a LAMIRD — see GMA RCW.36.70A.170(C)(iv)] *may be designated an alternate shoreline environment* “provided it is consistent with the objectives of the Growth Management Act and this chapter.”
2. Rural Conservancy SMP may have removed WAC criterion accomodating residential uses “outside UGSs and incorporated cities or towns” because it failed to follow the correct criteria for Shoreline Residential.
3. The Thurston SMP Rural Conservancy criterion #5 makes it clear that areas fitting Natural environment criteria must be designated Natural. It is very important to note that the WAC clarifies in various places that drawing lines based on parcel lines for convenience, or including individual property-sized or even less than property-sized areas (see GMA RCW regarding LAMIRDs) in designations that are less restrictive for the sake of convenience, is not allowed under the SMA. Therefore, the statement in the March 9, 2022 *Memorandum on Shoreline Environment Designation Reviews & Background* that “staff generally prefer to avoid