City of Seattle
Draft Environmentally Critical Areas Code

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Overview

1. What are Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA)?
2. Reasons for ECA update
3. Components of the update
4. Update process
5. Proposed changes – Heron Habitat
What are Environmentally Critical Areas?

- Aquifers
- Landslide-Prone and Steep Slope Areas
- Peat bogs
- Streams
- Small lakes
- Shorelines
- Wetlands
ECA Background

• **1990** – Washington State’s response to rapid growth was the 1990 Growth Management Act (GMA)

• **1992** – GMA-required protection of Environmentally Critical Areas

• **1995** – New requirement to use **Best Available Science** to protect ECAs with “special consideration” for protecting anadromous fish (e.g., salmon)

• **2015** – No new requirements; update ECA regulations for clarity and continued compliance with GMA
Requirements for the 2015 ECA Update

1. Review regulations for compliance with GMA
2. Best Available Science
3. Public participation plan
4. Develop policies and regulations
Process

• Public outreach via website and meetings
• Public Open House
• Summary of identified changes – February 2015
• Proposed policy changes – February 2015
• Proposed regulatory changes – October 2015
• Public input throughout process.
• SEPA
• Mayor’s Approval
• City Council – Public Hearing and Approval
ECA Mapping

Great Blue Heron Management Area
Bald Eagle Management Area

Biodiversity Area and Corridor
- 2015 WDFW Data
- Existing WDFW Data

City of Seattle Park
City Property

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 HARN StatePlane Washington North FIPS 4601 Feet
Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic
Datum: North American 1983 HARN
False Easting: 1,640,416.6667
False Northing: 0.0000
Central Meridian: -120.8333
Standard Parallel 1: 47.5000
Standard Parallel 2: 48.7500
Latitude Of Origin: 47.0000
Units: Foot US
ECA Mapping

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Datum: North American 1983 HARN
False Easting: 1,640,416.6667
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Central Meridian: -120.8333
Standard Parallel 1: 47.5000
Standard Parallel 2: 48.7333
Latitude Of Origin: 47.0000
Units: Foot US
Existing ECA Regulations

Section 25.09 of the Seattle Municipal Code

The current regulations:

1. Define ECAs
2. Establish exempt development (e.g., maintenance and repair)
3. Specify submittal requirements
Existing ECA Regulations

4. Establish specific development standards for each ECA type

5. Outline variance process for development on steep slopes

6. Outline exception process for lots predominantly ECA
Proposed Changes

- Clarification of code were needed
- Steep Slope - unit lot subdivision standards
- Wetland - increase setback for Type III wetlands with moderate to high habitat function 85 to 110 feet
- Heron Habitat Director’s Rule
Update to Heron Habitat Protection
DR 5-2007
Seven Heron Colonies

Kiwanis Ravine 1
North Beach 2 & 3
NE Seattle 4
Seven Heron Colonies

UW Campus 5

Duwamish Greenbelt 6 & 7
UFC Recommendations - 2010

Retain trees: 6” dbh or larger screening trees year round (decrease from 22” dbh during nesting season)

15-ft Building setback: Require a landscape planting plan approved by DPD.
Updated Great Blue Heron Director’s Rule

√ Retain trees: 6” dbh or larger screening trees year round

√ 15-ft Building setback:
Include additional detail that native vegetation is required and this plan is required to be approved by DPD based on the standards.
Updated Great Blue Heron Director’s Rule
Additional Changes

Include year round buffer: 197-ft if vegetation is removed mitigation to replace habitat loss is required using mitigation sequencing.

Great Blue Heron Nesting Colony:
- Clarify no development is allowed within the GBH nesting colony &
- Protect a nesting colony for 10 years after last known nesting season.

Definitions: update and add additional terms.
Additional Information or Questions

• Visit the project websites:
  www.seattle.gov/dpd/codesrules/changestocode/ecaupdate/whatwhy

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